

# The Partnership for Drug-Free New Jersey: Parents' Attitudes & Behaviors Toward Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Study, 2016

Prepared for: Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey

New Jersey Center for Prevention Research (PDFNJ)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction.....3
- Key Findings.....5
- Detailed Findings .....9
- Sample Profile.....59





# Introduction



# Introduction

4

- GfK Roper Public Affairs & Corporate Communications was commissioned by The Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey to conduct a telephone survey among a sample of 500 parents with children ages 12-15 in New Jersey. This is the seventh time this study has been conducted since 2006.
- The sample was randomly drawn from listed sample purchased from American Student Lists and Dunhill.
- Interviews for this wave were conducted from January 19 - February 7, 2016.
- Data were weighted to New Jersey census data for key demographics of households with children ages 12-15.
- Margin of error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 5 percentage points for the total sample.





# Key Findings



# Key Findings

**New Jersey Parents See a Link Between Opioid and Heroin Use.** The study finds that most New Jersey parents seem knowledgeable about the relationship between rising opioid and heroin use. Seven in ten (71%) believe there is a link between pain killers prescribed for things like sports injuries and wisdom teeth removal and the rising use of heroin in NJ. Seven in ten (72%) also know that heroin is now less expensive to obtain than prescription drugs. Six in ten (60%) understand that opioids are a synthetic version of heroin. Just over one-quarter (27%) believe that illegal prescription drugs are getting harder to obtain.

**Anti-Drug and Anti-Alcohol Commercials/Advertisements Play a Role in Encouraging Many Parents to Speak with Their Children About the Risks.** Eight in ten parents (80%) say the ads encouraged them to talk to their children about using drugs or alcohol, consistent with last wave's level of 82%, which represented the highest level ever recorded. Almost six in ten say the ads made them more aware of the risks of using drugs and alcohol (down 13 points, but back to levels recorded in previous waves).



# Key Findings

7

## **Majority of New Jersey Parents Continue to Feel Most Knowledgeable About Marijuana; Knowledge of Heroin Has Increased Significantly.**

Parents continue to feel most knowledgeable about marijuana, with seven in ten saying they know "a lot" (70%). Parents knowledge of heroin has increased significantly since last wave, from 39% to 49%. Knowledge of prescription drug abuse (63% up from 58%), OxyContin (50% up from 46%) and meth abuse has increased somewhat since last wave (38% up from 32%).

## **Top Reason Parents Think Kids Use Drugs Is To Look Cool and To Feel Better About Themselves.**

Two-thirds of parents think a major reason kids use drugs is to look cool (68%, up from 63% last wave). Six in ten (60%) believe it is to help them feel better about themselves, representing a decrease of 4 points. A majority also cite the pressure and stress of school as a major reason (54%) and a majority of parents also feel that kids are using drugs to help them deal with problems at home (50%). One-third cite improving their athletic performance as a major reason kids are using drugs.



# Key Findings

8

## **Parents Believe Substances Come From Different Sources, With Home Being A Top Source For Both Alcohol and Prescription/OTC Drugs.**

A majority of parents think that children are getting drugs from their classmates (57% up from 49% 2014), followed by their friends (34%). When it comes to getting alcohol, parents believe kids are getting it from their home (43%), from friends' homes (26%), or from friends (24%). Six in ten (60%) feel that kids get prescription and over-the-counter drugs out of home medicine cabinets, an increase of 11 points since 2014. Those citing friend's medicine cabinet (15%), friends (13%) or classmates (9%) follow.

## **Positive Steps Regarding Unused, Unwanted Or Expired Prescription/OTC Medications.**

Parents' behaviors toward managing unused, unwanted and expired medication have changed in one key respect: the number saying they have disposed of unused, unwanted, and expired medicine at a local disposal site has increased significantly (25% compared to 16% in 2014). The number who report having expired medicines in their home is at its lowest level since the question was first asked in 2011 – registering now at 34%.





# Sample Profile

9

## Age of 12-15 year old child:

12-13	53%
14-15	47%

## Gender of child:

Male	48%
Female	52%

## Child's grade in school

4-8	62%
9 or higher	35%

## Age of Parent:

Under 40	7%
40-49	51%
50 or older	39%

## Gender of Parent:

Male	42%
Female	58%



## Race/Ethnicity:

White	66%
African American or Black	15%
Hispanic	18%
Other	3%

## Income:

Under \$25,000	6%
\$25,000 to under \$50,000	15%
\$50,000 to under \$100,000	22%
\$100,000 or more	47%