

Safety Behaviors
Survey Results

National College Health Assessment
Spring 2003

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* significant to $\leq .05$, ** significant to $\leq .01$, ***significant to $\leq .001$

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey instrument is a comprehensive survey designed to assess all aspects of students' health including general health, alcohol and drug use, sexual health and activity, exercise habits, and nutrition. This report pertains to items regarding safety behaviors.

Reference to the NCHA comparative information refers to the national sample for the spring 2003 survey conducted by the American College Health Association (ACHA), which consists of 19,497 respondents from 33 schools around the country.

Reference to the OSU sample refers to the spring 2003 administration of the survey on the main campus of The Ohio State University. A random sample of 3,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students were surveyed, 562 responses were collected (18.7%). The sample from The Ohio State University is not exactly comparable to the national sample, primarily in that the OSU sample contains more graduate students, and therefore older students, than the national sample. This is partly accounted for by including analysis by class rank and age, but this difference needs to be considered in interpreting comparisons to the national findings.

In the analysis, various student populations were stratified by gender, age category, class rank, international status and campus residence. Some distinctions were made for ethnicity and sexual orientation; however, caution is recommended in the interpretation of the results given the small sample size.

Some distinctions are made for high-risk drinkers, which are categorized by the definition used in the Spring 2002 CORE Alcohol and Drug survey, an undergraduate study administered by the Core Institute at Southern Illinois University. A high-risk drinker is categorized as someone who drank five or more drinks at one sitting in the past two weeks. Reference to time frames such as, within the last year, within the last month or 30 days, etc. are in relationship to the day the survey was administered in April 2003.

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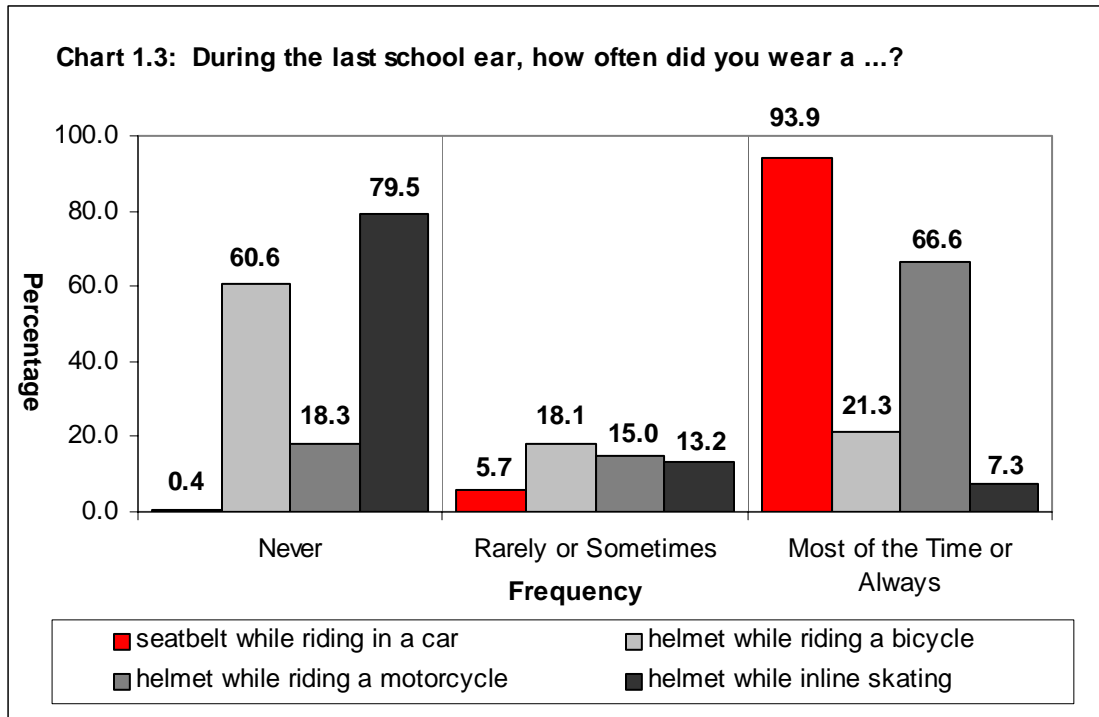
FINDINGS

Safety Behaviors

Students were asked questions about their use of road safety devices while riding in a car, riding a motorcycle, inline skating or cycling. Questions were posed as to how often in the past year did you wear a seatbelt while riding in a car, and wear a helmet while riding a bicycle, motorcycle, or while inline skating.

For all OSU students the use of seatbelts and motorcycle helmets was far more common than the use of helmets during inline skating or cycling (See Chart 1.3).

- The percent of OSU students always using a seatbelt while riding in a car was 76.6%, significantly higher than the 72.5% in the national findings, $\chi^2 (1) = 4.183^*$.
- The percent of students always wearing a helmet while riding a motorcycle was less than the NCHA results with 6.3% reported for OSU students and 9.7% nationally.
- The percentage of students always wearing a helmet while inline skating was 1.4% for OSU students and 1.6% for NCHA.
- The percentage of students wearing a helmet while bicycling was higher than the national results with 5.7% of OSU students and 6.4% of NCHA.



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Gender

OSU women (n=334) were significantly more likely than OSU men (n=224) to wear seatbelts while riding in a car, with 80.5% of OSU women reporting always wearing seatbelts and 70.4% of OSU men, $\chi^2 (1) = 7.637^{**}$.

Over seven percent (7.8%) of OSU women always wear helmets while riding a motorcycle, which was significantly more than 3.6% of OSU men, $\chi^2 (1) = 5.094^*$.

Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Students

Undergraduate students (n=380) were significantly less likely to always wear seatbelts while riding in a car (74.4%), than of graduate/professional students (83.1%) (n=160), $\chi^2 (1) = 4.828^*$.

Nine percent (9.4%) of graduate/professional students always wear helmets while riding a bicycle, which was significantly more than 4.2% of undergraduates, $\chi^2 (1) = 6.531^*$.

High-Risk Drinkers

Sixty-eight percent (68.2%) of high-risk drinkers (n=223) always wear seatbelts while riding in a car; significantly less than 82.0% of low-risk drinkers (n=334), $\chi^2 (1) = 14.311^{***}$.

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FUTURE RESEARCH

In addition to reports provided by the office of Student Affairs Assessment, additional uses of this data include:

- 1) Identification of specific issues with OSU students that might be improved programmatically by student affairs or other offices on campus. *In addition to referencing this report, programs and offices on campus may review the data files, or request a focused analysis of individual question items by contacting the Office of Student Affairs Assessment or Student Wellness to gain access to the data or obtain more detailed information.*
- 2) The tracking of change over time so that improvements or possible problem areas can be identified. *OSU currently plans to participate in the survey again in the spring of 2006 to enable this tracking.*
- 3) Making comparisons to the national sample so that OSU can identify areas that may need to be researched further in terms of identifying best practices from other institutions. *In addition to comparisons made in this report, a data set containing information from other large, research institutions has been requested from NCHA so that more specific comparisons can be made.*

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