

# Health Disparities Experienced by Kansans with Disabilities



Disability and Health Program  
kansans with disabilities can be healthy

People with disabilities use health care services for the same reasons everyone does – to be healthy, active and part of their community. Despite this fact, health disparities between those with and without disabilities in Kansas are significant.

The Kansas Disability and Health Program (DHP), which is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is using targeted interventions to address these disparities. The DHP offers programs in the areas of physical activity, nutrition and oral health to improve the health and quality of life among Kansans with mobility limitations and intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD).

## Physical Health and Activity

In the area of physical activity, the BRFSS data reveal significant disparities between Kansans with and without disabilities. (CDC guidelines regarding recommended levels of physical activity for adults are available at <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults>.)

Physical Health and Activity	With a disability		Without a disability	
	2015	2016	2015	2016
Report fair/poor health	44.1%	40.4%	7.7%	7.7%
Report poor physical or mental health that keeps one from doing usual activities	60.0%	59.2%	28.3%	30.3%
Obese (Body Mass Index [BMI] ≥ 30)	44.7%	39.9%	31.1%	28.4%
Did not participate in any physical activity other than at work in the past month	39.8%	42.2%	22.7%	17.3%

Data source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Available at: <http://www.kdheks.gov/brfss>

## Co-existing Health Conditions

People with disabilities have higher rates of chronic health conditions (in addition to their disability) than those without disabilities. As shown in the following chart, Kansans with disabilities are more likely to experience hypertension, stroke and diabetes than those without a disability.

(continued)

### What are health disparities?

Health disparities are preventable differences in health that certain groups of people experience.

These differences are related to disadvantages such as poverty, disability, and lack of education.

Health disparities occur when opportunities like employment or health care services are not equally available to everyone.



Photo: Florida Office on Disability and Health

Co-existing Health Conditions	With a disability		Without a disability	
	2015	2016	2015	2016
Has hypertension	52.2%	49.8%	25.9%	25.5%
Has diabetes	21.2%	19.6%	6.6%	6.3%
Has had a stroke	8.8%	7.8%	1.4%	1.3%

Data source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Available at: <http://www.kdheks.gov/brfss>

### Oral Health

Oral health is important to a person’s overall health.

Oral Health	With a disability 2016	Without a disability 2016
Have had <b>any</b> permanent teeth removed	54.1%	28.9%
Have had <b>all</b> permanent teeth removed	8.4%	1.4%

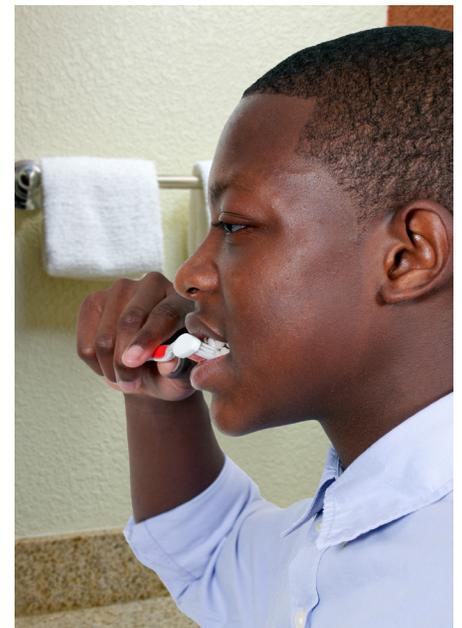
Data source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Available at: <http://www.kdheks.gov/brfss>



### Information About Counties

For individuals interested in the health disparities of people with disabilities in your community or local area, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) provides county-level data in years that end in an odd number.

Note that due to smaller populations and sample sizes, information is not publicly available for all counties. Please visit the KDHE BRFSS website to see the latest data available: <http://www.kdheks.gov/brfss/BRFSS2015>.



#### For More Information:

Kim Bruns, DHP Coordinator  
 kbruns@ku.edu  
 The University of Kansas  
 Institute for Health and Disability Policy Studies  
 1000 Sunnyside Ave.  
 3099 Dole Center  
 Lawrence, KS 66045  
 Web: [ihdps.ku.edu/dandhkansas](http://ihdps.ku.edu/dandhkansas)

This fact sheet was supported by Grant/Cooperative Agreement Number DD000006 from CDC, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Disability and Health Branch. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC, NCBDDD, Disability and Health Branch.