

Helena College – Healthy Colleges Montana

National College Health Assessment

2023 Institutional Summary

Healthy Colleges Montana at Helena College

[Healthy College Montana](#) (HCM) is a coalition of 19 colleges and universities in Montana promoting college student health and wellbeing through peer-to-peer prevention and education programming for cancer prevention, chronic disease prevention, physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco and alcohol use prevention. The HCM coalition is funded by Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program (MTUPP) and is supervised by NASPA Health, Safety, and Well-being Initiatives team.

HCM funded the NCHA for coalition members, including Helena College. Helena College Student Life benefits by participating in the HCM coalition by engaging in state advisory and strategic planning, attending NASPA trainings including the annual Strategies Conference, and certifying student leaders through the NASPA Certified Peer Educator (CPE) training.

National College Health Assessment (NCHA)

[The National College Health Assessment](#) (NCHA) is a web-based survey measuring health attitudes and behaviors of college students. This survey is managed by the American College Health Association and includes several evidence-based scales including: Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST), The Connor-Davison Resilience Scale (CD-RISC2), Diener Flourishing Scale –Psychological Well-Being (PWB), USDA ERS Food Security 6-item, Kessler 6 (K6) screening for serious mental illness, UCLA Three-Item Loneliness Scale, and The Suicide Behaviors Questionnaire (SBQ-R). [Updates](#) to the 2023 NCHA Survey tool included the addition of section N3Q86A-C, regarding firearms.

Helena College 2023 NCHA Highlights

Helena College had a small sample size with a response rate of (n=53); the results of this study are not generalizable, however, the following highlights were of interest to the Director of Student Life. 36% of respondents reported low to very low food security (similar to 2021). 74% identified as meeting criteria for recommended activity for adults, however, 56.3% had BMIs that classified them as overweight or obese. 61% reported consuming at least 1 sugary drink every day for the last 7 days as compared to 74% in 2021. 44.6% of respondents had used tobacco/nicotine, 30% in the last 3 months; 80% had consumed alcohol, 67.9% in the last 3 months; 5.4% had abused prescription medication, less than 2% having done so in the last 3 months.

Program Planning & Implementation

Results from the 2023 NCHA will be used to inform Health and Wellbeing programs and prevention education at Helena College for 2024-2025 Annual Work Plans for Student Life and Student Wellness. Early recommendations from the 2023 NCHA suggest nutrition programs around sugary energy drink consumption could be beneficial for busy Helena College students. Continued efforts to support student food insecurity through the HC Campus Pantry and improving physical activity and weight.