

# 2005 Mecklenburg County



## *Youth Risk Behavior Survey*

### Highlights

**SUPPORTED BY:**

**THE CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
Epidemiology Program**

More information on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey is available  
at <http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss>

# Acknowledgements

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This report represents a collaborative effort of many individuals and agencies, including:

- **Charlotte Mecklenburg School System**

Student, Family, and Community Services: Anthony F. Bucci, Assistant Superintendent  
Coordinated School Health: Nancy Langenfeld, Director

- **Mecklenburg County Health Department**

School Health Program: Maria Bonaiuto, Director  
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- Dr. Peter C. Gorman, Superintendent, Charlotte Mecklenburg School System
- Dr. E. Winters Mabry, Health Director, Mecklenburg County Health Department
- Carolinas HealthCare System, Public Health Department

# 2005 Mecklenburg County Youth Risk Behavior Survey

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**MECKLENBURG COUNTY**

# Introduction

## BACKGROUND

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was developed in 1990 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor priority health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. The YRBS is administered at the middle and/or high school level by individual states, counties and/or cities in odd-numbered years to coincide with the national high school administration of the YRBS conducted by the CDC.

The YRBS was designed to focus the nation on behaviors among youth related to the leading causes of mortality and morbidity among both youth and adults and to assess how these behaviors change over time. The survey measures behaviors such as: unintentional injuries and violence; tobacco, alcohol and other drug use; sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies; nutrition; and physical activity. The YRBS also measures self reported height and weight to allow calculation of body mass index.

## METHODS

In the spring of 2005, the Charlotte Mecklenburg High School YRBS was conducted by the Mecklenburg County Health Department in collaboration with the Charlotte Mecklenburg School District. The survey was administered in 18 public high schools and was completed by 1,755 students in randomly selected classes. Students answered a self-administered 96-item questionnaire. Survey procedures were designed to protect the privacy of students by allowing for anonymous and voluntary participation.

Local parental permission procedures were followed before survey administration. The school response rate was 90%, the student response rate was 80% and the overall response rate was 72%. To correct for any differences between the YRBS sample and the overall Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools population, the responses were statistically weighted by the CDC. Weighting is a procedure that adjusts for over sampling and any discrepancies between the sample and the entire population from which the sample is drawn<sup>3</sup>.

## Characteristics of Students Participating in the Charlotte Mecklenburg High School YRBS Total Number of Students Surveyed 1,755

	Number	Weighted Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	890	50.9%
Female	859	49.1%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Black <sup>1</sup>	630	43.7%
Hispanic/Latino	202	8.2%
White <sup>1</sup>	727	43.0%
All other races <sup>2</sup>	108	2.9%
Multiple races	81	2.2%
<b>Grade</b>		
9th	564	33.9%
10th	544	25.4%
11th	370	21.0%
12th	268	19.5%
Ungraded or other grade	4	0.2%
<b>Age Group</b>		
≤ 15 years	728	40.6%
16-17 years	863	47.7%
≥ 18 years	163	11.7%

The weighted survey results presented in this report accurately reflect gender, race/ethnicity, and grade level distribution of public high school students in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District.

1. Non-Hispanic
2. All other races include American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Methodology of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. MMWR 2004;53(No. RR-12).

For more detailed information about the Mecklenburg County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, please call the Epidemiology Program at Mecklenburg County Health Department, (704) 353-0543. For information about the national and other state and local Youth Risk Behavior Surveys please visit the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss>.



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Personal Safety Highlights

**Personal Safety** issues surrounding adolescents include motor vehicle safety, weapons and violence. In 2003 teenagers accounted for 10% of the US population and 13% of motor vehicle crash deaths. The risk of involvement in a motor vehicle accident is greater for teens than older drivers, regardless of blood alcohol concentration<sup>1</sup>. More than 750,000 young people aged 10-24 were treated in an emergency department for injuries due to violence in 2004<sup>2</sup>.

### SEAT BELT USE

Almost 7% of Mecklenburg teens surveyed never or rarely wore a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else.

- Black teens were approximately two times more likely to report never or rarely wearing a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else than White teens.

### DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

Over 25% of Mecklenburg teens reported riding in a car or other vehicle driven by someone else who had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the past 30 days.

- White teens were 1.2 times more likely to report riding in a car or other vehicle driven by someone else who had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the past 30 days than Black teens

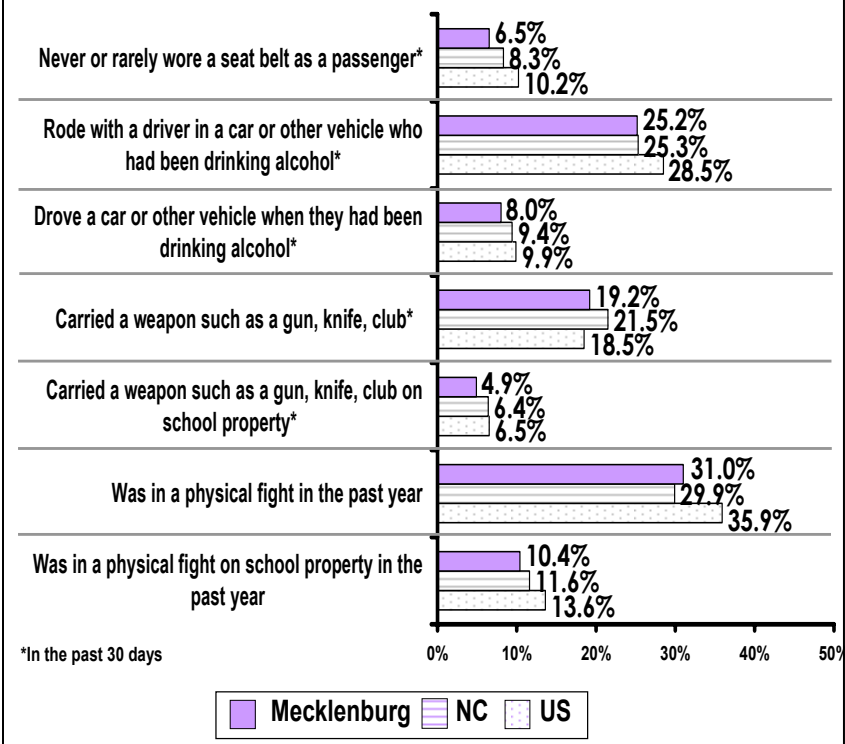
Eight percent of Mecklenburg teens surveyed reported driving a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the past 30 days.

- White teens were 2.3 times more likely than Black teens to report driving a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the past 30 days.

### WEAPONS

- Almost 20% of Mecklenburg teens surveyed reported carrying a weapon such as a gun,

2005 Youth Survey: Selected Personal Safety  
Mecklenburg, North Carolina, United States



knife, or club on one or more days in the past 30 days. About 5% reported carrying a weapon on school property.

- Approximately 7% of teens reported having been threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on one or more days in the past 12 months.
- Over 25% of teens reported having property, such as their car, clothing, or books stolen or deliberately damaged on school property one or more times in the past 12 months.

1. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Fatality facts: teenagers 2003. Arlington (VA): The Institute; 2005 [cited 2005 June 19]. Available from: URL: [www.hwysafety.org/research/fatality\\_facts/pdf/teenagers.pdf](http://www.hwysafety.org/research/fatality_facts/pdf/teenagers.pdf).
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2006) [cited 2006 Feb 8]. Available from: URL: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars).

# Personal Safety Highlights, *cont.*

## PHYSICAL FIGHT

Over 30% of Mecklenburg teens reported being in a physical fight one or more times in the past 12 months.

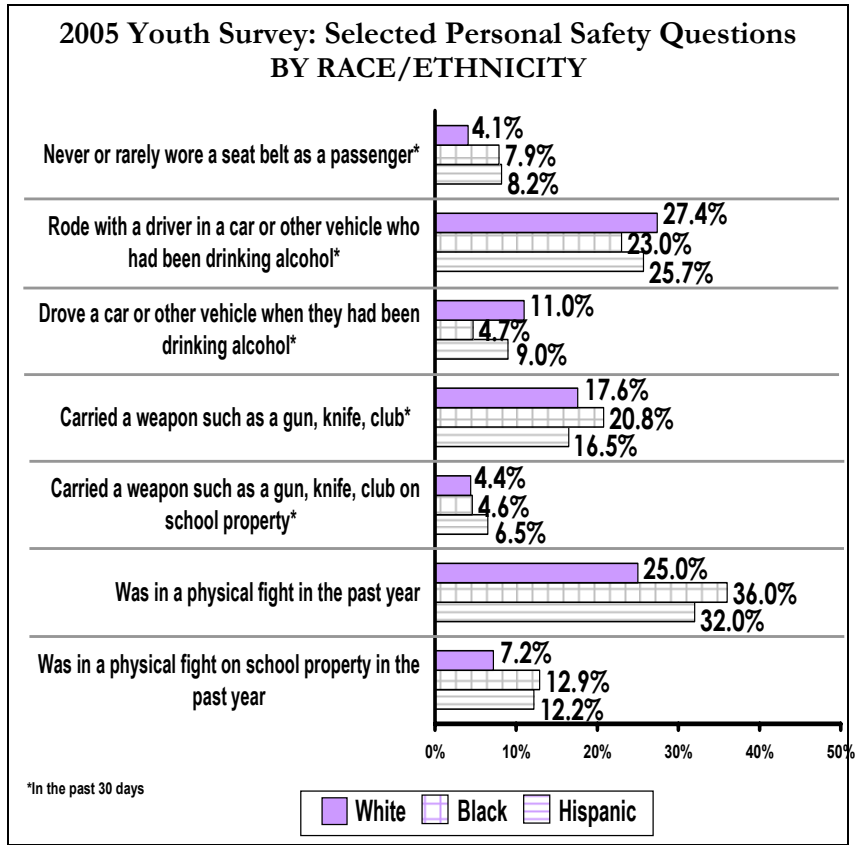
- Black teens were 1.4 times more likely than White teens to report being in a physical fight.

Over seven percent of teens reported not going to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school one or more times in the past 30 days.

- Hispanic teens were 2.5 times more likely to report feeling unsafe at school than White teens and two times more likely than Black teens.

About 10% of teens reported being hit, slapped or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months.

Approximately 9% of teens reported having ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to.



NUMBER OF TEENS IN A GROUP OF 30 WHO:	
Never or rarely wore a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else	2.0
Rode in a car or other vehicle driven by someone else who had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the past 30 days	7.6
Drove a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the past 30 days	2.4
Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, club on one or more days in the past 30 days	5.8
Had property, such as their car, clothing, or books stolen or deliberately damaged on school property one or more times in the past 12 months	7.7
Were in a physical fight one or more times in the past 12 months	9.3
Were in a physical fight on school property one or more times in the past 12 months	3.1
Were hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months	3.0
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school one or more times in the past 30 days	2.2



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Psychological Health Highlights

In the U.S. today, one in ten children suffer from a mental disorder severe enough to cause some level of impairment<sup>1</sup>. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people ages 15 to 24 in the US. Some schools and communities do have suicide prevention programs that include screening, referral, and crisis intervention programs<sup>2</sup>.

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH

When asked about the past 12 months:

Twenty-seven percent of Mecklenburg teens surveyed reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row to the extent they stopped doing some usual activities.

Females were 1.5 times more likely than males to report decreased participation in usual activities because of feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row.

Over 13% of teens reported seriously considering attempting suicide. Approximately 12% of teens made a plan about how they would attempt suicide one or more times and twelve percent of teens reported actually attempting suicide one or more times.

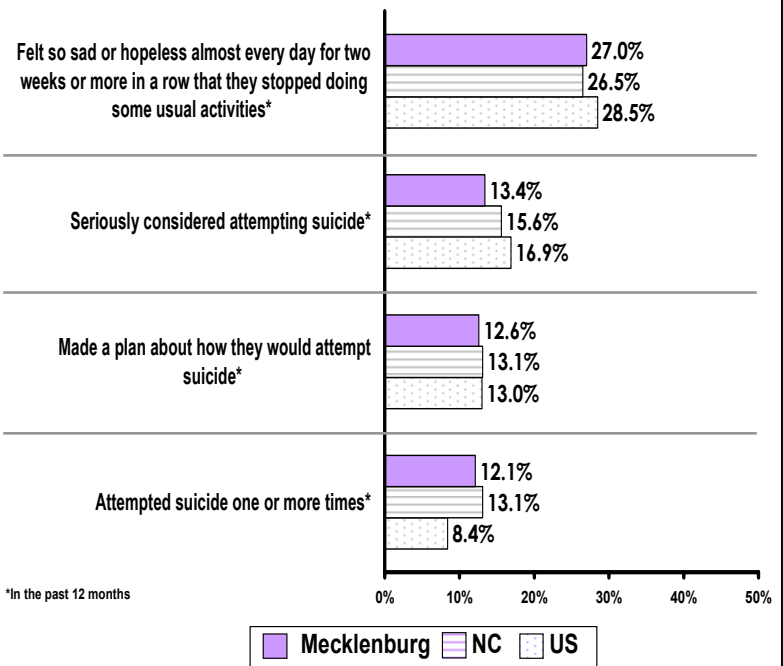
- Teens of Other races (American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander) were two times more likely to report seriously considering attempting suicide and making a plan about how they would attempt suicide than Black and Hispanic teens.
- White males were 1.6 times more likely to report seriously considering attempting suicide than Black males.

About 15% of teens reported feeling alone in their life.

Over 70% of teens reported that they feel good about themselves.

- Teens of Other races were 1.4 times less likely to report feeling good about themselves than Black and White teens.

2005 Youth Survey: Selected Psychological Health Mecklenburg, North Carolina, United States



## HARASSMENT

More than 20% of teens reported having been harassed or bullied on school property one or more times during the past 12 months. About 28% of teens agree that harassment and bullying by other teens is a problem at their school.

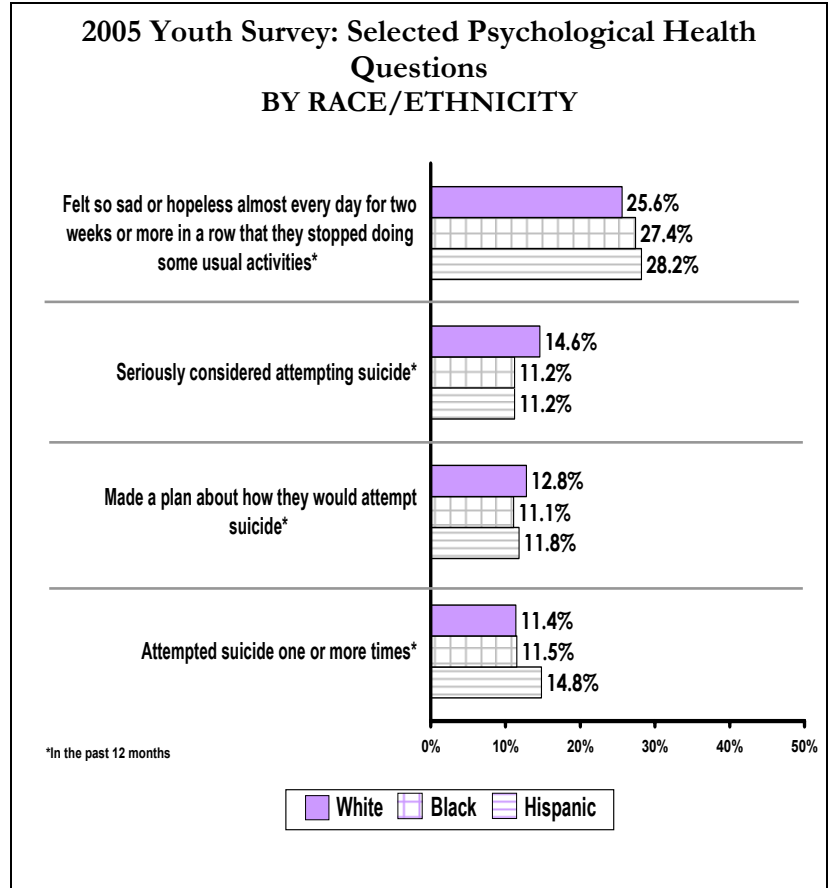
- White males were 1.5 times more likely to report having been harassed or bullied on school property one or more times during the past 12 months than Hispanic males.

1. National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health, [www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/childmenu.cfm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/childmenu.cfm)  
 2. Lubell KM, Swahn MH, Crosby AE, Kegler SR. Methods of suicide among persons aged 10-19 years—United States, 1992-2001. MMWR 2004;53:471-473: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5322.pdf>.

# Psychological Health Highlights, *cont.*

## HARASSMENT, *CONT.*

- Teens of Other races were approximately two times more likely to report teasing or name calling because of their weight, size or physical appearance during the past 30 days than White teens.
- Black females were almost two times more likely to report they experienced teasing or name calling because of their weight, size or physical appearance during the past 30 days than White females.
- Black males were 1.7 times more likely to report teasing or name calling because of their weight, size or physical appearance during the past 30 days than Hispanic males.



## NUMBER OF TEENS IN A GROUP OF 30 WHO:

Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities in the past 12 months

8.1

Seriously considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months

4.0

Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide in the past 12 months

3.8

Actually attempted suicide one or more times in the past 12 months

3.6

Have been harassed or bullied on school property on or more times during the past 12 months

6.4

Have been the victim of teasing or name calling because of their weight, size, or physical appearance during the past 30 days

6.2





MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Substance Abuse Highlights

**Substance Abuse** continues to be a problem among adolescents. An estimated 6.4 million of today's children can be expected to die prematurely from a smoking-related disease. Among youth, the use of alcohol and other drugs has been linked to unintentional injuries, physical fights, academic and occupational problems, and illegal behavior. Over half of Mecklenburg teens surveyed reported that drugs are a problem at their school. In general, male teens were more likely to report substance abuse behavior than females.

### TOBACCO USE

In 2005, approximately 20% of Mecklenburg teens surveyed reported having smoked cigarettes on one or more days in the past 30 days. Almost 17% of teens reported smoking a whole cigarette before age 13.

- White teens were two times more likely to report having recently smoked cigarettes than Black teens and 1.3 times more likely than Hispanic teens.
- Over 7% of teens reported smoking cigarettes on 20 or more days in the previous month.
- Among the teens who reported smoking, over half had tried to quit smoking in the last 12 months.

### MARIJUANA USE

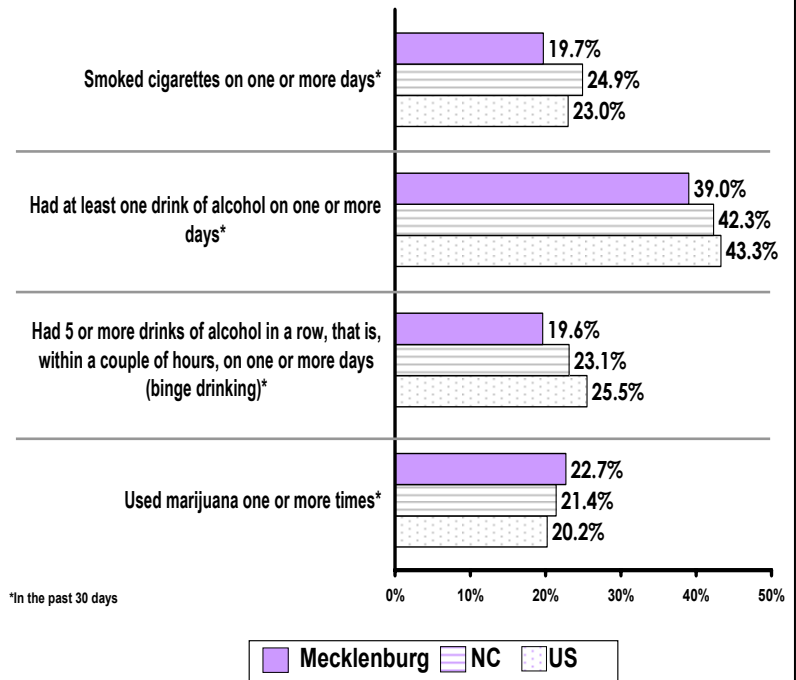
Over 40% of Mecklenburg teens have used marijuana one or more times during their life. Almost 10% have tried marijuana for the first time before age 13.

- White and Black teens were more likely than Hispanic teens to report having used marijuana one or more times in the previous month.
- About 5% of teens reported having used marijuana on school property one or more times in the past 30 days.

### OTHER DRUGS

Over a third of Mecklenburg teens reported they were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property by someone during the past 12 months.

2005 Youth Survey: Selected Substance Abuse  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, United States



### OTHER DRUGS, CONT.

- About 7% of teens have used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase one or more times during their life.
- Over 4% of Mecklenburg teens reported using methamphetamines one or more times during their life.
- Approximately 6% have used ecstasy one or more times during their life.
- About 14% of teens have taken prescription drugs such as OxyContin, Percocet, Demerol, Adoral, Ritalin, or Zanax without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their life.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Substance Abuse Prevention, 2002.  
2. American Journal of Public Health, Substance Abuse in Teenagers 2005.

# Substance Abuse Highlights, *cont.*

## OTHER DRUGS, CONT.

- Three percent of teens reported taking steroid pills or shots without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their lifetime. Teens in ninth grade were more likely to have taken steroids than any other grade level.

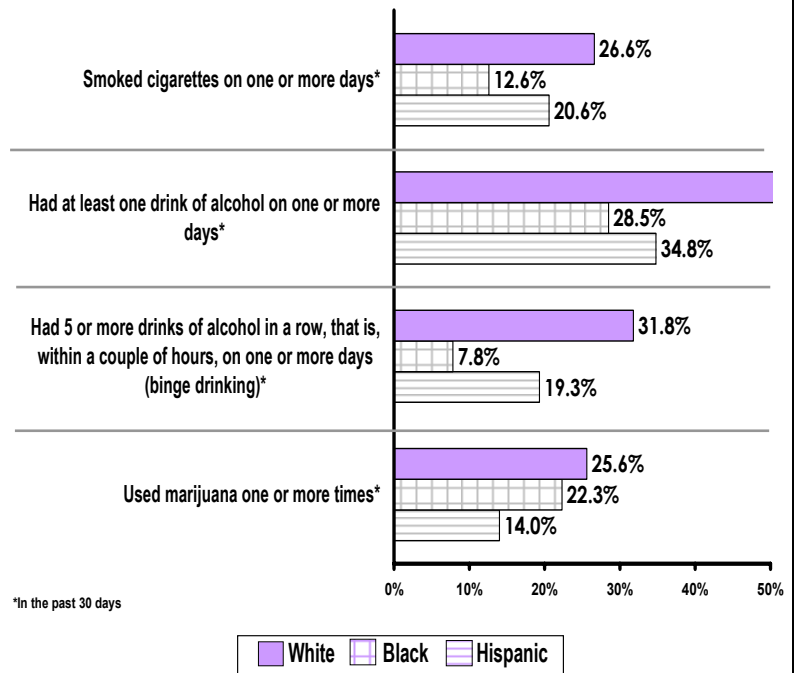
## ALCOHOL USE

When asked about the past 30 days:

Almost 40% of Mecklenburg teens reported having at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days.

- White teens were approximately two times more likely than Black teens and 1.5 times more likely than Hispanic teens to report drinking alcohol on one or more days.
- About 20% of teens reported binge drinking (five or more drinks of alcohol in a row within a couple of hours).
- Reports of binge drinking in the past 30 days among White teens were four times higher than Black teens and 1.6 times higher than Hispanic teens.
- Almost 4% of teens reported having at least one drink of alcohol on school property in the previous month. Teens in ninth grade were more likely to report drinking on school property than any other grade level.

2005 Youth Survey: Selected Substance Abuse Questions  
BY RACE/ETHNICITY



## NUMBER OF TEENS IN A GROUP OF 30 WHO:

Smoked cigarettes on one or more days in the past 30 days	5.9
Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days in the past 30 days	2.2
Had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days in the past 30 days	11.7
Had 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row on one or more days in the past 30 days	5.8
Used marijuana one or more times in the past 30 days	6.8
Used methamphetamines one or more times during their life	1.3
Were offered, sold or given illegal drugs on school property	10.2
Have taken a prescription drug without a doctor's permission*	4.1
Agree or strongly agree that drugs are a problem at their school	15.5



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Sexual Behavior Highlights

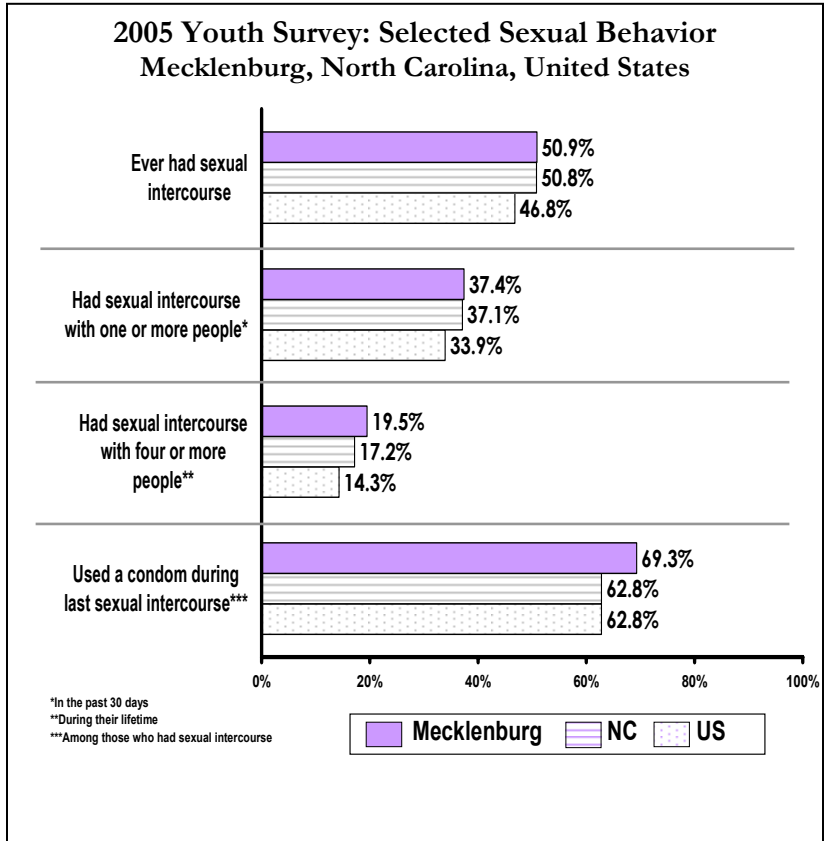
**S**exual intercourse that is unprotected and multiple sex partners place adolescents at risk for HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and pregnancy. There are almost 19 million new STD infections reported in the US each year; almost half of them are among youth ages 15 to 24<sup>1</sup>.

### SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

Over 50% of Mecklenburg teens reported ever having sex. More than 10% reported having sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13.

- Black teens were approximately two times more likely to report ever having sex than white teens.
- Mecklenburg teens were 1.7 times more likely to report having sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 than teens nationwide.

Almost 20% of teens reported having sexual intercourse with four or more people during their lifetime.



### 2005 YOUTH SURVEY: SELECTED SEXUAL BEHAVIOR DISPARITIES BY RACE & GENDER

Black males are more likely to report than White males:

Had sexual intercourse 1.8 times

Four or more partners 4.4 times

Black females are more likely to report than White females:

Had sexual intercourse 1.5 times

Four or more partners 2 times

### SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, CONT.

- Black teens were three times more likely to report having sexual intercourse with four or more people during their lifetime than White teens and two times more likely than Hispanic teens.

Approximately 38% of teens reported having sexual intercourse with one or more people in the past three months.

- Black teens were 1.9 times more likely than White teens and 1.7 times more likely than Hispanic teens to report having sexual intercourse with one or more people in the past three months.

1. Weinstock H, Berman S, Cates W. Sexually transmitted diseases among American youth: Incidence and prevalence estimates, 2000. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 2004;36(1):6-10.

# Sexual Behavior Highlights, *cont.*

## SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, CONT.

Among those who had sexual intercourse in the past three months, almost 20% of teens reported drinking alcohol or using drugs before last sexual intercourse.

- White teens were 2.1 times more likely to report drinking alcohol or using drugs before last sexual intercourse than Black teens.

## CONDOM AND BIRTH CONTROL USE

Among those who had sexual intercourse in the past three months, about 70% reported using condoms.

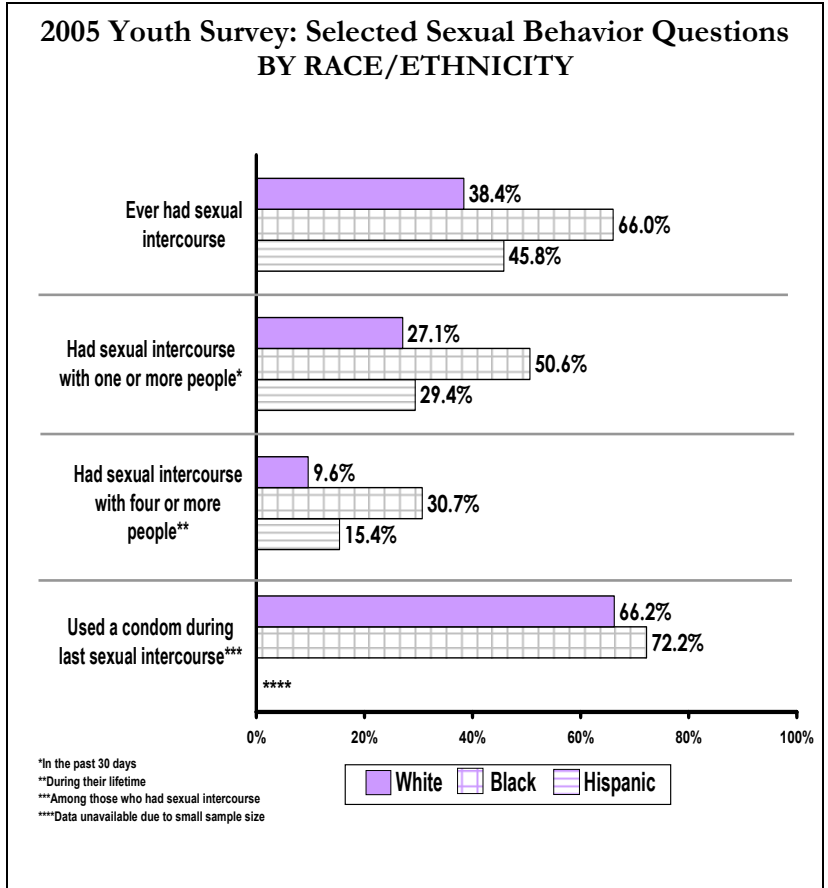
- Ninth graders were 1.3 times more likely to report using condoms than twelfth graders.

Thirteen percent of teens reported using birth control pills before last sexual intercourse.

- White teens were 2.3 times more likely to report using birth control pills before last sexual intercourse than Black teens.

## SEX EDUCATION

The majority of Mecklenburg teens have had parents or other adults in their family talk to them about what they expect them to do or not to do when it comes to sex (78%).



NUMBER OF TEENS IN A GROUP OF 30 WHO:	
Ever had sexual intercourse	15.3
Had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 years	3.2
Had sexual intercourse with four or more people during their life	5.9
Had sexual intercourse with one or more people in the past three months	11.2
Among those who had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months, drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse	5.8
Among those who had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months, used a condom during last sexual intercourse	20.8
Among those who had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months, used birth control pills to prevent pregnancy before last sexual intercourse	3.9
Parents or other adults in their family have ever talked with them about what they expect them to do or not to do when it comes to sex	23.4



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Weight Management and Nutrition Highlights

**O**verweight among young people has more than tripled since 1980. Sixteen percent of children aged 6-19 years (over 9 million young people) in the US are considered overweight<sup>1</sup>. Healthy eating in children and adolescence is important for proper growth and development and is associated with reduced risk for heart disease, cancer and stroke<sup>2</sup>.

## OVERWEIGHT

About 15% of Mecklenburg teens surveyed are at risk for becoming overweight (at or above the 85th percentile but below the 95th percentile for body mass index, by age and sex) and over 10% are overweight (at or above the 95th percentile for body mass index, by age and sex).

- Black teens are two times more likely to be at risk for becoming overweight and almost three times more likely to be overweight than White teens.

Over 25% of teens described themselves as overweight.

- Females were 1.7 times more likely than males to describe themselves as overweight.
- White females were over ten times more likely to describe themselves as being overweight than to actually report being overweight.

### 2005 YOUTH SURVEY: OVERWEIGHT DISPARITIES BY RACE & GENDER

**Black males are more likely to report than White males:**

At risk for overweight  1.5 times

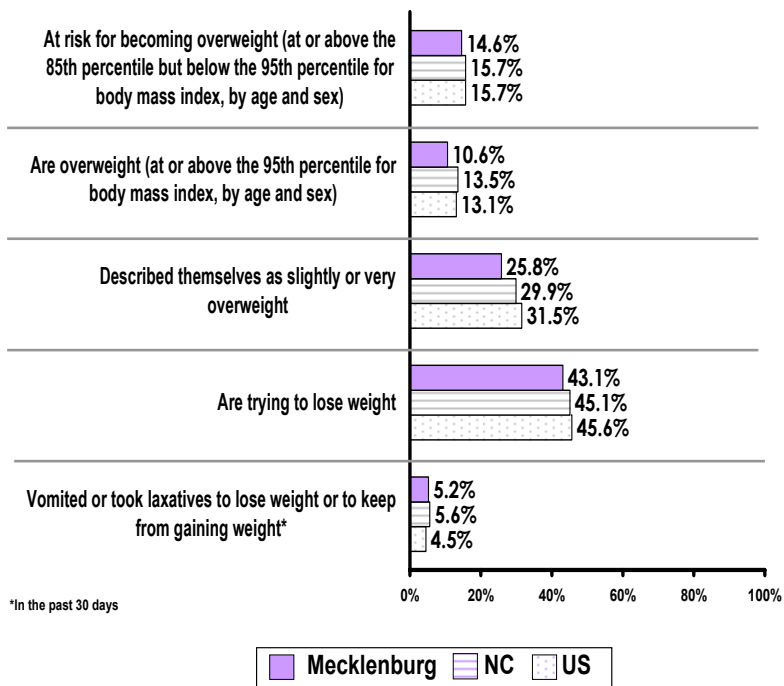
Are overweight  1.8 times

**Black females are more likely to report than White females:**

At risk for overweight  2.5 times

Are overweight  5.9 times

### 2005 Youth Survey: Selected Weight Management Mecklenburg, North Carolina, United States



## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Approximately 43% of Mecklenburg teens reported they are trying to lose weight.

When asked about the past 30 days:

- Over 61% of teens exercised and 39% ate less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight.
- About 4.6% of teens reported taking diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's advice to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight. White teens were 1.4 times more likely than Black teens to report taking substances without a doctor's advice.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Overweight and Obesity, [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/).

2. U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services. *The Surgeon General's call to action to prevent and decrease overweight and obesity*. Rockville, MD.: Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General, 2001.

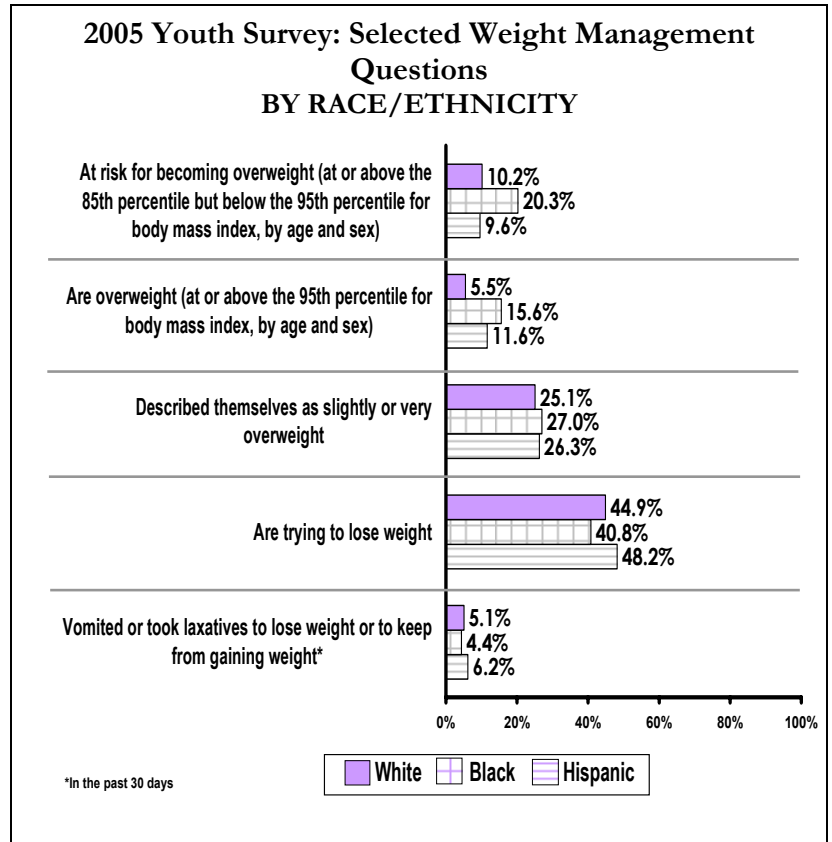
# Weight Management and Nutrition Highlights, *cont.*

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT, CONT.

- More than 5% of teens reported they vomited or took laxatives to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight.

## NUTRITION

- Approximately 90% of Mecklenburg teens reported eating fruits and vegetables one or more times on a typical day.
- Seventy eight percent of teens reported eating French fries one or more times during the past seven days.
- Almost 90% of teens reported drinking a soft drink or sweetened beverage one or more times on a typical day.
- Half of Mecklenburg teens reported buying food and/or drinks from vending machines at school one or more times during the past seven days.
- A third of teens reported eating breakfast every day during the past week.
- Over sixty percent of teens reported eating dinner at home with their family four or more times in the past week.



NUMBER OF TEENS IN A GROUP OF 30 WHO:	
Are at risk for becoming overweight (at or above the 85th percentile but below the 95th percentile for body mass index, by age and sex)	4.4
Are overweight (at or above the 95th percentile for body mass index, by age and sex)	3.2
Described themselves as slightly or very overweight	7.7
Are trying to lose weight	12.9
Exercised to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days	18.4
Eat fruit one or more times on a typical day	27.4
Eat vegetables one or more times on a typical day	27.0
Ate French fries one or more times during the past seven days	23.4
Drink a soft drink or sweetened beverage one or more times on a typical day	26.9



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Physical Activity Highlights

**Physical activity** in childhood and adolescence improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, reduces anxiety and stress, increases self-esteem, and may improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels<sup>1</sup>. Positive experiences with physical activity at a young age helps lay the basis for being regularly active throughout life<sup>2</sup>. In 2003, more than one-third of high school teens did not regularly engage in vigorous physical activity and only 28% of high school teens attended physical education class daily<sup>1</sup>.

### EXERCISE

Over 38% of Mecklenburg teens reported being physically active for a total of 60 minutes or more per day on five or more of the past seven days.

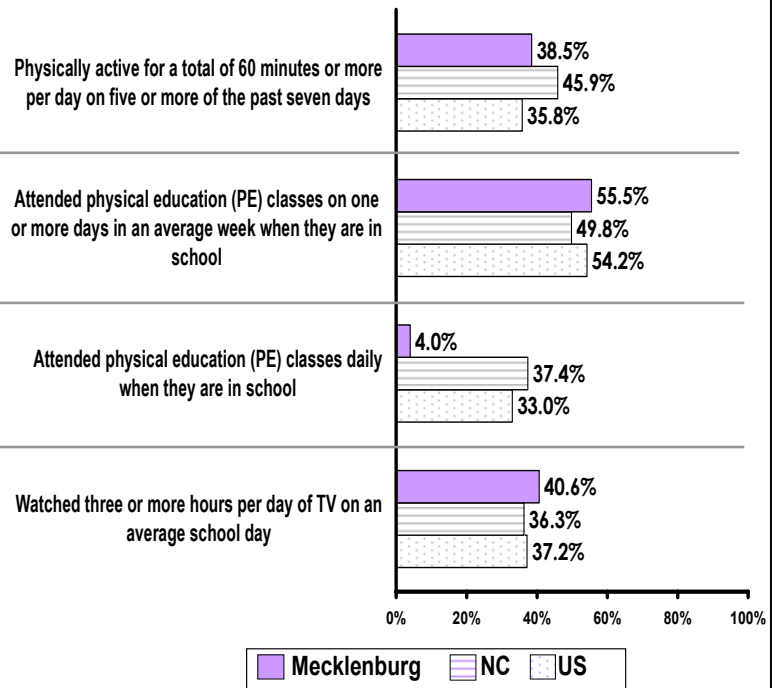
- Males were 1.7 times more likely to report being physically active than females.
- White teens were 1.4 times more likely to report being physically active than Black or Hispanic teens.

Over half of teens attend physical education classes on one or more days in an average week when they are in school. Four percent of teens attend physical education classes daily in an average week when they are in school.

- Teens in North Carolina and the US were over eight times more likely than Mecklenburg teens to attend physical education classes daily in an average week when they are in school.
- Among teens who are enrolled in physical education classes, about 85% actually exercise or play sports more than 20 minutes during an average PE class.

More than 68% of teens reported being physically active at least 20 minutes or more on a typical school day and more than 76% on a typical weekend day.

2005 Youth Survey: Selected Physical Activity  
Mecklenburg, North Carolina, United States



- White teens are 1.2 times more likely to report being active on a typical school day and on a typical weekend day than Black and Hispanic teens.

### PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

Approximately 40% of Mecklenburg teens reported watching three or more hours per day of TV on an average school day. Over half of teens reported watching three or more hours of TV on an average weekend day.

1. Grunbaum JA, Kann L, Kinchen S, Ross J, Hawkins J, Lowry R, et al. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2003. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2004;53(SS-2):1–95.
2. CDC. *Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996.

# Physical Activity Highlights, *cont.*

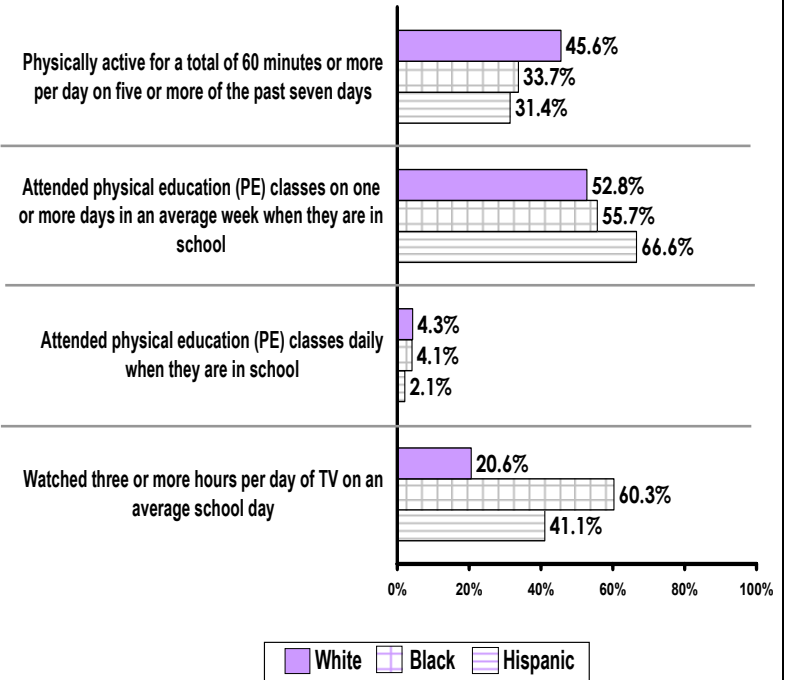
## PHYSICAL INACTIVITY, *CONT.*

- Black teens were 3 times more likely than White teens and 1.5 times more likely than Hispanic teens to report watching three or more hours of TV on an average school day.

Over 20% of teens reported spending three or more hours per day playing video games or using a computer for something that is not school work on an average day.

- Males were 1.7 times more likely than females to report spending three or more hours per day playing video games or using a computer for something that is not school work on an average day.

## 2005 Youth Survey: Selected Weight Management and Nutrition Questions BY RACE/ETHNICITY



## NUMBER OF TEENS IN A GROUP OF 30 WHO:

Physically active for a total of 60 minutes or more per day on five or more of the past seven days

11.6

Attended physical education (PE) classes on one or more days in an average week when they are in school

16.7

Attended physical education (PE) classes daily when they are in school

1.2

Among students enrolled in physical education (PE) class, actually exercised or played sports more than 20 minutes during an average PE class

25.4

Spend 20 minutes or more being physically active on a typical school day

20.5

Spend 20 minutes or more being physically active on a typical weekend day

22.9

Watch three or more hours per day of TV on an average school day

12.2

Watch TV three or more hours on an average weekend day

15.6

Spend three or more hours per day playing video games or using a computer for something that is not school work on an average day

6.2





MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# Selected Health Issues Highlights

## ASTHMA

Asthma is the leading chronic illness among children and youth in the United States. In 2003, five million school-aged children and youth were reported to currently have asthma and 3.1 million had an asthma episode or attack within the previous year<sup>1</sup>. More than 18% of Mecklenburg teens reported they have been told by a doctor or nurse they have asthma.

- About 15% of Mecklenburg teens surveyed have current asthma<sup>4</sup>.
- Among teens with current asthma, 32% have had an episode of asthma or an asthma attack during the past 12 months.

## SKIN CANCER PREVENTION

Protection from ultraviolet exposure during childhood and adolescence reduces the risk for skin cancer in adulthood<sup>2</sup>. About 78% of Mecklenburg teens reported never or rarely wearing sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher when they are outside for more than one hour on a sunny day.

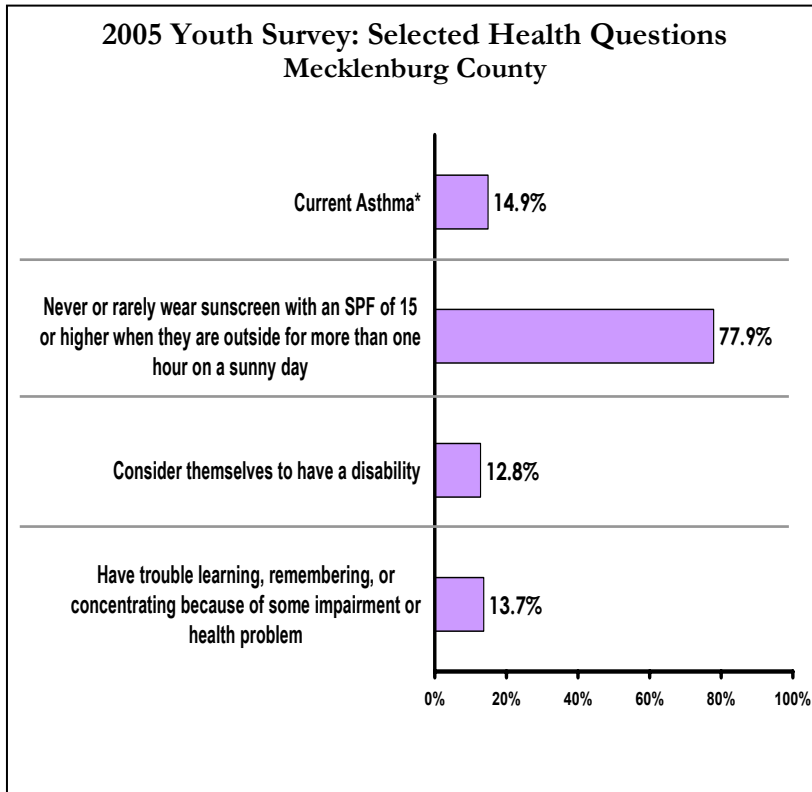
- Males were 1.2 times more likely than females to report never or rarely wearing sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher when they are outside for more than one hour on a sunny day.

Almost 60% of teens reported never or rarely doing one or more of the following to protect themselves from the sun when they are outside for more than one hour on a sunny day: stay in the shade, wear long pants, wear a long-sleeved shirt, or wear a hat that shades their face and ears.

- White teens were 1.3 times more likely to report never or rarely protecting themselves from the sun than Black teens.

## DISABILITY

- Over 12% of teens considered themselves to have a disability.



## DISABILITY, CONT.

- Eleven percent of teens said they are limited in some way in some activities because of some impairment or health problem. Females were 1.4 times more likely to report being limited in some way than males.
- Approximately 14% of teens reported they have trouble learning, remembering, or concentrating because of some impairment or health problem.

1. American Lung Association, Epidemiology and Statistics Unit, Research and Program Services. *Trends in Asthma Morbidity and Mortality*, May 2005.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/skincancer/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/skincancer/index.htm).
3. Ozer, et.al. Increasing the Screening and Counseling of Adolescents for Risk Health Behaviors: A Primary Care Intervention. *Pediatrics* 2005;115:960-968.
4. Ever been told they had asthma but have not had an episode of asthma or an asthma attack during the past 12 months or who had an episode of asthma or an asthma attack during the past 12 most but have not been diagnosed with asthma.

# Selected Health Issues Highlights, *cont.*

## SCREENINGS

Recent trends in adolescent morbidity and mortality have turned greater attention to the preventive role of the health care system. About 63% of Mecklenburg teens reported seeing a doctor or health care provider for a check-up or physical exam when they were not sick or injured during the past 12 months.

- White and Black teens were about 1.4 times more likely than Hispanic teens to report seeing a doctor or health care provider for a check-up or physical exam when they were not sick or injured during the past 12 months.

Over 67% of teens reported that the last time they saw a dentist for a check-up, exam, teeth cleaning, or other dental work was during the past 12 months.

- White teens were 1.6 times more likely to have seen a dentist in the past 12 months than Black or Hispanic teens.

