

## Overview of Substance Use Results

**Background:** In fall 2016, over 230,000 students in grades 6 through 12 participated in the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS). Over 1,000 schools administered the survey, representing all 39 Washington counties and 236 school districts. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), in partnership with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, and the Liquor and Cannabis Board, administers the HYS to provide data for state and local prevention planning.

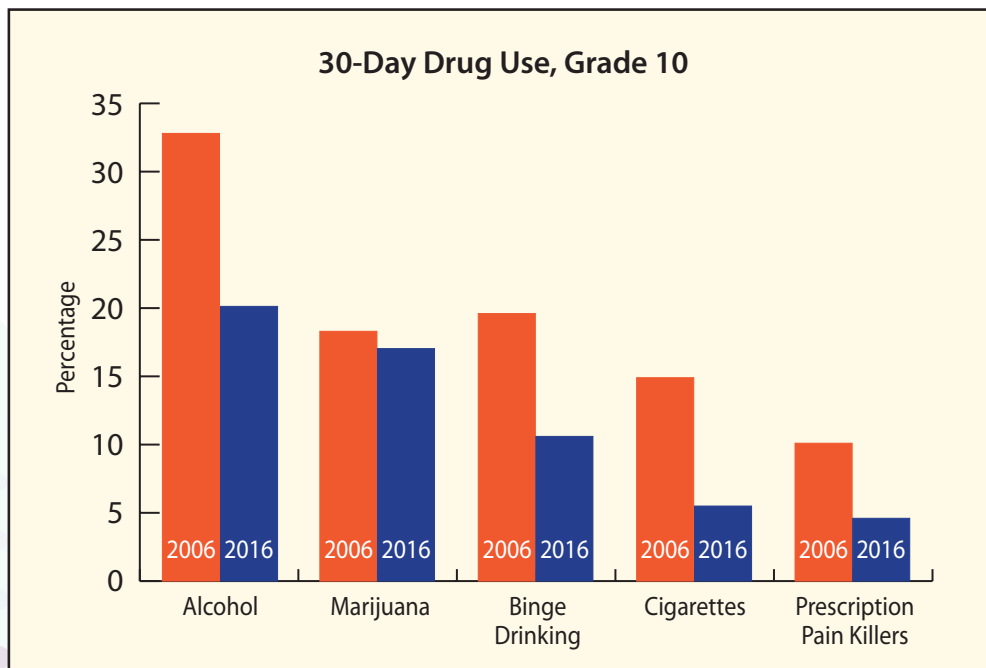
### Youth use of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs

According to the 2016 HYS, most students (73 percent of 10th graders) do not use alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs. In addition, the percentage of youth who use alcohol, cigarettes, and prescription painkillers has gone down substantially across all grades surveyed since 2006. However, past month marijuana use has not declined like other drug use, and is second only to alcohol use.

### Alcohol use in the past month is down in all grades

Past month alcohol use has declined across all grades surveyed since 2006. The 2016 percentages are:

- 8th grade - down from 15 percent to eight percent
- 10th grade - down from 33 percent to 20 percent
- 12th grade - down from 42 percent to 32 percent



Washington Healthy Youth Survey



Washington State  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

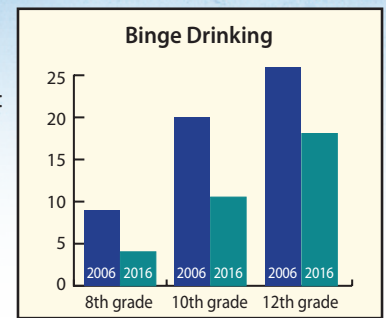
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## Binge drinking

Significantly fewer students report drinking five or more drinks in a row in 2016 than 2006:

- 8th grade - down from nine percent to four percent.
- 10th grade - down from 20 percent to 11 percent
- 12th grade - down from 26 percent to 18 percent



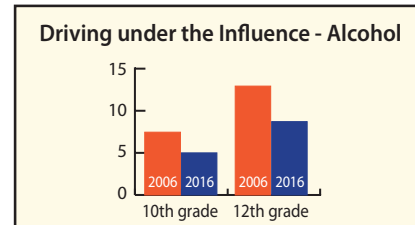
## Driving under the influence

Compared with 2006, fewer students report driving after drinking alcohol in 2016:

- 10th grade –down from seven percent to five percent
- 12th grade – down from 13 percent to ten percent

The 2014 survey introduced a new question asking students if they drove in the past year within three hours of using marijuana. There was no change from 2014 to 2016.

- 10th grade – nine percent
- 12th grade - 17 percent



## Marijuana use

Compared to 2006, fewer students think it is harmful to use marijuana regularly. The percentage of 10th graders saying regular marijuana use carries great risk dropped from 60 to 35 percent.

While a decline in risk can lead to an increase in use, the percentage of students using marijuana in the past month has remained about the same since a decade ago:

- 8th grade - from seven percent in 2006 to 6 percent in 2016
- 10th grade – from 18 percent in 2006 to 17 percent in 2016
- 12th grade – a slight increase from 2006 (22%) to 2010 (26%) but stable since, with 26 percent in 2016

## Tobacco and electric cigarette/vape pen use

Over twice as many 10th graders reported using electronic cigarettes (e-cigs) or vape pens (13%) as smoking cigarettes (6%). Both cigarettes and e-cigs/vapor product use fell from 2014 to 2016. Among 10th graders:

- Used Tobacco: decreased from 8 percent to 6 percent
- Used E-cigs or vapor products: fell from 18 percent to 13 percent

## Prescription Drugs/Opiates/Heroin

The percentage of students who misuse prescription pain killers has decreased by half across grades since a decade ago (2006). Among 10th graders in 2016:

- Eight percent reported using a prescription drug not prescribed to them in the past month.
- Four percent reported abusing painkillers in the past month.
- Four percent of 10th graders reported ever using heroin in their lifetime.

## Perceived parent attitudes about teen drug use

Youth are less likely to use drugs when they believe their parents disapprove. The following percentages of 10th grade students in 2016 said their parents feel it's wrong or very wrong for them to use:

- Alcohol - 88 percent
- Marijuana - 90 percent
- Prescription drugs not prescribed - 95 percent
- Tobacco - 97 percent

## What DSHS is doing to promote healthier youth and communities

DSHS is nationally recognized as a leader in supporting evidence-based prevention practices and collaborating with community-based prevention organizations. DSHS provides funding, training, and oversight to communities to prevent, reduce, and treat substance use disorders, promote mental health, and increase healthy community norms. DSHS also supports statewide initiatives to increase public knowledge about drug prevention and mental health.

For other Healthy Youth Survey fact sheets, visit [www.AskHYS.net](http://www.AskHYS.net)

For more information about DSHS-funded prevention services, email [Sarah.Mariani@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Sarah.Mariani@dshs.wa.gov).