

Regional Youth Survey - 2014-2015

FACT SHEET

THE SURVEY

- ☑ Measures practices and attitudes of youth regarding substance use and other risky behaviors.
- ☑ Administered anonymously to youth enrolled in grades 7-12 in 10 communities in Southeastern Connecticut in 2014 and 2015.
- ☑ The reported rates are based on responses from more than 7,400 youth.

ALCOHOL

- ☑ **Alcohol** is the most commonly used substance among youth in the region.
 - 30% of youth report **ever** having used alcohol **in their lifetime**.
 - 10% of youth report having used alcohol **in the past 30 days**.
- ☑ About one-half of youth surveyed (50%) **strongly disapprove** of someone their age having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly everyday.
 - Disapproval is highest among 7th graders (67%) but is below 50% among 10-12th graders.
- ☑ *Among youth who do report having used alcohol in their lifetime:*
 - The most common source of alcohol is **friends**.
 - 57% report **ever** having consumed 4 or more drinks in a single occasion in their **lifetime**.
 - 18% report having had 4 or more drinks in a single occasion in the **past 30 days**.

ILLICIT DRUGS

- ☑ **Marijuana** is the most commonly abused illicit drug among youth in the region.
 - 19% of youth report **ever** having used marijuana **in their lifetime**.
 - 9% of youth report having used marijuana in the **past 30 days**.
- ☑ *Among youth who report having used marijuana in their lifetime:*
 - The most common source of marijuana is **friends**.
- ☑ Other illicit drugs that youth in the region report having experimented with include **cocaine, ecstasy, hallucinogens and synthetic marijuana**.

LEGAL PRODUCTS

- ☑ Overall, 13% of youth in the region report **ever** having **misused a prescription medication** without a prescription.
 - The most commonly abused type of prescription medication is **pain medication**.
 - 8% of youth report **ever** having **misused** prescription pain medications without a prescription.
- ☑ 4% of youth in the region report **ever** having misused an **over-the-counter medication** to get high.
- ☑ 47% of youth in the region report **ever** having used **energy drinks** while 17% have used energy drinks in the **past 30 days**.
- ☑ 9% of youth in the region report **ever** having used **electronic cigarettes**.

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RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- ☑ Most youth (about 75%) report that it is **definitely true** or **mostly true** that their family has clear rules discouraging cigarette/tobacco, alcohol, marijuana or prescription drug misuse.
- ☑ Most youth (70% or more) report that their parents think it would be **very wrong** for them to smoke tobacco, smoke marijuana, or drink 1 or 2 alcoholic beverages nearly every day.
- ☑ Perceived peer disapproval of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use are all lower than perceived parental disapproval.
- ☑ About 83% of youth report that their parents think it would be **very wrong** for them to use a prescription drug not prescribed to them.
- ☑ Among youth in the region, perceived harm is greatest for cigarette smoking and lowest for marijuana use.
- ☑ 20- 30% of youth in the region report it would be **very easy** for them to get alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana if they wanted to.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- ☑ Overall, youth in the region identified checking IDs, fear of addiction and having friends who disapprove of drinking the most important strategies for keeping kids from drinking alcohol.
- ☑ Youth identified alcohol education in school and high price of alcohol as the least important strategies.

GAMBLING

- ☑ Overall, about 18% of youth report **ever** having gambled while 1% of youth report that they gamble on a **daily** basis.
- ☑ 10% of youth report that someone in their **family** has gambled so much that it created problems at home, at work or with friends.
- ☑ ***Among youth who report ever having gambled in their lifetime:***
 - About 23% report ever having tried to cut back on their gambling.

COMPARISONS

- ☑ In general, lifetime and recent substance use rates among youth in the region tend to be similar to or lower than reported national rates.
- ☑ Between 2006 and 2015:
 - Recent use of cigarettes and alcohol tended to decrease while recent use of marijuana remained constant.
 - Perception of harm associated cigarettes alcohol and prescription drug misuse has tended to increase or remain constant while perception of harm with marijuana use has tended to decrease.