Summer 2001

Executive Summary: 7th Biennial Statewide Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use Among California Students in Grades 7, 9 and 11

California Attorney General's Office

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/caldocs_agencies

Part of the Legislation Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/caldocs_agencies/98

This Cal State Document is brought to you for free and open access by the California Documents at GGU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in California Agencies by an authorized administrator of GGU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jfischer@ggu.edu.
Executive SUMMARY

7th Biennial Statewide Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use Among California Students in Grades 7, 9 and 11

Summer 2001

California Attorney General's Office
Gregory Austin and Rodney Skager
Executive SUMMARY

7th Biennial Statewide Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use Among California Students in Grades 7, 9 and 11

Winter 1997-98

Gregory Austin, PhD and Rodney Skager, PhD

Published by the California Attorney General's Office

Summer 2001

Opinions, findings and conclusions in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the State of California, Department of Justice, California Department of Education, Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs or Department of Health Services
Foreword

We all want our children to grow up healthy and drug-free — and to be safe at home and school. Our job is to help California's diverse communities provide safe homes and schools so our children can achieve and excel.

Our immediate priority is to support our children — they need our help. Today's youth are facing life-altering challenges, and many are not equipped with the maturity or skills to make healthy choices. Too many teens start drinking, succumbing to peer pressure, multi-million dollar TV beer ads or other influences — making alcohol the most widely used illicit substance by youth. Alcohol's popularity is confirmed by our 1997-98 Seventh Biennial Statewide Survey of 7th, 9th and 11th graders. The survey found that almost half of 7th-, two-thirds of 9th- and three-quarters of 11th-grade students reported drinking in the six months prior to the survey. In addition, a significant number (20%) of 11th graders reported weekly drinking.

Another disturbing survey finding is that one-third of 11th graders have been involved in drinking and driving. This information should motivate state and local policymakers to do more to curb youths' alcohol use. Also, drunk driving is not the only risk that teens face with alcohol use. According to a 1998 report by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), almost four in 10 violent crimes involve alcohol, as do four in 10 fatal motor vehicle accidents.

But we have faith in our youth. Some heard the prevention message and changed their behavior. The findings from the Seventh Biennial Survey indicate small to moderate increases in students abstaining from alcohol or other drug use in the six months before the survey.

We know what works — long-term prevention strategies and programs that help our youth make the right choices. Information from the Seventh Biennial Survey can help state leaders and educators direct their prevention efforts more effectively.

Joining us in these efforts are survey cosponsors: Delaine Eastin, Superintendent of Public Instruction, California Department of Education; the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs; and the Department of Health Services. Our thanks go to them for their long-time support of the survey. Special thanks also goes to the school administrators, teachers, parents and especially the students for their participation in this important endeavor which benefits all young people in California.

California Attorney General's Office
Preface

This survey and report was prepared by WestEd under Contract #96-4375 from the Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, as legislated by the Health and Safety Code section 11605. We are indebted to Attorney General Bill Lockyer for his support of this survey and his recognition of the importance of ongoing monitoring of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use by California youth as a guide to prevention and intervention efforts. In the Attorney General’s Crime and Violence Prevention Center, Daphne Hom served as the Project Manager.

Support also was provided by the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs; the California Department of Education, Healthy Kids Program Office; and the Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, Epidemiology Branch.

This project would not have been possible without the cooperation of the participating school superintendents, principals, and teachers. Their commitment and professionalism have made this survey a reality once again. We thank them on behalf of all the state sponsoring agencies and WestEd.

Gregory Austin and Rodney Skager
Project Directors, WestEd

For more information, write to: Office of the Attorney General
Crime and Violence Prevention Center (CVPC)
1300 I St., Suite 1150
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 324-7863
http://caag.state.ca.us/cvpc
Abbreviations and Definitions

Surveys
CSS California Student Survey
MTF Monitoring the Future

Drugs and Drug-Related Behaviors
AOD (ATOD) Alcohol (tobacco) and other drugs.
Alcoholic Drink One can/bottle of beer or wine cooler, glass of wine, mixed drink, or short glass of distilled spirits (liquor).
Binge Drinking Refers to consuming five drinks or more in a row on the same occasion. The CSS and MTF measure this behavior over the past two weeks. Also referred to as episodic or occasional heavy drinking.
Cigarettes Refers only to tobacco smoking.
Illicit Drugs Drugs other than alcohol or tobacco, such as marijuana.
Inhalants Drugs that you “sniff” or “huff” to get “high,” such as glue, gasoline, paint fumes, aerosol sprays, and poppers.
Methamphetamines Crystal meth, speed, ice, crank, or any amphetamine.
Polydrug Use Use of two or more different drugs on the same occasion. Measured for the past six months.
Smokeless Tobacco Chew or snuff, such as Redman, Levi Garrett, Beechnut, Skoal, Bandits, or Copenhagens.

ATOD Use Prevalence Measures

Six-Month Prevalence Any use six months prior to the survey.
Lifetime Prevalence Any use over respondent’s lifetime (i.e., ever used).
Current Use Any use 30 days prior to the survey.
Weekly Use Once a week or more often, calculated based on the frequency of use in the past six months.
Daily Use Once a day or more often. For alcohol and illicit drugs, calculated for the past six months. For smokeless tobacco and cigarettes, for the past 30 days.
# Contents

Foreword ..................................................................................................................... i  
Preface ......................................................................................................................... ii 
Abbreviations and Definitions ....................................................................................... iii  
Introduction ................................................................................................................... 1 
Background ................................................................................................................... 1 
Survey Content ............................................................................................................. 2 
Procedures ................................................................................................................... 2 
Sample Plan and Characteristics ................................................................................. 2 
Alcohol Use ..................................................................................................................... 3 
Six-Month Prevalence .................................................................................................... 3 
Current Drinking (Past 30 Days) ................................................................................ 3 
Lifetime Drinking .......................................................................................................... 3 
Binge Drinking ............................................................................................................. 4 
Excessive Alcohol Use ................................................................................................. 4 
Early Intoxication .......................................................................................................... 4 
Drinking and Driving .................................................................................................... 4 
Drug Use ....................................................................................................................... 5 
Six-Month Prevalence .................................................................................................... 5 
Current & Lifetime Use ............................................................................................... 7 
Drug Intoxication .......................................................................................................... 7 
Patterns of AOD Use and Related Problems ................................................................. 8 
Abstinence ..................................................................................................................... 8 
High-Risk Use ............................................................................................................... 8 
Polydrug Use ............................................................................................................... 9 
Attending School "High" .............................................................................................. 9 
Use-Related Problems ................................................................................................. 9 
Use Influences ............................................................................................................. 10 
Perceived Harm of Frequent Use ................................................................................. 10 
Availability ................................................................................................................... 10 
Parental Disapproval ................................................................................................... 11 
Tobacco Use ............................................................................................................... 12 
Current Smoking ......................................................................................................... 12 
Smokeless Tobacco Use .............................................................................................. 13 
Perceived Harm .......................................................................................................... 13 
National Comparisons ................................................................................................. 13 
Conclusion and Recommendations ............................................................................. 13
Figures

1. Beer Use in Past Six Months ................................................................. 3
2. Excessive Alcohol Use, Grades 9 & 11 .................................................. 4
3. Involvement in Drinking and Driving During Lifetime, Grades 9 & 11 .......... 5
4. Any Use of Eight Substances, Past Six Months, Grade 11 ...................... 6
5. Intoxication from Illicit Drug Use ............................................................... 7
6. Abstinence, High-Risk, and Conventional Drug Use, Past Six Months,
   Grade 11 ........................................................................................................ 8
7. Ever “High” at School on Alcohol or Another Drug .................................. 9
8. Cigarette Smoking, Past Month .................................................................. 12

Appendices

Appendix A. Substance Use, Past Six Months, Grade 7 .................................. 14
Appendix B. Substance Use, Past Six Months, Grade 9 ................................... 15
Appendix C. Substance Use, Past Six Months, Grade 11 ................................. 16
Appendix D. Substance Use, Past 30 Days, Grds 7, 9 & 11 ............................... 17
Introduction

The seventh (1997-98) Biennial Statewide Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use Among California Students — also referred to as the California Student Survey (CSS) — continues the important work of the state to monitor, understand, and prevent adolescent use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD). This report briefly summarizes the survey's major findings.¹ Tables with the results for six-month, 30-day, and lifetime use rates are provided in the appendices.

Background

The first CSS was conducted in 1985. Through 1989, illicit drug use and cigarette smoking among California students steadily declined. In 1989, alcohol consumption declined as well. For the 1991 survey, signals were mixed. Students reported: (a) a resurgence in alcohol and tobacco use; (b) slight increases in the use of marijuana, LSD, and inhalants; but (c) continued declines in the use of cocaine and amphetamines.

However, the 1993 CSS was a wake-up call to the State. Major increases occurred in the use of marijuana, LSD, inhalants, and several other drugs, especially among 9th graders. Cigarette smoking continued to rise, and alcohol consumption remained at elevated levels. Overall, ATOD use approached or equaled the peaks of 1985.

In 1995, most changes in behavior were small or continued trends that pre-existed the active consent requirement, such as the rise in marijuana use, polydrug use, and attending school “high.” Interpretation of the 1995 results, however, was complicated by a new requirement that parent or guardian consent had to be confirmed through a valid signature. This procedure resulted in an overall drop in student participation rates, with wide variations within and between schools. Because the effects of this change on the results could not be determined, comparisons with earlier findings had to be made with caution, and the results considered a new benchmark. (As a reminder, a slash mark has been placed across the line between the 1993 and 1995 rates in all trend figures.)

The 1997 results suggest that the general rise in ATOD use, particularly marijuana use, which characterized the first half of the 1990s has leveled off and may even be reversing among younger students. The few changes that occurred were generally small and often inconsistent across grades (e.g., slightly higher in one grade and lower in another). Those most note-worthy were declines, especially for alcohol and cigarette use among 7th graders. While this is encouraging, adolescent ATOD use remains as common today as in 1985 when this survey was initiated.

¹ For the full report of all findings, see Austin, G., and Skager, R., Seventh Biennial Statewide Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use Among California Students in Grades 7, 9, and 11: 1997-98. Sacramento CA: Office of the Attorney General, 2001.
Survey Content

The survey assesses the use of 16 substances or classes of substances, as well as high-risk behaviors such as polydrug use (two or more drugs on the same occasion) and binge drinking. It also assesses perceived harm and other attitudes relevant to substance use; personal problems associated with use of alcohol and other drug use; social influences (such as availability and use among adults); and exposure to prevention and intervention programs. Since the survey's inception, the main series of questions about alcohol and other drugs has assessed the frequency of use in the six months prior to survey administration. In 1993, we added use in the past month (current use) and lifetime (ever used).

Procedures

Student participation was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. As in 1995, no student took the survey without a signed consent form from a parent or guardian. Parents were allowed to review the survey questionnaire prior to its administration. WestEd staff administered all the surveys.

Sample Plan and Characteristics

With the assistance of supplemental federal funding, we increased the number of participating schools and classrooms in the target sample for the 1997 CSS. This was done to: (a) expand the number of questions asked by using two survey forms; (b) compensate for the reduced participation rate that resulted from written consent in 1995; and (c) narrow statistical confidence intervals. WestEd randomly selected schools for the sample proportionally to their total number in each of six geographic regions of the state, and randomly selected approximately half of the schools in each region from the 1995 survey. We then selected three regular classrooms for each grade level at each school.

The survey was administered in 157 public and 10 private (independent) secondary schools statewide between November 1997 and April 1998. The survey was completed by 11,696 students in grades 7, 9, and 11 — the largest sample in the history of the survey. As occurred in 1995, the final response rate was 60%, largely due to problems in getting the signed parent consent forms returned. The ethnic breakdown of the final sample was similar to previous surveys. Females were over-represented, but we weighted the data to correct this gender bias.
Alcohol Use

Alcohol remains the most widely used class of substances, with overall prevalence rates similar or slightly lower than in 1995. In the upper grades, rates for most beverage categories remain approximately what they were in the past. In grade 7, several rates fell.

Six-Month Prevalence

Nearly half of 7th graders (47%), two-thirds of 9th (67%), and three-quarters (75%) of 11th reported at least some drinking in the previous six months. These levels were about the same as observed throughout the 12 years of the survey, allowing for moderate fluctuations. However, for 7th grade, use fell below 50% for the first time. Weekly drinking during this period was stable, at 9% of 9th and 20% of 11th graders.

The percentage of beer drinkers has been relatively stable across grades since 1985, with the exception of a dip in 1989. Over half of 9th graders (54%) and almost two-thirds of 11th (64%) reported drinking it in the past six months.

**Figure 1. Beer Use in Past Six Months, Grades 7, 9 and 11, Since 1985**

Current Drinking (Past 30 Days)

Twenty-two percent of 7th graders, 38% of 9th, and 47% of 11th consumed alcohol at least once in the previous 30 days. Compared to 1995, rates were equivalent in grade 11. In grades 7 and 9 they were down slightly, and down a total of six points since 1993.

Lifetime Drinking

There was a drop in lifetime drinking among 7th graders, from 58% in 1995 to 52%. It remained approximately the same among 9th and 11th graders, at 73% and 81%, respectively.
Binge Drinking

The percentage of students who had five drinks in a row in the past two weeks is a standard indicator of episodic heavy drinking, often called binge drinking. Binge drinking increased slightly in all grades, one of the few alcohol indicators to rise. The rates were 10% for 7th grade (vs. 8% in 1995), 20% for 9th (vs. 17%), and 26% for 11th (vs. 22%).

Excessive Alcohol Use

About one-fifth of 9th graders (19%) and one-third of 11th (31%) were classified as excessive alcohol users, based on an index of items including binge drinking, drinking styles (liking to get drunk), and frequency of drunkenness. There was no change among 11th graders, but a moderate decline among 9th (from 23% in 1995).

Figure 2. Excessive Alcohol Use, Grades 9 and 11, Since 1991

Early Intoxication

Lifetime alcohol intoxication (ever) was reported by 20% of 7th graders by age 12, slightly less than in 1995 (21.5%). In contrast, between 1989 and 1993 the rate rose from 13% to 23%.

Drinking and Driving

Among 11th graders, 38% reported either driving a car after drinking or being in a car driven by someone after drinking, the same percentage as in 1995. Almost half of these students (17.5%) reported three or more drinking and driving experiences, as has been found in the past.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Figure 3. Involvement in Drinking and Driving During Lifetime, Grades 9 and 11, Since 1989

Drug Use

As in 1995, there were few changes in the use of specific illicit drugs other than marijuana, in contrast to the major increases observed in 1993. Changes that did occur were generally small and often inconsistent across grades, suggesting general stability. The one exception besides marijuana was inhalant use.

Six-Month Prevalence

Any Illicit Drug

Over one quarter (27%) of 7th graders, 43% of 9th, and almost half (49%) of 11th reported using an illicit drug on at least one occasion in the past six months. Although not significantly different than in 1995, these rates remain at survey highs for all grades because of the escalation in marijuana use since the early 1990s.

Marijuana

Marijuana use has leveled off after the sharp upward trend in the first half of the decade. Nevertheless, six-month prevalence rates are almost at peak levels, which occurred in 1985 for grades 9 and 11. They are about half again higher than in 1989. Eleven percent of 7th graders, 32.5% of 9th, and 42% of 11th reported using marijuana. In comparison, the survey lows reported in 1989 were 7%, 20%, and 28%, respectively.

Nine percent of 9th graders and 14% of 11th used marijuana once a week or more frequently (past six months), representing modest declines of about three points for both grades compared to 1995.
**Figure 4. Any Use of Eight Substances, Past Six Month, Grade 11, Since 1985**

Inhalants

Inhalants are the most popular illicit drug among 7th graders and the second most popular among upper graders. Six-month inhalant use rose slightly (two points) in grade 7, to a survey high of 18%. Use was stable in grades 9 at 21% and grade 11 at 15%. These remain at a four-year survey high because of the increases between 1989 and 1993. *This rise in inhalant use is one of the significant trends of the 1990s.*

LSD

Six-month use of LSD declined in 9th grade (from 10% in 1995 to 6%) and remained about the same in 11th (at 10%). The increase in LSD use observed between 1989 and 1993 (from 3% to 9% in 9th grade, and from 6% to 12% in 11th) may have run its course and perhaps reversed.

Cocaine

One of the survey’s most positive trends was a decline in cocaine use among high school students in the early 1990s. Though this decline has not persisted, rates held steady at 6% among 9th graders and 8% among 11th.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

6
Methamphetamine

Use of methamphetamine and other amphetamines ("speed") rose between 1991 and 1993, exceeding cocaine. Since then, survey trends have been mixed, but there has not been the anticipated rise in adolescent use, which was predicted because of the large increase reported among adults. In 1997, use may have marginally increased to 12% among 11th graders (from 10% in 1995), but it declined among 9th graders to 8% from 11%. Present rates in both grades are still lower than the peak levels in 1985.

Current & Lifetime Use

Marijuana thirty-day prevalence rate (current use) remained about the same in 7th (7.5%) and 11th grades (26%). In 9th grade, it declined to 18% (vs. 24% in 1995). The only other notable change in drug use was a 2-point decline in inhalant use in 9th grade, to 8.5%. Lifetime marijuana use may have declined marginally in grade 9 to 33% (vs. 35%), but was unchanged in grades 7 (11%) and 11 (46%).

Lifetime inhalant use declined about 2 points in all grades to 17%, 25%, and 20%. (However, as noted on the previous page, six-month use increased slightly.)

Drug Intoxication

About one-tenth (11%) of 7th, 32.5% of 9th, and 43% of 11th grade students had been intoxicated on an illicit drug by the grade modal age. These results suggest that about four in ten 7th graders who had ever tried an illegal drug had been "high" or intoxicated at least once. The rate rose to two-thirds in 9th and eight in ten in 11th grade.

Figure 5. Intoxication from Illicit Drug Use, Since 1985

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Patterns of AOD Use and Related Problems

Abstinence

Forty-four percent of 7th graders, 20% of 9th, and 16% of 11th had been totally abstinent (never used alcohol or illicit drugs) over their lifetime. Six-month abstinence rates in 9th and 11th grades were about the same as in previous surveys, at 29% and 23%, respectively. However, among 7th graders abstinence rose marginally to 47% (from 45% in 1995), equaling the previous peak in 1989. Overall, trends in six-month abstinence rates have been relatively stable.

High-Risk Use

Based on patterns of drug use in the past six months, the percentages of 9th and 11th graders categorized as high-risk illicit drug users remained steady at 20% and 27%. This measure is based on a combination of indicators, including weekly or more frequent use of marijuana, any use of cocaine, and/or sampling of other illicit drugs. The percent classified as “conventional drug users” (any use but not meeting high-risk criteria), also remained steady at about 50% for both grades.

Figure 6. Abstinence, High Risk and Conventional Drug Use, Past 6 Months, Grade 11, Since 1987

Executive Summary
Polydrug Use
The percentage of upper graders reporting that they used more than one drug on the same occasion (polydrug use, alcohol included) held steady at 23% among 9th and 34% among 11th graders. Present rates are still significantly higher than in 1991 when survey lows occurred (14% and 21%, respectively). This trend is probably associated with the rise in marijuana use over this period.

Attending School "High"
One-fifth of 9th graders and almost one-third of 11th (31%) reported attending school at least once while "high" on alcohol or another drug. This behavior has been mainly stable since 1993 but with a decline among 9th graders in 1997 (from 23% in 1995).

Figure 7. Ever "High" at School on Alcohol or Another Drug, Grades 7, 9 and 11, Since 1989

Use-Related Problems
Students were given a list of 10 specific problems, such as getting arrested or fighting with other kids, that could result from alcohol and illicit drug use: 21% of 9th graders and 28% of 11th experienced one or more problems from alcohol; and 16% and 20%, respectively, experienced one or more problems from drugs. For weekly users of alcohol or marijuana in 11th grade, the total problem rates rose to 64% and 58%, respectively. The higher rates for alcohol reflect the higher prevalence of drinking.

Results for both alcohol and illicit drugs on specific problems were similar, with adverse pharmacological effects, hurting school work, interpersonal conflicts, and money problems most frequently selected.
Use Influences

Underlying adolescent AOD use are the high rates for perceiving that both alcohol and illicit drugs to be easy to obtain, as well as adult modeling of drug use. Overwhelming majorities of the respondents believed that their parents would strongly disapprove were they to learn that the student had used marijuana. At the same time, the majority of 11th graders knew an adult who used marijuana regularly. Parental disapproval was lower for alcohol use by youth than for marijuana use.

Perceived Harm of Frequent Use

The percentages of students rating frequent (daily or almost daily) use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana as extremely harmful have varied considerably over time. However, the perceived harmfulness of marijuana seems to have been softening.

- Alcohol. In 7th and 9th grades, considerably more students than in 1995 gave ratings of extreme harm: 46% in 7th (vs. 35%); and 35% in 9th (vs. 28%). The rate was unchanged in 11th grade at 36%.
- Marijuana. In grade 7, almost three-quarters (73%) rated daily marijuana use as extremely harmful. In grade 9, the rating dropped to 50% and in grade 11 to 44%. (There has been a downward trend in these perceptions since 1991 for both grades 9 and 11.) Current rates are about the same as in 1985 for 7th and 9th grade, but lower for 11th.

Availability

Significant majorities of high school students reported that both alcohol and marijuana were easy to obtain. Older teenagers perceive marijuana to be as easy to obtain as alcohol.

- Alcohol. All three grades perceived alcohol to be much less available than in 1995. About one-third of 7th graders (37%), two-thirds of 9th (66%), and three-fourths of 11th (79%) considered alcohol to be either very easy or fairly easy to obtain. This compares to 45%, 75%, and 83% respectively in 1995.
- Marijuana. Over one-fourth of 7th graders (28%) perceived marijuana to be easy or fairly easy to obtain, as did almost two-thirds of 9th graders (64%), and three-fourths of 11th grade students (77%). In the two upper grades, there has been little difference between alcohol and marijuana on this measure over the past three surveys.

Marijuana Use among Peers

Research on adolescents has shown that spontaneous modeling of peers is a powerful influence on youth substance use. In 1997, we asked students for the first time how many of their same-age peers used marijuana. The results supported the theory that youth overestimate use prevalence and perceive it as normative.

- Close to half of the older students (43% in 9th grade and 49% in 11th) believed that 50% or more of their classmates used marijuana at least once a month. The percentage of students uncertain about how many peers use marijuana dropped from 42% in grade 7 to 11% in grade 11.
- About 36% of students overestimated marijuana use in grade 7, 59% in grade 9 and 68% in grade 11.
Parental Disapproval

For the first time, we assessed students’ perception of their parents’ attitudes toward AOD use among their children. Survey results do not support criticism that parents do not take a firm stand against it: students know that parents are especially against marijuana use and also disapprove of alcohol and marijuana use for 7th graders.

- **Student Marijuana Use.** Regardless of grade level, more than 8 out of 10 respondents felt that their parents would disapprove strongly if they were to learn that the student had used marijuana. The rate was higher in 7th grade (95%) than 11th (84%).

- **Student Alcohol Use.** Fewer respondents in all grades, though still substantial majorities, believed that their parents would disapprove strongly if they drank alcohol. The rate dropped from 83% disapproval in 7th grade to 66% in 11th.

Use by Adults Known to the Student

Use by adults, especially adults whom a young person admires and respects, may provide a model for the youth’s own behavior. Substantial numbers reported that they knew at least one adult who was a regular marijuana user.

- **Marijuana.** Half of 9th graders and more than half of 11th graders (59%) knew one or more adults who used marijuana regularly. These were substantial increases over the rates reported in 1995 (43% and 53%).

- **Stimulants.** About one in five 9th-grade students knew one or more adults who used cocaine (19%) or amphetamines (21%). The rates for 11th graders were slightly higher, at 22% and 25%, respectively. These percentages are about the same as in 1995, though with a possible slight decrease for cocaine.
Tobacco Use

Current Smoking
Results of past surveys provided little evidence that meaningful inroads had been made in current (past month) smoking rates through 1995. Smoking is less common than drinking, but more common than marijuana use. Overall trends have been similar to marijuana, declining in the late 1980s and rising in the early 1990s. In this context, present findings are mildly encouraging.

- **Cigarette Smoking.** Among 7th graders, current cigarette smoking declined to a new low for the survey at 13%, compared to peaks of 18% in 1991 and 1993. Among both 9th and 11th graders, it was 29%, about the same as in 1993 and 1995.

- **Daily Smoking.** Current smoking of one or more cigarettes each day was unchanged across grades, at 2% in 7th grade, 7% in 9th, and 11% in 11th. These rates have been relatively constant since 1987, except for a dip in 1991 among upper grades.

**Figure 8. Cigarette Smoking, Past Month, Any and Daily, Since 1985**

![Graph showing percentage of students smoking over years from 1985-1998. The graph indicates a decline in smoking rates across grades, with 7th grade showing the lowest and 11th grade the highest. The graph also shows a steady increase in daily smoking rates across all grades.](image)
Smokeless Tobacco Use

Use of smokeless tobacco in the past 30 days declined slightly among high school students to 4% in 9th grade (from 6% in 1995), and to 5% in 11th (from 8%).

Perceived Harm

For frequent (daily) smoking, perceptions of extreme harm for 7th graders were higher than in 1995, at 50% (vs. 43%) and for 9th graders, at 40.5% (vs. 32%). It was stable in grade 11, at 43%. Younger students may be becoming somewhat more aware that cigarettes are harmful. Despite this apparent improvement, ratings of extreme harm still were much higher at all three grades in 1993 than they are now.

National Comparisons

For national comparisons, the most valuable dataset for alcohol and other drug use is the annual Monitoring the Future Survey (MTF), funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The MTF differs in several important respects from the CSS: MTF collects data from different grades (8, 10, and 12), assesses use in the past 12 months rather than past six months, and is administered in the spring. Nevertheless, trend comparisons are still reasonable:

- As a whole, prevalence rates for alcohol, marijuana, and cigarette use have remained more stable since 1991 in the CSS than in the MTF.
- Current results suggest use of marijuana and cigarettes in California are both declining compared to national trends.
- Alcohol use trends appear very similar in the two surveys.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The general stability in ATOD use in grades 9 and 11 is a positive sign after the increases reported between 1991 and 1995. Even more encouraging are the declines observed since 1993 among 7th graders in six-month alcohol drinking (from 53% to 47%) and current smoking (18% to 13%). Both are at 12-year survey lows. The lifetime drinking rate also dropped substantially in grade 7 (from 58% to 52%).

Nevertheless, many indicator rates across grades remain at survey highs comparable to peaks of 1985 — notably marijuana and inhalants. Progress in reducing illicit drug use among 7th graders is not as evident for drugs as for alcohol and cigarettes. Although marijuana use was flat, inhalant use continued to increase, and use of each drug is at a survey high. Also of concern is the softening of perceived harm from frequent marijuana use in all grades.

The challenge for the next two years is to reduce consumption of all drugs in all grades. The findings suggest that among the strategies that should be implemented are countering overestimation of use among peers, increasing awareness of the harm associated with drug use, reducing availability, and providing more assistance to help older youth reduce or stop use.
### Appendix A. Substance Use, Past Six Months, Grade 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine coolers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychedelics</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbiturates</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedatives</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranquilizers</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other narcotics</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Aggregated Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any AOD use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any illicit drug</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug not marijuana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polydrug used</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No AOD use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Weekly Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (Any)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Note: the vertical dotted line indicates when written parental consent was implemented.

a Includes methamphetamine.
b Other than LSD.
c Any illicit drug other than marijuana.
d Use of two or more substances (e.g., alcohol and marijuana; cocaine and heroin) at the same time.
e Once a week or more often.
## Appendix B. Substance Use, Past Six Months, Grade 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine coolers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines(^a)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychedelics(^b)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbiturates</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedatives</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranquilizers</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other narcotics</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Aggregated Categories

- Any AOD use: 70.2% (1985-86), 71.3% (1987-88), 70.4% (1995-96) 71.0% (1997-98)
- Alcohol only: 29.3% (1985-86), 29.8% (1987-88), 27.3% (1995-96), 27.6% (1997-98)
- Any illicit drug: 40.9% (1985-86), 41.6% (1987-88), 43.1% (1995-96), 43.4% (1997-98)
- Drug not marijuana\(^c\): 20.5% (1985-86), 20.1% (1987-88), 31.7% (1995-96), 30.1% (1997-98)
- Polydrug used\(^d\): 29.0% (1985-86), 21.2% (1987-88), 24.7% (1995-96), 23.4% (1997-98)
- No AOD use: 35.5% (1985-86), 29.8% (1987-88), 29.6% (1995-96), 29.0% (1997-98)

### Weekly Use\(^e\)


---

Special Note: the vertical dotted line indicates when written parental consent was implemented.

\(^a\) Includes methamphetamines.
\(^b\) Other than LSD.
\(^c\) Any illicit drug other than marijuana.
\(^d\) Use of two or more substances (e.g., alcohol and marijuana; cocaine and heroin) at the same time.
\(^e\) Once a week or more often.
### Appendix C. Substance Use, Past Six Months, Grade 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine coolers</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines¹</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychedelicsᵇ</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbiturates</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedatives</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranquilizers</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other narcotics</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Aggregated Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any AOD use</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>77.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol only</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any illicit drug</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug not marijuanaᶜ</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polydrug usedᵈ</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No AOD use</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Weekly Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (Any)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Note: the vertical dotted line indicates when written parental consent was implemented.

---

¹ Includes methamphetamine.

ᵇ Other than LSD.

ᶜ Any illicit drug other than marijuana.

d Use of two or more substances (e.g., alcohol and marijuana; cocaine and heroin) at the same time.

ᵉ Once a week or more often.
Appendix D. Substance Use, Past 30 Days, Grades 7, 9 & 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 9</th>
<th>Grade 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes*</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine/crack</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychedelics</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Drugs</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Drug Use</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Note: the vertical dotted line indicates when written parental consent was implemented.

a Past month.