

2017 NM-YRRS Results:

Sports-Related Concussions

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that can have serious effects on a developing brain. While most young people recover quickly and fully after a concussion, others may experience symptoms for weeks or months. Compared to adults, high school athletes have an increased risk for concussions and have a longer recovery time after a concussion. Concussions can result

in cognitive and behavioral changes. Repeated and severe concussions are associated with impulsivity, anxiety, depression, and suicide attempts. In 2017, the YRRS included a question about concussions from physical activity or participation in sports.

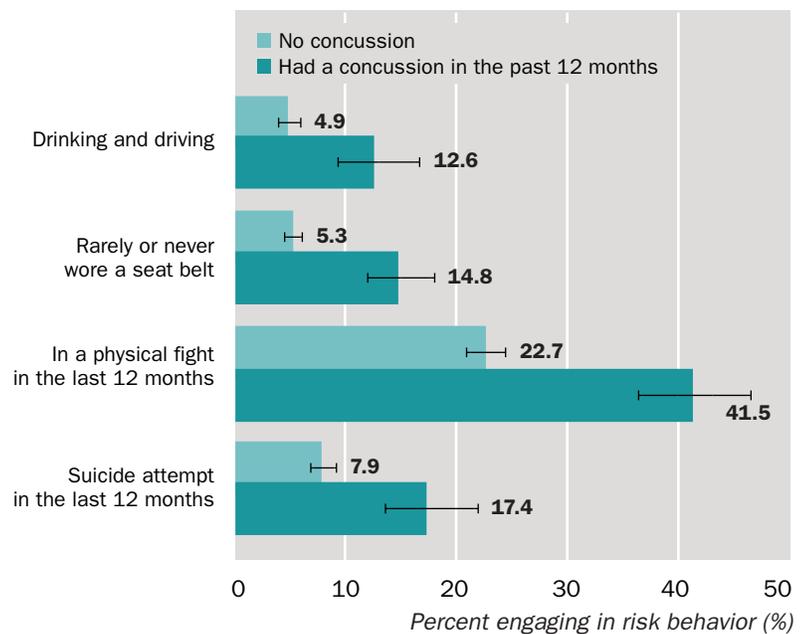
2017 NM-YRRS question about concussions:

A concussion is when a blow or jolt to the head causes problems such as headaches, dizziness, being dazed or confused, difficulty remembering or concentrating, vomiting, blurred vision, or being knocked out. **During the past 12 months, how many times did you have a concussion from playing a sport or being physically active?**

- 20.2% of high school students had a sports or activity related concussion in the past 12 months.
- Concussions were more common among high school boys than girls (23.3% vs. 16.9%).
- Risk of concussion decreased with grade level (9th = 23.1%; 10th = 20.6%; 11th = 18.3%; 12th = 17.3%).

Students who experienced at least one concussion in the past 12 months were more likely to drink and drive, to rarely or never wear a seat belt, to be in a physical fight, and to attempt suicide. Yet, among all students who attempted suicide, those who experienced a concussion were less likely to have seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months than those who had not experienced a concussion (70.7% vs. 85.0%).

Factors associated with concussions
Grades 9–12 ■ NM ■ 2017



Parents, coaches, and other adults should be alert to behavioral changes by young people who have had concussions, even after the immediate symptoms have resolved. This is particularly important for youth who have experienced repeated concussions.

A young person who has had a concussion should be monitored for symptoms and cleared by a medical professional before returning to physical activity. New Mexico has a “Return to Play” law designed to protect youth athletes involved in both scholastic and non-scholastic activities from the effects of head injuries. This law requires that concussion safety protocol be provided to parents and coaches of youth athletes, and imposes restrictions on returning to play after a suspected concussion.

For more information on New Mexico’s “Return to Play” law, and for other information about youth concussions, see nmhealth.org/about/erd/ibeb/ipp.

This newsletter was produced by the New Mexico Department of Health, the Public Education Department (NM PED), and the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center. The NM YRRS receives support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in cooperation with the NM PED through Grant number 1U87PS004195-01. For more information about the YRRS, including methodology, comprehensive state level reports, county level reports, and more, see www.youthrisk.org or nmhealth.org/go/youth. To have an email added, changed or removed from the mailing list, contact YRRS@youthrisk.org.

