

Regional Youth Survey - 2016-2017

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 13 communities in Southeastern Connecticut in 2016 and 2017.
- ☑ The reported rates are based on responses from more than 8,500 youth.

ALCOHOL

- ☑ **Alcohol** is the most commonly used substance among youth in the region.
 - 23% of youth report **ever** having used alcohol **in their lifetime**.
 - 7% of youth report having used alcohol **in the past 30 days**.
- ☑ Less than one-half of youth surveyed (42%) **strongly disapprove** of someone their age having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly everyday.
 - Disapproval is highest among 7th graders (60%) but is below 40% among 9-12th graders.
- ☑ *Among youth who do report having used alcohol in their lifetime:*
 - The most common source of alcohol is **friends**.
 - 50% report **ever** having consumed 4 or more drinks in a single occasion in their **lifetime**.
 - 19% report having had 4 or more drinks in a single occasion in the **past 30 days**.

ILLCIT DRUGS

- ☑ **Marijuana** is the most commonly abused illicit drug among youth in the region.
 - 15% of youth report **ever** having used marijuana **in their lifetime**.
 - 7% 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, salvia and synthetic marijuana**.

LEGAL PRODUCTS

- ☑ Overall, 12% of youth in the region report **ever** having **misused** a **prescription medication** without a prescription.
 - The most commonly abused types of prescription medication are **pain medications** and **downers**.
 - 7% of youth report **ever** having **misused** prescription pain medications or downers without a prescription.
- ☑ 4% of youth in the region report **ever** having misused an **over-the-counter medication** to get high.
- ☑ 41% of youth in the region report **ever** having used **energy drinks** while 15% 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, electronic cigarette, alcohol, marijuana or prescription drug misuse.
- ☑ Perceived peer disapproval of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use are all lower than perceived parental disapproval.
- ☑ Among youth in the region, perceived harm is greatest for cigarette smoking or misuse of prescription medications and lowest for marijuana use or electronic cigarettes use.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- ☑ Overall, youth in the region identify checking IDs, fear of addiction and the availability of alcohol free activities as 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.

MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS

- ☑ In the past year...
 - 20% of youth report having felt so sad or hopeless for 2 weeks or more that it stopped them from doing their usual activities.
 - 20% report having had thoughts of hurting themselves.
 - 12% report having hurt themselves on purpose.
 - 10% report having seriously considered attempting suicide.

GAMBLING

- ☑ Overall, about 17% of youth report **ever** having gambled while 1% of youth report that they gamble on a **daily** basis.
- ☑ 7% 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 20% report ever having tried to cut back on their gambling.

COMPARISONS

- ☑ Between 2006 and 2017:
 - Recent use of cigarettes and alcohol have tended to decrease while recent use of marijuana has remained constant.
 - Perception of harm associated with cigarette, alcohol and prescription drug misuse has tended to increase or remain constant while perception of harm with marijuana use has tended to decrease.
 - Perceived parental disapproval of cigarette use, alcohol use and prescription drug misuse has tended to increase or remain constant while perception of harm with marijuana use has tended to decrease.
- ☑ Electronic cigarette use is an emerging trend among youth in Southeastern Connecticut.