ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE AMONG TEENS

Alcohol is used by more young people in the U.S. than tobacco or illicit drugs. It is a factor in approximately 41% of all deaths from motor vehicle crashes, which is the leading cause of death among teenagers. Long-term alcohol use is associated with liver disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and neurological damage, as well as psychiatric problems.

Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug among youth in the United States, yet many everyday household products, such as aerosol sprays and paint, are also abused by students in grades 9 through 12. Heroin, cocaine and ecstasy are still being abused by teenagers.

LOUISIANA STATISTICS

In 2009, 73.5% of Louisiana students reported that they had consumed at least one drink of alcohol in their lifetime. This is a decrease from 77.5% in 2008 and is only slightly higher than the national average (Figure 1).

» More white than black students (79.0% vs. 65.9%) reported that they had consumed at least one drink of alcohol during their life in 2009 (Figure 1). Both races have shown a slight decrease in lifetime drinking from 2008 to 2009.

» Lifetime alcohol use increases with age in both 2008 and 2009 (Figure 1), with slightly lower levels in 2009.

FIGURE 1

Alcohol is used by more young people in the U.S. than tobacco or illicit drugs. It is a factor in approximately 41% of all deaths from motor vehicle crashes, which is the leading cause of death among teenagers. Long-term alcohol use is associated with liver disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and neurological damage, as well as psychiatric problems.

Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug among youth in the United States, yet many everyday household products, such as aerosol sprays and paint, are also abused by students in grades 9 through 12. Heroin, cocaine and ecstasy are still being abused by teenagers.
RECENT ALCOHOL USE

In 2009, 47.5% of all Louisiana students drank alcohol in the 30 days before the survey, an increase from 45.1% in 2008 (Figure 2). In contrast, the national average decreased from 44.7% in 2008 to 41.8% in 2009.

» Recent alcohol use is more common in females than males, and has increased in both genders from 2008 to 2009 (Figure 2).

» More white students drank in the 30 days before the survey (56%) than black students (36.3%) (Figure 2). Current alcohol use has increased in both races. However, white students still drink more than black students by a factor of 1.5.

FIGURE 2

EPISODIC HEAVY DRINKING

In 2009, 24.6% of students in Louisiana had periods of episodic heavy drinking, a very slight increase from 2008 (23.1%) (Figure 3). The national average for episodic drinking decreased from 26% in 2008 to 24.2% in 2009, becoming nearly equal to Louisiana in that year.

» Males were more likely (27.3%) than females (22.3%) to have episodic drinking periods (Figure 3). Although male rates of episodic drinking have not changed much in one year, they have risen slightly for females from 18.9% to 22.3%.

» In both survey years, white students were much more likely to engage in episodic drinking than black students (36.3% vs. 11% in 2009) (Figure 3).

» The upper grade levels were generally more likely to participate in episodic heavy drinking than the lower grade levels, in both 2008 and 2009 (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3
DRANK ALCOHOL ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

In 2009, 5.6% of Louisiana students drank alcohol on school property in the 30 days before the survey, an increase from 4.3% in 2008 (Figure 4). The national average increased only slightly from 4.1% to 4.5% in 2008 to 2009.

» About twice as many male students drank alcohol on school property as female students (Figure 4), and both increased in the year between the surveys.

» More 12th graders drank alcohol on school property in 2008 than all other grades, a trend which reversed in 2009, possibly due to a cohort effect, with the lowest group (11th graders in 2008) remaining the lowest group a year later (12th graders in 2009) (Figure 4).

BOUGHT ALCOHOL AT STORE RECENTLY

In 2009, of the 47.5% of Louisiana students who drank alcohol recently, 10.4% bought it at a store (Figure 5). This is an increase since 2008. Nationally, the percentage of students who bought alcohol at a store recently declined from 5.2% to 4.2% in 2008 to 2009.

» More than five times as many male students bought alcohol at a store in 2009 as female students, and more than twice as many males did so in 2008 (Figure 5).

» The percentage of students buying alcohol in a store increases with grade level in both years. However, the percent of students below the 12th grade doing this has increased from 2008 to 2009.
LIFETIME MARIJUANA USE

In 2009, 32.8% of Louisiana students reported they had used marijuana at least once during their lifetime. These results were similar to those of 2008 (Figure 6). Lifetime marijuana use declined slightly nationally; from 38.1% to 36.8% from 2008 to 2009.

» The rate of lifetime marijuana use was higher in males than in females in 2009, and in white compared to black students (Figure 6). This was a change from 2008 which showed few differences between genders and races.

RECENT MARIJUANA USE

In 2009, 16.3% of Louisiana students used marijuana recently, an increase from 13% in 2008, but still lower than national survey results (Figure 7). Marijuana use increased slightly nationally, from 19.7% to 20.8% from 2008 to 2009.

» More males (15.5% in 2008 and 18.2% in 2009) than females (10.5% in 2008 and 14.7% in 2009) used marijuana recently in both years (Figure 7).

» More white than black students used marijuana recently (19.8% vs. 12.4%) (Figure 7).
USED MARIJUANA ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

In 2009, 3.6% of Louisiana students used marijuana on school property, a much lower figure than the national average of 9.4% (Figure 8). The percentage of students using marijuana on school property increased in Louisiana and nationally from 2008 to 2009.

» More than 3 times as many male students used marijuana on school property than female students in 2009 (Figure 8).

» There were few differences between the races in 2009. White students doubled their survey results from 2008 to 2009 (1.5% to 3.1%) (Figure 8).

» In 2009, use of marijuana on school property decreased by age, but increased in all ages from 2008.

OFFERED OR SOLD DRUGS AT SCHOOL

In 2009, 22.8% of Louisiana students were offered or sold drugs at school (Figure 9). This is similar to the national average (22.7%), and to survey results in 2008 (22.2%).

» Male students were slightly more likely to be offered or sold drugs than female students (Figure 9).

» More white students were offered/sold drugs at school than black students in 2009, but there were lesser differences between the races in 2008 (Figure 9).
In 2009, 7.6% of Louisiana students reported they had used cocaine at least once in their lifetime, a figure similar to that of 2008 (7.4%). More male students (8.9%) than female students (6.8%) have used cocaine. Rates are similar to those of 2008 in which 7.5% of students had ever used cocaine.

In 2009, 7.9% of Louisiana students said they have used methamphetamines at least once during their lifetime, an increase from 6.5% in 2008. Both genders have increased in one year: male students from 7.7% to 9.3%, and female students from 4.3% to 6.6% in 2009.

In 2009, 12.4% of Louisiana students said they have sniffed glue, breathed the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhaled paints or sprays to get high at least once in their lifetime; a decrease from 14.5% in 2008. The rate of male students reporting this decreased from 14.8% to 13.5% and female students went from 13.3% to 11.3%.

In 2009, 6.4% of Louisiana students said they have used heroin and 9.5% said they have tried ecstasy at least once in their lifetime. There was no comparable question in the YRBS 2008 survey.

For more information on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, go to [http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm).
The mission of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is to ensure equal access to education and to promote equal excellence throughout the state. The LDOE is committed to providing Equal Employment Opportunities and is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. The LDOE does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, or genetic information. Inquiries concerning the LDOE’s compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Deputy Undersecretary, LDOE, Exec. Office of the Supt., P.O. Box 94064, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064; 877.453.2721 or customerservice@la.gov. Information about the federal civil rights laws that apply to the LDOE and other educational institutions is available on the website for the Office of Civil Rights, USDOE, at http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/.

This public document was published at a cost of $720.00. Three hundred (300) copies of this public document were published at this first printing at a cost of $720.00. The total cost of all printings of this document, including all reprints, was $720. This document was printed by the Office of Federal Programs Support, Division of Student and School Learning Support; Louisiana Department of Education; P.O. Box 94095, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9095. This material was printed in accordance with the standards for printing by State agencies established pursuant to R.S. 43.31.