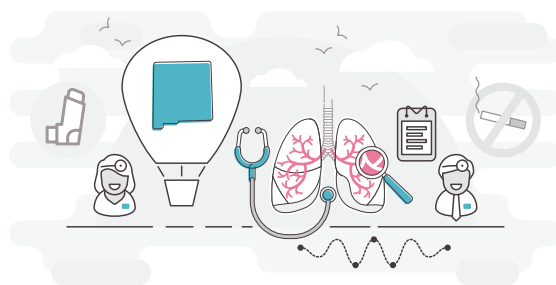


Clearing the Air

A Quarterly New Mexico Asthma Data Report



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ASTHMA IN SCHOOLS

Asthma is the leading chronic illness among children and youth in the United States and a leading cause of school absenteeism. Asthma causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and nighttime or early morning coughing. With appropriate care, students can live well with asthma so that it does not interfere with their educational or extra-curricular activities. In New Mexico, about 1 out of every 18 (5.4%) children overall¹, and about 1 in 10 middle and high school students² report currently having asthma. More than half (54.9%) of children with asthma report missing at least one day of school or daycare because of their asthma³. School personnel, partners, parents, and healthcare providers can collaborate to create asthma-friendly schools, which can provide safe and supportive environments for children with asthma where school policies and practices help students better manage their asthma, miss fewer school days, and participate in more school activities. Some key strategies include⁴:

- Provide asthma education for students
- Provide asthma education for school staff and caregivers
- Improve indoor air quality and reduce asthma triggers
- Link students to medical care
- Allow students to carry medicine and have schools stock Albuterol

This report summarizes trends in prevalence, health behaviors, and wellbeing among middle and high school students with asthma in New Mexico.

ASTHMA IN NM MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Since 2015, the prevalence of current asthma among NM middle and high school students has remained consistent. In 2019, 9.6% of middle school students and 11.2% of high school students reported that they currently have asthma (about 1 in 10 students).

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS



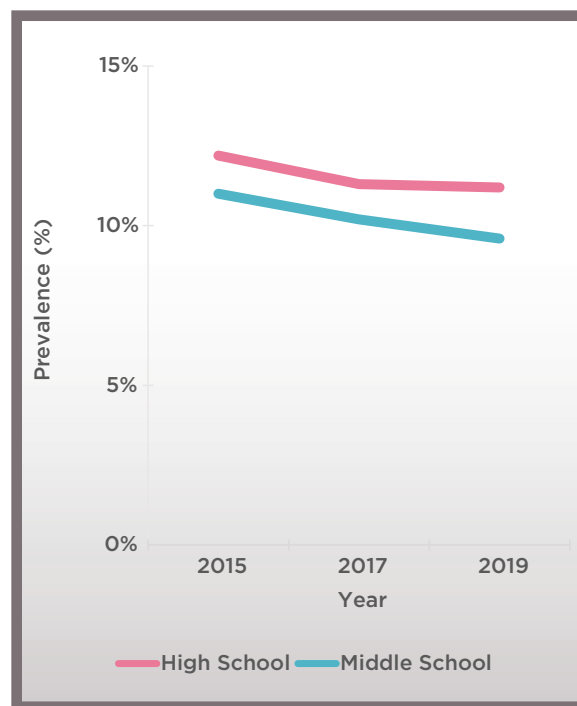
NM students with asthma do not report any major differences in participation in schools and community activities or physical activity.



NM students with asthma are more likely to report consistent exposure to secondhand smoke.



NM students with asthma are more likely to report being bullied and worse mental health.



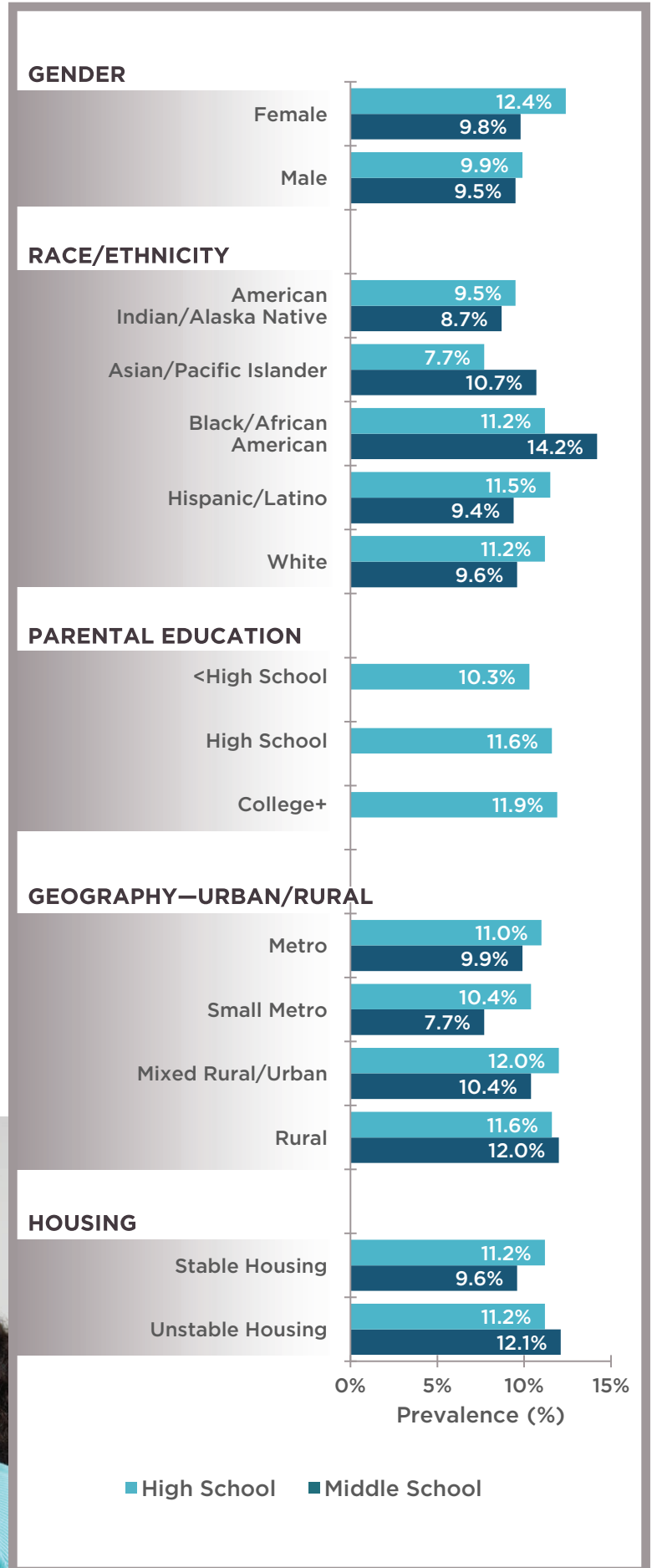
ASTHMA DISPARITIES

Asthma disproportionately affects certain portions of NM students. This may be due to genetic and biologic factors, but differences in one’s physical environment, socioeconomic status, access to health care, and health literacy may also play a role. This chart highlights some of these differences. By understanding these differences we can better focus resources and efforts to address disease among these populations. It is also important to understand that these figures represent self-reported asthma prevalence. There is another layer regarding asthma control. While asthma prevalence may be high among certain populations, they may have resources and/or exposure to healthier environments to better control their condition.

Among NM students, asthma is more commonly reported by:

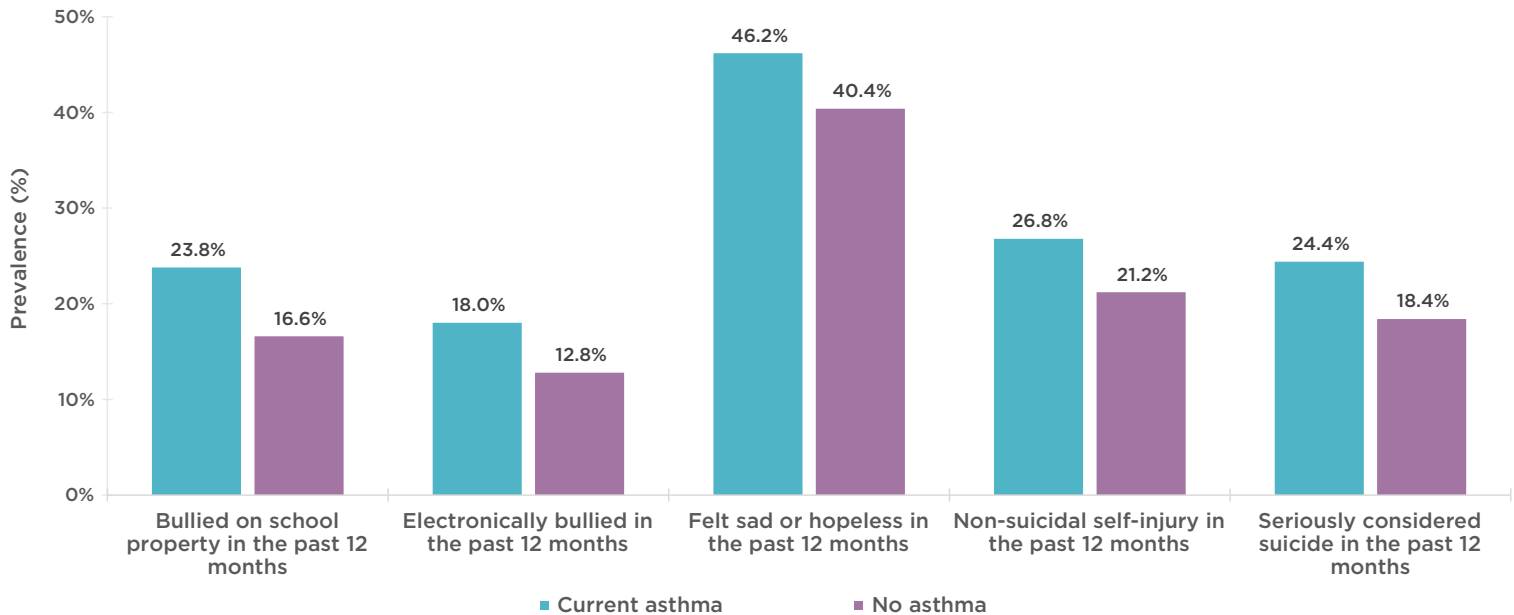
- Females.
- Black/African Americans.
- Those with parents with at least a college degree.
- Those living in mixed urban/rural and rural counties.
- Those reporting having unstable housing situations.

Strategies and priority actions to address preventable factors that impact disparities in the burden of asthma are available here:
<https://ptfceph.niehs.nih.gov/activities/asthma/index.htm>
<https://aafa.org/asthmadisparities>



BULLYING & MENTAL HEALTH AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH ASTHMA

NM high school students with asthma are significantly more likely to report being bullied at school and/or cyberbullied. They are also significantly more likely to report feeling sad or hopeless, non-suicidal self-injury, and seriously considering suicide.



TOBACCO USE/EXPOSURE, ACTIVITIES, AND WELLBEING AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH ASTHMA

Current reported tobacco use is similar among NM high school students with asthma compared to those without asthma. However, students with asthma are significantly more likely to report recent exposure to secondhand smoke compared to those without asthma.

Students with asthma do not report any difference in involvement in school activities, PE, or general physical activity. Although, students with asthma are significantly more likely to report being overweight or obese. Middle school students with asthma are less likely to report getting 8+ hours of sleep each night compared to those without asthma.

	Current asthma % (95% CI)	No asthma % (95% CI)
Tobacco Use/Exposure		
Any current tobacco use*	36.6 (34-39.4)	36.7 (35.5-38.1)
Current cigarette smoker	9.1 (7.5-10.9)	8.1 (7.5-8.8)
Current e-cig use	32.5 (29.9-35.1)	33.4 (32.2-34.6)
In room with a smoker in the past 7 days	35.7 (32.9-38.5)	30.3 (29.3-31.5)
Activities and Wellbeing		
Involved in school group activities*	68.8 (66.1-71.4)	66 (64.5-67.5)
No days of physical activity	16.2 (14.1-18.5)	16.3 (15.3-17.3)
Attended PE classes at least 1 day per week	46.5 (42.7-50.2)	46.3 (44-48.6)
3+ hours of daily screen time	61.7 (58.8-64.5)	61.1 (60-62.2)
Overweight or obese	37.7 (34.9-40.5)	30.7 (29.6-31.9)
8+ hours of sleep per night	27.1 (26.4-29.8)	28.1 (27-29.2)
Mental Health		
Bullied on school property in the past 12 months	23.8 (21.2-26.5)	16.6 (15.7-17.5)
Electronically bullied in the past 12 months	18 (15.7-20.5)	12.8 (12.1-13.5)
Felt sad or hopeless in the past 12 months	46.2 (43.3-49.2)	40.4 (39.3-41.5)
Non-suicidal self-injury in the past 12 months	26.8 (24.3-29.4)	21.2 (20.3-22.2)
Seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months	24.4 (22-26.9)	18.4 (17.6-19.3)

*Cigarette, cigar, spit tobacco, or e-cigarette

NOTE: The table and figure above display results for high school students only. Middle school students report similar trends, and those data can be made available by contacting the NM Asthma Control Program (contact information is on page 4).

CURRENT ASTHMA AMONG NM MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

	High School % (95% CI)	Middle School % (95% CI)
Ever told they have asthma	23.7 (22.9-24.6)	18.6 (17.8-19.5)
Current asthma	11.2 (10.6-11.8)	9.6 (9.1-10.2)
Gender		
Female	12.4 (11.6-13.2)	9.8 (9.1-10.6)
Male	9.9 (9.1-10.8)	9.5 (8.7-10.3)
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaska Native	9.5 (8.2-11.1)	8.7 (7.5-10.2)
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.7 (5.0-11.6)	10.7 (8.1-14)
Black/African American	11.2 (8.4-14.8)	14.2 (11.5-17.5)
Hispanic/Latino	11.5 (10.7-12.4)	9.4 (8.7-10.3)
White	11.2 (10.6-11.8)	9.6 (8.6-10.7)
Parental Education Level		
<High School	10.3 (8.8-12)	n/a
High School	11.6 (10.6-12.7)	n/a
College+	11.9 (11.0-12.9)	n/a
Geography - Urban/Rural County		
Metro	11.0 (10.2-11.9)	9.9 (9.2-10.7)
Small Metro	10.4 (9.1-11.7)	7.7 (6.6-9.1)
Mixed Rural/Urban	12.0 (11.0-13.1)	10.4 (9.4-11.6)
Rural	11.6 (10.2-13.0)	12.0 (9.9-14.5)
Housing Status		
Stable Housing	11.2 (10.6-11.8)	9.6 (9.0-10.2)
Unstable Housing	11.2 (9.0-14.0)	12.1 (9.3-15.5)

DATA SOURCES & REFERENCES

The New Mexico Department of Health Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey: This survey is a survey of public middle and high school students (grades 6 - 12). The survey includes questions about risk behaviors, health status, and resiliency (protective) factors.

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/erd/ibeb/yrrs/>

Other references:

1. New Mexico Department of Health. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Available from: <https://ibis.health.state.nm.us/>

2. New Mexico Department of Health. Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey. Available from: <https://ibis.health.state.nm.us/>

3. New Mexico Department of Health. Asthma Call-Back Survey. Available from: <https://cdc.gov/brfss/acbs/>

4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Controlling Asthma in Schools. Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/controlling_asthma_factsheet.html

RESOURCES

Learn more about asthma in schools:

New Mexico School Health Manual: <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/phd/pchb/osah/shm/>

Strategies for Addressing Asthma in Schools:

https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/pdfs/strategies_for_addressing_asthma_in_schools_508.pdf

CDC Healthy Schools: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/index.htm>

EPA Managing Asthma in the School Environment:

<https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/managing-asthma-school-environment>

Explore more data:

New Mexico Indicator-Based Information System: <https://ibis.health.state.nm.us/>

New Mexico Environmental Public Health Tracking Program: <https://www.nmtracking.org/>

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