

2018



Substance Abuse in Minnesota:  
A State Epidemiological Profile  
Section 7. Socioeconomic Factors

**Prepared by: EpiMachine, LLC**

**for the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Alcohol  
and Drug Abuse Division**

---

# Substance Abuse in Minnesota

## Section 7. Socioeconomic Factors

The 2018 Minnesota State EpiProfile is divided into eight parts:

1. Introduction (which includes a profile overview, population snapshot, and acknowledgements)
2. Executive Summary
3. Alcohol: Use, Consequences, and Intervening Variables
4. Tobacco and Nicotine: Use, Consequences, and Intervening Variables
5. Drugs: Use, Consequences, and Intervening Variables
6. Mental Health and Shared Factors
7. Socioeconomic Factors
8. Appendix (which includes technical notes and data sources)

## Substance Use in Minnesota: Socioeconomic Factors

### Substance Use and Median Household Income

#### About the Indicator

Socioeconomic factors are related to substance use, but perhaps in unexpected ways; the relationship is not as clear as it is for some other risk or protective factors.

According to data from BRFSS, adults in higher-income households ( $\geq \$75,000$ ) were more likely to report binge drinking; however, of adults in the lowest income group ( $< \$25,000$ ), those who did engage in binge drinking, did so more often, and drank more.

Adults in lower-income households are 3.4 times more likely to report cigarette use, but are slightly less likely to report using smokeless tobacco (although total use is relatively low).

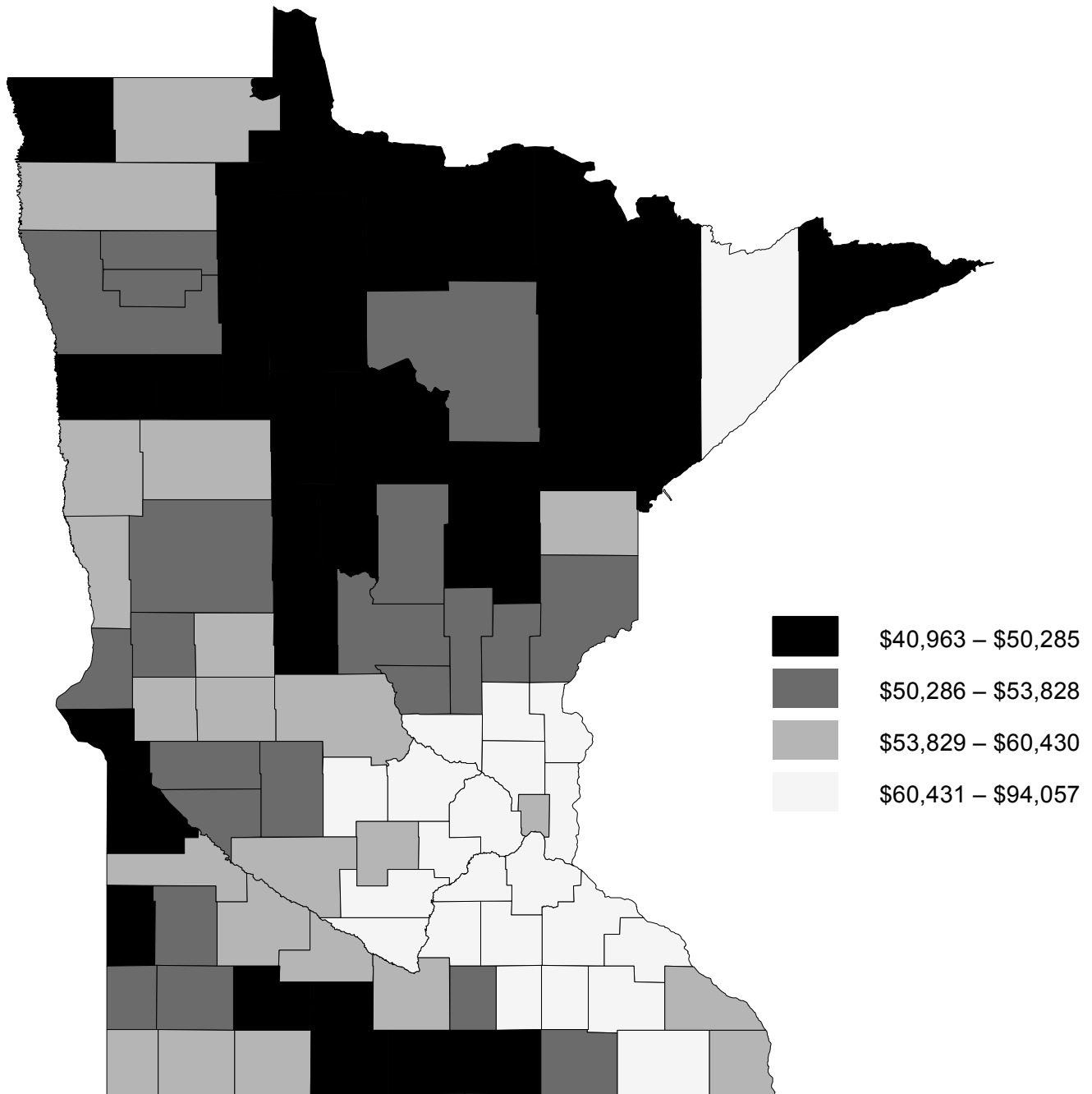
#### Data Source(s)

US Census  
BRFSS

#### Section Summary

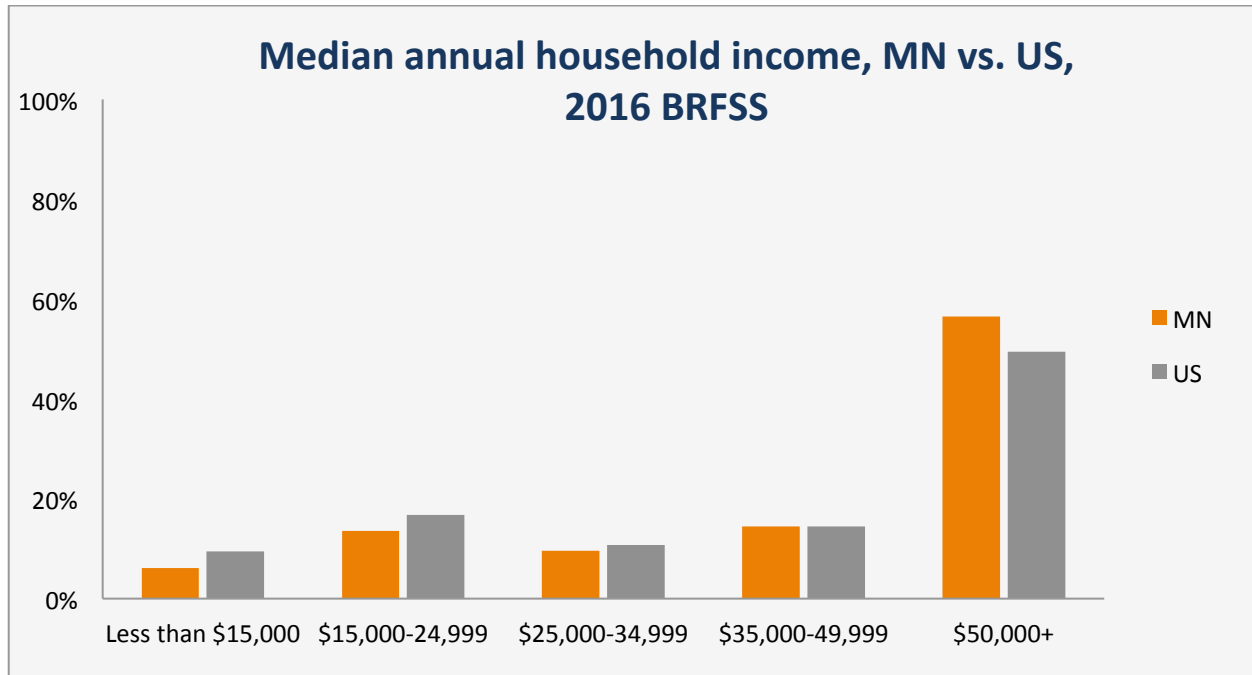
- The median household income is slightly higher in Minnesota than in the US as a whole.
- Minnesota median household income ranges from \$40,963 to \$94,057, depending on the county.
- Minnesotans in higher-income households are more likely to report alcohol consumption, but less likely to report cigarette use.

Data Source: US Census



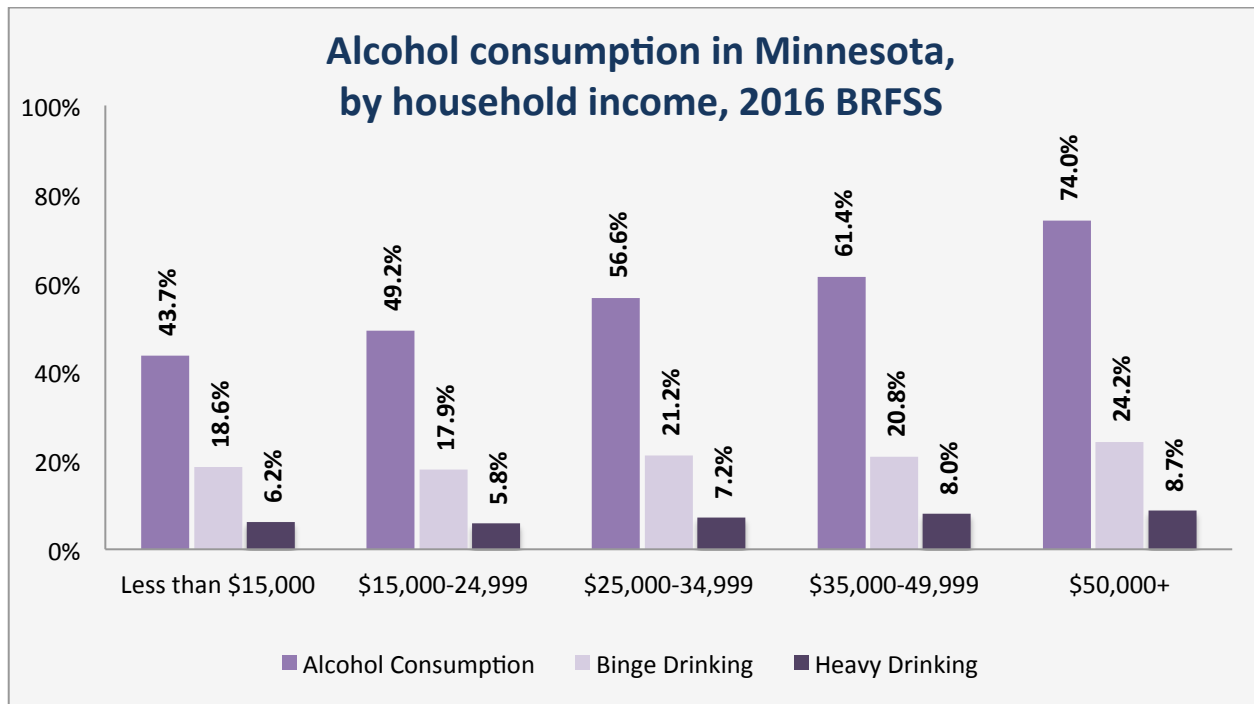
*Median Household Income, by County, US Census: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2016*

Data Source: BRFSS

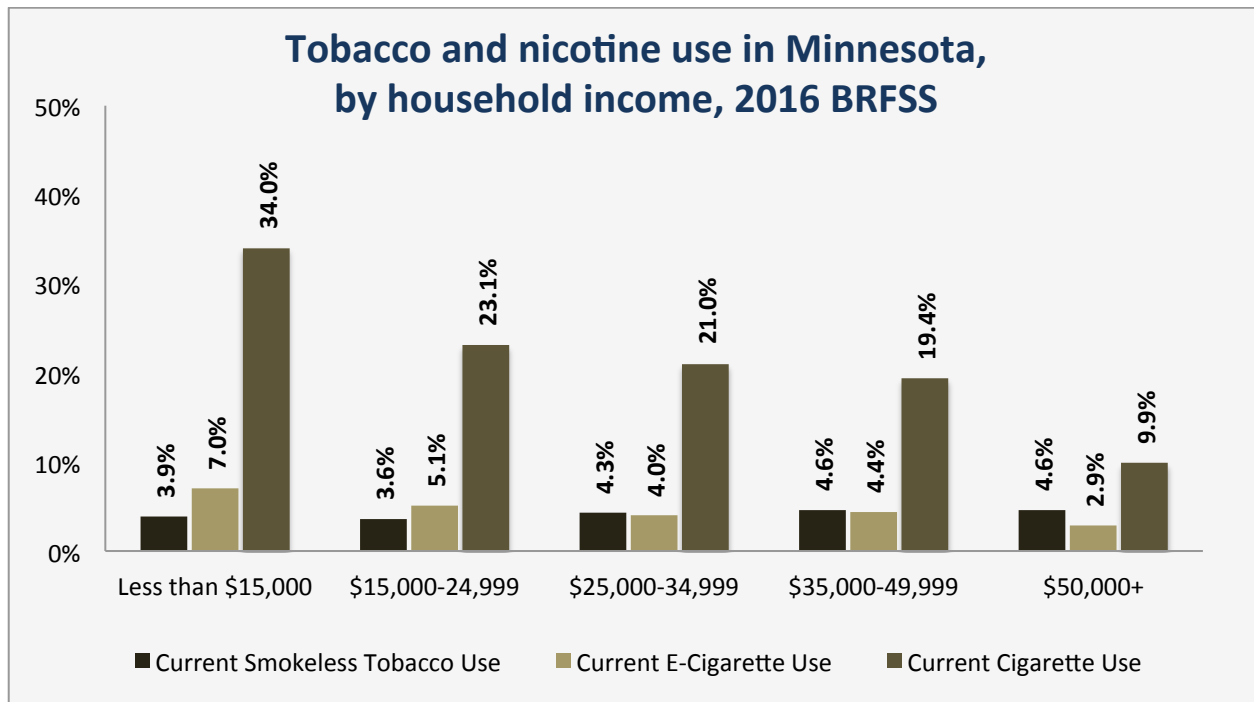


Median Annual Household Income, BRFSS						
MN	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Less than \$15,000	7.6%	7.7%	7.4%	6.7%	6.2%	6.1%
\$15,000-24,999	15.5%	15.2%	14.6%	14.3%	13.6%	13.5%
\$25,000-34,999	11.7%	10.3%	10.7%	10.6%	9.7%	9.6%
\$35,000-49,999	15.8%	15.0%	15.3%	14.8%	14.7%	14.4%
\$50,000+	49.4%	51.8%	52.1%	53.6%	55.9%	56.5%
US	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Less than \$15,000	12.4%	11.5%	11.5%	10.7%	9.9%	9.4%
\$15,000-24,999	18.5%	18.1%	17.9%	17.1%	16.0%	16.8%
\$25,000-34,999	11.7%	11.7%	11.7%	11.3%	11.1%	10.8%
\$35,000-49,999	15.0%	14.9%	14.7%	14.6%	14.6%	14.4%
\$50,000+	41.7%	43.5%	44.1%	45.2%	48.4%	49.4%

Data Source: BRFSS



NOTE: "Alcohol consumption" is defined as any alcohol in the past month. "Binge drinking" is 5 drinks for men and 4 drinks for women, consumed on one occasion. "Heavy drinking" is 14 or more drinks per week for men, or 7 per week for women.



## Substance Use in Minnesota: Socioeconomic Factors

### Youth Substance Use in Relation to Socioeconomic Indicators

#### About the Indicator

Just as the data for adults show a complicated relationship between socioeconomic status and substance use, so do the data for youth.

In many studies, young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were more likely to report cigarette smoking. However, marijuana and alcohol use (especially binge drinking) often increases with socioeconomic status.

The Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) uses 3 indicators as proxies for socioeconomic status:

- Having to skip meals in the past month because the family didn't have enough money
- Receiving free or reduced-price lunch at school
- Staying at a shelter, somewhere people were not intended to live, or in someone else's home because they had nowhere else to stay—either on their own, or with parent(s)

These three indicators are associated with substance use to varying degrees.

#### Data Source(s)

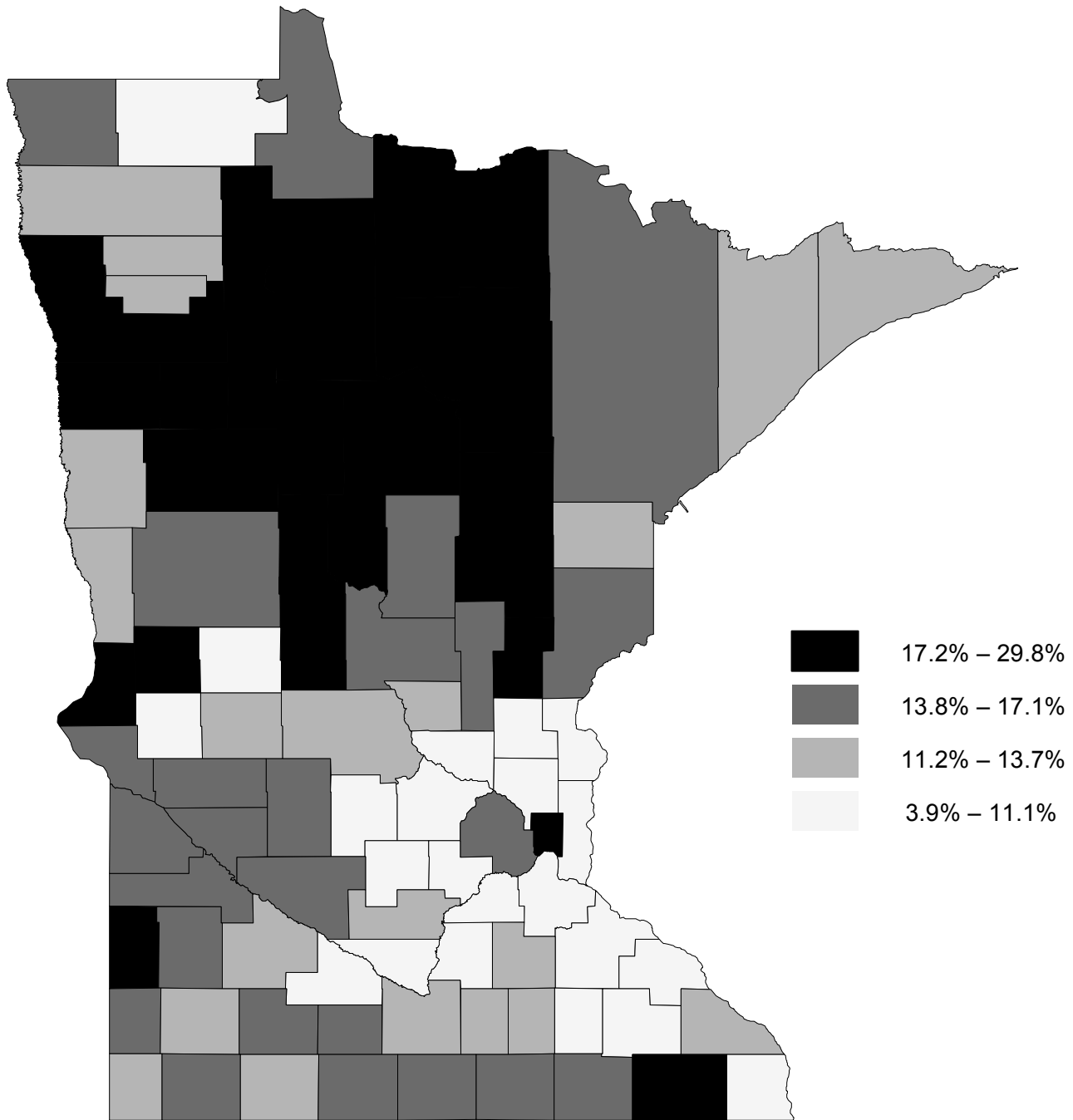
US Census

Minnesota Student Survey (MSS)

#### Section Summary

- An average of 11.8% of Minnesota children live in poverty, with the state ranking 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation.
- Alcohol does not show a strong relationship to socioeconomic status for Minnesota's 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Students who've had to skip meals in the past month are much more likely to have reported past-month use of substances.

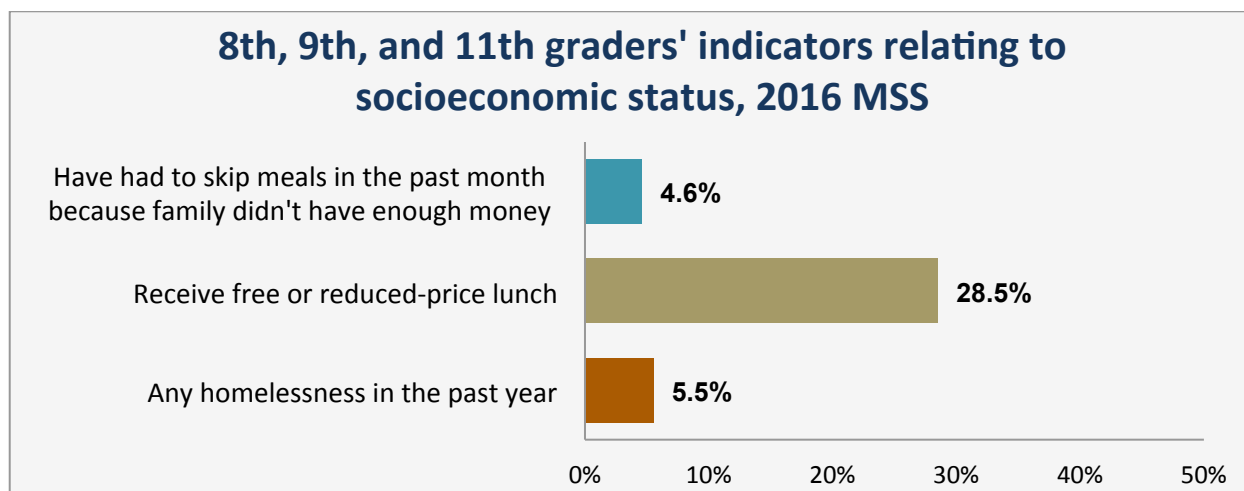
Data Source: US Census



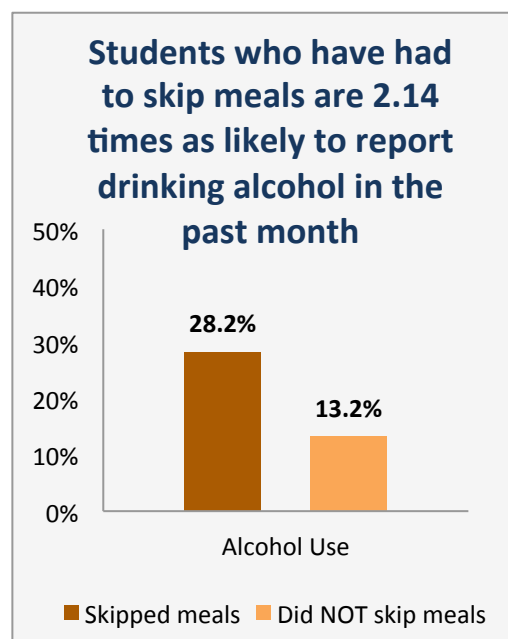
Percentage of Children in Poverty, by County, US Census: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2016



Data Source: MSS



*Students whose families have had to skip meals are much more likely to use substances—twice as likely to have drunk alcohol in the past month (28.2% vs. 13.2%), and 3.6 times as likely to have misused prescription drugs in the past month (15.1% vs. 4.2%).*



Factor by which 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , and 11 <sup>th</sup> Graders are More Likely to Report Substance Use, 2016 MSS				
	Past-Month Alcohol	Past-Month Tobacco Use	Past-Month Marijuana Use	Past-Month Rx Drug Misuse
Skipped Meals	2.1x	2.5x	3.0x	3.6x
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	--	1.4x	1.7x	1.7x
Homelessness	1.8x	2.0x	2.4x	3.7x

## Substance Use in Minnesota: Socioeconomic Factors

### Substance Use and Homelessness

#### About the Indicator

Wilder Research performs a statewide survey of the persons in Minnesota who are experiencing homelessness. The survey takes place every 3 years, on the last Thursday of October. The survey comprises over 300 questions, and provides valuable information about Minnesotans without homes.

The number of people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota has increased since the study began in 1991, although a slight decrease was seen between 2012 and 2015.

Of homeless adults in Minnesota, 21% have substance abuse disorder (SA); 1% have both SA and a chronic health condition; 7% have both SA and a serious mental illness; and 11% have all three conditions. Almost one-fifth (19%) cite a drinking or drug problem as a reason they left their last regular housing.

Of young people who are homeless alone (without parents), 24% say their own use of drugs or alcohol is part of the cause or the main cause of their homelessness. 31% of youth cite their parents' use as a cause of homelessness. Further, when asked about adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), 61% said they lived with a substance abuser as a child. Further, 18% have lived in a drug or alcohol treatment facility, 7% have been told in the past 2 years that they have a drug abuse disorder, and 12% have been diagnosed with an alcohol abuse disorder.

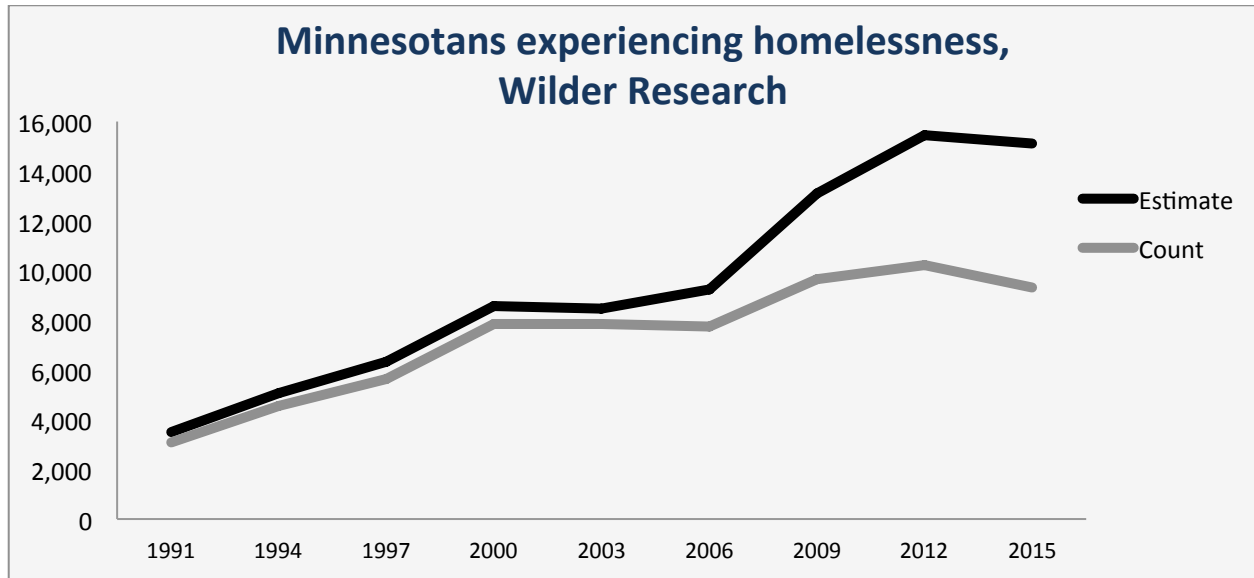
#### Data Source(s)

Wilder Research Minnesota Homeless Study  
<http://mnhomeless.org/>

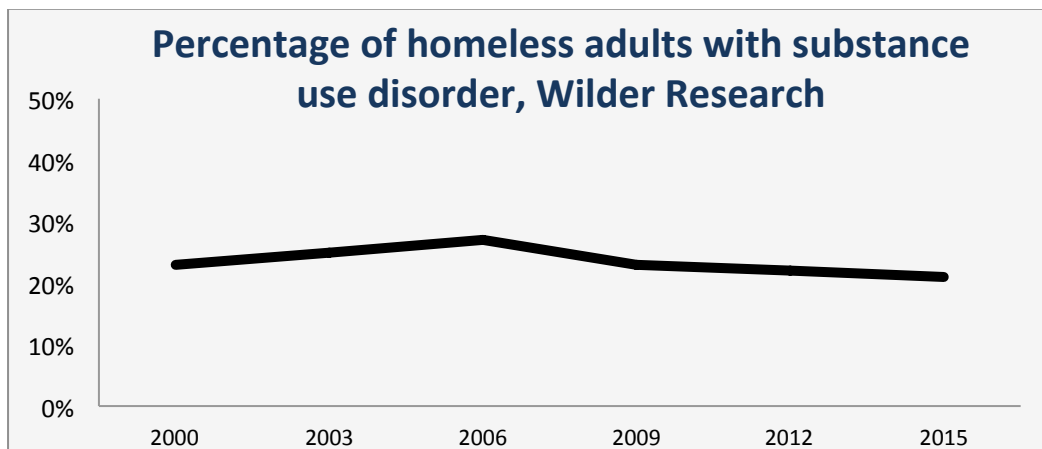
#### Section Summary

- About one-fifth of adults experiencing homelessness have a substance use disorder.
- Youth and young adults experiencing homelessness are most likely to use nicotine, at rates higher than their peers.

Data Source: Wilder Research



Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Minnesota, Wilder Research									
	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
<b>Estimate</b>	3,500	5,061	6,341	8,569	8,461	9,244	13,100	15,455	15,109
<b>Count</b>	3,079	4,553	5,645	7,854	7,854	7,751	9,654	10,214	9,312



Percentage of Homeless Adults with Substance Abuse Disorder					
2000	2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
23%	25%	27%	23%	22%	21%

Data Source: Wilder Research

