

Hennepin County
Public Health
Assessment Team

FACT SHEET



Adolescent Drug Use

Why is this indicator important?

Beyond alcohol and tobacco use, illicit drug use includes the abuse of illegal drugs or the misuse of prescription medications or household substances. The most frequently drug used is marijuana followed by non-prescribed prescription drugs. There are protective factors that can help adolescents stay drug free such as strong positive connections with parents, other family members, school and reduced access to illegal substances in the home¹

What is the current status?

The Minnesota Student Survey asked about past 30-day use of drugs (excluding alcohol and tobacco), including marijuana and prescription drugs not prescribed to the student. They also ask about 12 month use on a number of other illicit drugs such as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamines. Overall 12 month usage for 9th grade was very low (0-2%). Prescription drugs and marijuana were the most frequently reported drugs in the past 12 months and 30 days for 8th, 9th and 11th graders.

Table 1. 30-day drug use (marijuana and non-prescribed prescription drugs) for 8th, 9th and 11th graders, 2016.

Suburban Hennepin County students attending school in public school districts	8 th graders	9 th graders	11 th graders
30 day any marijuana use	4.0%	5.5%	16.2%
Boys	4.2%	5.4%	18.5%
Girls	3.8%	5.6%	14.1%
30 day prescription (not prescribed to youth) drug use	4.1%	3.9%	6.7%
Boys	4.2%	3.6%	6.1%
Girls	3.9%	4.2%	7.2%



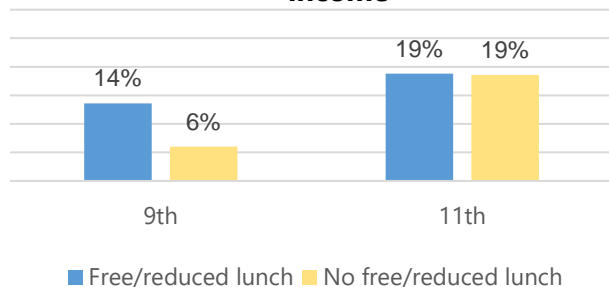
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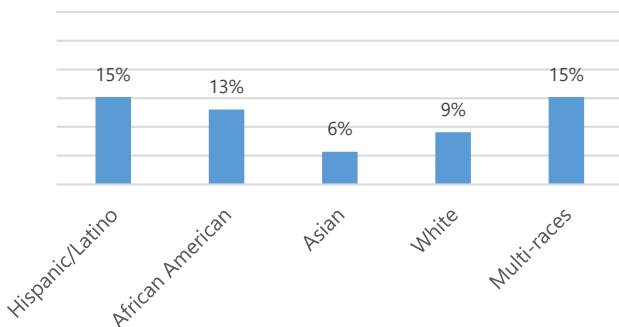
Ninth graders receiving free/reduced lunch were more likely to report using drugs (marijuana or non-prescribed prescription) in the past 30 days compared to not low income 9th graders. However, there was no difference by income among 11th graders (figure 1).

Figure 1. Ninth and 11th graders reporting drug use in past 30 days by income



Hispanic and multi-racial students used marijuana or non-prescribed prescriptions drugs at the highest rates compared to their classmates. (figure 2).

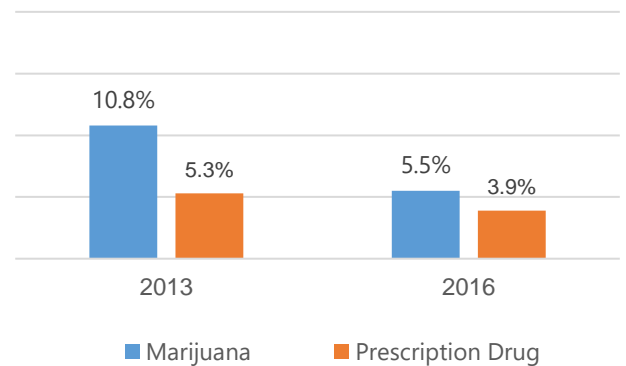
Figure 2. Students (all grades) reporting drug use (marijuana or non-prescribed prescription drugs) in past 30 days by race/ethnicity



How do we compare?

Rates of both past 30 day marijuana and non-prescribed prescription drug use among ninth graders decreased in 2016 (figure 3).

Figure 3. Ninth graders reporting any marijuana or non-prescribed prescription drug use in past 30 days



The data on adolescent drug use were drawn from the Minnesota Student Survey 2016 data. These survey questions were asked 8th, 9th, and 11th grade students in Suburban Hennepin County in 2016: "During the last 30 days, on how many days did you use prescription drugs not prescribed for you?" AND "During the last 30 days, on how many days did you use marijuana (pot, weed) or hashish (hash, hash oil)? (Do NOT count medical marijuana prescribed for you by a doctor.?)" Students were provided with a series of response categories ranging from 0 days to All 30 days.

1. US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of adolescent health. Retrieved May 4, 2018 from <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/substance-use/index.html>