

been holding steady among youth at 74%-75% for the past several years, according to Tennessee YRBSS. The rate of 30-day use of smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco and snuff) has declined slightly from 17% of students in 1991 to 14% in 1995 and 1997.

- Crack/cocaine use has increased slightly from the low of 5% lifetime users in 1993 to 6% in 1995 and 7% in 1997. Thirty-day cocaine use has also increased from 2% in 1991 and 1993 to 3% of students in 1995 and 1997. While these percentages are small, the increases represented are relatively large and worth noting. Crack use is about 71% of cocaine use (that is, 7% of students were 1997 cocaine users, and 5% of students had ever used crack or had freebased cocaine).

Stabilization of Rates of Risk Practices among High School Students from YRBSS

- Certain risk practices among high school students, based on the Tennessee YRBSS 1991, 1993, 1995 and 1997, have remained relatively constant over time. These include:
 - suicide attempts in the last 12 months -- 9%-11%
 - lifetime prevalence of cigarette smoking -- 74%-75%
 - lifetime prevalence of alcohol use -- 75%-77%
 - trying to lose weight -- 42%-45%
 - vomiting or taking laxatives in the past 30 days -- 6%-7%
 - eating fried foods, especially french fries and potato chips, in the last 24 hours -- 68%-69%.

The School as a Locus of Risky Practices among High School Students, Tennessee, 1997

To what extent were Tennessee schools a locus of risky practices among high school students in 1997? The next set of variables deal specifically with activities at school or on school property.

Violence and Theft on School Property

- In 1997, 11% of Tennessee high school students carried a weapon, such as a gun, knife or club, on school property on one or more days within 30 days of the survey. This represents nearly half of the students who reported carrying weapons in the past 30 days (24%). Male students were about five times more likely to report carrying weapons to school than female students (19% compared to 4%, respectively).
- Lack of perceived safety at or on the way to or from school resulted in 5% of students not attending school on one or more of the past 30 days. This affected male and female students similarly. But more younger students (9th and 10th graders) reported feeling unsafe than older students (11th and 12th graders).