

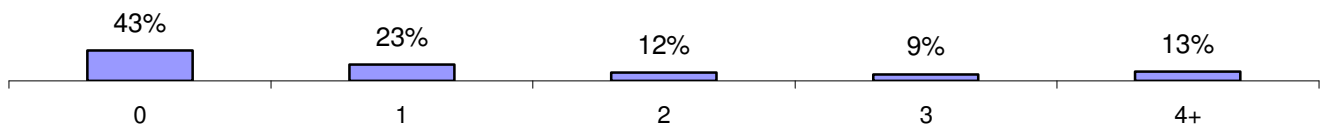
Vermont Adult Behavioral Risk Factor Survey

Data Brief – Adverse Childhood Experiences

In 2010, the Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) included questions on adverse childhood experiences (ACE). The BRFSS questions address the occurrence of the following childhood events: lived with someone who had mental illness, was an alcoholic, or spent time in jail, parents were separated or divorced, witnessing or experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Studies have shown that adults with higher ACE scores show an increase in risk behaviors and health problems.

In Vermont, 57% said they had at least one ACE in 2010. Nearly a quarter of adults reported one ACE (23%) and another quarter said they experienced two or three adverse events during childhood (12% had two and 9% had three). Thirteen percent of Vermont adults had four or more ACE. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1: Number of Adverse Childhood Experiences
Vermont Adults, 2010 BRFSS



Adults with at least four ACE generally experience higher rates of chronic disease and risk behaviors than the entire Vermont population. However, only the differences for smoking, recent marijuana use (last 30 days), obesity, depression, and overall prevalence of a chronic disease (1 or more and 2 or more) are statistically significant. (See Figures 2 and 3)

Interestingly, while adults with four or more ACE are significantly more likely to be obese than Vermont adults as whole, they are less likely to be overweight (26% vs. 35%). Meaning, the rate of overweight/obesity in adults with a higher number of ACE is similar to the general Vermont adults population. However, adults with at least four ACE tend to be obese rather than overweight, as compared with Vermont adults overall.

Figure 2: Chronic Disease Prevalence
Overall and Among those with Four or More Adverse Childhood Experiences
BRFSS 2010

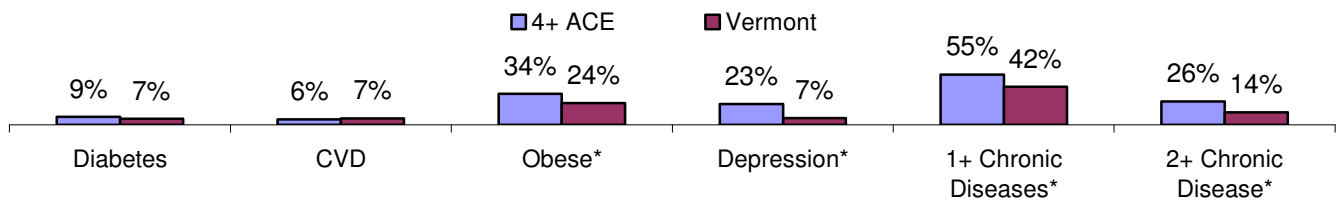
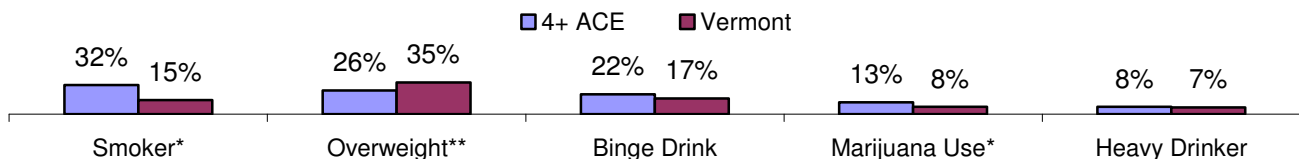


Table 3: Risk Factor Prevalence
Overall and Among those with Four or More Adverse Childhood Experiences
BRFSS 2010



*Statistically significantly higher for those with four or more ACE, as compared with the adult Vermont population.

**Statistically significantly lower for those with four or more ACE, as compared with the Vermont adult population.

Note: Depression defined as moderate to severe depression.

There are differences in the occurrence of ACE among different populations within Vermont. Women, adults 25-44, members of a racial or ethnic minority, those with less education, and lower annual household incomes all are significantly more likely to report four or more ACE, as compared with other demographic groups. (See Table 1)

| Table 1: Prevalence of ACE, by Demographics Vermont Adults, 2010 BRFSS | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Gender | % - 4+ ACE | Mean # ACE |
| Male | 11% | 1.3 |
| Female | 16% | 1.5 |
| Age | | |
| 18-24 | 9% | 1.1 |
| 25-44 | 20% | 1.8 |
| 45-64 | 14% | 1.4 |
| 65+ | 5% | 0.9 |
| Race/Ethnicity | | |
| White, non-Hispanic | 13% | 1.4 |
| Racial/Ethnic Minority | 23% | 2.3 |
| Education Level | | |
| Less than High School | 25% | 2.0 |
| High School | 14% | 1.4 |
| Some College | 16% | 1.5 |
| College or More | 10% | 1.3 |
| Annual Household Income | | |
| Less than \$25,000 | 21% | 1.8 |
| \$25,000-\$49,999 | 14% | 1.5 |
| \$50,000-\$74,999 | 13% | 1.5 |
| \$75,000 or More | 11% | 1.3 |

For more information on adverse childhood experiences, please go to <http://www.cdc.gov/ace/>.

For more information on the BRFSS or to suggest ideas for future BRFSS Data Briefs, contact Jessie Brosseau, M.P.H. (802-863-7663; Jessie.Brosseau@state.vt.us).