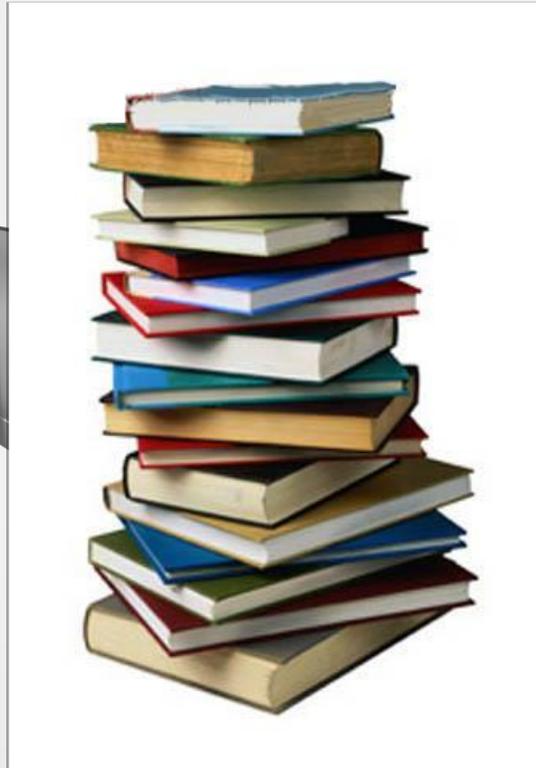


**DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AMONG BERNARDS
TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS
6TH, 8TH, 10TH, & 12TH GRADES
2016-17**



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Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures.....	3
Executive Summary	5
Survey Method.....	5
Key Findings.....	5
Alcohol.....	5
Tobacco	6
Marijuana	6
Prescription drugs	7
Illicit drugs.....	8
General patterns	8
Prevention Implications	8
Main Report	
Introduction	10
Survey Method.....	10
Organization of the Report.....	11
Alcohol Use.....	11
Patterns of Alcohol Use.....	11
Attitudes and Beliefs about Alcohol Use.....	15
Alcohol Section Conclusions.....	20
Tobacco	21
Tobacco Section Conclusions	25
Marijuana	26
Marijuana Section Conclusions	31
Prescription Drugs.....	32
Prescribed use of prescription drugs.....	32
Unprescribed use of prescription drugs.....	34
Steroids.....	39
Prescription Drug Conclusions	39
Illicit Drugs	39
Illicit Drug Section Conclusions	46
Report Conclusions.....	46
Key Findings.....	46
Alcohol.....	46
Tobacco	46
Marijuana	47
Prescription drugs	48
Illicit drugs.....	48
General patterns	49
Prevention Implications	49
About the Author	51

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1. Survey Response Rates by Gender and Grade Level.....	10
Table 2. Percent of Students Indicating Experience with Alcohol by Grade and Gender	12
Figure 1. Age First Gotten Drunk by Gender	13
Table 3. Frequency of Use of Alcohol in Past 12 Months by Grade Level.....	14
Table 4. Frequency of Use of Alcohol in Past 30 Days by Grade Level.....	14
Table 5. Drinking Behavior Among Students by Grade Level and Gender	15
Table 6. Proportion of Students Who Have 1 or More Friends Who Get Drunk by Grade and Gender	15
Table 7. Perceived Risk of Alcohol by Grade Level.....	16
Table 8. Problems Experience by Students Who Have Gotten drunk 1 or More Times in the Last 12 Months.....	17
Table 9. Percent of Students Reporting Use of Alcohol in the Past 12 Months at Selected Locations and Times	18
Table 10. Percent of Students Who Used Alcohol in Past 12 Months Indicating They Have Gotten Drunk Alone.....	18
Table 11. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Their Parents Would Consider Alcohol Use.....	19
Table 12. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Their Friends Consider Alcohol Use	20
Table 13. Ease of Access to Alcohol by Grade	20
Table 14. Use of Tobacco Products in Lifetime by Grade.....	21
Table 15. Use of Tobacco Products in Lifetime by Grade and Gender	21
Table 16. Use of Tobacco Products in Past Month by Grade and Gender	22
Table 17. Frequency of Tobacco Use by Type.....	22
Figure 2. Age First Used Part of a.....	23
Table 18. Ease of Access to Tobacco by Grade.....	24
Table 19. Student Perceptions of How Much Parents Care about Tobacco Use.....	24
Table 20. How Wrong Friends Feel It Is to Smoke Tobacco.....	24
Table 21. Perceived Harm of Tobacco Use	25
Table 22. Percent Who Have Ever Tried Marijuana by Grade and Gender.....	26
Table 23. Frequency of Use of Marijuana in Last 12 Months an Past 30 Days.....	27
Figure 3. Age of First Use of Marijuana by Gender.....	28
Table 24. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Parents Consider Smoking Marijuana	29
Table 25. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Friends Consider Marijuana Use	29
Table 26. Ease of Getting Marijuana by Grade.....	29
Table 27. Perceived Risk of Marijuana Use	30
Table 28. Percent of Students Who Indicated Use of Various Forms of Marijuana and Had One or More of the Consequences	31
Table 29. Proportion of Students Who Have Ever	32
Table 30. Proportion of Male and Female Students Who Have Ever Been Given These Drugs by a Doctor	33
Table 31. Reasons for Being Prescribed a Painkiller.....	33
Table 32. Who Is Responsible for Making Sure Prescribed Painkiller is Used as Directed?.....	34
Table 33. Percent of Students Taking Extra Doses of Prescribed Drugs.....	34
Table 34. Proportion of Students Responding “Yes” to Using Prescription Drugs Not Prescribed to Them by a Doctor.....	34
Table 35. Proportion of Students Who Have Ever Gotten these Drugs Other than from a Doctor by Source	35
Table 36. Use of Drugs Not Prescribed One or More Times in Past 12 Months by Grade	35
Table 37. Use of Drugs Not Prescribed One or More Times in Past 30 Days by Grade.....	36
Table 38. Ease of Getting Narcotic Painkillers.....	36
Table 39. How Wrong Parents and Friends Perceive Taking Prescription Drugs Not Prescribed	37
Table 40. Perceived Risks of Prescription Drug Types by Grade	38
Table 41. Percent of Students Who Have Ever Used Drugs by Grade	40
Table 42. Percent of Students Who Used Drugs One or More Times in Past 12 Months and Past 30 Days.....	41

Table 43. Perceived Risk of Selected Illicit Drugs by Grade and Amount of Use	42
Table 44. Perceived Ease of Getting Illicit Drugs by Grade.....	44
Table 45. Perception of How Wrong Parents Consider Using Drugs.....	45
Table 46. Perception of How Wrong Friends Consider Using Drugs.....	45
Table 47. Student Description of Their Current Drug Use Excluding Alcohol	50

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AMONG BERNARDS TOWNSHIP DISTRICT STUDENTS 2016-17

Prepared by Kirk C. Harlow, Dr.P.H.

Executive Summary

Adolescent drug use is a serious national problem. Bernards Township Health Department and Bernards Township School District have worked together for many years to assess drug use and abuse among students using *The American Drug and Alcohol Survey™* (ADAS).¹ Bernards Township School District's 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade students have completed the ADAS nine times. The results of the 2016-17 survey are presented in this report.

Survey Method

The survey used was an adaptation of *The American Drug and Alcohol Survey™* (ADAS) developed by RMBSI, Inc. The survey has been used widely, with versions having been given to more than a million students in recent years. The survey was administered to students using a computer-based delivery platform. Parental permission was sought for all 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students.

The response rates were 72% for 6th graders, 71% for 8th graders, 47% for 10th graders, and 43% for 12th graders. Any survey sample, whether random or self-selected as in this case, may not perfectly represent the total surveyed population. In addition, although most students provide honest answers, some students may provide answers that are not accurate. Several surveys that had responses that were clearly inaccurate were removed from the analysis. Finally, all surveys have a margin of error that can vary among the survey items. In general, a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ can be applied to this survey, although it is lower for some items and higher for others. Given these limitations, the results should be viewed only as estimates for the whole student body.

Key Findings

Alcohol

- Alcohol is consistently the most widely used drug. About 18% of 10th graders and 40% of 12th graders indicated getting drunk in the past 30 days, higher than the 2016 national proportions of 9.0% for 10th graders and 20.6% for 12th graders.
- 46.2% of females and 57.7% of males in 12th grade indicated they have gotten drunk.
- The majority of students who reported having gotten drunk had done so prior to age 16.

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- About 80% of students in all four grades reported getting drunk regularly was of “great risk.” Over half of 12th graders, however, viewed having 5 or more drinks once or twice a week of “moderate risk” or less.
- 69.6% of students who have gotten drunk one or more times in the past month have experienced not remembering what happened while drinking. About 40% reported drinking had “made them break something” and that they had “passed out.”
- Use of alcohol most frequently occurs at weekend parties, at night with friends, or at home both with and without parents’ knowledge.
- In sum, alcohol is the most widely used drug among students of the drugs examined in this report. Students’ use of alcohol exceeds that reported nationally. In addition, although students report understanding the risks of getting drunk, considerable numbers of students “binge” drink and report experiencing alcohol-related consequences.

Tobacco

- By the 12th grade, 23.4% of students indicated ever having used cigarettes, a slightly lower proportion than the 28.3% reported in national data.
- There was no difference in the proportions of males and females who have tried cigarettes. Higher proportions of males, however, indicated having tried smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes.
- Use of cigarettes in the past month among 12th graders was lower than that reported nationally, 6.9% compared to 10.5%.
- Use of electronic cigarettes appears to be an emerging problem among students, with 15.1% of 12th grade students reporting use in the past 30 days.
- Over half of both males and females who have tried cigarettes did so before the age of 16.
- Most students indicated their parents believe tobacco use is wrong, but fewer believe their friends do.
- About 79% of 10th and 12th graders consider use of tobacco to be a great risk.
- In sum, current use of cigarettes (use in the past 30 days) among students is lower than that reported nationally. Electronic cigarettes are an emerging problem, however. Although most students consider use of cigarettes to be risky, they may not be aware of the risks of electronic cigarettes.

Marijuana

- 16.9% of 12th graders indicated using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days, slightly lower than the 22.5% reported nationally.
- The proportion of students reporting use of marijuana in the past month is higher than that reported for cigarettes.
- Most student who have tried marijuana have done so at ages 15 or 16.

- By 12th grade year, 73% of students reported that marijuana is “very easy” or “fairly easy” to get.
- Although the majority of students believe their parents think using marijuana is wrong, 15% of 12th graders reported that their parents thought marijuana was just “a little bit” or “not at all” wrong.
- Overall, students believe their parents and friends view marijuana use as less wrong than tobacco use.
- Slightly more than half of 12th graders viewed smoking marijuana more than once a week as of “moderate” or “great” risk.
- In sum, a smaller proportion of students report use of marijuana than reported nationally. The use of marijuana, however, is viewed as having less risk than tobacco, and a higher proportion of students report using marijuana than tobacco. Students’ attitudes about marijuana parallel the change in attitudes nationally.

Prescription drugs

- Four categories of prescription drugs, narcotic painkillers, tranquilizers, sedatives, and ADD/ADHD drugs were examined.
- The most prescribed drug type was narcotic painkillers with 27.2% of 12th graders reporting a doctor had prescribed them narcotic painkillers.
- Most students who had been prescribed a narcotic painkiller indicated it was for an acute problem such as surgery. Less than 10% reported getting a prescription for chronic pain.
- Less than 10% of students reported taking extra doses of any of the various types of prescription drugs.
- Few students reported “Ever” using prescription drugs not prescribed by a doctor. ADD/ADHD drugs were the most frequently identified. By 12th grade, 8.7% of students indicated using unprescribed drugs in their lifetimes. Less than 2% of students reported using drugs that are not prescribed in the past month.
- Students may underestimate the risks of the various prescription drugs. About 15% of 10th and 12th graders reported that narcotic painkillers were of “No risk” or “Slight risk.” 32.9% of seniors indicated that ADD/ADHD drugs were of “No risk” or “Slight risk.”
- In sum, the use by students of the four categories of drugs outside of a prescription was quite low. Although over 25% of 12th graders indicated receiving a prescription of narcotic painkillers, the types of prescriptions most frequently provided were for acute problems rather than chronic pain. This suggests that the risk of long-term exposure and availability is limited. The most frequent drug type to be used outside of a prescription was ADD/ADHD drugs. Students may underestimate the risks of the various prescription drugs, but it appears that only a small segment of students uses them in an unprescribed way.

Illicit drugs

- The reported use of the various types of illicit drugs was low. Less than 5% of students in any of the four grades indicated having tried any of the illicit drugs. The only exception was LSD, which 6.9% of 12th graders reported having tried.
- Less than 2% of the students in any grade level reported using illicit drugs in the past 30 days.
- The most frequently used drugs identified in the past 30 days were LSD, Other hallucinogens, Ecstasy, Synthetic marijuana, and Synthetic cathinones.
- One percent or less of students in any grade reported use of Heroin or Methamphetamine in the past 30 days.
- Most students considered use of illicit drugs of great risk.
- In sum, the reported use of illicit drugs among students was quite low. Less than 5% reported any lifetime use other than LSD. Less than 2% of students indicated current use (use past 30 days), and even fewer students reported use of heroin and methamphetamine. Even though current use of illicit drugs is low, drug use among young people ebbs and flows depending on factors including perceived risk, cultural norms, and availability. The cocaine and crack epidemic of the past and the current opioid epidemic are testaments to the potential of one or more drugs to take hold in a community.

General patterns

- Alcohol and drug use for nearly every category increases with the grade level of respondents.
- The initiation of drug use occurs primarily from ages 13 through 16, corresponding to adolescence.
- Higher perceived risk of the use of a drug is associated with less use of the drug. If students underestimate a drug's risk, they may be more likely to use it.
- The perception of parental disapproval of use of a drug is associated with less use of the drug.
- The use of alcohol and drugs most frequently takes place in social settings.

Prevention Implications

The prevention and control of alcohol and drug use and abuse among young people requires ongoing effort in the community. The findings of this survey, as well as other research on prevention, suggest some prevention considerations.

- The survey results suggest that prevention and control efforts should be considered with respect to alcohol use. Sizable percentages of students report getting drunk and

experiencing serious consequences, so prevention should not only focus on controlling use, but also on practices to ensure the safety of students.

- It has become especially important to ensure young people are aware of the risks of marijuana use given the liberalization of attitudes towards it and its easy access.
- The emergence of the use of electronic cigarettes indicates the importance of informing students about the risks associated with their use. Increased regulation by the Food and Drug Administration may help, but local efforts also should be considered.
- Although the use of illicit drugs is low, they are all dangerous drugs and merit ongoing attention. Approaches to help monitor and identify emergent problems should be considered. Some possible source of information include local emergency rooms, local law enforcement agencies, teachers, and local health
- The results also indicated that prevention efforts are particularly important during the transition to adolescence. Attitudes towards the use of drugs other than alcohol shift from 6th grade to 12th grade. In other words, prevention efforts should focus on sustaining the attitudes that younger students have.
- Student perceptions of parental attitudes toward alcohol and drug use matter. An important part of prevention is for parents to convey not only concern about alcohol and drug use, but to be involved in discussing issues of safety with their children. In addition, as suggested in the previous item, parental discussions about drugs should begin by age 13 and be ongoing throughout the period of adolescence.
- The lesson reflected in the relatively low proportions of students using tobacco products is that cultural attitudes are important. Attitudes toward tobacco use have changed over the past 50 years from smoking being acceptable to being unacceptable. The cultural norms among student groups and in the community affect the popularity of drugs and the ways in which they are used. The use of alcohol and marijuana are not only about intoxication, but also about social norms.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AMONG BERNARDS TOWNSHIP DISTRICT STUDENTS 2016-17

Prepared by Kirk C. Harlow, Dr.P.H.

Introduction

Adolescent drug use is a serious national problem. Bernards Township Health Department and Bernards Township School District have worked together for many years to assess drug use among students using *The American Drug and Alcohol Survey™* (ADAS).² Bernards Township School District’s 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade students have completed the ADAS nine times. The results of the 2016-17 survey are presented in this report.

Survey Method

The survey used was an adaptation of *The American Drug and Alcohol Survey™* (ADAS) developed by RMBSI, Inc. The survey has been used widely, with versions having been given to more than a million students in recent years. The survey was administered to students using a computer-based delivery platform. Parental permission was sought for all 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students.

The response rates for each grade by gender are presented in Table 1. The response rates for 6th and 8th grades are very good. The rates for 10th and 12th grades are somewhat low, especially the rate for 12th grade males. Because students self-selected participation, it is possible that those who did not complete the survey may have biased the results. Any survey sample, whether random or self-selected as in this case, may not perfectly represent the total surveyed population.

Table 1. Survey Response Rates by Gender and Grade Level						
	Male		Female		Total	
Grade Level	Count	Response Rate	Count	Response Rate	Count	Response Rate
6th Grade	174	71%	135	71%	313	72%
8th Grade	149	68%	173	77%	331	71%
10th Grade	113	46%	103	45%	223	47%
12th Grade	97	38%	119	48%	220	43%

² The American Drug and Alcohol Survey™, © RMBSI, Inc., was used by permission.

Although most students provide honest answers, some students may provide answers that are not accurate. Several surveys that had responses that were clearly inaccurate were removed from the analysis, but unless there was a clear pattern of misrepresentation, some student responses could be inaccurate, whether intentionally or through an error in selection. Some of the results presented are for small numbers of students, so inaccurate responses may affect the proportions.

In addition, the percentages reported are affected by sampling error and are a point estimate in the center of a range. The size of the range increases as narrower categories are reported. The ranges vary depending on what is reported from $\pm 2\%$ for results for all students to $\pm 8\%$ for male 12th graders. In general, it is reasonable to use $\pm 5\%$ as a rule of thumb. In addition, some of the results are compared with national statistics from the 2016 *Monitoring the Future* study conducted by the University of Michigan.³ The comparisons not only help to understand where the District's students stand relative to a national sample, but also as a way of checking if local results fall within an expected range.

Given the limitations, the results should be viewed only as estimates and not as a census of drug and alcohol use in the school district. That said, results do provide useful insight into the general patterns of drug and alcohol use and students attitudes.

Organization of the Report

The report is divided into several sections representing different drugs or categories of drugs. We begin with the drugs that are most widely used by young people including alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. These sections are followed by sections on prescription drugs and a variety of illicit drugs. The report is concluded with a summary of the key findings and recommendations for prevention and control of drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Alcohol Use

The most widely used and abused drug among young people is alcohol. Two different aspects of alcohol use are examined in this section. The patterns of alcohol use are examined in the first part. This is followed by a section with information on where alcohol is used and perceived consequences of alcohol use.

Patterns of Alcohol Use

Three different levels of alcohol use are examined in the survey. The first level is if students have had an experience with alcohol or getting drunk at any time. This is a measure of exposure to alcohol, since it can include anywhere from one time to many times. The second level is use of alcohol in the past 12 months. This provides information about those who have engaged in some use of alcohol, but can include both frequent and infrequent alcohol use. The last measure is use of alcohol in the past month. This is a measure of current use and abuse of alcohol among students.

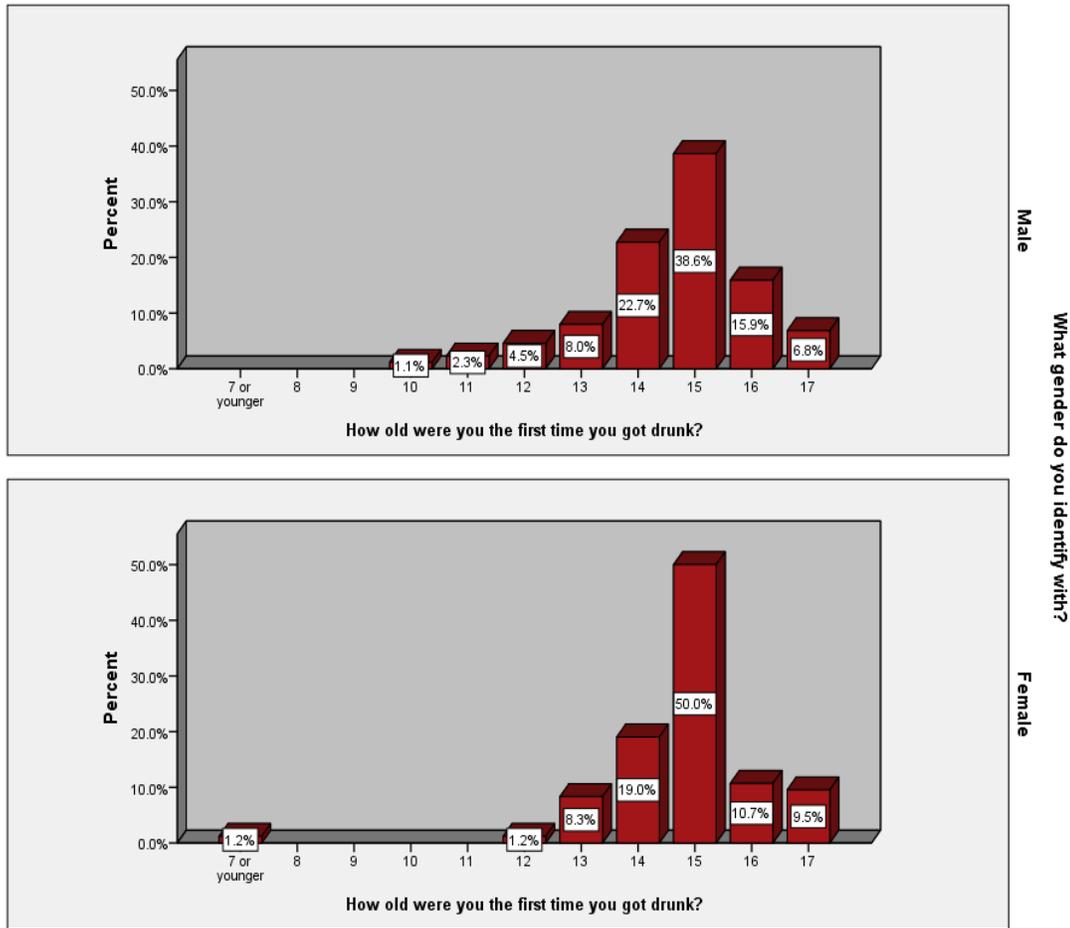
³ See the Monitoring the Future website, <http://monitoringthefuture.org/>

The results of two survey questions, “Have you ever had alcohol to drink - more than a few sips?” and “Have you ever gotten drunk?” are presented in Table 2. As the table reveals, the proportions of students who have had “more than a few sips of alcohol” or “gotten drunk” increase with grade level. Nearly 25% of students have gotten drunk by 10th grade. By 12th grade, 46.2% of females and 57.7% of males indicated they have gotten drunk.

Table 2. Percent of Students Indicating Experience with Alcohol by Grade and Gender		
	Male	Female
6th Grade *		
Have you ever had alcohol to drink - more than a few sips?	Not Available	Not Available
Have you ever gotten drunk?	Not Available	Not Available
8th Grade *		
Have you ever had alcohol to drink - more than a few sips?	Not Available	Not Available
Have you ever gotten drunk?	Not Available	Not Available
10th Grade		
Have you ever had alcohol to drink - more than a few sips?	31.9%	45.6%
Have you ever gotten drunk?	21.2%	24.3%
12th Grade		
Have you ever had alcohol to drink - more than a few sips?	74.2%	71.4%
Have you ever gotten drunk?	57.7%	46.2%
* The proportions for 6 th and 8 th grades have been omitted because they are inconsistent with the results presented in Table 3 that follows. The results for “ever had” were marked less than the results for “used in the past 12 months.”		

As shown in Figure 1, most students who have gotten drunk have done so before age 16. This is particularly important for prevention planning. As a rule, the risk of use of many drugs including alcohol increases markedly at around age 13, even among young people who have indicated they would not use drugs in earlier ages. Consequently, it is important to target prevention efforts at students in the 13 to 15 age group.

Figure 1. Age First Gotten Drunk by Gender



The frequencies of use of alcohol other than in a religious ceremony and the frequency of getting drunk in the past 12 months and the past 30 days are presented in Tables 3 and 4. By the time students are in 12th grade, about 25% indicated they have gotten drunk “10 or more times” in the past 12 months. Twenty-one percent of 12th grade students indicated getting drunk three or more times in the past 30 days. Forty percent of 12th graders reported getting drunk at least once in the past 30 days compared to 37.3% of 12th graders nationally.⁴

⁴ See: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data/16drtbl1.pdf>

Table 3. Frequency of Use of Alcohol in Past 12 Months by Grade Level				
	None	1-2 times	3-9 times	10 or more times
6th Grade				
Had alcohol to drink other than part of a religious practice	92.7%	5.4%	<1.0%	1.5%
Gotten drunk regardless of setting or situation	98.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
8th Grade				
Had alcohol to drink other than part of a religious practice	88.5%	9.4%	1.2%	<1.0%
Gotten drunk regardless of setting or situation	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10th Grade				
Had alcohol to drink other than part of a religious practice	61.0%	18.8%	11.2%	9.0%
Gotten drunk regardless of setting or situation	78.9%	9.0%	8.1%	4.0%
12th Grade				
Had alcohol to drink other than part of a religious practice	38.6%	14.5%	13.2%	33.6%
Gotten drunk regardless of setting or situation	55.9%	8.2%	10.9%	25.0%

Table 4. Frequency of Use of Alcohol in Past 30 Days by Grade Level				
	None	1-2 times	3-9 times	10 or more times
6th Grade				
Had one or more drinks of alcohol	97.8%	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Gotten drunk	98.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
8th Grade				
Had one or more drinks of alcohol	97.3%	2.4%	<1.0%	0.0%
Gotten drunk	99.4%	<1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10th Grade				
Had one or more drinks of alcohol	74.0%	17.5%	6.3%	2.1%
Gotten drunk	82.5%	13.0%	3.6%	<1.0%
12th Grade				
Had one or more drinks of alcohol	45.0%	23.6%	23.6%	7.7%
Gotten drunk	60.0%	19.1%	17.3%	3.7%

The results of a different survey question examining alcohol use behavior are presented in Table 5. As shown, 23.7% of 12th grade males and 21.0% of 12th grade females indicated drinking enough to “feel it a lot,” and 6.2% of 12th grade males and 5.9% of 12th grade females reported they drink enough to “get really drunk.” These results suggest that “binge” drinking is quite prevalent among students.

	6th Grade		8th Grade		10th Grade		12th Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
I do not drink	97.7%	100.0%	98.0%	94.8%	75.2%	63.1%	30.9%	38.7%
Just a glass or two	1.1%	0.0%	1.3%	5.2%	4.4%	8.7%	12.4%	14.3%
Enough to feel it a little	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%	8.0%	17.5%	26.8%	20.2%
Enough to feel it a lot	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	7.8%	23.7%	21.0%
Until I get really drunk	<1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	2.9%	6.2%	5.9%

Attitudes and Beliefs about Alcohol Use

Peer pressure and peer norms play an important part in choices around alcohol use. The results of a question asking students about the use of alcohol among their friends are presented in Table 6. By 10th grade, 50.5% of the males and 47.2% of females indicated one or more of their friends are getting drunk almost every weekend. By 12th grade, 53.3% of males and 39.8% of females responded “some or most” of their friends get drunk almost every weekend.

	Male			Female		
	Number of Friends			Number of Friends		
	None	1 or 2	Some or most	None	1 or 2	Some or most
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
6th Grade						
Get drunk once in awhile	98.7%	<1.0%	<1.0%	98.5%	1.5%	0.0%
Get drunk almost every weekend	99.4%	0.0%	<1.0%	99.2%	<1.0%	0.0%
8th Grade						
Get drunk once in awhile	88.2%	10.2%	1.6%	90.3%	7.9%	1.8%
Get drunk almost every weekend	97.0%	2.3%	<1.0%	99.4%	<1.0%	0.0%
10th Grade						
Get drunk once in awhile	26.7%	18.8%	54.5%	22.7%	13.4%	63.9%
Get drunk almost every weekend	49.5%	21.8%	28.7%	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%
12th Grade						
Get drunk once in awhile	7.6%	14.1%	78.3%	12.9%	23.3%	63.8%
Get drunk almost every weekend	20.0%	26.7%	53.3%	39.8%	20.3%	39.8%

It is important to note that this not a measure of the number of students getting drunk. It is a measure of how many of the students have a member of their peer group who gets drunk. For example, if you have two groups of friends with five members and one member of one group gets drunk every weekend, 40% of the students would have one or more friends getting drunk. What the results in Table 6 say is that many students have at least one friend who is getting drunk with some frequency. On the one hand, this opens the door for the friend to encourage drinking among those who currently do not drink. On the other hand, it opens the door for those who do not drink to encourage friends not to drink, or to help ensure safety such as being a designated driver.

The perceived risk of alcohol use for students is presented in Table 7. The perceived risk of alcohol use is an indicator of the likelihood they will engage in the behavior. Eighty-one percent of 6th graders, 88% of 8th graders, 81% of 10th graders, and 76% of 12th graders indicated that getting “drunk regularly” is of “great risk.” At least half of the students in each of the four grade levels indicated that “using alcohol regularly” was of “moderate” or “great” risk.

Table 7. Perceived Risk of Alcohol by Grade Level					
	No Risk	Slight Risk	Moderate Risk	Great Risk	Don't know
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
6th Grade					
Use alcohol 1 or 2 times	43.1%	37.4%	6.1%	1.0%	12.5%
Use alcohol regularly	7.3%	31.3%	36.4%	14.1%	10.9%
Have 5 or more drinks of alcohol 1 or 2 times per week	5.4%	7.3%	44.4%	30.7%	12.1%
Get drunk 1 or 2 times	5.1%	8.3%	41.5%	31.9%	13.1%
Get drunk regularly	4.5%	<1.0%	2.2%	81.2%	11.5%
8th Grade					
Use alcohol 1 or 2 times	39.9%	44.7%	8.2%	3.3%	3.9%
Use alcohol regularly	1.5%	24.2%	45.6%	26.3%	2.4%
Have 5 or more drinks of alcohol 1 or 2 times per week	1.2%	8.2%	43.8%	42.6%	4.2%
Get drunk 1 or 2 times	3.0%	17.5%	47.7%	27.2%	4.5%
Get drunk regularly	0.6%	<1.0%	3.9%	88.2%	6.6%
10th Grade					
Use alcohol 1 or 2 times	33.6%	51.6%	9.9%	1.8%	3.1%
Use alcohol regularly	2.2%	16.6%	46.6%	31.8%	2.7%
Have 5 or more drinks of alcohol 1 or 2 times per week	1.3%	9.4%	32.7%	53.4%	3.1%
Get drunk 1 or 2 times	9.4%	30.0%	38.1%	18.8%	3.6%
Get drunk regularly	0.0%	2.7%	12.6%	81.2%	3.6%
12th Grade					
Use alcohol 1 or 2 times	46.4%	41.4%	8.2%	2.7%	1.4%
Use alcohol regularly	5.0%	28.2%	39.1%	26.4%	1.4%
Have 5 or more drinks of alcohol 1 or 2 times per week	1.8%	10.5%	40.0%	46.4%	1.4%
Get drunk 1 or 2 times	15.9%	31.4%	35.9%	15.0%	1.8%
Get drunk regularly	1.8%	2.3%	17.7%	75.9%	2.3%

The actual consequences experienced by students who indicated getting drunk at least one time in the last 12 months are presented in Table 8. As the table shows, about 70% of the students who got drunk at least once in past 12 months indicated they could not remember what happened while drinking. In addition, over a third of the students reported breaking something, passing out, and doing something sexual that they regretted. Even though the majority of students recognize the risk of alcohol use, these results suggest that a sizable segment of students experience alcohol-related issues that may result in serious consequences.

Table 8. Problems Experience by Students Who Have Gotten drunk <u>1 or More Times</u> in the <u>Last 12 Months</u>		
	Number of Times Experienced Problem	
	1-2 times	3 or more times
	Row %	Row %
Could not remember what happened while drinking?	41.2%	28.4%
Made you break something?	26.4%	13.5%
Passed out?	27.0%	12.8%
Did something sexual that you later wished you hadn't?	26.4%	11.5%
Hurt yourself?	12.8%	8.1%
Fight with your parents?	20.3%	7.4%
Fight with other kids?	16.9%	5.4%
Damage a friendship?	14.2%	5.4%
Have money problems?	6.1%	4.1%
Hurt your school work?	6.1%	3.4%
Hurt someone else?	7.4%	3.4%
Get a traffic ticket?	<1.0%	2.7%
Have a car crash?	0.0%	2.7%
Get arrested?	1.4%	2.7%
Gotten you in trouble at school?	2.0%	2.0%

The results of a survey question asking about locations and times where alcohol has been used are presented in Table 9. As shown, use of alcohol happens most frequently at “Weekend parties.” This is closely followed by “With friends at night,” “At home (parents know),” and “At home (parents do not know).” Few students indicated using alcohol right before, during, or right after school. As shown in Table 10, 11.9% of 12th graders noted they have gotten drunk alone.

Table 9. Percent of Students Reporting Use of Alcohol in the <u>Past 12 Months</u> at Selected Locations and Times		
	Number of Times Alcohol Used at Location	
	1-2 times	3 or more times
At weekend parties	7.1%	12.1%
At night with friends	7.8%	9.9%
At home (parents knew)	8.4%	4.7%
At home (parents did not know)	6.1%	3.8%
At school events (dances, games, etc.)	1.7%	2.9%
Before school events	1.6%	2.8%
At clubs and/or raves	3.0%	1.2%
Right after school	1.4%	1.1%
During school hours away from school	<1.0%	1.1%
On the way to school	<1.0%	<1.0%
While driving around	<1.0%	<1.0%
During school hours at school	0.0%	<1.0%

Table 10. Percent of Students Who Used Alcohol in <u>Past 12 Months</u> Indicating They Have Gotten Drunk Alone		
	10th Grade	12th Grade
Gotten drunk alone (N=35)	12.6%	17.2%

Student perceptions of how “wrong” their parents consider various levels of use of alcohol are presented in Table 11. These perceptions, of course, may not accurately reflect the actual views of parents. Student views of their parents’ attitudes toward their use of alcohol, nonetheless, may play a part in their decisions.

By 12th grade only 39.4% of students indicate that they believe their parents would consider it “very wrong” if they get drunk compared to 86.9% of 6th graders. This pattern of decline from 6th to 12th grade in students’ views of how wrong parents consider use of alcohol also holds true for “drink some alcohol” and “drink alcohol regularly.” Most students in all four grade levels, however, indicated their parents would consider alcohol use of “1 or 2 drinks every day” “very wrong.”

One possible interpretation of this is that students view daily use as addiction and more problematic than the other forms of alcohol use. This suggests that there may be a perception among some students that getting drunk periodically (binge drinking) is more acceptable than daily alcohol use. Although it is positive that students perceive their parents consider daily alcohol use

as wrong, it is important that parents also convey the risks related to binge drinking. As noted in Table 8 above, sizable proportions of students indicate having some serious problems associated with getting drunk.

Table 11. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Their Parents Would Consider Alcohol Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Drink some alcohol				
Very wrong	64.1%	45.2%	31.8%	17.0%
Wrong	16.3%	28.8%	21.5%	11.5%
A little bit wrong	5.1%	16.1%	30.9%	36.2%
Not at all wrong	2.9%	6.1%	12.6%	33.9%
Don't know	11.5%	3.9%	3.1%	1.4%
Drink alcohol regularly				
Very wrong	82.4%	82.1%	65.9%	45.4%
Wrong	5.1%	12.1%	25.1%	34.4%
A little bit wrong	1.9%	3.0%	5.4%	16.5%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.3%	0.4%	2.8%
Don't know	9.6%	2.4%	3.1%	0.9%
Have 1 or 2 drinks of alcohol nearly every day				
Very wrong	82.7%	88.2%	80.7%	77.1%
Wrong	5.8%	7.3%	14.3%	15.1%
A little bit wrong	1.0%	2.1%	1.8%	6.0%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.3%	0.4%	0.9%
Don't know	9.6%	2.1%	2.7%	0.9%
Get drunk				
Very wrong	86.9%	86.1%	63.2%	39.4%
Wrong	2.6%	10.0%	22.9%	30.3%
A little bit wrong	0.3%	1.5%	9.4%	22.5%
Not at all wrong	0.6%	0.0%	2.2%	6.9%
Don't know	9.6%	2.4%	2.2%	0.9%

Students' views of how wrong their friends consider alcohol use are presented in Table 12. As shown, the views of students about their friends are similar to their views of their parents. The extent to which students believe their friends consider drinking some alcohol and getting drunk wrong declines with grade level. Likewise, they indicated they believe their friends consider "having 1 or 2 drinks every day" as more wrong than getting drunk. As noted above, this may suggest that students perceive binge drinking as a safer use of alcohol than daily use.

Table 12. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Their Friends Consider Alcohol Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Drink some alcohol				
Very wrong	59.1%	24.3%	8.5%	2.3%
Wrong	22.7%	29.7%	2.4%	1.5%
A little bit wrong	13.6%	21.6%	7.3%	6.9%
Not at all wrong	4.5%	24.3%	81.7%	89.3%
Have 1 or 2 drinks of alcohol nearly every day				
Very wrong	76.2%	70.3%	25.3%	24.6%
Wrong	14.3%	18.9%	39.2%	42.3%
A little bit wrong	4.8%	10.8%	24.1%	21.5%
Not at all wrong	4.8%	0.0%	11.4%	11.5%
Get drunk				
Very wrong	85.7%	62.2%	11.2%	4.6%
Wrong	4.8%	16.2%	10.0%	9.9%
A little bit wrong	4.8%	18.9%	27.5%	16.8%
Not at all wrong	4.8%	2.7%	51.2%	68.7%

Information about how easy students believe it is to obtain alcohol is presented in the final table of this section. Two-thirds of 12th graders noted they believe it is “Very easy” to get alcohol. Few 10th and 12th graders indicated that alcohol is “Hard” or “Very hard” to obtain.

Table 13. Ease of Access to Alcohol by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col N %	Col N %	Col N %	Col N %
Very easy	13.5%	30.3%	52.9%	66.8%
Fairly easy	11.3%	29.4%	21.1%	25.3%
Hard	7.1%	10.9%	9.0%	2.3%
Very hard	9.3%	6.1%	3.6%	1.4%
Probably impossible	18.3%	6.7%	2.2%	<1.0%
Don't know	40.5%	16.7%	11.2%	3.7%

Alcohol Section Conclusions

There are several general conclusions that can be drawn from the results in this section. By 12th grade 40% of students indicated having gotten drunk at least once in the past 30 days, a proportion that is slightly higher than recent national estimates. Nearly a third of both male and female students stated they drink enough to “Feel it a lot” or “Get drunk.” Most students recognize the potential risk of alcohol use, but more than 40% of students who got drunk in the past 30 days have experienced serious consequences such as passing out and engaging in unwanted sexual behavior. Taken together, the results suggest a sizable segment of students who are at risk for alcohol-related consequences. Considerable numbers of students are using alcohol by age 15, suggesting the need to make sure any prevention efforts focus on students in early adolescence.

Tobacco

Information about tobacco use is presented in this section of the report. The proportions of students who have used tobacco in various forms in their lifetimes are presented Table 14. By 12th grade, 23.4% of students report having smoked some or all of a cigarette. This is lower than the 28.3% reported in national data.⁵ About 34% of 12th graders indicated having used electronic cigarettes, similar to 33.0% reported nationally.

Table 14. Use of Tobacco Products in <u>Lifetime</u> by Grade					
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	12 th Grade National
Cigarettes (all or part of a cigarette)	5.8%	5.1%	10.3%	23.4%	28.3%
Smokeless tobacco (chewing, snuffs)	5.8%	3.6%	10.8%	16.1%	14.2%
Electronic cigarette, e-cigarette, vape pen, e-cigars, etc.	6.1%	6.9%	23.8%	34.4%	33.0%

As shown in Table 15, there are observable differences in lifetime prevalence of tobacco use between males and females. Higher proportions of males than females in the 10th and 12th grades indicate they having tried smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes, although the differences are not statistically significant.

Table 15. Use of Tobacco Products in <u>Lifetime</u> by Grade and Gender								
	6th Grade		8th Grade		10th Grade		12th Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Cigarettes (all or part of a cigarette)	6.4%	3.0%	4.0%	5.8%	10.6%	9.7%	22.9%	22.9%
Smokeless tobacco (chewing, snuffs)	6.4%	3.0%	2.7%	4.6%	13.3%	6.8%	24.0%	8.5%
Electronic cigarette, e-cigarette, vape pen, e-cigars, etc	6.9%	3.0%	7.4%	6.9%	23.0%	23.3%	40.6%	28.0%

Although the lifetime prevalence of tobacco use is high, current tobacco use, measured as use of tobacco in the last 30 days, is somewhat lower (See Table 16). Only 6.9% of 12th graders indicated using cigarettes in the past 30 days. This is slightly lower than the 10.5% reported nationally.⁶ A slightly higher proportion of 12th graders, 15.1%, indicated using electronic cigarettes compared with 12.5% reported nationally.⁷

⁵ See: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data/16cigtbl2.pdf>

⁶ See: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data/16cigtbl2.pdf>

⁷ See: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data/16cigtbl1.pdf>

Student use in the past 30 days of various forms of tobacco is presented in Table 16. Although sizable proportions of students indicated trying various forms of tobacco, the results in Table 16 indicate much smaller segments of students have used tobacco in the past 30 days. The table's results also show slightly smaller proportions of Bernard's students having smoked cigarettes and slightly higher proportions having used electronic cigarettes than reported nationally, although these differences should be viewed cautiously since they may not be statistically significant.

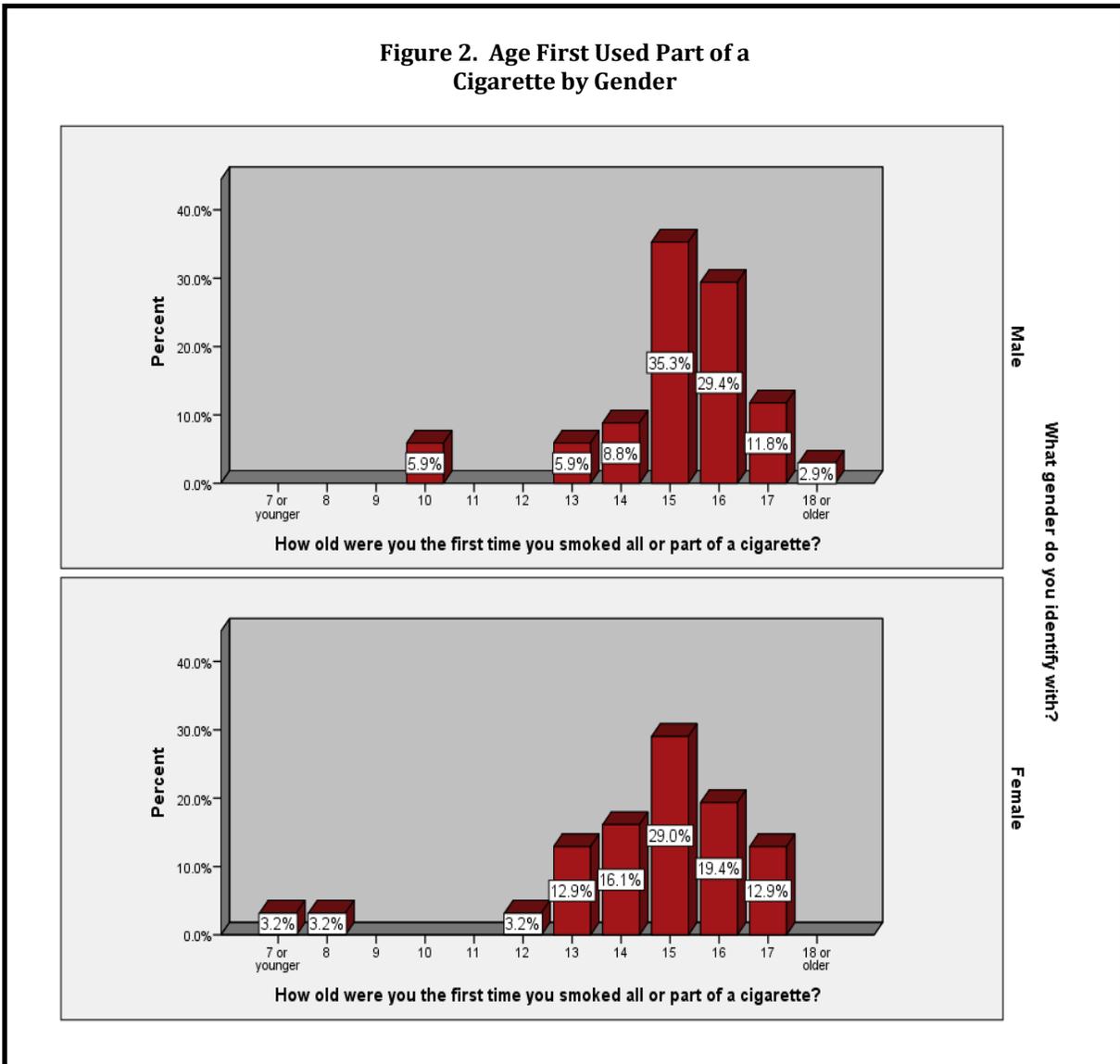
Table 16. Use of Tobacco Products in Past Month by Grade and Gender					
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	12th Grade National*
Smoked cigarettes (all or part of a cigarette)	1.6%	1.8%	1.8%	6.9%	10.5%
Used smokeless tobacco (chewing, snuffs, etc.)	1.9%	1.8%	3.6%	5.5%	6.6%
Used an electronic cigarette, e-cigarette, vape pen, e-cigar, etc.	1.9%	2.4%	9.9%	15.1%	12.5%
*Source: Monitoring the Future, 2016 data, http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data.html#2016data-cigs					

A slightly different picture of student tobacco use is presented in Table 17. As shown, the results suggest only small numbers of students indicated they used the different forms of tobacco. Of those students indicating use in the past 30 days, most indicated less than daily use of cigarettes. In addition, the majority of respondents use smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes less than 10 days a month.

Table 17. Frequency of Tobacco Use by Type		
	Less than one cigarette per day	More than one cigarette per day
Cigarettes N=18	55.6%	44.4%
	1-9 days	10 or more days
Smokeless tobacco N=21	76.2%	23.8%
Electronic cigarettes N=59	69.5%	30.5%
Note: The number of students indicating use of each form of tobacco is less than the number indicating use in Table 16. This may be a consequence of different interpretations of the two survey questions.		

The age that students indicated their first use of a cigarette is presented in Figure 2. Like alcohol, age of first use of tobacco tends to occur between the ages of 13 and 15. As noted above for

alcohol, it is important to focus prevention activities at the time when young people are transitioning to adolescence.



Student assessments of the ease of access to cigarettes and electronic cigarettes are presented in Table 18. Slightly less than half of 6th graders indicated they “Don’t know” for both categories. It is likely that this reflects the fact that they have not tried to get access. Well over half of 10th graders considered access to the two different forms of tobacco “Very easy” or “Fairly easy.” Among 12th graders, over three-fourths noted it was “Very easy” or “Fairly easy” to have access to tobacco.

Table 18. Ease of Access to Tobacco by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Cigarettes				
Very easy	8.7%	14.8%	25.7%	43.5%
Fairly easy	8.1%	18.2%	31.5%	32.9%
Hard	4.2%	17.3%	8.1%	8.3%
Very hard	8.4%	13.0%	5.9%	2.8%
Probably impossible	25.5%	15.8%	9.0%	3.7%
Don't know	45.2%	20.9%	19.8%	8.8%
E-cigarettes and vaping supplies				
Very easy	5.2%	14.8%	41.0%	50.5%
Fairly easy	4.5%	15.8%	20.3%	28.2%
Hard	4.2%	17.0%	6.3%	2.8%
Very hard	6.1%	12.1%	6.8%	3.2%
Probably impossible	32.3%	17.3%	7.2%	5.6%
Don't know	47.7%	23.0%	18.5%	9.7%

The results presented in Tables 19 and 20 are about students' beliefs about how wrong their parents and friends consider use of tobacco. Well over 80% of the students in all four grades believe their parents view tobacco use as "Very wrong" or "Wrong." The results are similar for the perceptions of friends. In other words, students believe their parents and friends consider tobacco use is not acceptable.

These results are similar for parents with respect to getting drunk (See Table 11 above). Much smaller proportions of students, however, indicated their friends believe getting drunk is "Very wrong" or "Wrong" (See Table 12 above). One interpretation of this is that the social norms to not use tobacco may be stronger than those to not get drunk.

Table 19. Student Perceptions of How Much Parents Care about Tobacco Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Very wrong	83.3%	83.9%	75.3%	67.4%
Wrong	5.4%	11.8%	16.6%	22.5%
A little bit wrong	1.6%	1.2%	3.6%	7.3%
Not at all wrong	0.6%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%
Don't know	9.0%	2.7%	4.5%	2.3%

Table 20. How Wrong Friends Feel It Is to Smoke Tobacco				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Very wrong	74.9%	74.2%	41.3%	41.0%
Wrong	8.0%	13.6%	26.5%	25.8%
A little bit wrong	<1.0%	3.9%	14.8%	18.4%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	<1.0%	6.7%	10.6%
Don't know	16.4%	7.3%	10.8%	4.1%

Student perceptions of the risk of using tobacco are presented in Table 21. The majority of students in all four grades indicated that even smoking occasionally results in “Moderate” or “Great” risk. Over 60% of students in all four grades reported that regular tobacco use results in “Great risk.” Students’ recognition of the potential risk of tobacco use is one factor that contributes to prevention.

Table 21. Perceived Harm of Tobacco Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Smoke tobacco occasionally	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
No Risk	3.6%	4.2%	5.0%	9.9%
Slight Risk	10.7%	22.4%	31.2%	28.2%
Moderate Risk	24.3%	33.3%	26.7%	30.5%
Great Risk	34.3%	34.2%	28.1%	25.8%
Don't know	27.2%	5.8%	9.0%	5.6%
Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day				
No Risk	2.3%	<1.0%	2.7%	4.2%
Slight Risk	1.3%	1.8%	3.6%	5.2%
Moderate Risk	7.1%	13.0%	14.0%	14.1%
Great Risk	64.7%	78.5%	70.6%	70.4%
Don't know	24.6%	6.4%	9.0%	6.1%

Tobacco Section Conclusions

Cigarette use among 12th grade students is slightly lower than use at the national level. Use of electronic cigarettes, however, is increasing nationally and appears to be emerging among Bernards Township School District students. Electronic cigarettes are not without danger. The CDC reports increases in the calls to poisoning centers related to electronic cigarettes.⁸ In addition, nicotine exposure to young brains may negatively affect brain development.⁹

Although most students recognize the potential harm of tobacco use, they may not include electronic cigarettes in that assessment. Recently announced Federal Government policies to regulate and control access to electronic cigarettes may help to control their emerging use by youth. In addition, it may be desirable to ensure students are informed about the potential risks of electronic cigarettes.

⁸ See: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6313a4.htm>

⁹ See: https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/50th-anniversary/pdfs/fs_smoking_youth_508.pdf

Marijuana

Information on the patterns of use of marijuana is presented in this section of the report. Although marijuana is an illicit drug based on federal law, it is presented in a separate section for several reasons. Marijuana is one of the three most frequently used drugs among youth. In addition, attitudes toward marijuana have changed markedly over the past decade. Recreational use of marijuana is legal in a number of states, and the medicinal use of marijuana is legal in New Jersey. Consequently, marijuana is viewed by many young people to be similar to alcohol; a culturally acceptable recreational drug that is not legally available.

As shown in Table 22, small percentages of 6th and 8th graders have tried marijuana. There is, however, a big jump among 12th graders with 28.6% of females and 42.7% of males indicating having tried marijuana. As shown in the table, however, the proportion of students who indicated having tried marijuana is quite a bit lower than the results reported based on national surveys.

Table 22. Percent Who Have Ever Tried Marijuana by Grade and Gender				
	Male	Female	Total	National Data*
	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
6th Grade	1.1%	<1.0%	1.0%	Unavailable
8th Grade	2.7%	<1.0%	1.6%	12.8%
10th Grade	6.2%	6.8%	6.5%	29.7%
12th Grade	42.7%	28.6%	34.9%	44.5%

*Source: Monitoring the Future, 2016,
<http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data/16drtbl1.pdf>

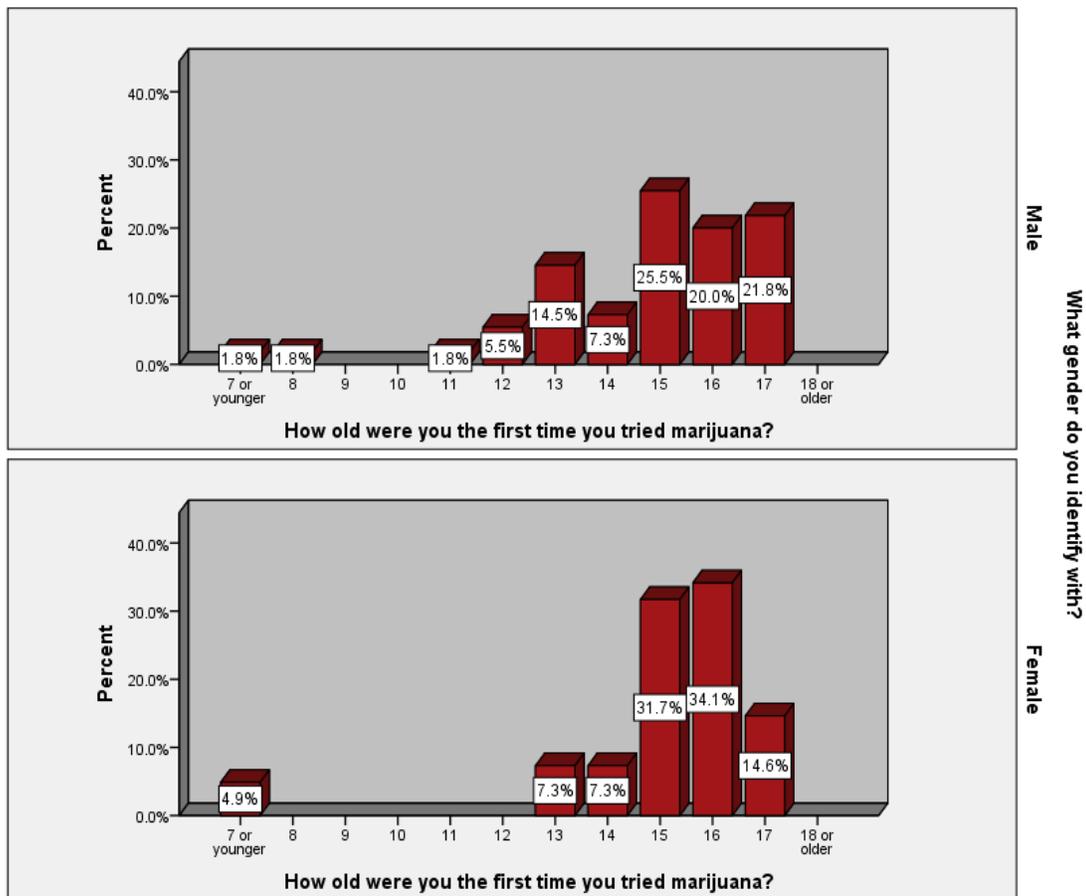
Information about frequency of use of marijuana in the past 12 months and in the last month is presented in Table 23. Nearly no 6th or 8th graders indicated using marijuana in the past 12 months or the last 30 days. Only a small percentage of 10th graders reported use of marijuana in both time periods, although it can be seen that “vaping” is now a means of use. There was a pronounced increase in reported use among 12th graders. Nearly 8% indicated using marijuana three or more times in the past 30 days. About 17% of 12th graders reported some marijuana or hashish use in the past 30 days compared to 22.5% reported nationally.¹⁰

¹⁰ See: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/16data/16drtbl3.pdf>

Table 23. Frequency of Use of Marijuana in Last 12 Months an Past 30 Days				
	Past 12 Months		Past 30 Days	
	1-2 times	3 or more times	1-2 times	3 or more times
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
6th Grade				
Marijuana or hashish	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Marijuana wax, oil or dab	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Synthetic marijuana	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%
Any form of marijuana with a vaping device	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%
8th Grade				
Marijuana or hashish	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Marijuana wax, oil or dab	<1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Synthetic marijuana	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Any form of marijuana with a vaping device	<1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10th Grade				
Marijuana or hashish	1.8%	3.6%	1.8%	1.3%
Marijuana wax, oil or dab	1.3%	1.8%	<1.0%	1.3%
Synthetic marijuana	1.3%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Any form of marijuana with a vaping device	4.0%	4.5%	3.1%	1.8%
12th Grade				
Marijuana or hashish	8.7%	20.5%	9.1%	7.8%
Marijuana wax, oil or dab	3.2%	4.6%	1.8%	2.7%
Synthetic marijuana	<1.0%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
Any form of marijuana with a vaping device	6.4%	6.4%	1.8%	3.2%

The age of first use of marijuana is presented in Figure 3. Like the other drugs discussed thus far, the age of first use tends to occur in early adolescence. Once again, the results indicate the importance of prevention efforts focusing on early adolescence.

Figure 3. Age of First Use of Marijuana by Gender



The perceptions of students about how wrong their parents consider the use of marijuana are presented in Table 22. Over 80% of students indicated that parents view smoking marijuana as “Very wrong” or “Wrong.” The results of this survey indicate that students who believe their parents consider smoking marijuana is wrong are less likely to have smoked marijuana in the past 30 days.¹¹ This suggests the important role parents play in the choices of their children to use marijuana.

¹¹ A Spearman’s rho correlation of .291, $p < .001$ was found. The positive correlation indicates an inverse relationship between use of marijuana and how wrong parents view use because of the way the question scales were constructed.

Table 24. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Parents Consider Smoking Marijuana				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Very wrong	87.2%	92.7%	78.9%	66.1%
Wrong	2.6%	4.2%	13.0%	17.0%
A little bit wrong	0.3%	0.6%	3.1%	12.8%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	2.3%
Don't know	9.0%	2.4%	3.6%	1.8%

The results of how wrong students believe their friends view marijuana use are presented in Table 25. Similar to the findings reported for alcohol, students tend to see their friends as more moderate about marijuana use than their parents. Over 50% of 12th graders indicated their friends view marijuana use as either “A little bit wrong” or “Not at all wrong.”

Table 25. Student Perceptions of How Wrong Friends Consider Marijuana Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Very wrong	78.8%	81.5%	39.0%	24.0%
Wrong	4.2%	7.6%	18.4%	16.1%
A little bit wrong	<1.0%	2.4%	16.6%	21.2%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	2.4%	16.1%	34.6%
Don't know	15.8%	6.1%	9.9%	4.1%

Marijuana is considered at least “Hard” to get by most 6th and 8th graders who did not respond that they “Don’t know” (See Table 26). The results in Table 26 change sharply for 10th and 12th graders, corresponding with the increased experience of those students with use of marijuana. Seventy-one percent of 12th graders and 48% of 10th graders report marijuana either “Very easy” or “Fairly easy” to get.

Table 26. Ease of Getting Marijuana by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Marijuana				
Very easy	2.6%	4.8%	24.7%	35.5%
Fairly easy	1.9%	12.7%	23.8%	35.5%
Hard	7.4%	18.8%	15.7%	12.9%
Very hard	10.3%	14.2%	8.5%	4.1%
Probably impossible	34.4%	25.5%	9.0%	4.1%
Don't know	43.4%	23.9%	18.4%	7.8%
Synthetic marijuana				
Very easy	2.3%	3.6%	15.3%	14.8%
Fairly easy	1.3%	10.3%	14.9%	25.9%
Hard	4.2%	15.5%	17.1%	20.8%
Very hard	6.5%	12.7%	8.6%	9.7%
Probably impossible	34.8%	30.3%	16.2%	8.3%
Don't know	51.0%	27.6%	27.9%	20.4%

The results of a survey question asking about the perceived risk of marijuana use are presented in Table 27. As expected, the perception of risk of marijuana use decreases with the grade level of students. Among 12th graders, 46.7% considered use of marijuana 1 to 2 times of “No risk” compared to 8.4% of 8th graders. Most students indicated smoking marijuana more than once a week is of “Great risk.” 41.8% percent of 12th graders, however, reported that smoking marijuana more than once or twice a week was of “Slight risk” or “No risk.”

Table 27. Perceived Risk of Marijuana Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Smoke marijuana 1-2 times				
No Risk	8.4%	11.2%	26.6%	48.4%
Slight Risk	21.4%	33.3%	36.0%	25.6%
Moderate Risk	17.2%	23.9%	16.2%	11.6%
Great Risk	28.8%	24.8%	14.4%	9.8%
Don't know	24.3%	6.7%	6.8%	4.7%
Smoke marijuana once or twice a week				
No Risk	3.6%	4.8%	13.5%	30.2%
Slight Risk	10.7%	12.4%	20.3%	27.4%
Moderate Risk	23.3%	34.2%	34.2%	20.5%
Great Risk	38.8%	42.4%	25.2%	17.7%
Don't know	23.6%	6.1%	6.8%	4.2%
Smoke marijuana more than once or twice a week				
No Risk	3.2%	4.2%	8.6%	19.5%
Slight Risk	4.9%	5.2%	13.1%	22.3%
Moderate Risk	12.6%	16.7%	24.3%	25.1%
Great Risk	55.3%	67.6%	47.3%	28.8%
Don't know	23.9%	6.4%	6.8%	4.2%

The consequences experienced by those students who indicated use of marijuana are presented in Table 28. As the counts (N) shown near the top of each column in Table 28 reflect, the total number of students for which the data is available is quite small. What the table shows is that for those students reporting, the proportions who report experiencing different consequences are quite high. Over 25% students report “Fight with your parents” for use of marijuana or hashish or vaping marijuana.

For the two categories, “Marijuana wax, oil or dab” and “Synthetic marijuana,” over 50% of students indicated fighting with parents. Further, higher proportions of students using “Marijuana wax, oil or dab” and “Synthetic marijuana” reported experiencing the consequences listed in Table 28. Although fewer students report using marijuana in these two forms, those who do are at greater risk of experiencing consequences.

Table 28. Percent of Students Who Indicated Use of Various Forms of Marijuana and Had One or More of the Consequences				
	Marijuana or hashish	Marijuana wax, oil or dab	Synthetic marijuana	Any form of marijuana with a vaping device
	N=82	N=28	N=13	N=52
Fight with your parents?	28.0%	53.6%	53.8%	30.8%
Have a "bad trip"?	24.4%	39.3%	38.5%	25.0%
Hurt your school work?	17.1%	39.3%	53.8%	25.0%
Made you break something?	17.1%	35.7%	38.5%	21.2%
Have money problems?	14.6%	35.7%	46.2%	21.2%
Damage a friendship?	14.6%	28.6%	30.8%	19.2%
Did something sexual that you later wished you hadn't?	13.4%	21.4%	23.1%	15.4%
Have a car crash?	12.2%	25.0%	30.8%	15.4%
Fight with other kids?	12.2%	28.6%	38.5%	17.3%
Gotten you in trouble at school?	11.0%	25.0%	38.5%	15.4%
Get arrested?	9.8%	17.9%	30.8%	11.5%
Get a traffic ticket?	8.5%	17.9%	30.8%	11.5%
Hurt yourself?	7.3%	14.3%	15.4%	9.6%
Hurt someone else?	6.1%	10.7%	15.4%	7.7%

Marijuana Section Conclusions

Very low percentages of 6th and 8th graders report use of marijuana. Use among 12th graders is more common, with 16.9% indicating using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days. The use of marijuana is viewed as having less risk than tobacco, and a higher proportion of students reported using marijuana than tobacco. About 20% of students who report use of marijuana or hashish report problems such as fighting with parents and with their homework. Even higher proportions of students reporting use of other forms of marijuana indicated having problems. The problems identified by students are consistent with the negative impacts of marijuana use identified by CDC.¹² With the liberalization of attitudes toward marijuana use, young people may be concluding that its use is of less risk than it is.

¹² See: <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/pdf/Marijuana-Teens-508.pdf>

Prescription Drugs

CDC has identified prescription opioids including Oxycodone and Hydrocodone as contributors to the opioid overdose epidemic. In addition, drugs for the treatment of ADD/ADHD may be used to get high or improve academic performance. The results of survey questions about the use of a variety of commonly prescribed drugs are presented in this section.

Prescribed use of prescription drugs

The proportions of students who have “Ever” been prescribed various types of prescription drugs are presented in Table 29. The data in this table are for prescriptions that have occurred and do not necessarily represent current prescribed use.

As shown in Table 29, when the “Don’t know” responses are factored out, the most prescribed drug type is narcotic painkillers. By 12th grade 27.2% of students indicated that a doctor had prescribed them narcotic painkillers. The second most prescribed group of drugs includes drugs for the treatment of ADD/ADHD. By 12th grade, 16% of students indicated having been prescribed an ADD/ADHD drug at some point in time. It is important to note that the results in Table 25 are for drugs legally prescribed by a physician at any time in a student’s life.

Table 29. Proportion of Students Who Have <u>Ever</u> Gotten these Drugs from a Doctor					
		6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Tranquilizers (Xanax, Ambien, Valium, Librium, Klonopin, Ativan, etc.)	Yes *	3.2%	5.7%	10.3%	9.6%
	Yes excluding <i>Don't Know</i> responses	6.0%	7.5%	12.0%	10.1%
Sedatives (barbiturates, Phenobarbital, seconal, etc)	Yes	3.5%	5.7%	10.3%	6.8%
	Yes excluding <i>Don't Know</i> responses	6.7%	7.9%	12.0%	7.3%
Ritalin, Adderall, Concerta, Vyvanse, other ADD/ADHD medication	Yes	5.1%	8.8%	15.2%	15.5%
	Yes excluding <i>Don't Know</i> responses	9.1%	11.1%	17.0%	16.0%
Prescription narcotic painkillers (Codeine, OxyContin, Vicodin, Percocet, Fentanyl, Opium, Opana, etc.)	Yes	5.8%	13.9%	17.5%	25.6%
	Yes excluding <i>Don't Know</i> responses	11.5%	18.3%	20.6%	27.2%
<p>* The “Yes” category is calculated with the “Don’t Know” responses included. It is the proportion of all respondents who indicated “Yes.” The “Yes excluding <i>Don't Know</i>” category excludes the “Don’t Know” responses in the calculation. It is the proportion of students who indicated “Yes” for only those students who did not respond “Don’t Know.” The differences, especially for 6th graders are because sizable numbers of respondents indicated they did not know if a doctor had prescribed the drugs listed.</p>					

The breakdown of the lifetime prescription of the four categories of drugs by gender is presented in Table 30. As shown, there is nearly no difference in the proportions between males and females. In other words, the lifetime exposure to the various groups of prescription drugs is similar for males and females.

Table 30. Proportion of Male and Female Students Who Have <u>Ever</u> Been Given These Drugs by a Doctor		
	Male	Female
Tranquilizers	7.3%	9.2%
Sedatives	8.0%	7.4%
ADD/ADHD medication	13.0%	11.9%
Prescription narcotic painkillers	19.5%	18.7%
Note: The proportions in this table are calculated excluding the “Don’t Know” response of students.		

The reasons indicated by students who “Ever” have been prescribed a painkiller are presented in Table 31. The most frequent reason was for surgery (40.3%), followed by a sports injury (32.7%), and then oral surgery (30.8%). In addition, the smallest percentage of student (9.4%) indicated chronic pain as a reason for the prescription.

Table 31. Reasons for Being Prescribed a Painkiller	
N=159	% of Students Prescribed a Painkiller
Surgery	40.3%
An injury related to sports	32.7%
Oral surgery (such as wisdom teeth)	30.8%
An injury not related to sports	13.2%
A chronic pain condition	9.4%
Note: The proportions in this table only are for the students who indicated having been prescribed a painkiller, and not for the total survey respondents.	

As shown in Table 32, the proportion of students who report having full responsibility for prescribed painkillers increases from none among 6th graders to 32.5% among 12th graders. Even by 12th grade, however, over two thirds of the students indicated that there was some parent involvement in handling prescriptions.

Table 32. Who Is Responsible for Making Sure Prescribed Painkiller is Used as Directed?				
N=359 *	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
I am responsible and have full access to the medication	0.0%	7.5%	14.9%	32.5%
I am responsible and I get the medication from a parent or other adult	14.5%	26.7%	32.2%	26.5%
A parent or adult is responsible and keeps the medication	85.5%	65.8%	52.9%	41.0%

* Student respondents who indicated they have never gotten a prescription have been excluded from the calculations.

Unprescribed use of prescription drugs

Student responses to questions about the unprescribed use of prescription drugs are examined in this section. The proportions of students who have taken extra doses of their prescriptions of the four categories of drugs are presented in Table 33. Less than 10% of the students reported taking extra doses of any of the groups of drugs. Of the four drug groups, the highest proportion of students that reported taking extra doses was for ADD/ADHD drugs (9.0%).

Table 33. Percent of Students Taking Extra Doses of Prescribed Drugs	
	% Yes
Tranquilizers	5.3%
Sedatives	3.1%
ADD/ADHD medication	9.0%
Prescription narcotic painkillers	5.8%

Note: percentages are only for students who indicated having a prescription and not the overall student respondent population.

A breakdown by grade level of the students who report using prescription drugs “not” prescribed to them is presented in Table 34. Few students in 6th and 8th grades report unprescribed use of prescription drugs. Among 10th and 12th graders, the most frequently used drugs without a prescription are ADD/ADHD drugs.

Table 34. Proportion of Students Responding “Yes” to Using Prescription Drugs Not Prescribed to Them by a Doctor				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Tranquilizers	1.0%	<1.0%	1.8%	5.0%
Sedatives	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	<1.0%
ADD/ADHD medication	1.9%	<1.0%	3.1%	8.7%
Prescription narcotic painkillers	1.3%	<1.0%	2.2%	4.1%
Other prescription drugs	1.0%	1.2%	3.1%	2.3%

The small proportion of students who access prescription drugs other than from a doctor is illustrated in Table 35. The most frequently identified source of these drugs outside of a physician is from a family member with permission. Of the four categories, Narcotic painkillers are the drugs most frequently gotten from a family member. ADD/ADHD drugs are the most frequently obtained drugs without a prescription when all seven sources are combined. Friends are identified as the most frequent source of ADD/ADHD drugs, providing them either as gifts or for purchase.

Table 35. Proportion of Students Who Have <u>Ever</u> Gotten these Drugs Other than from a Doctor by Source				
	Tranquilizers	Sedatives	ADD/ADHD	Narcotic painkillers
From a family member with permission	1.9%	1.1%	1.3%	2.8%
From a family member's prescription without permission	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Given from a friend	1.2%	<1.0%	2.0%	1.0%
Purchased from a friend	1.0%	<1.0%	1.5%	<1.0%
At a pill party	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Given by someone other than a friend or family member	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Purchased from a stranger or drug dealer	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%

As shown in Table 36, use of drugs not prescribed by a doctor is most frequent among 12th graders. ADD/ADHD drugs are used by the highest proportion of 12th graders (8.2%). For all the other drugs and grade levels, the proportion of students indicating using unprescribed drugs was less than 2.5%.

Table 36. Use of Drugs Not Prescribed One or More Times in Past 12 Months by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Tranquilizers	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.8%	2.3%
Sedatives	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	<1.0%
ADD/ADHD medications	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.8%	8.2%
Prescription narcotic painkillers	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	1.8%
Other prescription drugs	<1.0%	1.2%	2.2%	1.4%

The proportions of students who indicated using unprescribed drugs in the past 30 days are presented in Table 37. As shown, less than 2.5% of the students in any grade reported using unprescribed drugs in the categories listed. In addition, no one category stands out as higher than the others.

Table 37. Use of Drugs <u>Not Prescribed</u> One or More Times in Past 30 Days by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Tranquilizers	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	1.4%
Sedatives	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	<1.0%
ADD/ADHD medications	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	1.8%
Prescription narcotic painkillers	<1.0%	<1.0%	2.2%	<1.0%
Other prescription drugs not prescribed to you	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	1.4%

Although most students do not report getting drugs from sources other than a doctor, as Table 38 reveals, sizable proportions do consider that it is easy to get narcotic painkillers. 5.7% of 6th graders, 20.6% of 8th graders, 26.6% of 10th graders, and 32.0% of 12th graders consider it to be “Very easy” or “Fairly easy” to get narcotic painkillers. The ease of access to narcotic painkillers may be, in part, related to the fact that sizable proportions of students have been prescribed these drugs at some point in their lives (See Table 29 above).

Table 38. Ease of Getting Narcotic Painkillers				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Very easy	3.2%	7.3%	8.1%	9.3%
Fairly easy	2.3%	13.3%	18.5%	22.7%
Hard	6.1%	18.8%	20.3%	25.0%
Very hard	6.1%	15.5%	13.1%	14.8%
Probably impossible	30.0%	22.7%	14.9%	12.0%
Don't know	52.3%	22.4%	25.2%	16.2%

Students’ perceptions of their parents’ and friends’ views of how wrong it is to use unprescribed drugs are presented in Table 39. When the “Don’t know” responses are not included, over 80% of students in all four grades believe parents and friends consider it “Wrong” or “Very wrong” to use unprescribed drugs. When the responses to “Don’t know” are looked at, it can be seen that by 10th grade, relatively small proportions of students indicate they “Don’t know” the views of their parents and friends. It should be added, however, that the use of many forms of drugs often starts by the time students are 13, so it is important to encourage parents to talk about prescription drug use as well as other drugs prior to that age.

Table 39. How Wrong Parents and Friends Perceive Taking Prescription Drugs Not Prescribed

	Parents				Friends			
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Prescription narcotic painkillers	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Very wrong	73.6%	90.9%	85.7%	92.6%	64.0%	78.5%	60.1%	72.4%
Wrong	5.8%	4.5%	6.7%	4.6%	10.0%	10.3%	18.4%	18.4%
A little bit wrong	<1.0%	<1.0%	2.2%	<1.0%	0.0%	2.1%	5.8%	4.1%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	2.7%	1.8%
Don't know	19.3%	3.6%	4.5%	1.8%	25.7%	8.8%	13.0%	3.2%
Tranquilizers								
Very wrong	75.2%	92.7%	87.9%	91.2%	65.0%	79.4%	63.7%	75.1%
Wrong	3.9%	2.4%	6.3%	6.0%	9.3%	9.4%	16.6%	15.2%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	1.2%	1.3%	<1.0%	0.0%	1.2%	5.4%	4.1%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	2.3%
Don't know	20.6%	3.6%	4.0%	1.8%	25.4%	9.1%	13.0%	3.2%
Sedatives								
Very wrong	75.6%	93.6%	87.9%	92.2%	64.6%	79.7%	63.2%	74.2%
Wrong	3.5%	1.8%	5.8%	5.1%	8.7%	9.1%	17.5%	15.7%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.8%	5.4%	5.1%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.8%
Don't know	20.6%	3.6%	4.5%	1.8%	25.7%	9.1%	13.0%	3.2%
ADD/ADHD medication								
Very wrong	74.3%	93.6%	84.8%	82.5%	65.0%	79.4%	57.8%	60.8%
Wrong	4.2%	1.8%	7.6%	9.7%	8.4%	9.4%	19.3%	14.7%
A little bit wrong	<1.0%	<1.0%	2.2%	4.6%	0.0%	2.1%	6.7%	12.0%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.4%	1.0%	0.0%	3.1%	9.7%
Don't know	20.9%	3.6%	4.0%	1.8%	25.7%	9.1%	13.0%	2.8%
Other prescription drugs								
Very wrong	76.2%	92.1%	84.8%	91.7%	64.0%	79.7%	60.5%	72.8%
Wrong	3.2%	2.1%	8.5%	3.7%	9.6%	9.1%	17.9%	16.6%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	1.2%	1.3%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.5%	5.8%	4.1%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.4%
Don't know	19.9%	4.5%	4.9%	4.1%	25.4%	9.1%	14.8%	5.1%

Students' views of the risk of the different categories of prescription drugs are presented in Table 40. As the table reveals, the perceptions of risk shift from 6th to 12th grade. About half of the 6th graders reported they "Don't know" the risks of the drugs. The proportions for a "Don't know" response drop sharply by 10th grade.

The assessments of risk among 10th and 12th graders indicate that some students may be underestimating the risks of some of prescription drug use without a prescription. About 15% of 10th and 12th graders reported that narcotic painkillers were of "No risk" or "Slight risk." 32.9% of 12th graders indicated that ADD/ADHD drugs were of "No risk" or "Slight risk." Both forms of drugs have very serious risks when not used as prescribed including overdose and addiction.

Table 40. Perceived Risks of Prescription Drug Types by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Prescription narcotic painkillers				
No Risk	4.2%	1.5%	3.6%	6.1%
Slight Risk	7.4%	9.7%	10.9%	11.3%
Moderate Risk	12.3%	27.9%	19.5%	21.6%
Great Risk	24.3%	48.8%	47.7%	54.5%
Don't know	51.8%	12.1%	18.2%	6.6%
Tranquilizers				
No Risk	2.3%	<1.0%	3.2%	4.2%
Slight Risk	3.9%	6.1%	8.6%	9.4%
Moderate Risk	11.3%	21.2%	18.2%	20.2%
Great Risk	30.1%	54.5%	50.9%	57.3%
Don't know	52.4%	17.6%	19.1%	8.9%
Sedatives				
No Risk	1.9%	<1.0%	2.7%	4.2%
Slight Risk	3.9%	5.5%	7.3%	9.4%
Moderate Risk	10.7%	20.6%	18.6%	21.1%
Great Risk	29.4%	53.6%	52.3%	54.0%
Don't know	54.0%	20.0%	19.1%	11.3%
ADD/ADHD Medications				
No Risk	1.9%	0.0%	4.5%	9.4%
Slight Risk	2.9%	6.4%	11.8%	23.5%
Moderate Risk	10.4%	21.2%	15.9%	18.3%
Great Risk	31.1%	51.5%	45.9%	39.4%
Don't know	53.7%	20.9%	21.8%	9.4%
Other prescription drugs				
No Risk	1.6%	<1.0%	2.7%	5.2%
Slight Risk	2.6%	3.9%	6.8%	8.0%
Moderate Risk	8.1%	19.4%	15.5%	18.3%
Great Risk	39.5%	63.0%	55.0%	54.5%
Don't know	48.2%	13.3%	20.0%	14.1%

Steroids

A separate class of prescription drugs is anabolic steroids. Less than 1.5% of all students reported any use of steroids. Although it is possible that students are not reporting steroid use or even using them without knowing, the results suggest that steroid use is a limited concern at this time.

Prescription Drug Conclusions

The use by students of the four categories of drugs outside of a prescription was quite low, with less than 2% of students indicating using prescription drugs outside of their prescribed use. Over one quarter of 12th graders reported a doctor had prescribed them narcotic painkillers, suggesting a fair amount of exposure to these drugs. The types of prescriptions most frequently provided for pain, however, were for acute problems rather than chronic pain, reducing the risk of long-term exposure and availability. The most frequent drug type to be used outside of a prescription was ADD/ADHD drugs. Although students may underestimate the risks of the various prescription drugs, it appears that only a small segment of students uses them in an unprescribed way.

Illicit Drugs

The survey results for various illicit drugs are presented in this section. Although some of the drugs included are available by prescription, the prescription drugs included are those that are frequently diverted to illegal uses.

The percentages of students who report having “Ever used” various illicit drugs are presented in Table 42. The drugs are listed in order of the highest to lowest proportions based on the “12th grade” column. It is important to view the results in the table carefully. These are the drugs that have been tried by students at some point in time. The results are for any student from the one who tried a drug once to those who are currently using the drugs.

The most frequently tried drug among 12th graders is LSD at 6.9%, followed by Amphetamines, Other hallucinogens, Cocaine or Crack, Heroin, and Synthetic marijuana. Inhalants and Synthetic marijuana were identified as “Ever” used by the highest percentage 10th graders, although more than 3.5% of 10th graders indicated they have tried LSD, Amphetamines, Other hallucinogens, Heroin, and Cocaine or Crack. Nearly 5% of 8th and 10th graders reported they had tried Inhalants. 1.9% of 6th graders and 2.7% of 8th graders reported having tried heroin.

Table 41. Percent of Students Who Have <u>Ever Used</u> Drugs by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
LSD (acid)	2.6%	2.7%	3.6%	6.9%
Amphetamines (uppers, stimulants, speed, etc. without a prescription from a doctor)	2.2%	2.7%	3.6%	4.6%
Other hallucinogens (mescaline, PCP, Adrenochromes, spinners, peyote, mushrooms, "shrooms", etc)	2.2%	3.0%	4.0%	4.6%
Cocaine or crack (rock, smoked cocaine)	2.2%	2.7%	3.6%	4.1%
Ecstasy ("XTC", Molly, MDMA)	2.6%	2.1%	3.1%	4.1%
Synthetic marijuana (K2, spice)	2.2%	2.1%	4.5%	4.1%
Inhalants ("Huff" or "Sniff" something like glue, gasoline, etc.)	4.8%	4.8%	4.9%	2.8%
Methamphetamines (crystal meth, ice, crank)	2.2%	2.1%	2.7%	2.8%
Rohypnol (roofies, ruffies, etc)	1.9%	2.1%	3.1%	2.8%
Heroin	1.9%	2.7%	3.6%	2.3%
Synthetic cathinones (bath salts, cloud nine, ivory wave)	2.2%	2.4%	2.7%	2.3%
Ketamine ("Special K")	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%	1.8%
GHB or GBH	2.6%	2.1%	2.2%	1.8%

Although small percentages of students report trying illicit drugs, it should be kept in mind, these are dangerous drugs. For many of these drugs, a first use can result in overdose death or other serious consequences. Results for more current use (Use in the past 12 months and past 30 days) of illicit drugs are presented in Table 43.

In general, the proportions of students indicating any use of the drugs in the "Last 12 months" and the "Last 30 days" are very low. Synthetic marijuana, LSD, Other hallucinogens, and Ecstasy are among the most frequently reported among 10th and 12th graders.

There is very little reported use of heroin, methamphetamine, "bath salts," ketamine, GHB, and Rohypnol in both the past 12 months and past 30 days. When these results are compared with the results for "Ever used" drugs presented in Table 42, it suggests that use of these drugs may be experimental and not ongoing. As noted, there are substantial risks associated with even one use of many of these drugs. The results of a question reporting students' perceived risk are presented next.

Table 42. Percent of Students Who Used Drugs One or More Times in Past 12 Months and Past 30 Days								
	Past 12 Months				Past 30 Days			
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
LSD (acid)	1.0%	<1.0%	3.1%	4.1%	1.0%	0.0%	1.8%	1.4%
Other hallucinogens	1.0%	<1.0%	1.8%	2.3%	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.4%
Ecstasy	1.0%	0.0%	1.8%	2.3%	1.3%	0.0%	1.8%	1.4%
Amphetamines	1.0%	<1.0%	2.7%	1.8%	1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.4%
Cocaine or crack	1.0%	<1.0%	2.7%	1.8%	1.0%	<1.0%	1.3%	<1.0%
Inhalants	1.6%	1.5%	1.8%	1.8%	1.3%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.4%
Synthetic marijuana	1.0%	0.0%	3.1%	1.8%	1.0%	0.0%	2.2%	1.8%
Methamphetamines	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Synthetic cathinones (bath salts, cloud nine, ivory wave)	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.4%	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.4%
Ketamine	1.0%	<1.0%	2.7%	<1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.8%	<1.0%
Heroin	<1.0%	<1.0%	2.2%	<1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
GHB or GBH	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Rohypnol	1.0%	0.0%	1.8%	<1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	<1.0%

Note: The table is sorted from highest to lowest based on the values for 12th grade in the “Past 12 Months”

The results of survey questions on students’ views of the risk of various illicit drugs are presented in Table 44. The perceptions of risk tend to be similar among the four grade levels with the exception of a higher proportion of 6th graders indicating they “Don’t know.” As shown, about 80% of the students indicated any use of the drugs is of “Moderate” or “Great” risk. Perception of risk is inversely correlated with use of drugs, so the results suggest most students have that factor contributing to their resistance to use.

As noted, these drugs are dangerous, even on the first use. The fact that many students perceive that using several of them “1 or 2 times,” including inhalants, methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin, is slightly less risky than using them more frequently merits concern. The perception that some infrequent use is less risky is consistent with the results noted above that show higher proportions of students who “Ever” tried the drugs than those who have used them in the past 30 days.

Table 43. Perceived Risk of Selected Illicit Drugs by Grade and Amount of Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Use heroin 1-2 times				
No Risk	7.8%	1.5%	3.6%	5.6%
Slight Risk	13.3%	11.2%	8.6%	5.1%
Moderate Risk	16.5%	27.9%	21.6%	13.0%
Great Risk	35.6%	52.4%	59.5%	70.7%
Don't know	26.9%	7.0%	6.8%	5.6%
Use heroin once or twice a week				
No Risk	3.9%	<1.0%	3.2%	5.6%
Slight Risk	6.5%	1.8%	<1.0%	0.0%
Moderate Risk	17.8%	16.1%	13.1%	6.0%
Great Risk	46.0%	74.5%	76.1%	81.4%
Don't know	25.9%	6.7%	6.8%	7.0%
Use heroin more than once or twice a week				
No Risk	3.9%	1.2%	3.2%	5.6%
Slight Risk	2.6%	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%
Moderate Risk	9.7%	3.9%	3.2%	3.3%
Great Risk	59.5%	87.0%	85.6%	83.7%
Don't know	24.3%	7.3%	8.1%	7.0%
Use cocaine 1-2 times				
No Risk	6.8%	1.8%	3.6%	6.0%
Slight Risk	13.9%	13.6%	12.2%	7.9%
Moderate Risk	21.4%	29.7%	27.5%	23.3%
Great Risk	32.4%	47.0%	50.0%	57.2%
Don't know	25.6%	7.9%	6.8%	5.6%
Use cocaine once or twice a week				
No Risk	3.9%	1.2%	3.2%	5.1%
Slight Risk	4.9%	1.8%	<1.0%	1.4%
Moderate Risk	21.0%	19.1%	15.8%	8.4%
Great Risk	45.6%	70.9%	73.9%	78.1%
Don't know	24.6%	7.0%	6.8%	7.0%
Use cocaine more than once or twice a week				
No Risk	3.6%	<1.0%	3.2%	5.6%
Slight Risk	1.6%	0.0%	<1.0%	0.0%
Moderate Risk	10.0%	3.9%	5.0%	2.3%
Great Risk	60.8%	87.6%	84.2%	84.7%
Don't know	23.9%	7.6%	7.2%	7.4%
"Huff" or "sniff" inhalants 1-2 times				
No Risk	6.8%	4.2%	5.0%	6.1%
Slight Risk	17.5%	27.6%	22.6%	12.7%
Moderate Risk	17.2%	27.6%	24.4%	33.3%
Great Risk	25.2%	29.4%	31.7%	37.1%
Don't know	33.3%	11.2%	16.3%	10.8%
"Huff" or "sniff" inhalants once or twice a week				
No Risk	2.9%	<1.0%	3.2%	4.2%
Slight Risk	9.4%	7.3%	5.4%	4.7%
Moderate Risk	21.0%	32.7%	25.3%	22.1%
Great Risk	33.3%	48.5%	50.2%	58.2%
Don't know	33.3%	10.9%	15.8%	10.8%

Table 43. Perceived Risk of Selected Illicit Drugs by Grade and Amount of Use				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
"Huff" or "sniff" inhalants more than once or twice a week				
No Risk	2.6%	<1.0%	3.2%	4.2%
Slight Risk	1.9%	2.4%	1.4%	1.4%
Moderate Risk	12.6%	14.8%	10.0%	11.7%
Great Risk	49.2%	71.8%	70.6%	71.8%
Don't know	33.7%	10.6%	14.9%	10.8%
Use meth 1-2 times				
No Risk	3.9%	1.2%	3.6%	3.3%
Slight Risk	12.6%	15.2%	8.6%	5.6%
Moderate Risk	16.5%	24.2%	19.9%	15.5%
Great Risk	30.4%	50.0%	56.6%	67.6%
Don't know	36.6%	9.4%	11.3%	8.0%
Use meth once or twice a week				
No Risk	2.6%	<1.0%	3.2%	3.3%
Slight Risk	3.6%	2.1%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Moderate Risk	18.4%	20.6%	14.0%	7.5%
Great Risk	39.2%	67.6%	70.1%	80.3%
Don't know	36.2%	9.4%	11.8%	8.5%
Use meth more than once or twice a week				
No Risk	2.6%	<1.0%	2.7%	3.3%
Slight Risk	1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Moderate Risk	5.5%	5.8%	3.6%	3.3%
Great Risk	54.7%	84.8%	81.0%	84.5%
Don't know	36.2%	8.2%	11.8%	8.5%

Students' assessments of the ease of obtaining various illicit drugs for each grade level are presented in Table 45. Although there are slight differences in students' views of the ease of access of the drugs, most consider them at least "Hard" to get. Over 20% of 12th grade students, however, reported that stimulants were either "Very easy" or "Fairly easy" to get. This may be associated with the availability of ADD/ADHD drugs through friends as part of a prescription (See Table 35 above). The results also are similar to students' ratings of ease of access to narcotic painkillers (See Table 38 above).

While students indicated easier access to ADD/ADHD drugs and Narcotic painkillers, very small proportions of students reported using either ADD/ADHD drugs or Narcotic painkillers without a prescription (See Table 37 above). In other words, other factors in addition to access such as perceived risk and the views of parents and peers play a part in use patterns.

Table 44. Perceived Ease of Getting Illicit Drugs by Grade				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Stimulants, speed				
Very easy	1.9%	1.8%	6.7%	6.0%
Fairly easy	3.2%	7.6%	10.3%	15.2%
Hard	2.9%	13.3%	21.1%	27.6%
Very hard	9.0%	18.8%	13.9%	15.2%
Probably impossible	34.1%	26.7%	17.5%	12.0%
Don't know	48.9%	31.8%	30.5%	24.0%
Cocaine				
Very easy	2.9%	2.4%	5.4%	5.1%
Fairly easy	1.6%	6.1%	8.5%	12.9%
Hard	5.1%	10.9%	21.5%	30.0%
Very hard	8.0%	20.3%	15.2%	18.9%
Probably impossible	37.6%	33.9%	20.6%	13.4%
Don't know	44.7%	26.4%	28.7%	19.8%
"Huff" or "sniff" glue or gas, etc				
Very easy	9.3%	21.8%	17.0%	13.4%
Fairly easy	5.8%	15.8%	14.3%	18.0%
Hard	3.9%	12.4%	13.5%	20.3%
Very hard	5.5%	7.9%	11.2%	13.8%
Probably impossible	29.9%	18.8%	13.9%	12.4%
Don't know	45.7%	23.3%	30.0%	22.1%
LSD ("acid")				
Very easy	2.3%	2.1%	6.3%	7.8%
Fairly easy	0.6%	3.6%	8.1%	15.7%
Hard	5.1%	12.1%	21.5%	23.0%
Very hard	6.8%	18.8%	14.3%	17.5%
Probably impossible	35.0%	32.7%	19.7%	16.1%
Don't know	50.2%	30.6%	30.0%	19.8%
Other hallucinogen				
Very easy	2.3%	1.8%	7.2%	5.5%
Fairly easy	1.6%	6.1%	8.5%	11.5%
Hard	2.6%	13.0%	17.0%	19.8%
Very hard	6.8%	13.3%	13.9%	18.4%
Probably impossible	33.8%	33.3%	19.3%	16.1%
Don't know	53.1%	32.4%	34.1%	28.6%
Methamphetamine				
Very easy	1.6%	3.3%	1.8%	1.9%
Fairly easy	1.6%	6.1%	9.0%	6.5%
Hard	3.5%	11.5%	19.8%	22.2%
Very hard	6.1%	15.2%	15.8%	26.9%
Probably impossible	35.5%	37.3%	24.3%	20.4%
Don't know	51.6%	26.7%	29.3%	22.2%
Heroin				
Very easy	1.6%	4.5%	2.3%	2.8%
Fairly easy	1.6%	7.6%	9.5%	9.3%
Hard	4.5%	11.2%	19.4%	23.1%
Very hard	6.1%	16.1%	17.1%	25.0%
Probably impossible	37.1%	34.5%	23.0%	18.1%
Don't know	49.0%	26.1%	28.8%	21.8%

Students' ratings of how "wrong" they think parents and friends consider using the various types of illicit drugs are presented in Tables 46 and 47. Nearly all students report that their parents view use of any of the drugs as "Very wrong." The ratings of "wrongness" for their friends are only slightly lower.

Table 45. Perception of How Wrong Parents Consider Using Drugs				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Use cocaine				
Very wrong	86.9%	97.0%	94.6%	95.9%
Wrong	2.9%	<1.0%	2.2%	1.8%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Don't know	9.3%	2.1%	2.2%	<1.0%
"Sniff" glue or gas, etc				
Very wrong	79.8%	85.8%	87.0%	90.8%
Wrong	6.4%	9.1%	6.3%	5.5%
A little bit wrong	<1.0%	1.2%	2.7%	1.4%
Not at all wrong	1.6%	<1.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Don't know	11.5%	3.0%	3.1%	1.8%
Use meth, speed, or crank				
Very wrong	86.2%	97.3%	95.5%	95.9%
Wrong	1.9%	<1.0%	1.8%	2.3%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Don't know	10.9%	2.1%	2.2%	<1.0%
Use heroin				
Very wrong	85.9%	97.3%	96.0%	97.2%
Wrong	2.2%	<1.0%	1.3%	1.4%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Don't know	10.9%	2.1%	2.2%	<1.0%

Table 46. Perception of How Wrong Friends Consider Using Drugs				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Use cocaine				
Very wrong	80.1%	86.7%	70.9%	71.9%
Wrong	3.5%	5.8%	16.1%	17.5%
A little bit wrong	<1.0%	1.2%	2.7%	3.7%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	2.3%
Don't know	15.8%	6.4%	9.9%	4.6%
"Sniff" glue or gas, etc				
Very wrong	75.9%	78.5%	65.0%	75.6%
Wrong	5.5%	9.7%	17.9%	14.7%
A little bit wrong	1.0%	4.2%	4.0%	3.7%
Not at all wrong	1.0%	<1.0%	3.1%	1.8%
Don't know	16.7%	7.3%	9.9%	4.1%
Use meth, speed, or crank				
Very wrong	79.1%	87.6%	75.3%	83.4%
Wrong	4.2%	4.5%	13.5%	10.6%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	1.5%	1.8%	<1.0%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	1.4%
Don't know	16.4%	6.4%	9.0%	3.7%
Use heroin				
Very wrong	80.4%	87.9%	76.7%	87.1%
Wrong	3.2%	4.5%	12.6%	7.4%
A little bit wrong	0.0%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%
Not at all wrong	<1.0%	0.0%	<1.0%	<1.0%
Don't know	16.1%	6.4%	9.0%	3.7%

Illicit Drug Section Conclusions

The results in this section suggest that the percentages of students using illicit drugs are low. The most frequently tried drug among 12th graders was LSD, followed by Amphetamines, Other hallucinogens, Cocaine or Crack, Ecstasy, and Synthetic marijuana. The same six types of drugs also were the most frequently tried by 6th, 8th, and 10th graders. The proportions of students indicating more current use of illicit drugs was even lower than those for lifetime use. Less than 2% of students reported use of most illicit drugs in that past 30 days, and less than 1% reported use of methamphetamine and heroin in the past 30 days.

While small numbers of students report use of illicit drugs, many of these drugs can have serious consequences. Most students recognized the risk of the drugs, but sizable proportions did not see harm in using Cocaine, Inhalants, Methamphetamine, and Heroin “1 or 2 times.” This may reflect a perception that the risk of drugs occurs with prolonged use, even though there can be serious risks associated with one use of many of these drugs.

Report Conclusions

The aim of this report was to provide information about the patterns of use of different drugs by Bernards Township School District students. There are many results presented in the report, and some conclusions and comments have been provided throughout the report. The purpose of this section is to note the key findings and offer comments on their implications.

Key Findings

As noted in the introduction, the results presented in this report should be viewed as estimates. A great deal of information is provided in the report. The purpose of this section of the report is to distill the information and provide a summary of the key findings.

Alcohol

- Alcohol is consistently the most widely used drug. About 18% of 10th graders and 40% of 12th graders indicated getting drunk in the past 30 days, higher than the 2016 national proportions of 9.0% for 10th graders and 20.6% for 12th graders.
- 46.2% of females and 57.7% of males in 12th grade indicated they have gotten drunk.
- The majority of students who reported having gotten drunk had done so prior to age 16.
- About 80% of students in all four grades reported getting drunk regularly was of “great risk.” Over half of 12th graders, however, viewed having 5 or more drinks once or twice a week of “moderate risk” or less.
- 69.6% of students who have gotten drunk one or more times in the past month have experienced not remembering what happened while drinking. About 40% reported drinking had “made them break something” and that they had “passed out.”

- Use of alcohol most frequently occurs at weekend parties, at night with friends, or at home both with and without parents' knowledge.
- In sum, alcohol is the most widely used drug among students of the drugs examined in this report. Students' use of alcohol exceeds that reported nationally. In addition, although students report understanding the risks of getting drunk, considerable numbers of students "binge" drink and report experiencing alcohol-related consequences.

Tobacco

- By the 12th grade, 23.4% of students indicated ever having used cigarettes, a slightly lower proportion than the 28.3% reported in national data.
- There was no difference in the proportions of males and females who have tried cigarettes. Higher proportions of males, however, indicated having tried smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes.
- Use of cigarettes in the past month among 12th graders was lower than that reported nationally, 6.9% compared to 10.5%.
- Use of electronic cigarettes appears to be an emerging problem among students, with 15.1% of 12th grade students reporting use in the past 30 days.
- Over half of both males and females who have tried cigarettes did so before the age of 16.
- Most students indicated their parents believe tobacco use is wrong, but fewer believe their friends do.
- About 79% of 10th and 12th graders consider use of tobacco to be a great risk.
- In sum, current use of cigarettes (use in the past 30 days) among students is lower than that reported nationally. Electronic cigarettes are an emerging problem, however. Although most students consider use of cigarettes to be risky, they may not be aware of the risks of electronic cigarettes.

Marijuana

- 16.9% of 12th graders indicated using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days, slightly lower than the 22.5% reported nationally.
- The proportion of students reporting use of marijuana in the past month is higher than that reported for cigarettes.
- Most student who have tried marijuana have done so at ages 15 or 16.
- By 12th grade year, 73% of students reported that marijuana is "very easy" or "fairly easy" to get.
- Although the majority of students believe their parents think using marijuana is wrong, 15% of 12th graders reported that their parents thought marijuana was just "a little bit" or "not at all" wrong.

- Overall, students believe their parents and friends view marijuana use as less wrong than tobacco use.
- Slightly more than half of 12th graders viewed smoking marijuana more than once a week as of “moderate” or “great” risk.
- In sum, a smaller proportion of students report use of marijuana than reported nationally. The use of marijuana, however, is viewed as having less risk than tobacco, and a higher proportion of students report using marijuana than tobacco. Students’ attitudes about marijuana parallel the change in attitudes nationally.

Prescription drugs

- Four categories of prescription drugs, narcotic painkillers, tranquilizers, sedatives, and ADD/ADHD drugs were examined.
- The most prescribed drug type was narcotic painkillers with 27.2% of 12th graders reporting a doctor had prescribed them narcotic painkillers.
- Most students who had been prescribed a narcotic painkiller indicated it was for an acute problem such as surgery. Less than 10% reported getting a prescription for chronic pain.
- Less than 10% of students reported taking extra doses of any of the various types of prescription drugs.
- Few students reported “Ever” using prescription drugs not prescribed by a doctor. ADD/ADHD drugs were the most frequently identified. By 12th grade, 8.7% of students indicated using drugs not prescribed in their lifetimes. Less than 2% of students reported using unprescribed drugs in the past month.
- Students may underestimate the risks of the various prescription drugs. About 15% of 10th and 12th graders reported that narcotic painkillers were of “No risk” or “Slight risk.” 32.9% of seniors indicated that ADD/ADHD drugs were of “No risk” or “Slight risk.”
- In sum, the use by students of the four categories of drugs outside of a prescription was quite low. Although over 25% of 12th graders indicated receiving a prescription of narcotic painkillers, the types of prescriptions most frequently provided were for acute problems rather than chronic pain. This suggests that the risk of long-term exposure and availability is limited. The most frequent drug type to be used outside of a prescription was ADD/ADHD drugs. Students may underestimate the risks of the various prescription drugs, but it appears that only a small segment of students uses them in an unprescribed way.

Illicit drugs

- The reported use of the various types of illicit drugs was low. Less than 5% of students in any of the four grades indicated having tried any of the illicit drugs. The only exception was LSD, which 6.9% of 12th graders reported having tried.
- Less than 2% of the students in any grade level reported using illicit drugs in the past 30 days.

- The most frequently used drugs identified in the past 30 days were LSD, Other hallucinogens, Ecstasy, Synthetic marijuana, and Synthetic cathinones.
- One percent or less of students in any grade reported use of Heroin or Methamphetamine in the past 30 days.
- Most students considered use of illicit drugs of great risk.
- In conclusion, the reported use of illicit drugs among students was quite low. Less than 5% reported any lifetime use other than LSD. Less than 2% of students indicated current use (use past 30 days), and even fewer students reported use of heroin and methamphetamine. Even though current use of illicit drugs is low, drug use among young people ebbs and flows depending on factors including perceived risk, cultural norms, and availability. The cocaine and crack epidemic of the past and the current opioid epidemic are testaments to the potential of one or more drugs to take hold in a community.

General patterns

- Alcohol and drug use for nearly every category increases with the grade level of respondents.
- The initiation of drug use occurs primarily from ages 13 through 16, corresponding to adolescence.
- Higher perceived risk of the use of a drug is associated with less use of the drug. If students underestimate a drug's risk, they may be more likely to use it.
- The perception of parental disapproval of use of a drug is associated with less use of the drug.
- The use of alcohol and drugs most frequently takes place in social settings.

Prevention Implications

The prevention and control of alcohol and drug use and abuse among young people requires ongoing effort in the community. The findings of this survey, as well as other research on prevention, suggest some prevention considerations.

- The survey results suggest that prevention and control efforts should be considered with respect to alcohol use. Sizable proportions of students report getting drunk and experiencing serious consequences, so prevention should not only focus on controlling use, but also on practices to ensure the safety of students.
- It has become especially important to ensure young people are aware of the risks of marijuana use given the liberalization of attitudes towards it and its easy access.
- The emergence of the use of electronic cigarettes indicates the importance of informing students about the risks associated with their use. Increased regulation by the Food and Drug Administration may help, but local efforts also should be considered.

- Although the use of illicit drugs is low, they are all dangerous drugs and merit ongoing attention. Approaches to help monitor and identify emergent problems should be considered. Some possible source of information include local emergency rooms, local law enforcement agencies, teachers, and local health
- The results also indicated that prevention efforts are particularly important during the transition to adolescence. The results presented in Table 48 illustrate the importance of focusing on the transition to adolescence. As shown, attitudes towards the use of drugs other than alcohol shift from 6th grade to 12th grade. In other words, prevention efforts should focus on sustaining the attitudes that younger students have.

Table 47. Student Description of Their Current Drug Use Excluding Alcohol				
	6th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th grade
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Never used drugs and never will	94.8%	88.8%	77.7%	58.7%
Never use drugs, but may in the future	3.9%	8.5%	13.6%	12.2%
Used drugs, but don't plan to use them again	<1.0%	2.1%	2.7%	11.3%
Used drugs, and probably will use them again	1.0%	0.6%	5.9%	17.8%

- Student perceptions of parental attitudes toward alcohol and drug use matter. An important part of prevention is for parents to convey not only concern about alcohol and drug use, but to be involved in discussing issues of safety with their children. In addition, as suggested in the previous item, parental discussions about drugs should begin by age 13 and be ongoing throughout the period of adolescence.
- The lesson reflected in the relatively low proportions of students using tobacco products is that cultural attitudes are important. Attitudes toward tobacco use have changed over the past 50 years from smoking being acceptable to being unacceptable. The cultural norms among student groups and in the community affect the popularity of drugs and the ways in which they are used. The use of alcohol and marijuana are not only about intoxication, but also about social norms.

About the Author

Kirk C. Harlow, Dr.P.H. has been involved in research on behavioral health for over 35 years. He has published articles on the epidemiology and economics of drug abuse, employee assistance program outcome, screening for alcohol and drug abuse, and bullying. He also has prepared numerous technical reports on behavioral health issues for organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies to local public health departments. He is currently the outside evaluator on a tobacco prevention and control grant. Dr. Harlow was a university professor for 25 years at two different universities and is an emeritus faculty member of Midwestern State University.