

Substance Abuse

In 2007, there were 8,216 **drug and alcohol arrests**, for an arrest rate of 11.4 per 1,000 juveniles age 10-17 in Washington State. The number of arrests increased 5.3 percent over the number of arrests in 2006 (7,802). The following table displays the juvenile drug/alcohol arrests and rates per 1,000 juveniles from 2003 – 2007.

Juvenile Arrests for Drug and Alcohol Offenses 2003 -2007

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Arrests	8,216	7,802	7,063	7,464	8,173
Rate per 1,000	11.4	10.9	9.9	10.5	11.5

Males accounted for 71.6% of the 2007 arrests; females, 28.4%.

The rate of arrests for **drug and alcohol offenses** increased approximately five percent from 2006 to 2007, and decreased by 15.6 percent from 1998 to 2007. 12.5 percent of the total juvenile arrests in 2007 were for liquor law violations. Approximately thirty-eight (38) percent of the drug and alcohol juvenile arrests in 2007 were for **drug offenses**, and 62 percent were for **alcohol offenses** (no change from 2006).

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Substance abuse by juveniles is clearly linked to juvenile violence. According to Hawkins and Catalano,⁷ most of the risk factors for substance abuse are the same risk factors as those of juvenile violence and delinquency. Hawkins and Catalano indicate that the more risk factors a child or youth experiences, the more likely the child/youth will experience substance abuse and related problems in adolescence or young adulthood. Risk factors for violence are defined and categorized in four domains:

- **Individual/Peer** (friends who engage in problem behavior, early initiation of the problem behavior)
- **School** (Early and persistent anti-social behavior, academic failure beginning in elementary school)
- **Community** (community laws and norms favorable toward drug use, firearms, and crime; media portrayals of violence; extreme economic deprivation)
- **Family** (Family management problems and conflict, favorable parental attitudes and involvement in the problem behavior)

Youth who engage in substance abuse often demonstrate problem behaviors within their family, school and community. These youth often associate with peers engaged in problem behaviors, and have a family history of problem behavior, family management problems or conflict.

⁷ Hawkins, J.D. and R.F. Catalano, *Risk-Focused Prevention: Using the Social Development Strategy*, 1995.

Substance Abuse (continued)

The 2006 “Levels of Risk, Protection and Drug Use in Schools Predict Students’ WASL Scores” study conducted by the Social Development Research Group of the University of Washington found that seventh and tenth grade students in schools with higher rates of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use are less likely to meet the standards on the mathematics, reading, and writing sections of the WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning) tests. Further the report presented implications for policy and practice suggesting “reducing the prevalence of drug use in school populations will increase students’ academic success.”

According to the “Tobacco, Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse Trends in Washington State” 2007 Report from the Division of Alcohol & Substance Abuse (DASA), Department of Social & Health Services, the **use of alcohol** in the past 30 days and binge drinking by Washington State 10th and 12th graders has leveled off, and slightly decreased among 8th graders.⁸ Other Washington State findings from the Healthy Youth Survey include:

- More than a quarter of High School Seniors have engaged in recent binge drinking,
- The percentage of 10th and 12th grade students who have tried marijuana increased in 2006,
- By the 12th grade, over 40% of students have tried marijuana,
- More than half of youth entering State Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration facilities in 2006 has substance abuse related problems,
- In state fiscal year 2005, 612 youth received treatment under the chemical dependency disposition alternative,
- “Becca” youth who complete residential chemical dependency treatment are much less likely to use alcohol or marijuana, less likely to run away from home, and less likely to be suspended from school or arrested.
- The primary drug used by youth at time of admission to treatment is marijuana, followed by alcohol.
- In 2006, 4,964 youth (64% male; 36% female) were admitted to chemical dependency treatment.
- 61% of the youth entering treatment during 2006 were arrested at least once during 2005.

⁸ Source: www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/hrsa/dasa/trends07