

Ten Most Important Community Health Issues-Benton County

SUMMARY 2014

Lack of Physical Exercise

- Over half of Benton county residents report lack of physical exercise as a moderate/serious problem.
- Approximately 20% of adults surveyed reported 5 or more hours of screen time while not at work or school.
- Less than half of the adult population gets moderate exercise 5 times a week.

Poor parenting skills

- Ranked #2 in overall moderate/serious concern on the Community Health Assessment.
- Teen birth rate has been higher than the state average since 1998.
- High number of child maltreatment reports and an increased rate of out of home placements.

Financial Stress

- Ranked #1 in overall moderate/serious concern on the Community Health Assessment.
- Benton County poverty level is greater than the average in the state of MN, with the largest group under 18 years.
- Unemployment concerns are high, approximately 90% felt it was a problem on the Community Health Assessment.

Poor Nutrition

- Approximately 70% reported that unhealthy eating and obesity for all ages is a problem.
- Greater than 60% report being overweight/obese with elevated BMIs (Body Mass Index).
- Approximately 21% of Benton County 9th graders are obese.

Mental Health

- Women ranked Mental Health as more of a problem than men.
- Youth seriously considering suicide is high, up to approximately 22% for some age/gender groups.
- Over 50% of adults reported that Depression among adults is a moderate/serious problem.

Tobacco Use

- High smoking rate noted, Highest among the counties surveyed.
- National smoking average is 18.1%, Benton County rate is 20.6%.
- Tobacco use is high among low income and the 55-64 years age group.

Alcohol Use

- 70% of the population consumed alcohol in the last 30 days.
- Drinking and driving ranked in the top 10 moderate/serious concerns.
- Over 60% report alcohol abuse among those over 21 as a problem.

Drug Use

- Benton county reported the highest “some days” usage for drugs than other counties in the survey.
- County perception of drug use problem is with youth, biggest age group reporting drug use is 55-64 years.
- Men, lowest income, and highest income reported the most drug use.

Safe Driving

- Over 80% reported making or answering phone calls while driving
- Fatality rates in Benton County are greater than the region and the state of MN.
- Benton County is at the top for serious injury in our region.

Chronic Disease: Asthma

- 1 in 5 Benton County students report having asthma compared to 1 in 14 in MN.
- High rate of smoking during pregnancy, consistently higher rate than in MN since 1993.
- High rate of asthma related hospitalizations compared to the rate in MN.