

Worksite Wellness & Risk Behaviors

– Data Brief (3 of 4)

2014 Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFSS)

Background

In 2014, the Vermont BRFSS included a question specifically on respondent occupation¹. Respondents employed for wages or self-employed (63% of Vermont adults) were asked to provide the kind of work they do. This detailed information about Vermont's workforce provides an opportunity to better understand the demographics of specific occupations.

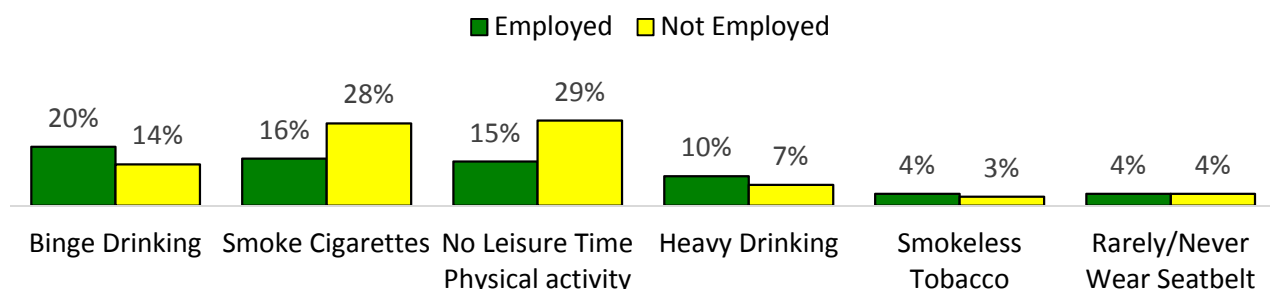
This data brief focuses on occupation and its correlation with risk behaviors. It is part of a series looking at relationships between occupation and various aspects of health, such as chronic disease and preventive behaviors, as well as general demographics. These data briefs can be found on the Vermont Department of Health website: <http://healthvermont.gov/research/brfss/reports.aspx#briefs>.

Risk Behavior Prevalence by Employment Status

One in five employed Vermont adults reported binge² drinking in the last 30 days. Fewer currently smoke cigarettes (16%) or said they did not participate in any leisure time physical activity during the last month (15%). One in ten or fewer employed Vermont adults reported heavy³ drinking (10%), using smokeless tobacco (4%), and rarely or never wearing their seatbelt (4%).

Employed adults in Vermont are significantly more likely than adults who are not employed to report binge drinking. They are less likely to not participate in leisure time physical activity or smoke.

**Selected Risk Behaviors by Employment Status
Vermont Adults, 2014**



Selected Risk Behaviors and Occupation

Binge drinking, smoking, not participating in leisure time physical activity, smokeless tobacco use, and not wearing a seatbelt all vary by specific occupation. Heavy drinking does not vary statistically by occupation.

Adults working in installation, maintenance, & repair occupations are nearly twice as likely as employed adults overall to report recent binge drinking (38% vs. 20%). Construction & extraction workers are also significantly more likely to binge drink (32%). Conversely, adults working in education, training, & library, as well as

¹ Free text occupation responses were coded to the Standard Occupational Classification System.

² Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks on an occasion for men and four or more for women.

³ Heavy drinking is defined as more than two drinks per day for men and more than one drink per day for women.

building and grounds, cleaning & maintenance fields are significantly less likely than Vermont employed adults overall to binge drink (11%).

Compared with employed adults (16%), those working in the area of food preparation & serving (33%), and building and grounds, cleaning & maintenance are significantly more likely to smoke (27%). Adults working in management (9%), healthcare practitioner & technical fields (7%), architecture & engineering (6%), or in education, training, & library areas (4%) are significantly less likely to smoke.

Adults employed in transportation & material moving occupations (29%) or in food preparation & serving (26%) are significantly more likely than Vermont employed adults (15%) to report not participating in any leisure time physical activity. Those working in education, training, & library (5%) or business & financial operations (4%) occupations are significantly less likely to report getting no leisure time physical activity. It is important to note that the data on exercise reported here only captures physical activity during one's free time. Some occupations engage in more physical activity while on the job than others which is not reflected in these data. Differences in physical activity while working may influence participation in leisure time exercise for some occupations more so than others.

Adults whose occupation is related to construction & extraction are significantly more likely than employed adults overall to use smokeless tobacco (11% vs. 4%) and not wear a seatbelt (12% vs. 4%). Likewise, those working in transportation & material moving are more likely to use smokeless tobacco (11%) and not wear a seatbelt (12%); adults in installation, maintenance, & repair fields are more likely to not wear a seatbelt (11%).

Occupation*	Estimated # Adult Vermonters	Binge Drinking	Smoking	No Leisure Time Physical Activity	Smokeless Tobacco	Rarely/Never Wear Seatbelt
Management	30,000		9% ↓			
Business and Financial Operations	10,600			4% ↓		
Architecture & Engineering	7,000		6% ↓			
Education, Training, & Library	22,100	11% ↓	4% ↓	5% ↓		
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	20,000		7% ↓			
Food Preparation and Serving	13,100		33% ↑	26% ↑		
Building & Grounds, Cleaning and Maintenance	13,000	11% ↓	27% ↑			
Construction & Extraction	20,300	32% ↑			11% ↑	12% ↑
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	9,000	38% ↑				11% ↑
Transportation & Material Moving	11,100			29% ↑	11% ↑	12% ↑
All Employed Vermont Adults	314,900	20%	16%	15%	4%	4%

Worksite Wellness

The Vermont Department of Health has identified five priority strategies for worksites to adopt that will assist in creating environments that support chronic disease prevention. They are: 1) implementing healthy food and beverage policies, 2) going tobacco-free, 3) providing refrigerators, microwaves, and break areas, 4) helping employees get 30 minutes of physical activity every day, and 5) supporting local food initiatives. These strategies are low-cost and offer population-level impact on health.

For more information, please contact Jessie Hammond, M.P.H., Vermont Department of Health (Jessie.Hammond@vermont.gov).