

New Data Released from the Monitoring the Future Survey

Each year, the National Institute of Health's Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey measures drug and alcohol use and related attitudes among students in grades 8, 10 and 12 nationwide. Some of the 2019 results are as follows:

- **Cigarette smoking and initiation of cigarette use in 10th and 12th grades continued a long decline.**
- **One in four 12th graders say they vaped nicotine in the past month**, along with one in five 10th graders, and nearly one in ten 8th graders.
- When asked why they vape, common answers included they like the flavor, to experiment, for social reasons, or to feel good. Notably, **the number of high school seniors who say they vaped because they are “hooked” more than doubled in the last year.**
- **The past 30-day use for seniors vaping marijuana also increased from 7.5% to 14%**, representing the second largest one-year increase in any drug use that has ever been recorded in the 45-year history of the MTF survey.
- **Daily marijuana use**, defined as use on 20 or more occasions in the past 30 days by any method, **significantly increased in 10th and 8th grades.** In 10th grade, it increased to 4.8% and in 8th grade prevalence increased to 1.3%, which are the highest prevalence for this outcome measured since 1991.
- **LSD use showed increases** in 30-day prevalence in grades 10 and 12. Though it seems the levels are low (1.1% and 1.4%, respectively), they are the highest levels seen since 2000.
- **Misuse of prescription opioids** is reported only for 12th grade students; it **continued a decade-long decline** in 2019. Use in the past 12 months decreased, and is now less than a third of the 9.5% prevalence recorded in 2004.
- **Annual use of any illicit drug**, which tends to be driven by marijuana, the most prevalent of the illicit drugs, **did not change significantly in any grade in 2019.** Since 2006 there has been little change in this index. The index of any illicit drug other than marijuana showed no significant change in lifetime, annual, or 30-day prevalence in 2019.
- **Alcohol remains the substance most widely used by today’s teenagers, but after a long period of decline among adolescents, the use of alcohol appears to be stabilizing.** For alcohol, prior to 2019, lifetime prevalence and annual prevalence for the three grades combined declined by roughly 40-45% from the peak levels of use reached in the mid-1990s; 30-day prevalence was down by about one-half since then; and daily prevalence by three-fourths.
- **Use of narcotics** other than heroin without a doctor’s prescription (reported only for 12th grade) **continued a decade-long decline**; it was 2.7% in 2019.

While the survey results indicate several positive trends, they also illustrate the need for continued conversations with your teenagers. Remember one last statistic – Research shows that **kids who learn about the risks of alcohol and drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to drink alcohol or use drugs.**