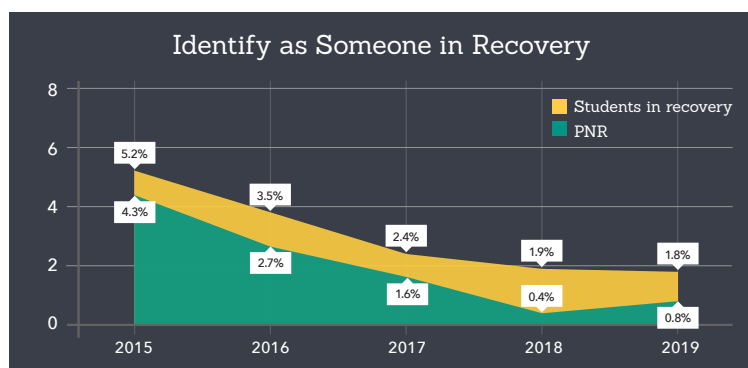


Update of Students in Recovery

Partners in Prevention (PIP) is Missouri's higher education substance abuse consortium dedicated to creating healthy and safe college campuses. The coalition is comprised of 21 public and private colleges and universities in the state that work to decrease high-risk behaviors among college students by implementing strategic plans for prevention utilizing evidence-based strategies. To measure progress and obtain data, PIP conducts the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) Survey. The MACHB is an annual, online survey implemented each spring to assess the impact that alcohol, drugs (illegal and prescription), tobacco, interpersonal violence, and mental health issues have on student health and wellness. The MACHB asks students to self-identify if they are in recovery from alcohol or other drug addiction to better understand their experiences and needs on campus.

Prevalence and Demographics

According to the 2019 MACHB, 1.8% of Missouri college students identify as someone who is in recovery from an alcohol or other drug addiction, with a range of 0.8% to 3.5% among PIP schools, and an additional 0.8% of students prefer not to respond (PNR). Students may choose to remain anonymous or to live sober lifestyles without participating in traditional recovery approaches, which may impact their decision to report PNR. Since 2015, the population of students who identify as in recovery has decreased each year.



Twenty-four percent (24%) of students in recovery indicate that they are 25 years or older, and 41% are under the age of 21. Forty-two percent (42%) identify as female, 55% male, 2.8% transgender, and 2.4% gender queer or self-identify.* Most (94%) students in recovery are non-Hispanic/Latino and identify their race as white (70%).

Defining Recovery

Since 2016, students have been asked to report how they define "in recovery" for themselves. The most common recovery format practiced by students in recovery is moderation management or harm reduction (23%), followed by "other" (22%), treatment or counseling based (18%), and the 12-Step program (15%), whereas 23% of students in recovery prefer not to respond. For students who indicated "other," responses included, but were not limited to, quitting cold turkey, religious or faith-based approaches, having a support system of family or friends, and programs similar to 12-Step. Over the past few years, there has been a decrease in rates of using the 12-Step Program, as more students have reported to use moderation management/harm reduction or another format of recovery.

What recovery format do you practice?				
Format	2016	2017	2018	2019
12-step program	28%	17%	14%	15%
Treatment or counseling based	13%	11%	23%	18%
Moderation management/harm reduction	30%	19%	23%	23%
Other	29%	30%	19%	22%
Prefer not to respond	n/a	24%	21%	23%

Well-Being of Students in Recovery

Similar to data from the 2018 MACHB, in 2019, fewer students in recovery reported feeling a sense of

belonging to their campus community (52% v. 67%), compared to their peers who are not in recovery. They also report higher rates of thoughts of transferring from their current school (34% v. 26%). In addition, in the past year, students in recovery report higher rates of mental health concerns in every category* included in the MACHB. They also report higher rates of experiencing sexual assault (9.7% v. 3.6%) and experiencing an abusive relationship (11% v. 5%).

*Indicates check all that apply

Well-being of students in recovery		
Mental health concern	In recovery	Not in recovery
Anxiety	69%	57%
Major depression	65%	31%
Panic Attacks	40%	27%
Chronic sleep issues	38%	20%
Eating disorders	18%	8.5%
Self-injury	12%	5.8%
Bipolar Disorder	11%	3.2%

Collegiate Recovery Communities

Sixty percent (66%) of Missouri college students are unsure if their campus has a collegiate recovery program, organization, or center, and only 25% of students have participated in or with their campus recovery program. The Missouri Alliance of Collegiate Recovery Organizations (MACRO) works with colleges and universities across the state to help establish new recovery programs and support existing ones. Currently, there are eight recovery programs at colleges and universities across Missouri. For more information about MACRO, visit macro.missouri.edu.

In addition to MACRO, there are national resources that provide resources, workshops and conferences

specifically based on recovery topics in higher education. These resources are available to students, faculty, and staff who support recovery. Two of these include the Association of Recovery in Higher Education (www.collegiaterecovery.org) and the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Drug Misuse Prevention (hecaod.osu.edu). In addition, Recovery Campus (www.recoverycampus.com) publishes newsletters, directories, and magazines that share information and stories about individuals and their collegiate recovery programs across the nation.

Summary

Although the population of students in recovery has decreased over the past few years and this group of students makes up a small population on college campuses, it is critical that campuses start or continue to create safe, welcoming environments that support these students, especially as they report lower rates of a sense of belonging to their campus and report higher rates of thoughts of transferring. Consider the resources available to students in recovery or living sober lifestyles on campus and in the community. If there is a student who may benefit from your campus's collegiate recovery program or any community resources, refer them to those resources. For interest in starting a collegiate recovery program on your campus, contact macro@missouri.edu.

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

Report prepared 6/11/19 by Michelle Burns, Graduate Research Assistant, data prepared by Dong Ding, Research Coordinator and Kennedy Brown, Undergraduate Research Assistant. Published October 2019.