



Muhlenberg College Public Health Program

2018 Pennsylvania Public Health Poll

The following report provides findings from the annual Muhlenberg College Public Health Program survey of Pennsylvanians on public health issues. This year's survey examined topics that included the Affordable Care Act, heroin addiction, mental health issues, immunizations, marijuana legalization, emergency preparedness, firearm regulation and the performance of President Trump and Congress in their handling of health care matters. The survey marks the 6th year of this initiative that is a partnership between the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion and the Muhlenberg College Public Health Program

Key Findings

1. On the future of the Affordable Care Act a majority of Pennsylvanians prefer that the law is either retained as is (11%) or changed to do more (47%), compared with about a third that think it should be either completely repealed (29%) or changed to do less (3%).
2. A majority of Keystone State residents have negative views of President Donald Trump's handling of health care with 51% disapproving of his performance in this area compared with 31% approving of his work on this issue.
3. About 7 out of 10 Pennsylvanians would like to see gun laws made more strict, with over 9 out of 10 in favor of a federal law requiring background checks on all potential gun purchasers.
4. A majority of Commonwealth residents report that they would be very comfortable confiding with family and friends if they were experiencing symptoms of mental illness.
5. Support for the legalization of recreational marijuana continues to grow among Pennsylvanians with 49% of state residents now supporting legalization compared to only 30% opposed to legalization.
6. A majority of Pennsylvanians personally know someone that is addicted to heroin or another opiate.
7. Keystone State residents remain highly divided on a tax on junk foods and soda with 51% supporting such a policy and 46% opposing this alternative.
8. Only about 4 out of 10 (44%) Pennsylvanians report that they have developed a plan for what their household would do in case of a natural disaster or emergency that left them without electricity or water for an extended period of time.

Methodological Statement

The following report contains the results of a telephone survey of 401 adults in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania between February 18 and March 2, 2017. Respondents were interviewed in English on both land lines (128) and cell phones (273) by the staff of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO) in Allentown, Pennsylvania on the Institute's Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. With a randomly selected sample of 401 respondents the margin of error for the surveys is +/- 6% at a 95% level of confidence. Margins of error for questions with smaller sample size will be larger. In addition to sampling error, one should consider that question wording and other fielding issues could introduce error or bias into survey results. The sample data has been weighted by gender, race, age and educational attainment to reflect those Pennsylvania population characteristics as reported by the United States Census Bureau for 2016. The calculation of sampling error takes into account design effects due to the weighting identified above. In order to reach a representative sample of adult Pennsylvanians both land lines and cell phones are called up to 5 times. The response rate for this survey as calculated using the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) RRII formula is 8%. Due to rounding the totals provided in the frequency report may not total 100%. The survey instrument (presented in its entirety below) was designed by Dr. Christopher P. Borick of the MCIPO and Dr. Mark Sciutto of the Muhlenberg College Psychology Department, in conjunction with students in the Public Health Program at Muhlenberg College. The survey was funded exclusively by the MCIPO. For more detailed information on the methods employed please contact the MCIPO at 484-664-3444 or email Dr. Borick at cborick@muhlenberg.edu.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT & FREQUENCY REPORT

Q1: Thank you. In which of the following age categories does your current age fall. READ LIST

18-29.....23%
30-49.....28%
50-65.....26%
Or Over 65....23%

Q2: What county do you currently reside in? (Coded Into Regions)

Southeast (Including Philadelphia).....34%
Southwest (Including Pittsburgh).....20%
Remainder of State.....46%

(GENERAL HEALTH CARE/HEALTH INSURANCE)

Q3: Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Donald Trump is handling the issue of health care?

1. Approve.....31%
2. Disapprove.....51%
3. Not Sure.....19%

	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Approve	34%	31%
Disapprove	47%	51%
Not Sure	20%	19%

Q4: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Congress is handling the issue of health care?

1. Approve.....10%
2. Disapprove.....66%
3. Not Sure.....24%

	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Approve	14%	8%	9%	12%	20%	10%
Disapprove	75%	80%	80%	75%	58%	66%
Not Sure	11%	12%	12%	14%	21%	24%

Q5: Which one of the following comes closest to your opinion about what Congress should do with the Affordable Care Act known as Obamacare? Let it stand. Change it so it does more. Change it so it does less. Repeal it completely.

- 1. Let it Stand.....11%
- 2. Change it so it Does More.....47%
- 3. Change it so it Does Less..... 3%
- 4. Repeal it Completely.....29%
- 5. Not Sure.....10%

(FIREARMS)

Q6: Next I would like to ask a few questions about issues related to firearms. In general, do you think gun control laws should be made more strict, less strict or kept as they are now?

- 1. More strict.....71%
- 2 Less Strict 4%
- 3. Kept the Same..... 23%
- 4. Not Sure..... 3%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2018
More Strict	47%	49%	46%	71%
Less Strict	6%	13%	14%	4%
Kept The Same	44%	36%	37%	23%
Not Sure	3%	3%	3%	3%

Q7: Do you favor or oppose a federal law requiring background checks on all potential gun buyers?

- 1. Favor.....96%
- 2. Oppose..... 4%
- 3. Not Sure.....<1%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2018
Favor	89%	89%	91%	96%
Oppose	9%	9%	8%	4%
Not Sure	3%	2%	2%	<1%

Q8: Do you favor or oppose banning possession of firearms from any individual that has been reported to authorities as dangerous by a mental health professional?

- 1. Favor.....90%
- 2. Oppose..... 8%
- 3. Not Sure..... 2%

(MENTAL HEALTH)

Q9: Next I have a few questions about your level of comfort with a number of situations. For each question please indicate if you are very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable or not at all comfortable with the situation presented. First, if a close friend or family member was showing signs of mental illness would you be very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable or not comfortable at all in recommending that they seek professional help?

- 1. Very Comfortable.....66%
- 2. Somewhat Comfortable.....22%
- 3. Not Too Comfortable..... 4%
- 4. Not Comfortable at All..... 5%
- 5. Depends on the Person (Vol)..... 1%
- 6. Not sure (VOL).....2%

	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Very Comfortable	62%	66%
Somewhat Comfortable	28%	22%
Not Too Comfortable	6%	4%
Not Comfortable at All	4%	5%
Depends on the Person (VOL)	<1%	1%
Not sure (VOL)	1%	2%

Q10: Next, how comfortable would you be with working with someone who has a significant mental illness such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia?

- 1. Very Comfortable.....31%
- 2. Somewhat Comfortable.....32%
- 3. Not Too Comfortable.....13%
- 4. Not Comfortable at All.....15%
- 5. Depends on the Person (Vol)..... 6%
- 6. Not sure (VOL).....3%

	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Very Comfortable	42%	31%
Somewhat Comfortable	34%	32%
Not Too Comfortable	10%	13%
Not Comfortable at All	7%	15%
Depends on the Person (VOL)	5%	6%
Not sure (VOL)	2%	3%

Q11: If you were experiencing symptoms of mental illness how comfortable would you be in confiding with family and friends about your condition?

- 1. Very Comfortable.....54%
- 2. Somewhat Comfortable.....28%
- 3. Not Too Comfortable..... 9%
- 4. Not Comfortable at All..... 5%
- 5. Depends on the Person (Vol)..... 2%
- 6. Not sure (VOL).....2%

	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Very Comfortable	51%	54%
Somewhat Comfortable	32%	28%
Not Too Comfortable	10%	9%
Not Comfortable at All	3%	5%
Depends on the Person (VOL)	2%	2%
Not sure (VOL)	3%	2%

Q12: Now, consider a child diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder also known as ADHD. Would you say that it is very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely or not at all likely that ADHD is caused by a genetic or inherited problem?

- 1. Very Likely.....18%
- 2. Somewhat Likely.....32%
- 3. Not Too Likely.....23%
- 4. Not at All Likely..... 6%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol).....21%

Q13: Next how likely is it that ADHD is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain? (REPEAT OPTIONS IF NEEDED)

- 1. Very Likely.....32%
- 2. Somewhat Likely.....37%
- 3. Not Too Likely..... 9%
- 4. Not at All Likely..... 5%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol).....17%

Q14: And how likely is it that ADHD is caused by his or her own bad character? (REPEAT OPTIONS IF NEEDED)

- 1. Very Likely.....10%
- 2. Somewhat Likely.....17%
- 3. Not Too Likely.....19%
- 4. Not at All Likely.....41%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol).....14%

Q15: And how likely is it that ADHD is caused by the way he or she was raised? (REPEAT OPTIONS IF NEEDED)

- 1. Very Likely..... 5%
- 2. Somewhat Likely..... 18%
- 3. Not Too Likely..... 25%
- 4. Not at All Likely.....39%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol).....13%

Q16: Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that psychiatric medication would be an appropriate treatment for a child with ADHD?

- 1. Strongly Agree.....11%
- 2. Somewhat Agree.....37%
- 3. Somewhat Disagree..... 20%
- 4. Strongly Disagree.....22%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol).....11%

(MARIJUANA AND HEROIN)

Q17: Next, I would like to ask you a few questions about marijuana. First, do you favor, oppose or neither favor nor oppose the complete legalization of the use of marijuana for any purpose?

- Favor.....49%
- Oppose.....30%
- Neither Favor or Oppose....19%
- Not Sure (Vol)..... 3%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Favor	33%	38%	34%	39%	45%	49%
Oppose	40%	35%	36%	38%	29%	30%
Neither Favor Or Oppose	24%	22%	29%	20%	23%	19%
Not Sure	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%

Q18 If the sale and possession of marijuana were made legal, do you think it would lead more people to use more serious drugs such as heroin and cocaine, lead fewer people to use more serious drugs, or have no effect on how many people use more serious drugs?

More Serious Drug Use..... 25%
 Less Serious Drug Use..... 20%
 No Effect.....50%
 Not Sure (Vol)..... 5%

	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
More Serious Drug Use	32%	27%	25%
Less Serious Drug Use	15%	23%	20%
No Effect	46%	45%	50%
Not Sure	7%	5%	5%

Q19 How serious of a problem do you think Heroin abuse in America is? (READ LIST)

Very Serious.....84%
 Somewhat Serious.....14%
 Not at all Serious..... 1%
 Not sure (VOL)..... 2%

	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Very Serious	75%	87%	84%
Somewhat Serious	17%	10%	14%
Not at All Serious	2%	1%	1%
Not Sure	7%	2%	2%

Q20: Do you personally know anyone who has been addicted to heroin or another opiate?

Yes.....55%
 No..... 45%
 Not Sure..... 1%

	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Yes	52%	58%	55%
No	44%	40%	45%
Not Sure	4%	2%	1%

(OBESITY/NUTRITION)

Q21. Now we'd like to ask you some general questions about government policies. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose each of the following. First, Putting a special tax on junk food—that is things like soda, chips, and candy—and using the money for programs to fight obesity.

Strongly Support.....21%
 Somewhat Support.....29%
 Somewhat Oppose.....20%
 Strongly Oppose.....26%
 Not Sure (Vol)..... 5%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Strongly Support	21%	25%	22%	24%	21%
Somewhat Support	18%	21%	26%	27%	29%
Somewhat Oppose	14%	22%	23%	19%	20%
Strongly Oppose	46%	30%	26%	26%	26%
Not Sure	2%	2%	2%	4%	5%

Q22. Making a law requiring fast food restaurants to list nutrition information—such as calorie count—for all items on their menus.

Strongly Support.....60%
 Somewhat Support.....19%
 Somewhat Oppose.....10%
 Strongly Oppose..... 8%
 Not Sure (Vol)..... 4%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Strongly Support	53%	58%	61%	64%	60%
Somewhat Support	23%	21%	24%	21%	19%
Somewhat Oppose	7%	8%	6%	5%	10%
Strongly Oppose	15%	11%	7%	8%	8%
Not Sure	2%	1%	3%	2%	4%

Q23. Requiring warning labels on packaged food about the health risks of being overweight, just like there are warning labels on cigarettes about the health risks of smoking.

Strongly Support.....33%
 Somewhat Support.....30%
 Somewhat Oppose.....16%
 Strongly Oppose.....16%
 Not Sure (Vol)..... 5%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Strongly Support	34%	34%	38%	38%	33%
Somewhat Support	18%	23%	28%	27%	30%
Somewhat Oppose	17%	19%	16%	11%	16%
Strongly Oppose	28%	23%	14%	22%	16%
Not Sure	3%	2%	4%	2%	5%

(IMMUNIZATION)

Q24: Please indicate if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements. First, the chances of a child getting autism are increased if they receive the recommended childhood immunizations.

Strongly Agree.....8%
 Somewhat Agree.....13%
 Somewhat Disagree.....14%
 Strongly Disagree.....49%
 Not Sure (Vol).....16%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Strongly Agree	5%	8%	7%	6%	4%	8%
Somewhat Agree	13%	13%	10%	13%	13%	13%
Somewhat Disagree	22%	21%	22%	16%	14%	14%
Strongly Disagree	35%	39%	48%	51%	48%	49%
Not Sure	26%	19%	12%	14%	21%	16%

Q25: In general, children in the United States receive too many immunizations.

Strongly Agree.....20%
 Somewhat Agree.....12%
 Somewhat Disagree..... 19%
 Strongly Disagree.....41%
 Not Sure (Vol).....8%

	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spring 2018
Strongly Agree	8%	12%	10%	11%	11%	20%
Somewhat Agree	9%	10%	13%	11%	15%	12%
Somewhat Disagree	20%	22%	18%	21%	20%	19%
Strongly Disagree	53%	47%	56%	49%	47%	41%
Not Sure	10%	9%	3%	8%	7%	8%

(EMERGENCY PREP)

Q26: next I have a few questions regarding emergency preparedness. There are many steps people may take to prepare for a natural disaster or emergency. Let us know whether you have done, plan to do, or have not done each of the following. First:

Talked with members of your household about where to meet in case of a natural disaster or emergency

- 1, Have done.....40%
- 2. Plan to do..... 6%
- 3, Have not done yet.....51%
- 4. Not sure..... 4%

Q27: Made an emergency kit for your household with basic items like food, water, a battery-powered radio, a flashlight and first-aid kit

- 1, Have done.....47%
- 2. Plan to do..... 8%
- 3, Have not done yet.....44%
- 4. Not sure..... 1%

Q28: Developed a plan for what your household would do in case of a natural disaster or emergency that left you without electricity or water for an extended period of time, for example, two weeks

- 1, Have done.....44%
- 2. Plan to do..... 6%
- 3, Have not done yet.....46%
- 4. Not sure..... 3%

(DEMOGRAPHICS)

Q29. Finally, I have a few questions about yourself. First, what is your current marital status?

Single	29%
Married	43%
Separated	2%
Divorced	7%
Widowed	11%
Partnered	7%
Not sure	<1%

Q30. What is your highest level of education? Is it (READ LIST)?

Less Than High School	3%
High School Graduate	23%
Some College Or Technical School	39%
College Graduate (4 Yr Only)	20%
Graduate Or Professional Degree	15%

Q31. Which of the following categories best describes your racial identity? (READ LIST)

White/Caucasian	73%
African-American	9%
Hispanic	4%
Latino	4%
Asian	2%
Native American	2%
Mixed Race	3%
Or Other	2%

Q32: Which of the following categories best describes your current voting status? Are you registered as a (READ LIST)?

Democrat	43%
Republican	33%
Independent	12%
Other Party	3%
Or Not Registered To Vote In Pennsylvania	7%
Not Sure	3%

Q33. Which of the following categories best describes your religious affiliation? Are you (READ LIST)?

Catholic	29%
Protestant	30%
Jewish	4%
Muslim	2%
Hindu	1%
Other Religion (Including Agnostic)	23%
Atheist	5%
Not Sure	5%

Q34. How many children do you have under 18? _____

Has Children Under 18	26%
No Children Under 18	74%

Q35: Which of the following best describes your health care insurance status. Are you primarily insured:

By A Plan Provided By Your Employer	44%
By A Plan That You Purchase Individually	11%
By Medicaid Coverage	7%
By Medicare Coverage	24%
Uninsured	5%
Other	7%
Not Sure	3%

Q36. Which of the following categories best describes your family income? (READ LIST)

Under \$20,000	12%
\$20,000-\$40,000	18%
\$40,000-\$60,000	20%
\$60,000-\$80,000	15%
\$80,000-\$100,000	9%
Over \$100,000	17%
Not Sure	9%

Q37: Finally to which gender identity do you most identify? (READ LIST)

Male	49%
Female	50%
Transgender Male	<1%
Transgender Female	0%
Or you do not identify as male, female or transgender	<1%