

Executive Summary of the Findings

2000 Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey Middle School Substance Abuse Survey

Conducted by RoperASW (Formerly Audits & Surveys Worldwide)

I. Usage

II. Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey Media Campaign

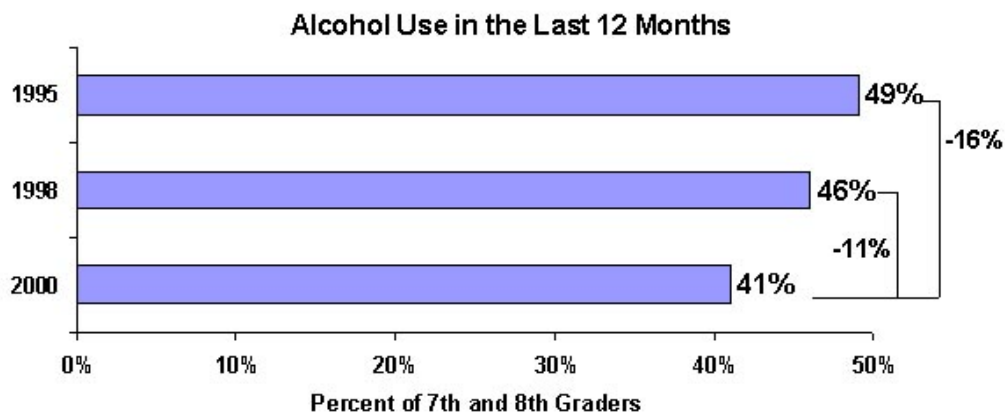
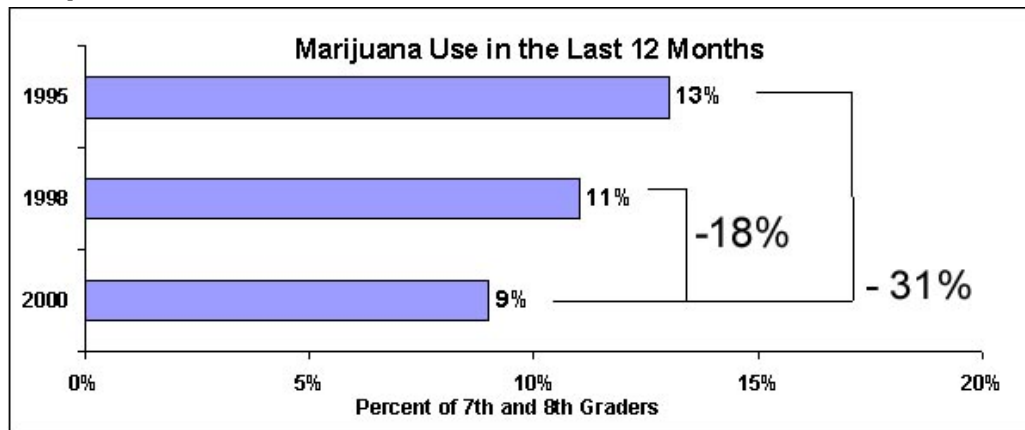
III. Parental Communication, Interaction and Usage

IV. Discussions about Drugs and Parental Influence

V. Helpfulness of Discussions about Drugs with Parents

I. Usage

[\(return to top\)](#)



Past 12 month usage of marijuana and alcohol is at its lowest level in five years.

Drug Use in the Last 12 Months	New Jersey	National
Marijuana	9	20
Alcohol	41	42
Cocaine	4	6
Crack	3	5
Inhalants	9	18

Usage of all substances, except alcohol, is lower in New Jersey than in the nation as a whole.

II. The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey Media Campaign

[\(return to top\)](#)

Frequency of Seeing or Hearing Commercials About the Risk of Drugs and Alcohol	Drugs (%)	Alcohol (%)
More than once a day	12	9
Everyday or almost Everyday	38	25
1 – 3 times a week	20	19
1 – 3 times a month	12	16
Less than once a month	7	13
Not at all	5	12

70% of all 7th and 8th graders see or hear commercials about the risk of using drugs once a week or more often.

Over one-half (53%) of all 7th and 8th graders see or hear commercials about the risks of using alcohol once a week or more often.

Impact of Commercials About Drugs and Alcohol	Agree A Lot		
	1995 (%)	1998 (%)	2000 (%)
Made you more aware of the risks of using drugs	39	35	46
Made you less likely to try or use drugs	40	37	46

The impact of anti-drug and anti-alcohol advertising is at its highest levels in five years.

III. Parental Communication, Interaction and Usage

[\(return to top\)](#)

Usage of Drugs Based on Frequency of Talking to Adults in Their Home About Daily Activities

Frequency of Talking to Adults in Your Home About What You've Done During the Day		Almost Every Day (%)	Once a Week or Less (%)	Reduction in Usage Among those Spoken to Almost Every Day (%)
Used in Last 12 Months:	Marijuana	6	18	67
	Alcohol	35	46	24

7th and 8th graders who discuss their daily activities almost everyday with an adult in their home are much less likely than those who have discussions once a week or less to have used marijuana and alcohol in the last 12 months.

Number of Days Per Week Have A Meal With Adults in Home	Percent of 7th and 8th Graders	Percent of Each Group Who Used Marijuana in the Last 12 Months
0 to 4	34	13
5 to 7	61	7

More than half of all 7th and 8th graders have at least one meal with adults in their home 5 to 7 days a week. Students who have meals with adults regularly are 46% less likely than those who don't to have used marijuana in the last 12 months.

Last 12 Month Marijuana Use By Number of Activities* Parents Engage in with Their Children	Percent Who Used Marijuana in the Last 12 Months
Number of Activities Engaged in "Often"	%
0 activities	19
1 activity	12
2 or more activities	6

*Activities included: going shopping, going on vacation, going to sporting events, going out to dinner, going to religious services, spending time outdoors, watching TV, and playing games

The more activities parents engage in with their children, the less likely those children are to use marijuana. Kids whose parents often engage in multiple activities with them are only a third as likely to use marijuana as kids whose parents engage in none.

IV. Discussions about Drugs and Parental Influence

[\(return to top\)](#)

Grade When Student First had Discussion With Parents About Drugs Vs When Student Thinks Parents Should Have Spoken to Them About Drugs

Most kids (53%) say their parents waited too long to have their first discussion with them about drugs.

Kids who say their parents spoke to them at about the “right” age are only half as likely to use marijuana as those who say their parents waited too long (4% vs. 9%).

On average, 7th and 8th graders say the best time for their parents to have talked to them about drugs would have been in the 3rd or 4th grade.

Grade When Student First had Discussion With Parents About Alcohol Vs When Student Thinks Parents Should Have Spoken to Them About Alcohol

Nearly half of all 7th and 8th graders in New Jersey (43%) say their parents waited too long to have their first discussion with them about alcohol.

Kids who say their parents spoke to them at about the “right” age are 16% less likely to use alcohol as those who say their parents waited too long (36% vs. 43%).

On average, 7th and 8th graders say the best time for their parents to talk to them about alcohol would have been in the 4th Grade.

Grade When Student First had Discussion With Parents About Drugs and Alcohol	Drugs (%)		Alcohol (%)	
Preschool	4		4	
Kindergarten	6		5	
1 st Grade	8		8	
2 nd Grade	6		6	
3 rd Grade	8		8	

4 th Grade	10	<u>+70%</u>	11	<u>+18%</u>
5 th Grade	17		13	
6 th Grade	13		10	
7 th Grade	7		5	
8 th Grade	3		2	
Never had such discussion	15		23	

The 5th Grade Parent Alert has apparently had an impact on when parents first discuss drugs and alcohol with their children; more parents first discuss drugs with their child when their child is in the 5th grade than any other grade.

Importance of Parents' Opinions on Decision Whether or Not to Use Drugs or Alcohol	Drugs (%)	Alcohol (%)
Very Important	58	54
Somewhat Important	22	24
Not Very Important	9	10
Not At All Important	6	8

More than half of all 7th and 8th graders say that their parents' opinions are "very important" in their decision whether or not to use drugs or alcohol.

Usage Based on Importance of Parents' Opinions on Decision Whether or Not to Use Drugs/Alcohol		Importance of Parents' Opinions			
		Very Important (%)	Somewhat Important (%)	Not That Important (%)	Not At All Important (%)
Used in Last 12 Months:	Marijuana	4	12	24	34
	Alcohol	30	51	70	61

Students who say that their parents' opinions are "very important" in their decision whether or not to use drugs are less than one eighth as likely as those who say their parents' opinions are "not at all important" to use marijuana.

Students who say that their parents' opinions are "very important" in their decision whether or not to use alcohol are only half as likely as those who say their parents' opinions are "not at all important" to use alcohol.

Influence Parents Have on Attitudes Towards Drugs/Alcohol	Drugs		Alcohol	
	1998 (%)	2000 (%)	1998 (%)	2000 (%)
A Lot	44	49	41	46
A Little	23	22	26	25
None	13	9	15	12
Not sure	19	15	17	13

According to their children, parental influence on children's attitudes about drugs and alcohol has increased since 1998.

Usage Based on Influence Parents have on Attitudes Towards Drugs/Alcohol		How Much Influence Parent Has		
		A Lot (%)	A Little (%)	None (%)
Used in Last 12 Months:	Marijuana	5	9	31
	Alcohol	32	50	55

Students who say their parents have "a lot" of influence on their attitudes towards drugs are only one-sixth as likely as those who say their parents have no influence to have used marijuana in the last 12 months.

Students who say their parents have "a lot" of influence on their attitudes towards alcohol are over 40% less likely as those who say their parents have no influence to have used alcohol in the last 12 months.

V. Helpfulness of Discussions About Drugs with Parents

[\(return to top\)](#)

Helpfulness of Discussions About Drugs and Alcohol	Drugs (%)	Alcohol (%)
Very Helpful	37	31
A Little Helpful	32	30
Not at all Helpful	11	10

Usage Based on Helpfulness Of Discussions About Drugs/Alcohol		Very Helpful (%)	A Little Helpful (%)	Not at all Helpful (%)
Used in Last 12 Months:	Marijuana	4	7	23
	Alcohol	29	48	61

37% of 7th and 8th graders say that discussions about drugs were “very helpful.”

Only 4% of those who felt that discussions were “very helpful” have used marijuana in the last 12 months, compared to about 6 times that number -- 23% -- among those who said such talks were not helpful.

31% of 7th and 8th graders say that discussions about alcohol were “very helpful” and only 29% of those who felt that discussions were “very helpful” have used alcohol in the last 12 months, compared to over twice that number -- 61% -- among those who said such talks were not helpful.