

STUDENT HEALTH

Participation in regular physical activity among young people can help build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, maintain body weight and reduce body fat, reduce feelings of depression and anxiety, and promote psychological well-being.⁽¹⁾ Over time, regular physical activity decreases the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, some types of cancer and premature death.⁽¹⁾ Watching TV and using a computer are considered sedentary behaviors. Among youth, time spent watching TV is associated with childhood and adult obesity,⁽²⁻⁶⁾ consumption of fast food, soft drinks, and high-fat snacks,⁽⁷⁻¹²⁾ and consumption of fewer fruits and vegetables.^(7,13-14) Fruits and vegetables are good sources of complex carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and other substances that are important for good health. There is probable evidence to suggest that dietary patterns with higher intakes of fruits and vegetables are associated with a decreased risk for some types of cancer,⁽¹⁵⁻¹⁷⁾ cardiovascular disease,⁽¹⁸⁾ and stroke.⁽¹⁹⁾ Milk is an important source of many nutrients, including calcium.⁽²⁰⁾ There is evidence that intake of milk and milk products is associated with bone health in children and adolescents, with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, and with lower blood pressure in adults.⁽²⁰⁾

2013 New Jersey Student Health Survey (NJSHS) Highlights

- **Physical Activity:** 49% engaged in physical activity for 60 minutes a day for at least five days a week; 45% took physical education classes daily; and 13% walked or rode a bike to school.
- **Diet:** During the past week, 19% ate five or more servings of fruits or vegetables each day. However, 16% had gone hungry either “sometimes”, “most of the time” or “always” during the past 30 days.
- **Breakfast:** During the past week, 40% ate breakfast daily while 11% ate breakfast on none of those days.
- **Family Meals:** During the past week, 47% ate dinner with their parents or guardians five or more times, and 18% did not eat dinner with their parents or guardians any day during the past week.
- **Beverages:** During the past week, 18% consumed a sugar-sweetened beverage each day, 12% drank soda daily, 4% consumed an energy drink daily, and 7% had three or more glasses of milk on each day.
- **Body Mass Index (BMI):** Through calculation of the student’s ratio of height to weight, 14% were classified as *overweight* and 9% were classified as *obese*.

Student Health by Demographic Subgroup

- Males were much more likely than females to have been physically active for 60 minutes or more on five days or more of the past week (61% vs. 37%).
- Physical activity fell with grade level, such that 56% of ninth graders were active for 60 minutes or more on five days or more of the past week, compared to 43% of twelfth graders.

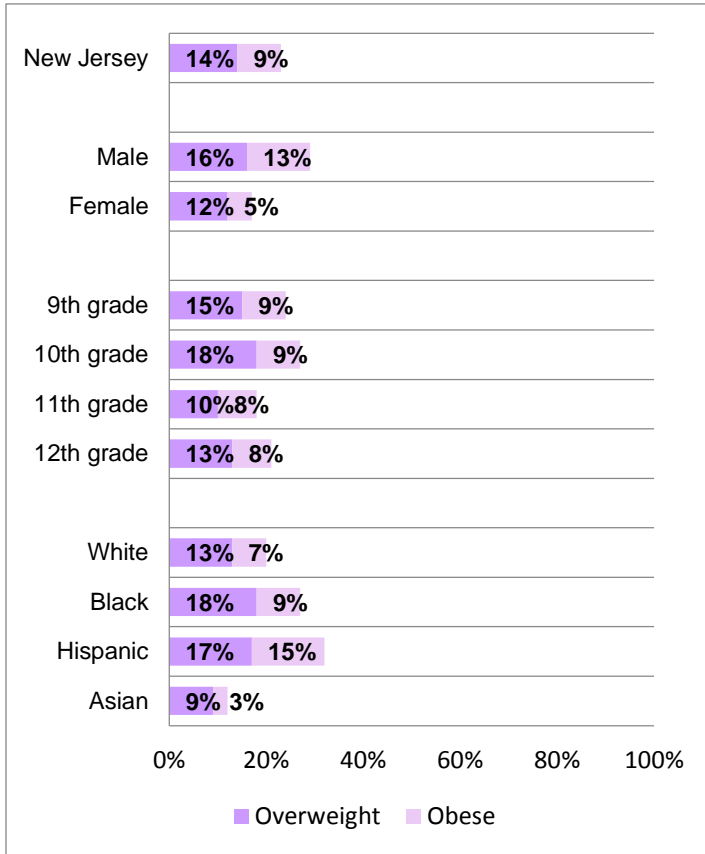
- Consistent meal time behaviors also fell with grade. In the ninth grade, 59% of students ate with their parents five or more times during the past week, and just 34% of students did this in the twelfth grade. Likewise, ninth graders (46%) were more likely to eat breakfast every day during the past week than twelfth graders (33%).
- Black students were the least likely to have eaten dinner with their parents five or more days during the past week (26%) when compared to Whites (54%), Asians (45%) and Hispanics (43%). Black students were also least likely to eat breakfast on each of the seven days of the past week (27%), compared to Asians (49%), Whites (45%) and Hispanics (35%). (Due to small sample sizes, conclusions in terms of race/ethnicity should be made with caution.)

NJSHS Trend Analysis: 2001-2013 Student Health

Percentage of New Jersey Youth Who:	2001	2005	2009	2011	2013	Trend Analysis		
Physical Activity <i>were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day (on 5 of past 7 days)</i>	--	34%	42%	50%	49%			
Walked or Rode a Bicycle to School <i>usually walked or rode a bicycle to school</i>	--	--	13%	12%	13%			
Five or More Servings of Fruit and Vegetables <i>ate 5+ servings of fruits and vegetables per day (past 7 days)</i>	26%	17%	20%	19%	19%			
Drank Soda or Pop Each Day <i>drank 1+ can/bottle of soda/pop* per day (past 7 days)</i> <small>*does not include diet soda/pop</small>	--	--	20%	19%	12%			
Drank 3 or More Glasses of Milk <i>drank 3+ glasses of milk per day (past 7 days)</i>	12%	11%	9%	8%	7%			
Increase in a negative behavior	Decrease in a negative behavior		Increase in a positive behavior		Decrease in a positive behavior		No change in behavior	Trend not reported by CDC
								--
Trend analysis was performed by the CDC on data from 2001 to 2013 to determine which differences across years were statistically significant. For questions not asked in all survey years, the trend analysis was performed from 2013 back to the last consecutive year in which the question was asked.								

Summary of Trend: Being physically active for 60 or more minutes a day on five or more days in the past week increased sharply between 2005 (34%) and 2013 (49%). New Jersey students were as likely in 2013 as in past years to have walked or ridden a bicycle to school. Over time, fruit and vegetable as well as milk consumption have consistently declined. Fruit and vegetable consumption has fallen from 26% in 2001 to 19% in 2013, and milk consumption has fallen from 12% in 2001 to 7% in 2013. Student rates of daily soda consumption declined to 12% in 2013 compared to 19% and 20% in 2011 and 2009, respectively.

Student Health by Demographic Subgroup



Body Mass Index

Students' self-reported height and weight were used to calculate a body mass index (BMI). BMI is calculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared. A BMI that is greater than the 95th percentile of the index population for gender and age is considered *obese* while a child in the 85th to 95th percentile is considered *overweight*. All others who are at the 85th percentile or below are considered normal. (It is recognized that factors such as muscle mass contribute to an individual's weight.)

Overall, 14% had a BMI that classified them as overweight and 9% were classified as obese. Consequently, 23% of New Jersey high school students had a BMI that is outside the normal range. Males were more likely than females to be overweight (16% vs 12%) and more than twice as likely to be classified as obese (13% vs 5%). There were no differences in obesity rates

between grade levels. In terms of race/ethnicity, Hispanics (32%) and Blacks (27%) were more likely than White (20%) and Asian students (12%) to be outside the normal BMI range.

NJSHS Trend Analysis: 2001-2013 Student Health

Percentage of New Jersey Youth With:	2001	2005	2009	2011	2013	Trend Analysis
BMI: Overweight <i>a calculated BMI that corresponds to being overweight (between 85th and 95th percentile for body mass index for age and sex)</i>	14%	15%	14%	15%	14%	●
BMI: Obese <i>a calculated BMI that corresponds to being obese (at or above the 95th percentile for body mass index for age and sex)</i>	10%	11%	10%	11%	9%	●
Increase in a negative behavior						
Decrease in a negative behavior						
Increase in a positive behavior						
Decrease in a positive behavior						
No change in behavior						●
Trend not reported by CDC						--

Trend analysis was performed by the CDC on data from 2001 to 2013 to determine which differences across years were statistically significant. For questions not asked in all survey years, the trend analysis was performed from 2013 back to the last consecutive year in which the question was asked.

Summary of Trend: In general, the percentage of New Jersey students classified as being either overweight or obese has remained consistent across all years from 2001 to 2013.





2013 New Jersey Student Health Survey (NJSHS) Highlights

- **General Health:** 60% of students reported their general health as being “excellent” or “very good”.
- **Sleep:** 27% of students reported receiving eight or more hours of sleep on an average school night.
- **Dental Visits:** 77% of students visited the dentist during the past year.
- **Asthma:** 26% of students had been diagnosed with asthma at some point in their life.

Student Health by Demographic Subgroup

- Male students were more likely than female students to describe their general health as “excellent” or “very good” (65% vs. 55%).
- Getting eight hours or more of sleep on an average school night was more prevalent among ninth graders (36%) than among those in the twelfth grade (19%).

NJSHS Trend Analysis: 2001-2013 Student Health

Percentage of New Jersey Youth Who:	2001	2005	2009	2011	2013	Trend Analysis
Been to the Dentist <i>went to the dentist 1+ times (past 12 months)</i>	--	76%	75%	--	77%	--
Diagnosed with Asthma <i>were diagnosed with asthma (lifetime)</i>	--	20%	24%	--	26%	--
Eight or More Hours of Sleep <i>slept eight or more hours on an average school night</i>	--	--	--	26%	27%	●
Excellent or Very Good Health <i>described their health as “excellent” or “very good”</i>	--	--	--	59%	60%	●
Viewed or Used Electronics <i>engaged in three or more hours of TV, video games or internet viewing on an average school day</i>	--	--	63%	64%	62%	--
Increase in a negative behavior		Decrease in a negative behavior	Increase in a positive behavior	Decrease in a positive behavior	No change in behavior	Trend not reported by CDC
					●	--
Trend analysis was performed by the CDC on data from 2001 to 2013 to determine which differences across years were statistically significant. For questions not asked in all survey years, the trend analysis was performed from 2013 back to the last consecutive year in which the question was asked.						

Summary of Trend: In general, rates of going to the dentist, getting eight or more hours of sleep on an average school night and students describing their overall health as either excellent or very good have not changed much. Diagnoses of asthma have increased from one in five students (20%) in 2005 to one in four (26%) in 2013. Almost four in ten students (37%) played video games or used the Internet for three or more hours a day and about three in ten (29%) watched television for three or more hours per day. After combining responses for these activities, 62% watched TV, played video games, or were on the Internet for three or more hours per school day in 2013, including 35% who did so for five or more hours. The percentage of students engaging in electronic viewing (three plus hours of TV, Internet or video games on an average school day) has changed little since 2009.

For a complete set of fact sheets on all 2013 NJSHS topics and [citations](http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/yrebs/index.html/), visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/yrebs/index.html/>.