

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 home<sup>1</sup>

## 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders.

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

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



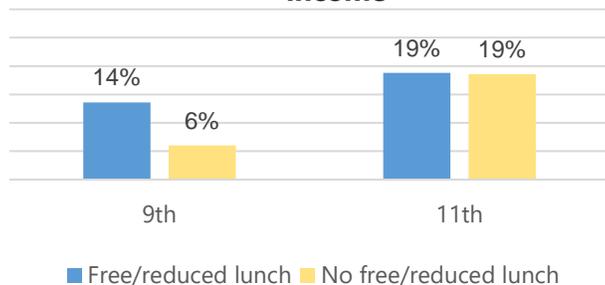
Hennepin County  
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**For more information** on the health of Hennepin County residents, visit: [www.Hennepin.us/PublicHealthData](http://www.Hennepin.us/PublicHealthData) or email: [PublicHealthData@hennepin.us](mailto:PublicHealthData@hennepin.us)

## What is the current status?

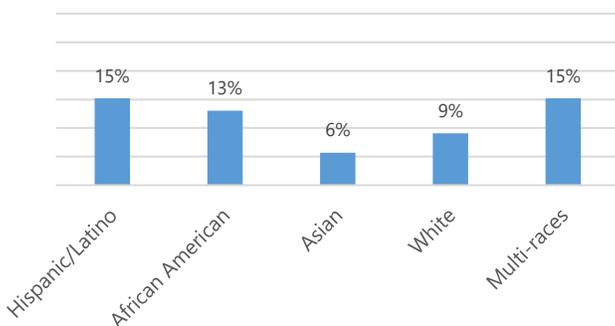
Ninth graders receiving free/reduced lunch were more likely to report using drugs (marijuana or non-prescribed prescription) in the past 30 days compared to not low income 9<sup>th</sup> graders. However, there was no difference by income among 11<sup>th</sup> graders (figure 1).

**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).

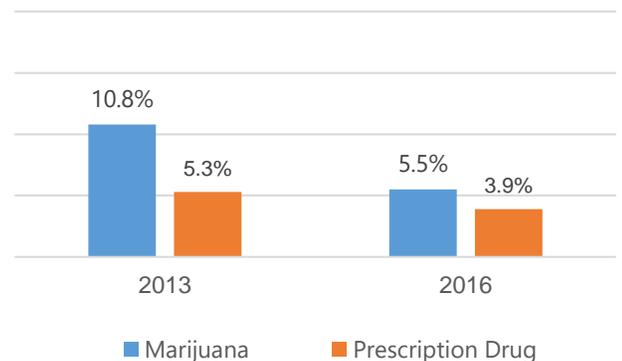
**Figure 2. Students (all grades) reporting drug use (marijuana or non-prescribed prescription drugs) in past 30 days by race/ethnicity**



## 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 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> 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>