



Illegal Drug and Alcohol Abuse in Anoka County

Illegal drug use and alcohol abuse/dependency are costly to individuals, families and communities. Lives are lost or shortened and human potential is decreased or lost. Alcohol and drug dependence is a chronic but treatable disease. Anoka County youth are especially at risk with documented higher levels of illegal drug use (marijuana) than statewide rates as documented in the table below.

Alcohol and illegal drug use are associated with child and spousal/partner abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancy, school failure, motor vehicle crashes, and low worker productivity. Alcohol use during pregnancy is known to cause fetal alcohol syndrome, a leading cause of preventable mental retardation.

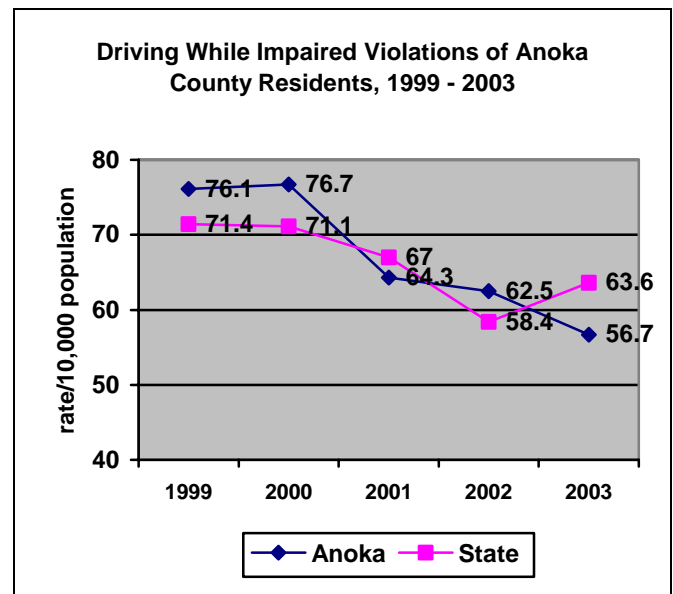
Results from the Minnesota Student Survey highlight the trend over a six-year period in which youth alcohol use and illegal drug use (marijuana) have declined.

Alcohol and Illegal Drug use among Anoka County Students

	Anoka County	MN
"Experience a family alcohol abuse problem" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th graders in 2004 • 9th graders in 2001 • 9th graders in 1998 	19.3% 19.0% 20.7%	18.2% 17.4% 17.7%
"Have consumed alcoholic beverages in the last year" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th graders in 2004 • 9th graders in 2001 • 9th graders in 1998 • 12th graders in 2004 • 12th graders in 2001 • 12th graders in 1998 	40.8% 46.7% 56.4% 60.6% 66.9% 67.5%	42.9% 46.5% 53.6% 62.7% 67.8% 69.7%
"Have used marijuana in the last year" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th graders in 2004 • 9th graders in 2001 • 9th graders in 1998 • 12th graders in 2004 • 12th graders in 2001 • 12th graders in 1998 	17.7% 22.5% 29.5% 27.2% 33.9% 35%	17% 19.9% 24.3% 26.9% 31.1% 31%
"Drove a motor vehicle in the past year after using alcohol or other drugs" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th graders in 2004 • 9th graders in 2001 • 9th graders in 1998 • 12th graders in 2004 • 12th graders in 2001 • 12th graders in 1998 	5.5% 6.9% 8.4% 25.8% 30.2% 30.9%	6.3% 6.8% 8.6% 28% 31.1% 33%

Source: Minnesota Student Survey Data, 1998-2004
Anoka County Community Health & Environmental Services Department

Alcohol abuse, as measured by **Driving While Impaired Violations**, is portrayed in the chart below for Anoka County residents and the state. Data interpretation may be complicated by the level of local/state enforcement of DWI in each jurisdiction/county.



Source: MN Dept. of Health (MDH), Center for Health Statistics 2004

According to data from the Minnesota Department of Health, alcohol kills over 100,000 people in the United States each year, ranking as the third leading cause of death. There were 1,324 alcohol-attributed deaths in Minnesota in 2001 (MDH, January 2004). One percent (1%) of national deaths was attributed to the illicit use of drugs.

The annual U.S. economic costs from alcohol abuse were estimated to be \$185 billion in 1998, and the economic costs from drug abuse were estimated to be \$143 billion. The Minnesota Department of Health estimated the economic costs of alcohol use in Minnesota in 2001 as \$4.5 billion, which is equivalent to about \$900 for every Minnesotan.

Minnesota-specific data document trends in illegal alcohol or drug use (Office of Applied Studies, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2002 and 2003).

- Marijuana was the most commonly used illegal drug according to state data.

- 9% of Minnesota teens ages 12-17 years report marijuana use in the past month compared to 17% of young adults (ages 18-25 years) and 4% of adults ages 26 and older. The combined rate was 6% for all of these ages.
- 5% of Minnesota teens ages 12-17 years report other illegal drug use in the past month compared to 7% of young adults (18-25 years) and 2% of adults (26 years and older).

A 1998 study by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reported that the younger a person begins drinking, the greater the chance that person will develop a clinically defined alcohol disorder like alcoholism or alcohol abuse. Young people who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism and two times as likely to develop alcohol abuse as those who begin drinking at age 21 years.

Healthy People 2010 is a comprehensive set of disease prevention and health promotion objectives for the Nation to achieve over the first decade of the new century. Created by scientists both inside and outside of Government, it identifies a wide range of public health priorities and specific, measurable objectives. *Healthy People 2010* has two objectives related to illegal drug use.

Increase the proportion of adolescents not using alcohol or any illicit drugs during the past 30 days.

Reduce the proportion of adults using any illicit drugs during the past 30 days.

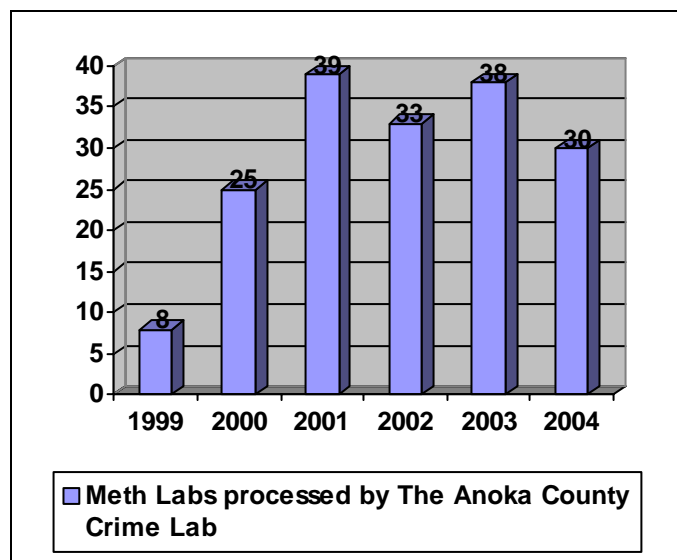
Illegal drug use and alcohol abuse in MN has created financial and social problems; and resulted in harm to human health and the environment. The financial burden includes substance abuse treatment and prevention costs as well as other healthcare costs, costs associated with reduced job productivity or lost earnings, and other costs to society such as crime and social welfare. These societal costs are borne primarily by governments.

Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine has significantly impacted Anoka County in a number of ways. Child Protection cases have risen from one-third of all cases to one-half in the last year. Neglect, treatment issues, growing probation caseloads and clogged court calendars are the some of the main issues.

In 2004, the County Attorney's office had 345 Methamphetamine complaints compared to 67 in 1999. Community Corrections has seen an increase in Methamphetamine offenders on probation and in the Medium Secure Facility. A snapshot at the end of 2004 at the Medium Security Facility showed 42% had one of their charges as a drug offense related to Methamphetamine.

The incidence of Methamphetamine lab seizures has increased significantly in Minnesota in the past few years. In 2000, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) seized 138 labs in Minnesota. Twenty-five (25) of the 138 were seized in Anoka County. Information obtained from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension indicates that the number of labs identified and seized is expected to increase at a fairly high rate.



Source: Anoka County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division

Resources:

- Anoka County Prevention Program at 763-422-7282
- Minnesota Institute of Public Health and the Minnesota Prevention Resource Center at 763-427-5310 or www.miph.org
- Minnesota Department of Health, Center for Health Promotion- Alcohol and drug Abuse Prevention at www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/alcohol/index.html
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at www.niaaa.nih.gov
- Office of National Drug Control Policy at www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov
- SAMHSA, Office of Applied Studies, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2002 and 2003 at www.oas.samhsa.gov