

# Youth Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco Use

## Results of the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey

Understanding the amount of and trends in alcohol, drug and tobacco use by adolescents in Minnesota is critical. Delaying the onset of use leads to lower rates of addiction and better outcomes. This is particularly important for youth as their brains are still developing. Good data on adolescents' substance use allows the state to estimate treatment needs and plan prevention and treatment programs. The 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) serves that need.

### About the Survey

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The Minnesota Student Survey is conducted every three years in grades 5, 8, 9, and 11. Different versions of the survey are used depending on grade level. Results reported here are for regular public schools, including charter schools. Results for alternative schools and juvenile corrections facilities are reported separately.

The Minnesota Student Survey is not a sample-based survey but more of a census where all the public schools with grades 5, 8, 9 and 11 were invited to voluntarily and anonymously participate. 85 percent of school districts participated in the survey for at least one grade level. Surveys were received from over 170,000 students, representing 66 percent of 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 73 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 71 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and 61 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> graders. The survey is anonymous.

### Demographics

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Overall, 67.6 percent of the statewide student population enrolled in the four grades participated.

Gender is evenly divided across all four grades. Overall, almost one third of students (31.7 percent) are members of a minority population or of multiple-race background. The proportion of minority students was higher among younger students (34.4 percent of 5<sup>th</sup> graders; 33.9 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders; 30.5 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> graders; 27.3 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> graders).

Just under three in ten students (29.0 percent) reported getting a free or reduced-price lunch at school. This is used as a measure for low-income status throughout the analyses.

***Good data on adolescents' substance use allows the state to estimate treatment needs and plan prevention and treatment programs.***

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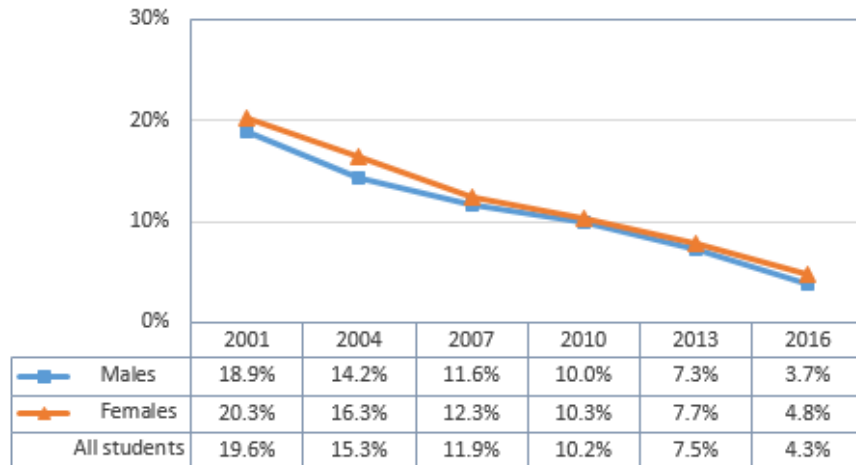
# Tobacco use

## Cigarette smoking

2.8 percent of 8th graders, 4.3 percent of 9th graders and 8.4 percent of 11th graders reported cigarette smoking in the past 30 days

**The trend:** Use of conventional tobacco products continues to fall. For example, 8.4 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days, down from 12.2 percent in 2013. These are the lowest levels of teen smoking ever reported on the survey. Use of cigars, cigarillos and little cigars and chewing tobacco also declined since 2013.

Percent of 9th graders who reported smoking cigarettes past 30 days

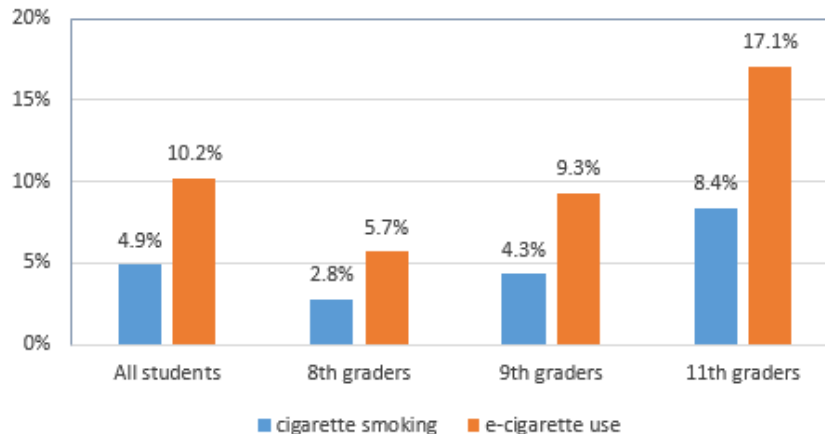


## E-cigarette Use

About 5.7 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 9.3 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 17.1 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> graders reporting e-cigarette use in the past 30 days

**The trend:** While smoking conventional cigarettes has decreased, use of electronic cigarettes has emerged as an issue among youth. Compared to smoking cigarettes, twice as many 11<sup>th</sup> grade students reported using electronic cigarettes in the past 30 days (17.1 percent vs. 8.4 percent). 2016 is the first year that the Minnesota Student Survey has asked about electronic cigarettes.

Percent of students in grades 8, 9 and 11 who reported cigarette smoking and e-cig use past 30 days

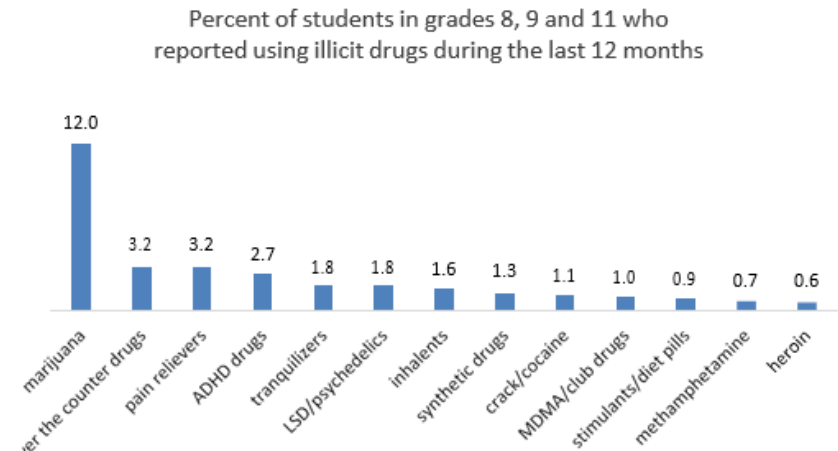


# Drug use

## Illicit Drugs

**12 percent of students used Marijuana in the past year.**

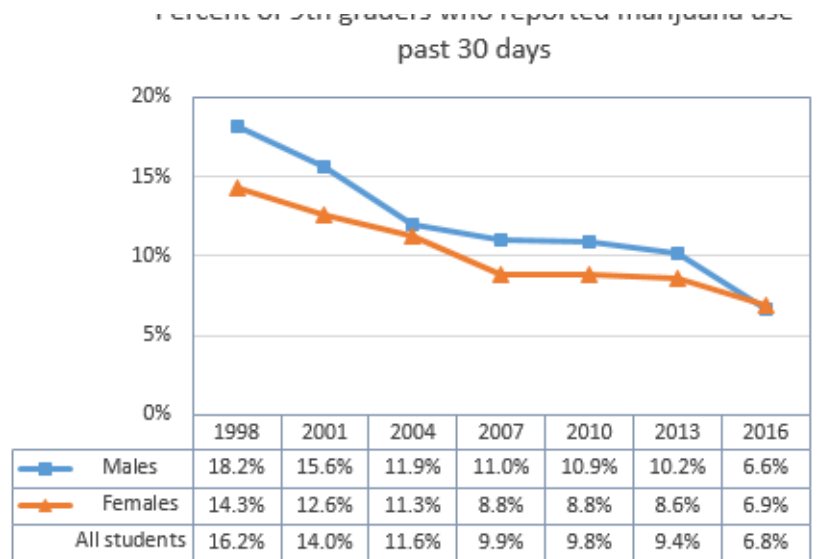
In the 2016 MSS, students in grades 8, 9 and 11 were asked about using various illicit drugs during past year. Marijuana was by far the most used illicit drug at nearly four times the rate of over the counter drugs and pain relievers.



## Marijuana use

**8.6 percent of students in grades 8, 9 and 11 used marijuana in the past 30 days.**

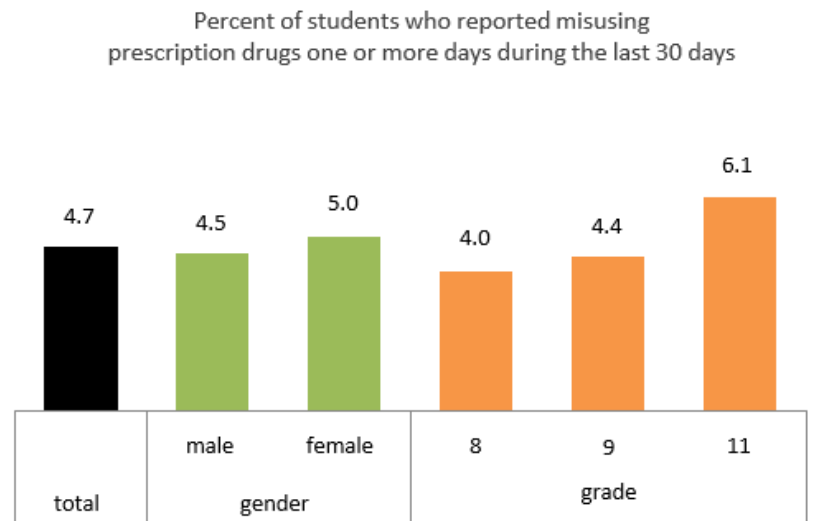
*The trend:* The prevalence of marijuana use in the past 30 days was 4.6 percent among 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 6.8 percent among 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 15.7 percent among 11<sup>th</sup> graders. Marijuana use among 9<sup>th</sup> grade student in the past 30 days fell from 9.4 percent in 2013 to 6.8 percent in 2016. Marijuana use fell slightly among 11<sup>th</sup> grade students.



## Prescription misuse

**4.7 percent of students in grades 8, 9 and 11 reported misusing prescription drugs in the past 30 days.**

*The trend:* 4.8 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students misused prescription painkillers like OxyContin in the past 12 months, and 5.0 percent misused prescription ADHD or ADD drugs like Ritalin. Misusing these drugs means that students used somebody else's prescription drugs or took them only to get high.

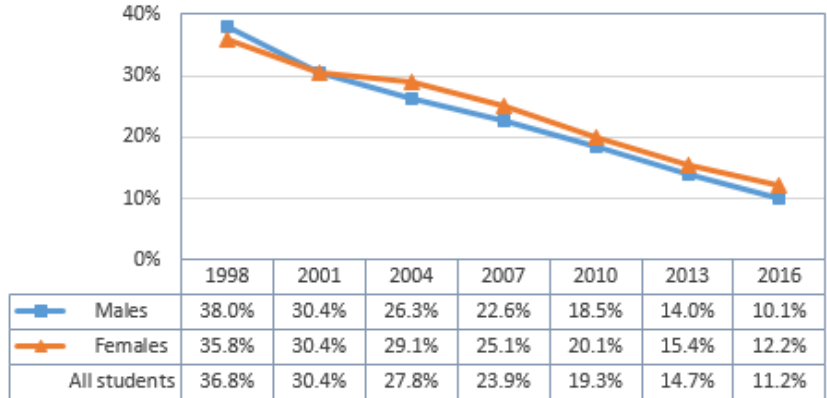


# Alcohol use

**7.9 percent of 8th graders, 11.2 percent of 9th graders and 24.6 percent of 11th graders drank alcohol in the past 30 days**

*The trend:* Statewide, about one-in-seven (13.9 percent) students in grades 8, 9 and 11 reported drinking an alcoholic beverage on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey. This was a 2.9 percentage-point decrease from 16.8 percent in 2013.

Percent of 9th graders who reported drinking alcohol past 30 days

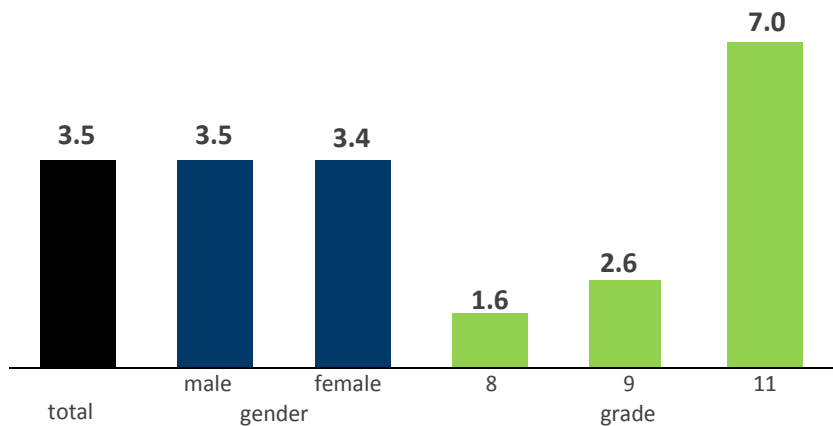


# Prevalence of Substance Use Disorder

**3.5 percent of students in grades 8, 9 and 11 had substance use disorders (SUDs) during the 12 months before the survey.**

*The trend:* The prevalence was similar across genders. The 11<sup>th</sup> graders had substantially higher prevalence of SUDs than 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> graders (7.0 percent compared to 1.6 percent and 2.6 percent for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders respectively).

Percent of students who had substance use disorders during past year by gender and grade



For an overview of substance use among Minnesota youth, <http://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/policies-procedures/alcohol-drug-other-addictions/mn-student-survey/>

For the complete data tables, visit the Minnesota Department of Education <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/health/mss/>

Or the Minnesota Department of Health <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>