The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Wayne Giles, MD
Division of Population Health
What is the BRFSS?

- A System of State-Based Health Surveys
- Surveillance on Adults 18 Years and Older, Regarding:
  - Health conditions and health-risk behaviors,
  - Health care access and utilization,
  - Chronic health conditions and injuries,
  - Preventable infectious diseases.
- Archive for Data Collected 1984 to the Present
- Participation in All 50 states, DC, and 6 US Territories
- More than 450,000 interviews completed each year
- State- and County-level Health Data: BEST SOURCE
The Four Components of BRFSS

1. **Core Survey**
   Implemented with Standardized Protocols. Includes Regular and Rotating Core Sections. Must Be Used in all States and Territories.

2. **Optional Survey Modules**
   Sets of Questions about One Topic. Proposed by CDC Programs and other Agencies (e.g., SAMHSA, VA).

3. **State-Added Questions**
   Developed by Each State to Meet Its Individual Needs and Issues.

4. **Special Project Additions**
   Proposed on an As-Needed Basis, with Dedicated Funding (e.g., Asthma call-back, H1N1).
BRFSS Core Survey Topics

- Immunization
- HIV / AIDS
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Alcohol Consumption
- Health Status
- Health Care Access
- Healthy Days
- Emotional Support / Life Satisfaction
- Disability
- Tobacco Use
- Sleep
Demographics

- Age
- Gender
- Race & ethnicity
- Marital status
- Education level
- Income
- Children in household
- Height & weight
- Pregnancy status
- Employment status
- Veteran Status
- Disabilities
## BRFSS Rotating Core Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Even-Numbered Years</th>
<th>Odd-Numbered Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breast/Cervical Cancer Screening</td>
<td>Fruits &amp; Vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostate Screening</td>
<td>Hypertension Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorectal Cancer Screening</td>
<td>Cholesterol Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Health</td>
<td>Arthritis Burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls</td>
<td>Physical Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seatbelt Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking &amp; Driving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BRFSS Optional Survey Modules

- Adult Asthma History
- Anxiety & Depression
- Arthritis Management
- Cardiovascular Health
- Child Immunization
- Childhood Asthma
- Diabetes
- General Preparedness
- Healthy Days: Symptoms
- Home Environment
- Influenza
- Indoor Air Quality
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Osteoporosis
- Random Child Selection
- Reactions to Race
- Secondhand-Smoke Policy
- Sexual Violence
- Smoking Cessation
- Visual Impairment
- Weight Control
- And More…
BRFSS Response Rates

- Rates between 42-80% (median 67%) using AAPOR rate #2, for combined landline and cell*
  - Introduction and screening questions are the key
  - On average 35% of interviews on cell phones, in some states over 60%

*Cooperation rate
Who Uses BRFSS Data?

- State & Local Governments
- CDC Programs
- Other Federal Agencies
- Policymakers
- Universities
- Research/Nonprofit Organizations
- The Media
- Insurance Companies & Other Businesses
- The General Public
Thank You

For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333
Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348
E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov Web: http://www.cdc.gov

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.