

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

Arizona Youth Survey 2006 Fact Sheet



Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Arizona

November 2006

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) in collaboration with the Governor's Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Health Services, and the Office of Problem Gambling conducted a statewide survey to assess risky behavior—such as the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other dangerous drugs—among Arizona 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in 2006. The study is legislatively mandated to measure attitudes, prevalence, and frequency of substance abuse among children in the state. The survey was conducted with technical assistance from Bach Harrison, LLC.

Table 1: Percentage of Arizona Students Who Have Used Drugs in Their Lifetime

	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	Total
Alcohol	50.4	67.6	74.5	61.7
Cigarettes	30.8	43.8	50.0	39.6
Smokeless Tobacco	8.0	11.8	15.6	11.0
Marijuana	18.3	34.0	42.6	29.2
Inhalants	15.2	11.9	9.8	12.9
Hallucinogens	2.1	4.1	5.6	3.6
Cocaine	3.6	7.6	11.6	6.8
Sedatives	10.0	14.3	17.4	13.2
Stimulants	3.4	7.1	8.5	5.9
Ecstasy	1.9	3.4	4.4	3.0
Heroin	1.4	2.1	2.8	2.0
Methamphetamines	2.6	5.0	6.6	4.3
Steroids	1.6	2.0	2.2	1.9
Prescription Drugs	9.8	16.0	20.0	14.3

Substance Use Among Arizona Youth

Alcohol continues to be the most used substance among youth in Arizona across all grades, with 50.4% of 8th graders, 67.6% of 10th graders, and 74.5% of 12th graders reported having drunk alcohol at least once in their lifetime. For substance use in the 30-days prior to taking the survey, alcohol was the most widely used, with 24.1% of 8th graders, 39.2% of 10th graders, and 47% of 12th graders having drunk alcohol at least once in the 30-days before taking the survey.

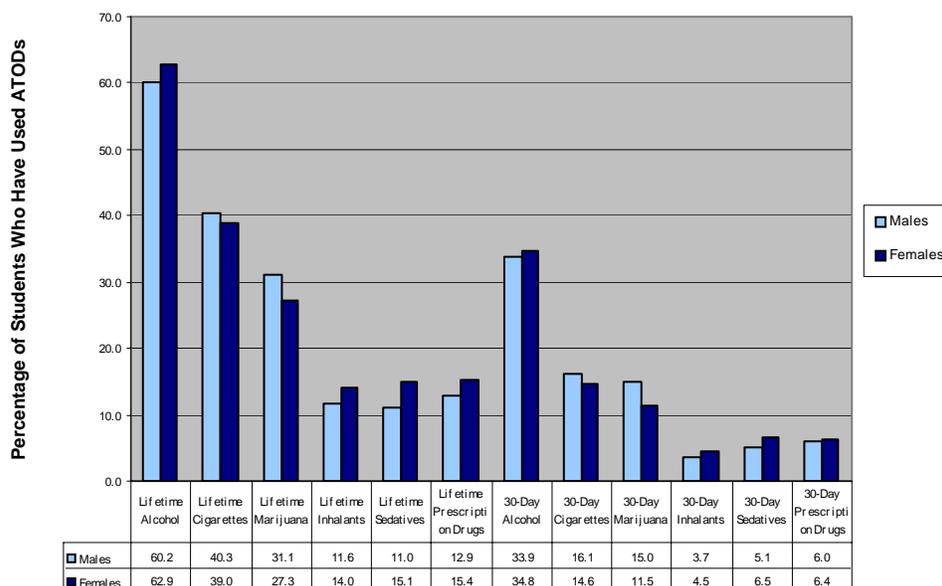
The four substances that have the highest percentages of lifetime and 30-day use are alcohol, marijuana, sedatives, and prescription drugs. Generally, the results show that the rate of substance use among youth tends to increase as a youth's age increases. As can be seen in tables 1 and 2, the only exception to this pattern are the rates of inhalant use, which actually decreases as youth get older.

Table 2: Percentage of Arizona Students Who Have Used Drugs in the Past 30-Days

	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	Total
Alcohol	24.1	39.2	47.0	34.4
Cigarettes	10.5	17.1	21.8	15.3
Smokeless Tobacco	2.7	4.0	5.4	3.8
Marijuana	8.5	15.7	18.1	13.1
Inhalants	6.2	3.1	1.7	4.1
Hallucinogens	1.0	1.7	1.7	1.4
Cocaine	1.7	2.9	3.3	2.5
Sedatives	4.5	6.6	7.1	5.8
Stimulants	1.5	2.9	2.6	2.2
Ecstasy	0.8	1.0	0.9	0.9
Heroin	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7
Methamphetamines	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.3
Steroids	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.9
Prescription Drugs	4.5	7.3	8.1	6.3

Chart 1 shows the usage rates of the six highest used drugs by gender. The rates of substance use for males and females are generally similar to one another. Surprisingly, for some drugs girls report slightly higher rates of use than

Chart 1: Lifetime and 30-Day Usage by Gender



Methodology:

The 2006 Arizona Youth Survey was administered in schools representing all 15 counties in Arizona. The 2006 AYS consisted of data from 362 schools and 60,401 students. This is a significant increase over the 2004 AYS, which was comprised of 266 schools with a sample of 40,960 students.

Antisocial Behavior Frequency

The Arizona Youth Survey also asked students if they participated in several types of anti-social and delinquent behavior in the past year. As a whole, the antisocial or delinquent behaviors students participated in most often were binge drinking, and being drunk or high at school. The rates for binge drinking have decreased over the three administrations of the Arizona Youth Survey. Unfortunately the rates of carrying a handgun and being suspended from school have increased over same time period.

Table 3: Percentage of Youth Engaged in Heavy Substance Use and Antisocial Behavior in the Past Year

	8th Grade			10th Grade			12th Grade			Total		
	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006
Binge Drinking	14.1	16.0	13.4	26.0	25.1	22.4	32.2	32.5	28.2	23.7	22.7	19.9
Drunk or High at School	15.4	13.2	13.0	20.4	20.8	21.1	23.8	22.2	21.4	19.6	17.7	17.6
Sold Illegal Drugs	5.7	5.0	4.9	9.9	8.9	9.1	10.0	9.8	9.8	8.4	7.3	7.4
Stolen a Vehicle	3.3	4.8	4.6	3.6	4.4	4.7	2.1	2.6	3.1	3.0	4.2	4.3
Been Arrested	9.1	8.7	8.3	8.0	9.1	9.3	8.2	9.1	7.8	8.5	8.9	8.5
Carried a Handgun	6.7	6.5	7.6	5.0	5.9	7.5	4.9	5.5	7.0	5.6	6.1	7.5

Gang Activity

The results from the AYS show that 3.6% of the youth report being currently in a gang. If you extrapolate this percentage to all 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in the state, then approximately 9,000 students in those grades are gang members. When you look at individual grades, 8th graders have the highest involvement in gangs with 4.3% self-reporting gang member-

School Safety Issues

With regard to students' perceptions of school safety (see Table 4), there has been little change since 2004. The data shows that over one and a half percent of students have carried a gun to school in the past year and almost seven percent have carried a weapon to school in the 30-days prior to taking the survey.

Table 4: Students' Responses to School Safety Questions

	8th Grade			10th Grade			12th Grade			Total		
	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006
Carried a Gun to School in Past 12 Months	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.6	0.9	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.6
In a Fight at School at Least Once in the Past 12 Months	21.5	27.6	25.6	12.4	17.1	15.7	6.5	9.9	8.9	14.0	20.2	18.0
I Do Not Feel Safe at My School	21.6	25.6	25.3	13.3	22.2	23.5	7.3	16.3	17.1	14.6	22.4	22.8
Did Not go to School at Least One Day in the Past Month Because Felt Unsafe At School or On the Way to School	5.3	11.3	10.7	2.3	7.8	7.8	2.6	5.6	5.0	3.5	8.8	8.4
Carried a Weapon to School at Least Once in the Past 30 Days	5.4	6.3	6.9	5.8	5.6	7.3	6.8	5.2	6.0	5.9	5.8	6.8
Been Threatened or Injured With a Weapon on School Property in the Past 12 Months	10.0	16.1	15.5	9.0	13.5	13.9	5.6	10.1	9.5	8.4	13.9	13.6
Been Bullied at Least Once in the Past Year	N/A	N/A	38.2	N/A	N/A	24.5	N/A	N/A	14.3	N/A	N/A	28.2

Risk and Protective Factors

The Arizona Youth Survey is based on the risk and protective factor

model of prevention. The risk and protective factors studied are categorized in four important areas of a youth's life: 1) community; 2) family; 3) school; and 4) within individuals themselves and their peer interactions. Having an understanding of the risk and protective factors affecting youth allow prevention strategies to target risk factors that are unacceptably high and protective factors that are unacceptably low.

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