

Chapter 4 - Other Drug Use

Youth have many decisions to make in their adolescent life and one very crucial decision is make positive decisions and stay drug free. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, today more than half of the youth have tried an illicit drug by the time they finish high school.¹

The most popular substances used by teens were illicit drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, LSD, inhalants, methamphetamines and ecstasy.² Methamphetamine production and abuse have increased considerably during the past decade in the United States. Unlike imported drugs such as heroine and cocaine, methamphetamine can be manufactured from common household ingredients that cause emergent, acute and chronic injuries to neurologic, cardiac, pulmonary, dental and other body systems. Methamphetamine is a major hazard for not only the individual who is using but also those who come in contact with this toxic substance. The health concerns related to methamphetamine use are psychological, social and mentally disabling; these problems may never go away even after the user stops.³

Nationally, 40 % of students reported ever using marijuana compared to 37% in Wisconsin, but 16% of state teens are current users.^{3,4} Marijuana use is associated with alcohol and smoking. It has also been linked to the use of other illegal substances.⁵ Although marijuana use has decreased in the past six years it is still the drug of choice of most teens after alcohol and tobacco.²

Use of prescription drugs by teens is an area of growing concern. In an annual survey conducted in 2004, 48% of teens considered themselves 'high risk' for prescription drug experimentation. The most popular drug is Vicodin followed by OxyCotin, Ritalin and Adderall. Teens can easily access these drugs from their own medicine cabinets at home.²

This chapter explores questions surrounding illegal drug use by teens including:

- What drugs are teens using?
- How frequently are teens using these drugs?
- What role do parents, peers and others play in teen's decisions regarding drug use?

¹ Understanding what Influences Tobacco Use by Young People. (2004). *Human Ecology*, 23, 8.

² Shift in Teen Substance Experimentation. (2005) *Nurse Practitioner*, 30, 11.

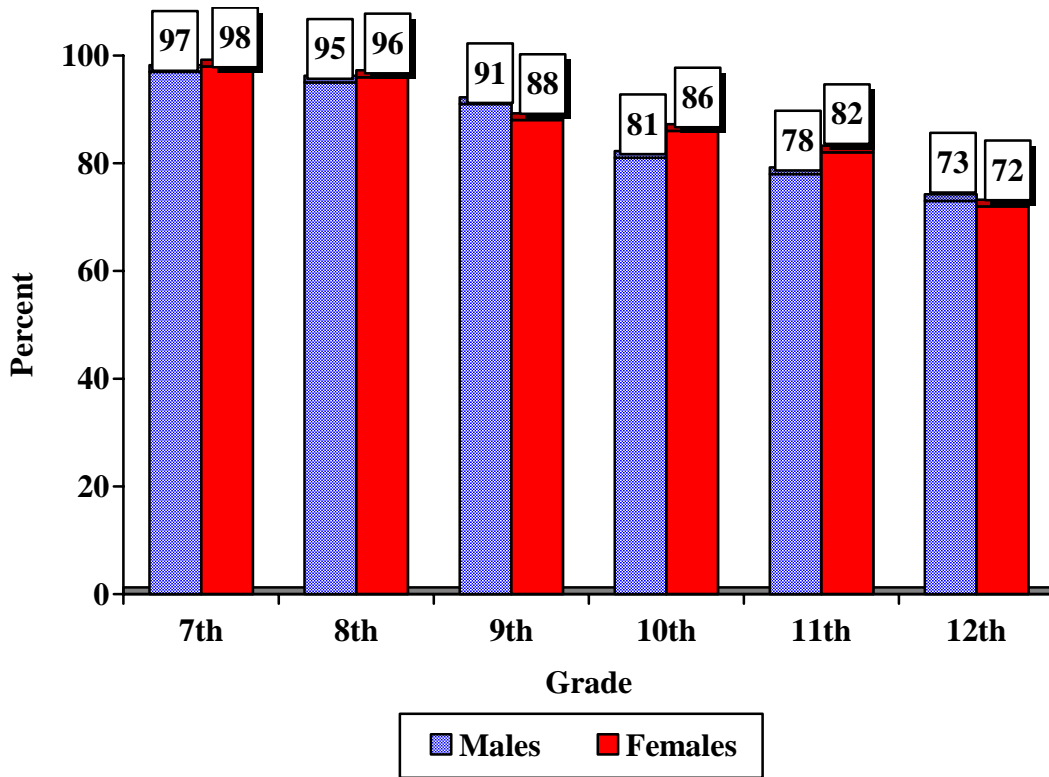
³ Lineberry, Timothy W & Bostwick, J. Michael. (2006) *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 81, 77-84.

⁴ Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey: Executive Summary and Report (2005).

⁵ Study revises explanation for use of multiple drugs. 2005 *The Brown University Digest of Addiction Theory & Application*, 24, 1.

TEENS WHO ABSTAIN FROM TRYING MARIJUANA BY GRADE AND GENDER

Teens who respond “never used” to the statement, “Please tell us how old you were when you first tried marijuana”:



Key Findings:

Only 3% of 7th grade males and 2% of 7th grade females report that they have tried marijuana.

Just over one in four 12th grade students report that they have tried marijuana.

Other Notable Findings:

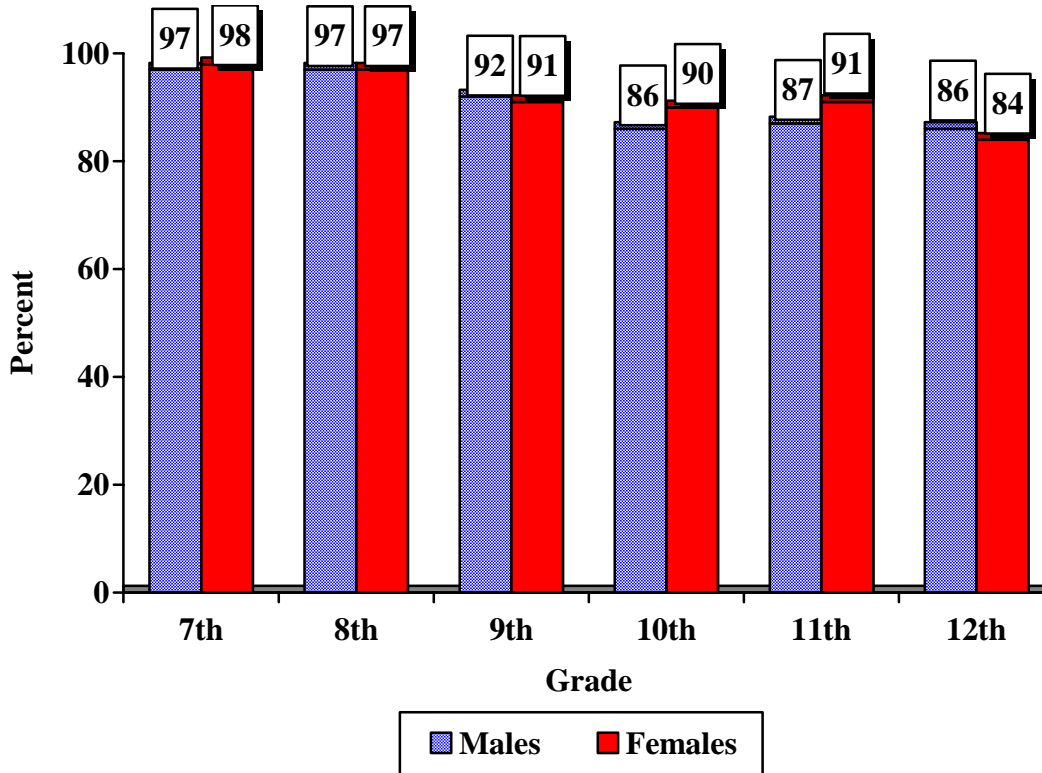
Overall, 85% of males and 86% of females have not tried marijuana.

Eight percent (8%) of teens report they have used marijuana more than once a week at some point in their lives.

When compared to teens who have not tried marijuana, teens who have tried marijuana were three times more likely to report using alcohol in the past 30 days, three times more likely to report using someone else’s prescription drugs in the past 30 days, four times more likely to report chewing tobacco in the past 30 days, six times more likely to report binge drinking in the past 30 days and eight times more likely to report smoking at least one cigarette in the past 30 days.

TEENS WHO DID NOT USE MARIJUANA IN THE PAST 30 DAYS BY GRADE AND GENDER

Teens who respond “none” when asked, “During the past 30 days how many times did you...use marijuana?”:



Key Findings:

No more than 3% of 7th and 8th grade students report using marijuana in the past 30 days.

Females in 12th grade are most likely to report using marijuana in the past 30 days.

Other Notable Findings:

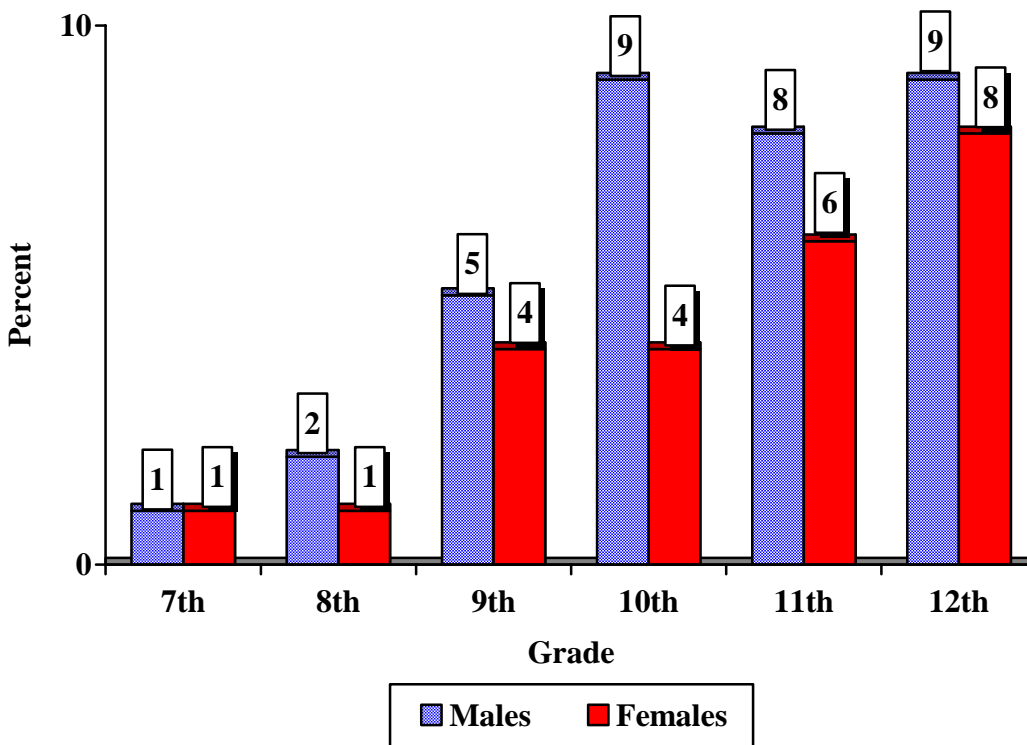
Overall, 9% of males and females report using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days.

Overall, 5% of teens report using marijuana six or more times in the past 30 days while 4% of all teens report using marijuana one to five times in the past 30 days.

Seven percent (7%) of 12th grade males and 6% of 12th grade females report using marijuana at least 10 times in the past 30 days.

REGULAR MARIJUANA USERS BY GRADE AND GENDER

Teens who respond six or more when asked, “During the past 30 days how many times did you...use marijuana?”:



Key Findings:

Nine percent (9%) of 10th and 12th grade males report using marijuana at least 6 times in the past 30 days.

Only 1% of 7th graders report regular marijuana use in the past 30 days.

Other Notable Findings:

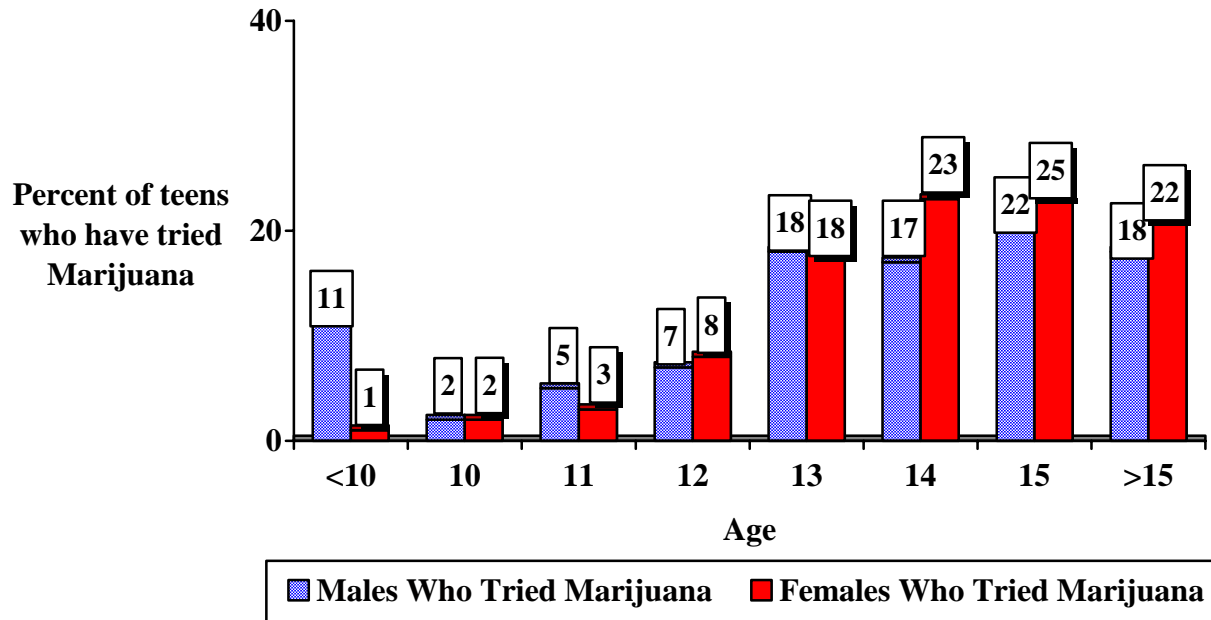
Overall, 6% of males and 4% of females report using marijuana 6 or more times in the past 30 days.

Five percent (5%) of 10th, 11th and 12th grade males report using marijuana at least 20 times in the past 30 days.

Five percent (5%) of 12th grade females and 4% of 11th grade females report using marijuana at least 20 times in the past 30 days.

AGE OF FIRST MARIJUANA USE BY GRADE AND GENDER

Responses of teens who have tried marijuana to the statement, “Please tell us how old you were when you first...tried marijuana”:



Key Findings:

One out of ten (11%) males who have tried marijuana report that they had tried by the time they were 10 years old.

Eighty-six percent (86%) of females who have tried marijuana did so after age 12.

Other Notable Findings:

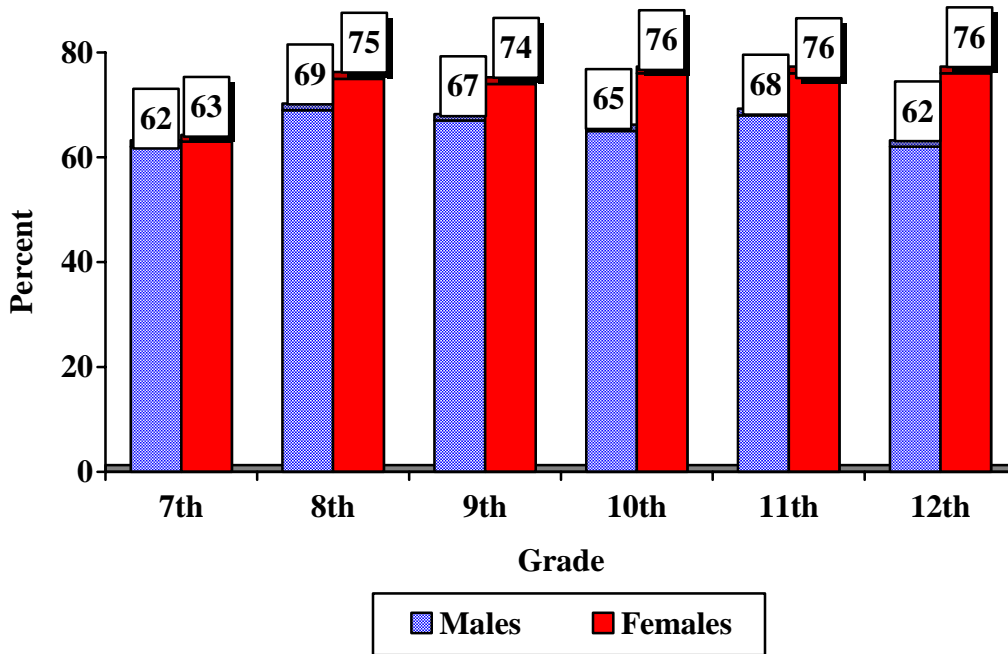
Overall, 8% of teens that have tried marijuana did so before the age of 10.

More than half (57%) of teens that have tried marijuana did so before the age of 15.

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of teens who have tried marijuana report using marijuana in the past 30 days.

PERCEPTION OF RISK ASSOCIATED WITH MARIJUANA USE

Teens who respond “*moderate risk*” or “*great risk*” when asked, “*how much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically and other ways) if they...use any marijuana?*”:



Key Findings:

With the exception of 12th grade males, 7th grade teens are the least likely to associate moderate or great risk with marijuana use.

At every grade level, females are more likely than males to associate moderate to great risk with using marijuana.

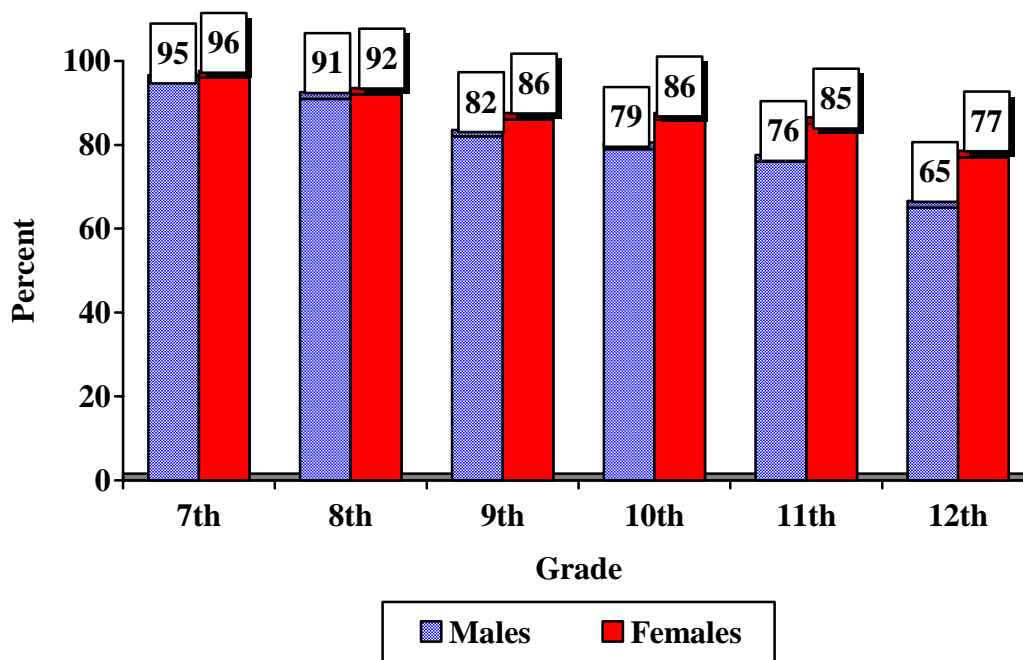
Other Notable Finding:

Half (50%) of all teens associate moderate to great risk with using marijuana.

Three out of four (76%) teens associate moderate to great risk with using marijuana once a week or more.

TEEN VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH MARIJUANA USE

Teens who respond “wrong” or “very wrong” when asked, “how wrong do think it is for teens your age to use marijuana?”:



Key Findings:

Ninety-five percent (95%) of 7th grade males and 96% of 7th grade females think it is “wrong” or “very wrong” for teens their age to use marijuana.

A significant majority of teens at every grade level feel it is “wrong” or “very wrong” for teens their age to use marijuana.

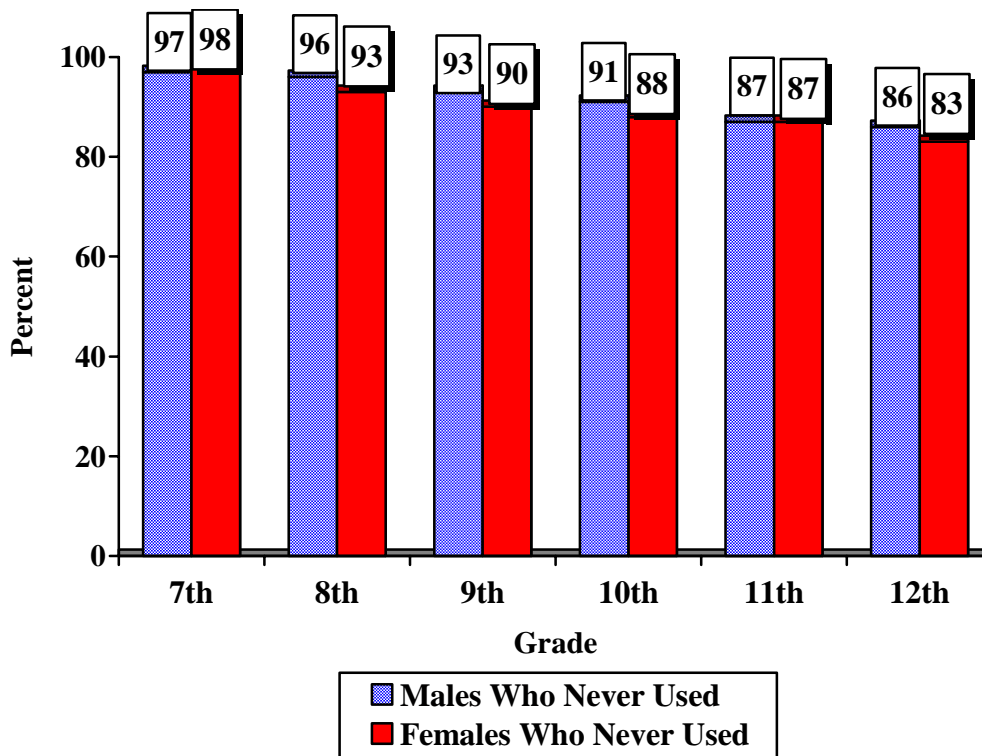
Other Notable Findings:

Ninety percent (90%) of males and 94% of females feel that it is at least “a little wrong” for teens their age to use marijuana.

Fifty-two percent (52%) of teens who think it is “not wrong” for teens their age to use marijuana, used marijuana in the past 30 days. This compares to 2% of those who said it was “very wrong” for teens their age use marijuana that used marijuana in the past 30 days.

USE OF SOMEONE ELSE'S PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Teens who respond “never used” to the statement, “Please tell us how old you were when you first tried someone else’s prescription drugs”:



Key Finding:

At nearly every grade level, more males than females report abstaining from the use of someone else’s prescription drugs.

Other Notable Findings:

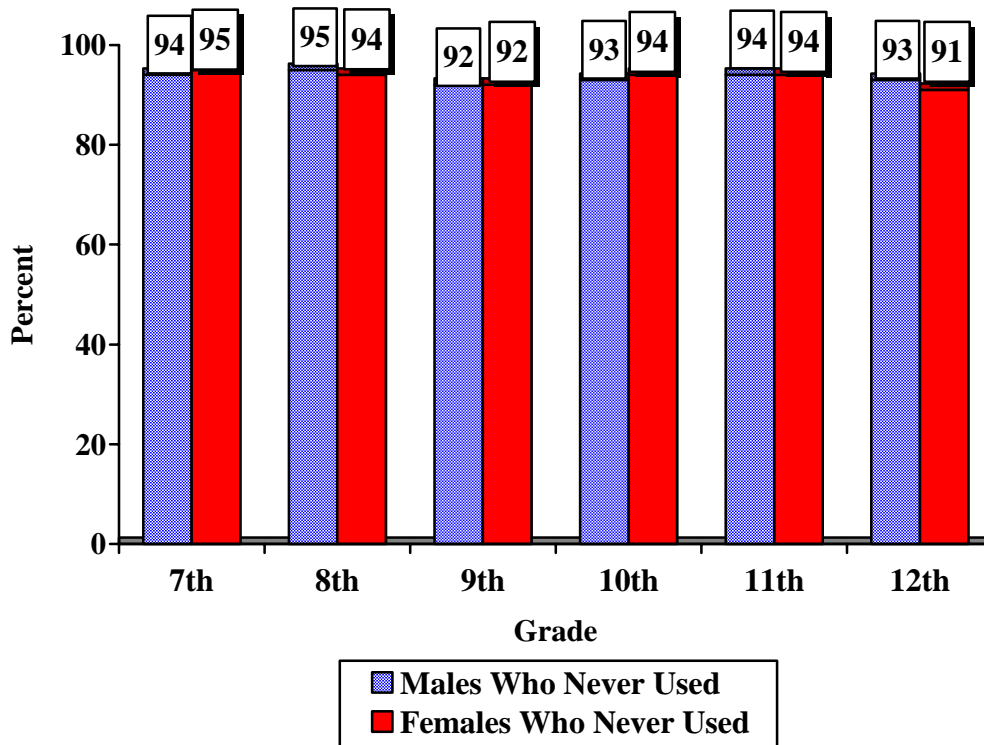
Overall, one of ten (10%) teens have used prescription drugs that were prescribed to someone else.

Thirty-four percent (34%) of males who have used prescription drugs that were prescribed to someone else did so by the time they reached age 13. Twenty-two percent (22%) of females who have used prescription drugs that were prescribed to someone else did so by the time they reached age 13.

Twelve percent (12%) of males and 12% of females report using someone else’s prescription drugs in the past 30 days. Three percent (3%) of all students report using someone else’s prescription drugs in the past 30 days at least six times.

INHALANT USE BY TEENS

Teens who respond “never used” to the statement, “Please tell us how old you were when you first tried inhalants (sniffed glue or other gases or sprays, “huffing”, “bagging”)”:



Key Finding:

The percentage of teens that have tried inhalants is relatively consistent across grade and gender.

Other Notable Findings:

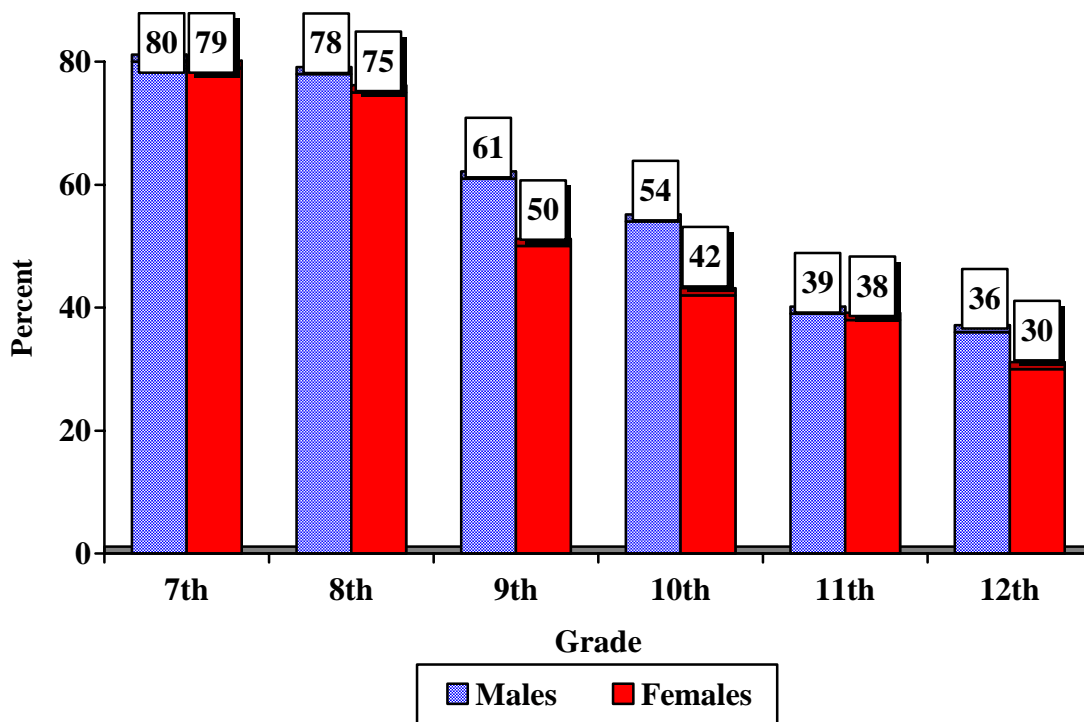
Overall, 7% of teens have used inhalants.

Twenty-one percent (21%) of males who have used inhalants first tried them by the time they reached age 10. Ten percent (10%) of females who have used inhalants first tried them by the time they reached age 10.

Four percent (12%) of males and 3% of females report using inhalants in the past 30 days. Six percent (6%) of 9th grade males report using inhalants in the past 30 days at least six times.

KNOWLEDGE OF GHB, THE DATE RAPE DRUG

Teens who respond “no, I’ve never heard of it” when asked, “Have you ever used the drug GHB (e.g. Date Rape Drug, Roachies, LA Roche, R Roche, Mexican Valium, Forget Me Pill)?”



Key Findings:

More males than females have never heard of GHB.

While 79% of 7th grade females have never heard of GHB, 30% of 12th grade females have heard of it.

Other Notable Findings:

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of males and 51% of females have never heard of the date rape drug, GHB.

Three percent (3%) of females say they have been given GHB without their knowledge at the time.

According to the National Institutes of Health, the date rape drug is odorless, colorless and tasteless. It can be put in someone’s drink unknowingly and will incapacitate the victim for hours. The victim has little or no recollection of what takes place while under the influence of the drug and unsuspecting females have been sexually assaulted after being given the drug.

USE OF ECSTASY, METHAMPHETAMINE AND COCAINE

	Males		Females		Total	
	Never Tried	30 Day User*	Never Tried	30 Day User*	Never Tried	30 Day User*
Ecstasy (e.g. XTC, Adam, Clarity, Lover's Speed)	96%	2%	97%	2%	97%	2%
Methamphetamine (e.g. Meth, Ice, Crank, Crystal, or Speed)	97%	2%	98%	1%	97%	2%
Cocaine	95%	3%	96%	3%	95%	3%

*30-day users indicated that they had used the substance at least once in the past 30 days

Key Finding:

Only a small portion of teens report trying or using ecstasy, methamphetamine or cocaine.

Other Notable Findings:

Six Percent (6%) of 12th grade males and 5% of 12th grade females report using cocaine in the past 30 days.

Only 2% of all teens report using methamphetamines in the past 30 days.

Only 2% of all teens report using ecstasy in the past 30 days.

Five percent (5%) of 12th grade males report using ecstasy in the past 30 days.

Overall 81% of males and 86% of females report some risk associated with trying illegal drugs.

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of males and 71% of females attribute “*great risk*” to trying illegal drugs.

Surprisingly 32% of 7th grade males and 33% of 7th grade females report “*no risk*” in trying illegal drugs, while 91% of 12th grade males and 95% of 12th grade females assign at least some risk to trying illegal drugs.

**TEENS EXPERIMENTATION WITH TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA
COMPARED WITH USE OF OTHER DRUGS**

	Percent Who Used These Drugs In The Past 30-Days				
	Tobacco	Alcohol	Marijuana	Methaphatmines	Prescription Drugs
Tried Tobacco	67%	75%	30%	7%	25%
Tried Alcohol	34%	68%	18%	4%	17%
Tried Marijuana	68%	79%	57%	12%	30%

	Percent Who Used These Drugs In The Past 30-Days				
	Tobacco	Alcohol	Marijuana	Methaphatmines	Prescription Drugs
NEVER Tried Tobacco	NA	22%	2%	1%	10%
NEVER Tried Alcohol	3%	NA	1%	1%	10%
NEVER Tried Marijuana	9%	28%	NA	1%	11%

Key Findings:

Teens who never tried alcohol are much less likely to have used alcohol, marijuana, methamphetamines and prescription drugs in the past 30 days than those who have tried tobacco.

Teens who never tried alcohol are much less likely to have used tobacco, marijuana, methamphetamines and prescription drugs in the past 30 days than those who have tried alcohol.

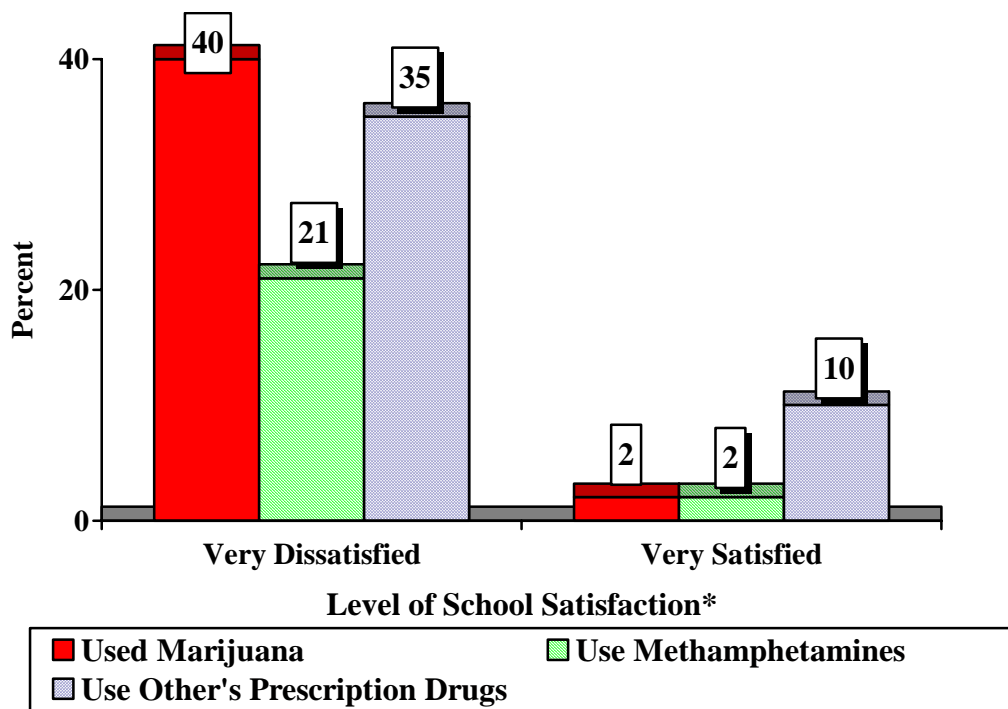
Teens who never tried marijuana are much less likely to have used tobacco, alcohol, methamphetamines and prescription drugs in the past 30 days than those who have tried marijuana.

Other Notable Findings:

In general, the younger a respondent was when he or she engaged in regular use of tobacco, alcohol or marijuana, the more likely they are to report using other drugs in the past 30 days. For example 41% of teens who report regular use of alcohol at age 12 report using marijuana in the past 30 days while 24% of those who report regular use of alcohol at age 16 report using marijuana in the past 30 days. The same holds true for tobacco use, 23% of those who became regular smokers at age 11 used methamphetamines in the past 30 days, while 2% of those who became regular smokers at age 17 used methamphetamines in the past 30 days.

SCHOOL SATISFACTION AND CURRENT DRUG USE

Level of school satisfaction compared with 30-day use and non-use of marijuana, methamphetamines and prescription drugs.



* The school satisfaction scale measured the teen's overall satisfaction with their school and was computed using seven questions related to how teens feel about their school. Higher scores correspond to greater satisfaction with school.

Key Finding:

Teens who are very dissatisfied with school are more likely to report using marijuana, methamphetamines or someone else's prescription drugs in the past 30 days.

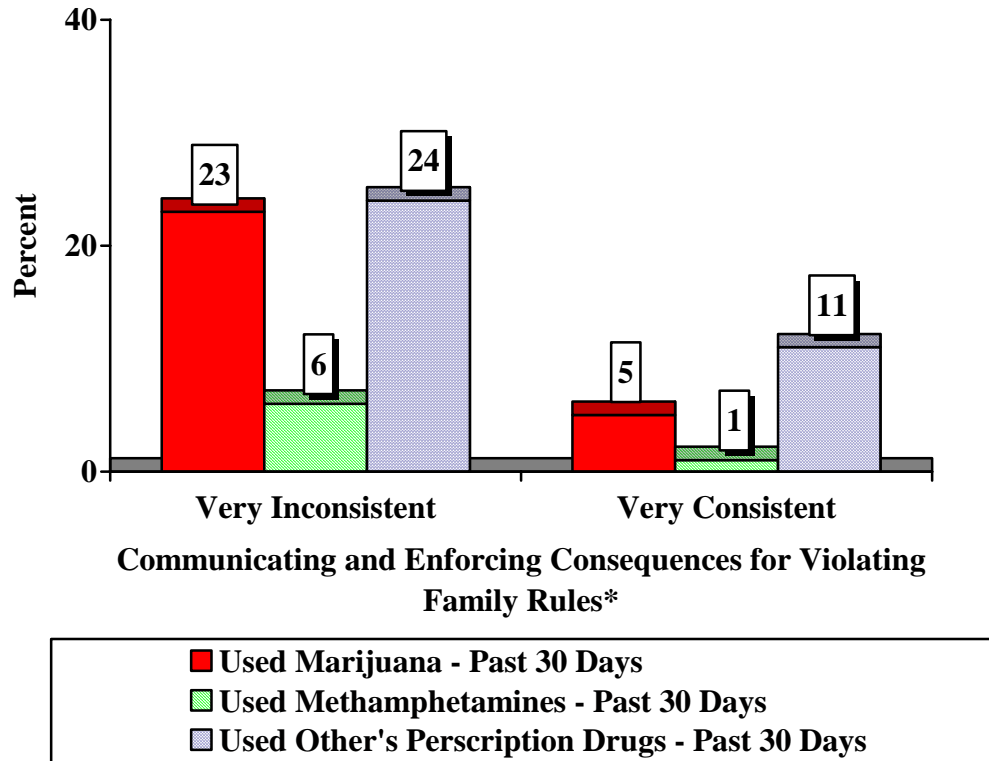
Other Notable Findings:

Eight percent (8%) of teens who are somewhat satisfied with school used marijuana in the past 30 days, while 21% of the teens who were somewhat dissatisfied with school used marijuana in the past 30 days.

Twelve percent (12%) of teens who are somewhat satisfied with school used someone else's prescription drugs in the past 30 days, while 21% of the teens who were somewhat dissatisfied with school used someone else's prescription drugs in the past 30 days.

COMMUNICATING AND ENFORCING CONSEQUENCE FOR VIOLATING FAMILY RULES AND DRUG USE

The extent that families consistently communicate and enforce consequences for violating family rules compared with teens' use of marijuana, methamphetamines or someone else's prescription



drugs in the past 30 days:

*The degree of consistency in family rule communication and enforcement was determined by creating a “Family Rules Scale” from two questions related to the communication and enforcement of consequences for violating family rules.

Key Findings:

Of the teens whose parents scored “*very inconsistent*” on the family rules scale, 23% used marijuana in the past 30 days, 6% used methamphetamines and 24% used someone else’s prescription drugs.

Of the teens whose parents scored “*very consistent*” on the family rules scale, 5% used marijuana in the past 30 days, 1% used methamphetamines and 11% used someone else’s prescription drugs.

Other Notable Finding:

Other parental practices linked to lower drug use include family love and support, eating meals as a family, communicating parental values regarding teen drug use, parental monitoring and reporting teens to school officials when they violate a school code.

For more information on family influences see the chapter on family relationships.