Prevention is Balanced, Comprehensive, Evidence-Based, Evaluated, and a Shared Responsibility

Partners in Prevention

Missouri's higher education substance misuse consortium

Volume 14, Number SE.1

Survey of Missouri Higher Education Institutions' Tobacco-Free Policies

Partners in Prevention (PIP) is Missouri's higher education substance misuse consortium dedicated to creating healthy and safe college campuses. The coalition is comprised of 27 public and private colleges and universities in the state working to prevent high-risk behaviors by implementing evidence-based strategies, including education, social norming campaigns, policy review and enforcement, and more. This brief includes data for the 23 4-year institutions in the coalition; 2-year campuses participate in a separate version of the survey, and their data is not included in this statewide aggregate. To measure progress and obtain data needed for the implementation of programs, PIP created the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) Survey. The MACHB is an annual, online survey that has been implemented each spring since 2007. The survey assesses the roles that alcohol, drugs (illegal and prescription), tobacco/nicotine, interpersonal violence, and mental health have on student health and wellness. This brief will provide a background on tobacco/nicotine use among Missouri college students and will focus on the 2024 tobacco-free policy assessment results.

Tobacco & Nicotine Use

Each year on the MACHB, students are asked to report past year use of any tobacco/nicotine product (e.g., cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vaporizers, chewing tobacco, etc.). 33% of students report ever use and 26% report past year use of tobacco/nicotine products. 56% of students say that they have been exposed for secondhand smoke and/or e-cigarette vapors. A combined 58.4% students are either thinking of or actively trying to change their current tobacco/nicotine use.

Policy

Studies have shown that the implementation of comprehensive tobacco-free policies lead to a decrease of smoking prevalence, increased cessation, and a decrease in initiation of tobacco/nicotine use for youth[1,2]. However, not all tobacco-free policies that are implemented are created equal, which can result in policy gaps that could inadvertently cause tobacco related health disparities[3]. The creation and development of comprehensive policies is important to ensure that all individuals across all institutions are provided with the same protections to prevent dangerous health outcomes. Partners in Prevention (PIP) and the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) have partnered together to assess Missouri's higher education institutions' tobacco-free policies.

Partners in Prevention (PIP) and the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) partnered together to develop a standardized assessment tool to rate the comprehensiveness of an institution's tobacco-free policy. A total of 25 assessment items across five domains (Rationale and Definitions, Tobacco-Free Environment, Cessation and Treatment Services, Enforcement, and Policy Communication) were utilized in determining policy comprehensiveness.

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Chart 1: Presence of Policy

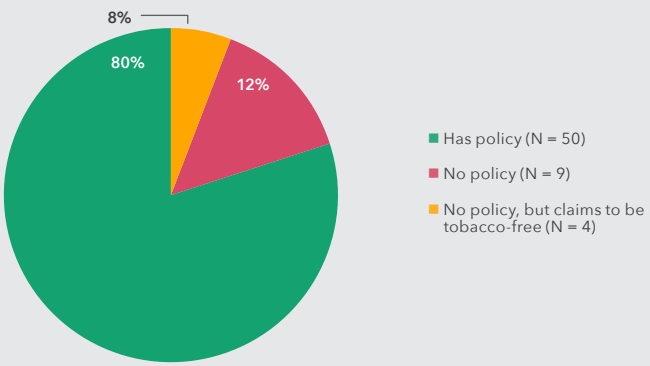
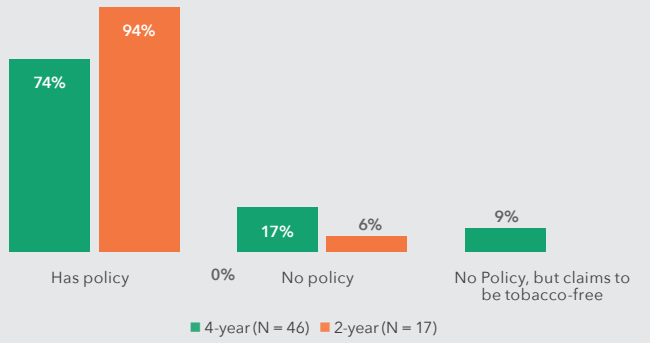


Chart 2: Presence of Policy



PIP staff were given a list of 63 institutions (46 four-year institutions and 17 two-year institutions) to assess. Policies for each institution were searched for and collected online.

Of the 63 institutions, the majority had some form of a tobacco-free policy with only 13 missing a policy (Chart 1). When broken down by institution type, all but one two-year institutions and three-quarters of four-year institutions have a policy (shown in Chart 2).

After policies were identified, tiers of policy comprehensiveness were created based on the number of components each institution met. The tiers are defined as:

- **Tier 1:** institutions that have met 18-25 items of the criteria.
- **Tier 2:** institutions that have met 12-17 items of the criteria.
- **Tier 3:** institutions that have met 0-11 items of the criteria.

Of the 50 institutions with policies, about ¼ have what is considered to be a comprehensive policy (Chart 3). Compared to four-year institutions, two-year institutions are more likely to have an incomprehensive policy (Chart 4).

Chart 3: Policy Comprehensiveness

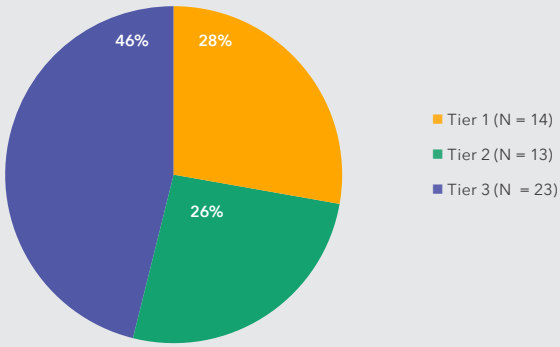
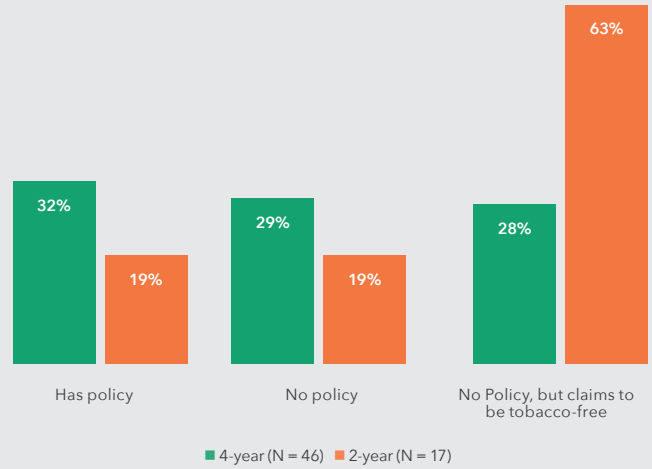


Chart 4: Policy Comprehensiveness by 4-year vs. 2-year



The following tables (1-5) will display the percentage of institutions meeting each policy assessment item in five different domains.

Table 1 is the domain of Rationale and Definitions which examines the general comprehensiveness of a tobacco-free policy. Most institutions meet all assessment items within this domain, with half missing an "applies at all times" statement.

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Table 1: Rationale and Definitions

Rationale and Definitions	All Institutions (N = 50)
Applies at all times.	50%
Applies for all persons, including students, faculty, staff, contractors/vendors, and visitors.	78%
Applies in all places, owned, or leased, including indoor or enclosed areas, outdoor campus property, vehicles while on campus, and at college-sponsored events.	76%
Comprehensive definition of all tobacco products.	72%

Table 2 is the domain of Tobacco-Free Environment which examines whether the policy ensures that an institution's campus is a tobacco-free environments. Most institutions outline the prohibition of tobacco products. However, many do not prohibit the presence of tobacco advertisement and/or the general participation of the tobacco industry within an institution. Another component within the Tobacco-Free Environment domain is permitting the use of cessation products and traditional/sacred tobacco for cultural, religious, and/or spiritual purposes, which most institutions do not state in their policies.

Table 2: Tobacco-Free Environment

Tobacco-Free Environment	All Institutions (N = 50)
Prohibits tobacco use for all persons.	86%
Prohibits smoking for all persons.	84%
Prohibits the use of all electronic cigarettes for all persons.	86%
Prohibits tobacco advertising, promotion, and marketing on college-owned or leased property, college-sponsored events, or college-produced publications.	22%
Prohibits all college entities from accepting sponsorships, donations, gifts, and funding, which includes funding of research through grants and contracts, from tobacco companies or any agencies or foundations in which the tobacco industry has influence.	10%
Prohibits tobacco and related companies from participating in career fairs and recruitment activities.	2%
Excludes use of products that have been approved by the U.S. FDA for sale as tobacco cessation products, tobacco dependence products, or other medical purposes.	24%
Excludes the use of traditional, sacred tobacco as part of an Indigenous practice or a lawfully recognized religious, spiritual, or cultural ceremony or practice.	2%

Table 3 is the domain of Cessation and Treatment Services which assesses whether a policy states that an institution has cessation access available. Cessation access is a necessary component of successful compliance to a tobacco-free policy. Less than half of institutions have this statement.

Table 3: Cessation and Treatment Services

Cessation and Treatment Services	All Institutions (N = 50)
Offers and/or promotes cessation access for students	44%
Offers and/or promotes cessation access for staff	44%

Table 4 is the domain of Enforcement which examines whether all individuals on a campus are responsible for the enforcement of the tobacco-free policy. Most institutions outline general enforcement for all individuals, but slightly less than half specifically designate students, employees, and visitors/vendors as being responsible for the enforcement of the policy. Additionally, while students make up a large portion of a campus body, only 10% of institutions have stated consequences for students in the case of policy violation.

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Table 4: Enforcement

Enforcement	All Institutions (N = 50)
All individuals on college property are responsible for enforcing this policy and encouraged to communicate this policy with courtesy and diplomacy.	58%
General enforcement for students.	72%
General enforcement for employees.	62%
General enforcement for visitors/ vendors.	56%
Designates students responsible for enforcement.	46%
Designates employees responsible for enforcement.	44%
Designates visitors/vendors responsible for enforcement.	32%
Students who violate the policy will be referred to the appropriate campus contact for screening, information, counseling, and/or referral.	10%
Consequences for violations for employees.	60%
Consequences for violations for visitors/vendors.	48%

Table 5 is the domain of Policy Communication. All individuals on a campus must be made aware of the presence of a tobacco-free policy through effective communication. Almost three-quarters of institutions have general communication and more than half include a date in which the policy took effect. Only a few institutions designate an entity for the annual maintenance of the policy. 12% include a statement about tobacco-free signage on the campus.

Table 5: Policy Communication

Policy Communication	All Institutions (N = 50)
General policy communication.	70%
Effective date.	56%
Designates individual or office responsible for maintaining the policy at least annually.	6%
Signage about tobacco-free campus policy at all points of entry to the campus, at all building entrances, and other highly visible locations.	12%

Summary

Tobacco-free policies are an effective practice to provide health protections to students on campuses. Comprehensive and evidence informed prevention and health promotion practices are an investment in the lives of students and the overall campus environment. PIP aims to perform annual policy assessments to track the progress of Missouri's higher education policy landscape. For more information about Partners in Prevention and to explore our research, visit **mopip.org/pip/research**.

Contact Partners in Prevention at (573) 884-7551.

Report prepared by Meekim Nguyen, Research Specialist I, and Brittany Carpenter, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator. Published July 2025.

The Department of Health and Senior Services funds our Tobacco Prevention and Control Program within PIP which has helped to create this report.

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