

SAP COUNTY COORDINATION UPDATE

April, 2015



Prepared by: PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)
www.sap.state.pa.us

PENNSYLVANIA NETWORK FOR STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES INTERAGENCY UPDATE

Department of Education (PDE)

This spring the Safe Schools Office will make four types of school climate surveys (students, staff, parents, community) available for districts to use at their discretion, throughout the year, and as many times as they wish. Click [here](#) for more information on school climate surveys.

Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP)

2015 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Please help encourage the school districts you serve to participate in the 2015 administration of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey. The PAYS is a great way to gain insight on what is happening in all areas of the lives of students. It identifies specific risk and protective factors across four areas (“domains”) that impact students’ behaviors. The PAYS is anonymous and confidential. Data from the survey is aggregated to show grade level responses and includes school district specific results, in addition to county and statewide reports. Student Assistance Teams are key stakeholders within schools that can help address the findings of the PAYS. Data can be used to better identify common barriers to learning and school success as well as assist in the planning and coordinating of supports both in school and in coordination with out of school providers.

Timeline

Date	Action
April 2015	Survey preview made available at www.pays.state.pa.us Superintendents receive notice of fall 2015 PAYS administration
May/June 2015	Bach Harrison outreach to schools included in state sample
Summer 2015	Recruitment outreach to schools from community, prevention, & education supporters of PAYS
September to November 2015	PAYS administered in participating schools
December 20, 2015	Survey Return Deadline
April 2016	PAYS Reports released to schools and counties

New DDAP Representative to SAP Interagency Committee

DDAP has hired a new staff person to fill the vacancy left by Lonnie Barnes who will serve as the DDAP representative on the SAP Interagency Committee. Please welcome the newest member of the DDAP team, McKinley (Mac) Generette! He can be reached at:

Division of Prevention & Intervention
PA Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs
02 Kline Village
Harrisburg, PA 17104
Voice: 717-736-7468
Email: mgenerette@pa.gov

Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)

Youth Suicide Prevention Project Director Appointed

Dr. Perri Rosen has been appointed project director for the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention in Schools and Colleges federal grant which was awarded to Pennsylvania in October 2014. She began work in the children's bureau on March 2. Ms. Rosen has extensive experience working with children and youth, most recently serving as a school psychologist with a school district in central Pennsylvania. She completed her Ph.D. in school psychology at Temple University, and also holds three master's degrees in education. As project director, Ms. Rosen will be responsible for developing and implementing statewide youth suicide prevention and early intervention strategies across Pennsylvania. The five-year grant will focus on youth suicide prevention efforts in school districts, community colleges and universities throughout the state. Ms. Rosen will be working with school district Student Assistance Program (SAP teams) to strengthen suicide prevention efforts, and will work with districts to develop programming that helps to identify students at risk for suicide and provide the behavioral health support to manage their needs. More about youth suicide prevention in Pennsylvania is available at <http://payspi.org/>

SAP BACK TO BASICS

"Effective Practices that Build Strong and Positive Parent and SAP Team Collaboration"

Creating a parent-friendly-climate for your school is the first step in building connections and relationships with parents. Consider this situation:

Johnny was never a top student. He was not very popular with other students in the class and concealed his academic failures by acting out. He frequently caused classroom disruptions and his parents were continually receiving disciplines notices in the mail. The parents had not attended meet the teacher sessions and from their perspective, they only had negative encounters with school-related interactions, leading to defensiveness when contacted.

When you look at your school from the parents' perspective, how can you measure the parent-friendliness in your school? Building positive parent relationships is essential for a parent to be a part of the SAP process. Module for Standard 3 in the SAP Bridge training provides an overview of how to work collaboratively to engage families and school/community partners in SAP process. Those connections can be facilitated through recognizing the stages of change, including pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance in the relationship building process (PA SAP, 2013).

To enhance the process - be proactive in terms of flexibility, reliability, and, and consistency, anticipating anxiety or uncertainty that may occur when including the parents in the SAP team process.

Consider the following examples:

If the SAP team knows the parents have several children to care for, would it be possible to have someone at the school watch the children during a conference with the parents? Or is it possible to schedule an evening meeting if the parents cannot leave work during the day? Are the parents allowed to bring someone with them to the meeting that they consider supportive? Are you prepared to offer some strengths that you have noticed in their child before you address the issues which concern you?

Be visible, attending events to build positive relationships with parents proactively. This builds trust that is essential during crisis and transitional times. Some schools have a SAP booth at home games, passing out refreshments and SAP information, while other teams may participate in the local community parade by creating a float and distributing information and treats along the parade route.

Be positive and factual. Be prepared to help clarify the process without judging the situation and follow-up as necessary. A parent might say "I thought this SAP program is just for druggies. Johnny isn't doing any of that." A positive, factual response might be, "The SAP team does offer assistance to students that may be struggling with substance abuse issues, however we also offer assistance for a variety of other issues. Would you like me to explain a little more about what we do? I can also mail some information to you."

Ultimately the relationship building and comfort that is established in good times will help create the partnerships needed in tough times. PA Student Assistance Program. (2013). *Working Collaboratively to Engage Families and School/Community Partners in the SAP Process*. Retrieved from <http://www.sap.state.pa.us/uploadedfiles/SAPbridgetraining-module3-engagement.pdf>

RESOURCES

Grants Available for Mental Health First Aid Training

Through RFA SM-15-012, "Now is the Time Project AWARE Community grants (NITT-AWARE-C)," SAMHSA will make awards to support Mental Health First Aid or Youth Mental Health First Aid training for youth-serving adults. To read more about the grant and eligibility requirements click [here](#). Awards of up to \$125,000 will be made. Proposals are due by May 1.

Project Beacon Spring Retreats

Project Beacon East – 10-12 April @ Camp Victory, Millville, PA (Columbia Co.)

Project Beacon West – 1-3 May @ YMCA Camp Soles, Rockwood, PA (Somerset Co.)

Project Beacon Registration is now open.

Project Beacon is a free weekend retreat for **children of current service members and veterans**. The weekends will be filled with fun, consisting of group games, a climbing wall and zip line, arts and crafts, paddle boats, fishing, archery and of course bonfires! This camp is open to children with or without disabilities/special needs. Check in will be at 6 pm on Friday and checkout will be at 1 pm on Sunday. Campers will be accepted via first come, first served basis. In order to be accepted campers must complete and submit a registration packet. If you have any questions, please contact Liz Bunting or Shane Gemmill at 717-741-3891 or ebunting@eastersealscentralpa.org.

REMS TA CENTER Introduces New Tools for School Emergency Planning

Winter presents many hazards at a school: icy roads and sidewalks, the spread of colds and the flu, and potentially dangerously low temperatures. Spring brings its own perils, including flooding. These and other risks require careful planning, and now is a great time to revisit your school's emergency plan.

The [Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools \(REMS\) Technical Assistance \(TA\) Center](#) supports schools, school districts, and institutions of higher education in developing high-quality emergency operations plans (EOPs).

Emergency planning can seem like an overwhelming process, but it doesn't need to be. The REMS TA Center recently developed three new [EOP Interactive Tools](#) to assist schools and community partners in their emergency planning efforts:

- **EOP Assess:** Evaluates individuals' understanding of the process for developing and maintaining EOPs, and provides customized information to reinforce and enhance understanding.
- **EOP Assist:** Helps school and school district emergency management planning teams design EOPs that align with federal guidelines.
- **EOP Evaluate:** Walks users through evaluating and improving their EOPs.

To learn more about these tools or for general technical assistance, please visit the REMS TA Center website at <http://rems.ed.gov>, email the REMS TA Center at info@remstacenter.org, or call them toll-free at 1-855-781-7367.

Family Engagement Inventory Resource for Human Services and Education Fields

Family engagement is recognized as a foundation for success across the human services and education fields. The Family Engagement Inventory (FEI) is designed to assist professionals in child welfare, juvenile justice, behavioral health, early education, and education to learn how family engagement is defined and implemented across these fields of practice. The FEI enables professionals to access information on family engagement organized by discipline and domain.

The FEI can be used in several ways:

- Explore [commonalities](#) across fields synthesized from an evidence-based framework
- View key information on family engagement across disciplines and compare and contrast the themes, approaches, and resources within them
- Examine in the [FEI Synthesis Summary \(PDF - 289 KB\)](#) how information for the FEI was researched, collected, and synthesized

Go [here](#) to read more.

NDTAC Explores What It Takes To Make Youth in Justice Settings College and Career Ready

In a December 2014 letter introducing the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice's [Correctional Education Guidance Package](#), Secretary Arne Duncan and Attorney General Eric Holder urged jurisdictions throughout the country to "be creative in taking steps to improve traditional academic offerings and to expand access to career and technical education [and] postsecondary education options for youth confined in juvenile justice facilities." They further contended that, for these young people, "providing high-quality correctional education that is comparable to offerings in traditional public schools is one of the most powerful, and cost-effective, levers we have to ensure that youth are successful once released and are able to avoid future contact with the justice system."

To exemplify the Guidance Package, particularly the [Guiding Principles for Providing High-Quality Education in Juvenile Justice Secure Care Settings](#), NDTAC will kick off a series of **N&D InFocus** programs exploring high-quality correctional education aligned with the five guiding principles that States and localities are implementing to prepare youth in their care for college and careers. The series will feature facilities and programs from around the country as well as experts in the field and staff from the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice who are leading the charge for quality correctional education.

More information about the series and the first program, including registration, will be available at www.neglected-delinquent.org soon. In the meantime, we welcome your questions and comments about this program at ndtac@air.org.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Do Something Remarkable

April 8-9, 2015.

Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel,
Harrisburg, PA

Sponsored by Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth and Family Services.
Deadline for presentation proposals is September 15, 2014.
For further information go to http://pccyfs.org/Spring_Conf.html

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools Training

April 28-29, 2015

Center for Safe Schools/Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Avenue, Commonwealth B (First Floor)

Camp Hill, PA 17011

The cost of the two-day training is \$150. This includes continental breakfast and lunch both days.

CBITS is a skill-based, group intervention that is aimed at relieving symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and general anxiety among children exposed to trauma. Children are provided with normalizing education about common reactions to stress and trauma and learn skills such as relaxation, how to challenge and replace upsetting thoughts and social problem solving. Children also work on processing traumatic memories and grief in both individual and group settings. The program consists of 10, one-hour group sessions (6-8 children) usually conducted once a week in a school or mental health clinic setting.

Click [here](#) for registration form. Questions? Contact:

Stephanie Roy

Special Projects Managing Coordinator

(717) 763-1661 x209

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

The Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education is pleased to announce the following training dates:

PaTTAN Pittsburgh - April 22 & 23, 2015 (9:00 am - 1:30 pm - both days)

PaTTAN Harrisburg - May 5 & 6, 2015 (9:00 am - 1:30 pm - both days)

Youth mental health first aid is an 8 hour training designed to teach people methods of assisting a young person who may be in the early stages of developing a mental health problem or in a mental crisis. This training event is being offered to school and/or agency teams to ensure ample support is available to students. Suggested team members are listed below. Prior to the training, teams will be required to watch an introductory webinar. Information pertaining to the recorded webinar will be provided upon registration.

Target Audience: School and/or agency teams which may include: educators, administrators, social services staff and volunteers, substance abuse professionals, social workers, school psychologists, guidance counselors, counselors, family members, college/university leaders, nurses, physician assistants, primary care workers, & policymakers

Please register online at [PaTTAN](#).

For questions regarding registration, contact:

Pittsburgh - Kristen Olszyk, kolszyk@pattan.net 412-826-6848

Harrisburg - Wendy Weary, wweary@pattan.net 717-901-2273

Third Thursdays Bullying Prevention Series Continues

Mark your calendars for these upcoming Third Thursdays Bullying Prevention dates:

April 16, 2015: Fostering Cultural Competence: Using Children's Literature to Talk about Difficult Issues in K-12 Classrooms

May 21, 2015: Bullying in Sports: The Injuries We Don't See

For more information go [here](#).

Celebrate Children's Mental Health Awareness on May 7th!

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. On Awareness Day, Thursday, May 7th, 2015, SAMHSA will address the needs of children, youth, and young adults with mental health and substance use

challenges and their families. A national launch event will take place in Washington, DC. The national event will highlight strategies for integrating behavioral health with primary health care, child welfare, and education. Last year, more than 1,100 communities and partner organizations throughout the country, including Tribes and Territories, hosted Awareness Day activities focused on the mental health needs of children, youth, young adults, and families. We expect just as many this year!

You may support Awareness Day by hosting an Awareness Day event or activity in your community. You can tailor such events and activities to the needs of your community, as well as to the ages of children served by your organization. You can also post the Awareness Day 2015 Save the Date logo on your organizational website or share social media messages about the observance. SAMHSA has materials and resources available for supporters to use in promoting these activities. You can access SAMHSA's materials by <http://www.samhsa.gov/children>.

The Center for Schools and Communities is Offering a New Training Course for Educators and Helping Professionals: Cultivating Empathy for Healthy Relationships and Collaborative Classrooms

This training opportunity will challenge you to examine your own empathy skills and offer several practical and engaging activities and discussions you can have with your students to help develop empathy and perspective-taking and to cultivate an atmosphere characterized by kindness, respect and collaboration. The training is 9AM-4PM at the Center for Schools and Communities in Camp Hill, PA. Cost is \$129 per person; lunch on your own. Pre-registration required. This training has been aligned with PA Core Standards, Academic Standards for Career Education and Work and Standards for Student Interpersonal Skills. This six-hour course is eligible for Act 48 and/or NASW credit.

Tuesday, May 19, 2015

[Register Online](#)

[Full course description](#)

[Download the flyer](#)

Mindset, Grit and Optimism: Promoting Skills that Lead to Academic Tenacity

Research shows us that non-cognitive factors such as mindset, students' beliefs about their intelligence and abilities, their habits of self-control and their reactions to everyday setbacks can have a far greater impact than IQ on both academic and long-term success. Come learn relatively simple educational and psychological interventions that target these factors and can transform students' experiences and achievements in school and in life. This six-hour course is eligible for Act 48 and/or NASW credit. The training is 9AM-4PM at the Center for Schools and Communities in Camp Hill, PA. Cost is \$129 per person; lunch on your own. Pre-registration required.

Thursday, May 7, 2015

[Register Online](#)

[Full course description](#)

[Download the flyer](#)

2015 STAR-Center Conference

"Understanding Adversity and Helping Youth to Overcome It"

Friday, May 1, 2015

The William Pitt Union (University of Pittsburgh Campus)

3959 Fifth Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Read the full conference brochure and access the registration form [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE

Commonwealth Prevention Alliance (CPA) 25th Annual Conference

June 10- June 12, 2015

Nittany Lion Inn

University Park, PA 16802

[Click here for Save the Date Flyer](#) and an outline of some conference highlights.

2016 Annual PASAP/PAMLE Conference

February 28-March, 2016

Penn State Conference Center Hotel

State College, PA 16803

NEWS

A Look at Children in Disconnected Families

Poverty poses short- and long-term risks for children. Child Trend's latest briefs look at children in disconnected families - poor families that aren't in the labor force or participating in TANF (cash assistance) - nationally and by state. Parents in these families generally reported that their families functioned well, but a substantial number of these parents were in fair or poor health and had low levels of education - factors that also place children at risk of negative outcomes. This research was supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Learn more [here](#).

ADHD Plus Childhood Trauma Heightens Risk for Self-harm, Suicide

Young women with ADHD who have been exposed to abuse, neglect or other traumas in childhood and adolescence are at greater risk for self-injury, eating disorders and suicide than those with ADHD who were not mistreated in early youth, according to new research from UC Berkeley.

The findings, just reported in the journal *Development and Psychopathology*, add to a growing body of evidence that environmental factors, including maltreatment in childhood, can have a significant bearing on the negative psychosocial outcomes of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder.

"While ADHD is clearly a heritable and biologically based disorder, and can be treated with medications, it is very important for clinicians and treatment providers to pay close attention to the trauma experiences of individuals, particularly women, with ADHD," said Maya Guendelman, a Ph.D. student in psychology at UC Berkeley, and lead author of the study.

The results also raise the question of whether children with ADHD are more vulnerable to maltreatment due to family stress. A neurodevelopmental disorder, ADHD is estimated to afflict at least 6 million children and teenagers in the United States and is characterized by poor concentration, distractibility, hyperactivity, impulsiveness and other behaviors that are inappropriate for the child's age.

Read more about the research [here](#).

Supersized Flavored Alcoholic Drinks Greatly Increase Teens' Risk of Injury

Teens who drink supersized flavored alcoholic drinks known as "alcopops" are at greatly increased risk of injury, according to a new study. The study included data from an online survey of more than 1,000 teens and young adults ages 13 to 20 who said they had consumed at least one alcoholic drink in the previous month. HealthDay reports those who said they drank super-sized alcopops were more than six times as likely to say they had suffered alcohol-related injuries, compared with those who did not drink the beverages. Read more [here](#).

Youth Suicide Rate in Rural Areas is Nearly Double the Rate in Cities

The adolescent and young-adult suicide rate in the United States was almost twice as high in rural settings as in urban areas between 1996 and 2010, and new research suggests that the gap appears to be widening.

Of the nearly 67,000 suicides analyzed, the rate of suicide for both males and females living in rural areas was about double the rate in cities.

The research, published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, also showed that gun use has decreased and that hanging has become a more common method of youth suicide for both males and females. Suicide rates by firearm and hanging were both disproportionately higher in rural areas than in urban regions for both sexes.

The findings suggest there is an urgent need to improve access to and availability of mental health care in rural areas, researchers say. The authors suggest that incorporating mental health care into primary care settings, providing care via telemedicine and creating school-based interventions might help reduce youth suicides in rural areas.

"These kinds of surveillance studies can really help us identify areas to target our prevention efforts, and it's clear we need to target rural areas for primary prevention of suicide," said Cynthia Fontanella, clinical assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral health at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and lead author of the study.

Fontanella cited access barriers to health care, geographic isolation and disproportionate stigma associated with mental illness as potential reasons for the observed disparities. "Rural America is beautiful, and many individuals live in close-knit communities.

Fontanella and colleagues analyzed mortality data from the National Center for Health Statistics National Vital Statistics System. Between 1996 and 2010, 66,595 youths between age 10 and 24 died by suicide in the United States. Among males, the rural versus urban suicide rate was 19.93 and 10.31 per 100,000, respectively, and for females, 4.40 and 2.39 per 100,000, respectively. When the researchers controlled for a number of other potential contributing factors, the rural and urban suicide rate disparity increased over time for males. The analysis also showed the suicide rate for young males is four times higher than for young females.

51.1 percent of youth committed suicide with a firearm, and 33.9 percent died by hanging. Poisoning accounted for 7.9 percent of suicides and other methods, such as jumping and transportation-related suicides, composed 7.1 percent of the deaths.

Clinicians have identified many risk factors for suicide over the years, but two in particular stand out, said John Campo, chair of psychiatry and behavioral health at Wexner Medical Center and senior author of the paper. About 90 percent of people who commit suicide suffer from a major psychiatric problem such as depression or bipolar disorder. Substance abuse, which can increase impulsivity and interfere with mood, is also frequently linked to suicides.

No studies have been done to try to pinpoint specific causes of this disparity in suicides based on where young people live. But these authors considered a number of potential contributing factors in the paper, all supported by previous research. Between the dispersed nature of rural populations and a severe shortage of mental health practitioners, access to care is a major problem. "If a rural child is depressed, it's much harder to get state-of-the-art care. And it's especially difficult to receive psychotherapy in a rural area," Campo said. Of the 1,669 federally designated shortage areas for mental health services in the United States, 85 percent are in rural regions. And more than half of the counties in this country, all rural, do not have a single psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker serving the region. This lack of access can compound the severity of illness, Fontanella said. People living in rural areas have to travel longer distances to see health care practitioners and wait longer for appointments, so by the time they receive care they may have developed more serious symptoms. And the culture of self-reliance in rural areas, as compared to urban living, may intensify the stigma associated with mental illness. "There is a lot of pride around taking care of your own problems and turning to neighbors rather than professionals for help," Fontanella said.

Because families living in rural areas tend to see a primary care practitioner for most of their health care, integrating mental health care into rural primary care settings, either with on-site practitioners or via remote

video access, has promise, Campo said. "It's going to be hard to generate the numbers of mental-health providers to get where we need to go. So we need to address things qualitatively to improve the entire system of care, which will improve access," he said.

This work was supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, which funds the Center for Clinical and Translational Science at Ohio State.

Additional co-authors are Danielle Hiance-Steelesmith of the College of Social Work, Gary Phillips of the Center for Biostatistics and Natalie Lester of psychiatry, all at Ohio State; Jeffrey Bridge of the College of Medicine at Ohio State and the Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital; and Helen Anne Sweeney of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Research on Risks to Economic and Social Wellbeing for LGBT Populations

What does research tell us about the risks LGBT populations may face in terms of their economic and social wellbeing? [Three new briefs](#) summarize findings in the areas of income support and self-sufficiency programs, child welfare programs, and youth programs. [A second set of briefs](#) recommends research questions and methods in these same programmatic areas.

Grey's Anatomy Star Chandra Wilson to Host 10th Anniversary Ceremony

Nominations are now open for the 10th anniversary of SAMHSA's Voice Awards, which will be hosted on August 12, 2015, by "Grey's Anatomy" star Chandra Wilson.

The annual awards program recognizes consumer/peer leaders and entertainment industry professionals whose work and personal stories of resilience demonstrate that people with mental and/or substance use disorders can and do recover and lead meaningful lives.

Eligible consumer/peer leaders must have:

- Personally demonstrated that recovery is real and possible
- Led efforts to reduce the discrimination and misperceptions associated with behavioral health conditions
- Made a positive impact on communities, workplaces, or schools.

Television and film productions must contain a dignified, respectful, and accurate portrayal of people with behavioral health conditions, and they must have aired in a public setting after April 15, 2014.

All nominations are due by **Friday, April 10**.

[Learn More about the Voice Awards](#)

[Submit a Nomination](#)

Recreational Marijuana Use Associated with Increased Impulsivity and Hostility in Daily Life by Emily Ansell, Holly Laws, Michael Roche, and Rajita Sinha; *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*; Published Online: January 6, 2015.

Little is known about the effects of recreational marijuana use on daily life. Most studies exploring this issue have either been conducted in a laboratory setting or have relied on retrospective reports of mood and use, which can be unreliable. One method to better capture information about experiences in real-life settings is Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA), where participants answer specific questions as they go about their typical, daily routines. In a recent 14-day study using a smartphone-based EMA, recreational marijuana users (average use of 4.5 days over the past 30 days) who also drank alcohol at least once per week answered questions each day regarding their alcohol consumption, marijuana use, and number of cigarettes or cigars smoked. Participants also answered questions to assess hostility following any interaction with another person that lasted longer than five minutes. In addition, end-of-day surveys were completed to measure impulsivity. For each subject, days of marijuana use and non-use were compared to look for changes in impulsivity and hostility. Results showed that marijuana use was correlated with increased impulsivity on the day of use and the following day. Participants also reported higher hostility ratings – for both themselves and their perception of others – on the day they used marijuana. This effect did not last into the next day and appeared to lessen as the study progressed. Results were not impacted by other variables measured, such as alcohol or nicotine use.

While this research couldn't determine whether marijuana caused these effects – or if increased impulsivity and/or hostility were stressors that led to marijuana use – these results highlight the need for further research to determine how marijuana impacts the daily experiences of recreational users.

For full article go to: www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871614020092

Monitoring the Future 2014 Survey Results-Teen Drug Use-NIDA

Monitoring the Future is an annual survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th-graders conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, under a grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health. Since 1975, the survey has measured drug, alcohol, and cigarette use and related attitudes in 12th-graders nationwide. Eighth and 10th graders were added to the survey in 1991. Overall, 41,551 students from 377 public and private schools participated in the 2014 survey.

The research shows the past 30 day use of alcohol, cigarette, and illicit drug use among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders from 1994 through 2014. Alcohol and cigarette use have generally decreased over the last two decades. Illicit drug use declined in the early 2000s, increased in 2011, but has remained steady or decreased somewhat in more recent years. Cigarette smoking and binge drinking are down over the last decade. The number of students who disapprove of regular smoking and binge drinking increased in 2014, and 8th and 10th graders report that cigarettes and alcohol are becoming harder to get. Teens are more likely to use e-cigarettes than cigarettes. Only 14.2% of 12th graders view e-cigarette use as harmful, which is less than 5 students in the average class.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of high school seniors do not view regular marijuana use as harmful compared to just over one-third (35%) 20 years ago. Marijuana use has remained relatively stable among high school students over the past few years. 56.7% of high school seniors say they disapprove of occasional marijuana smoking. After marijuana, prescription and over-the-counter medications account for most of the top drugs abused by 12th graders in the past year. For more information visit us [@NIDAnews](#) or DrugAbuse.gov.

For Parents and Caregivers- Let's Talk About It

As a parent or caregiver, you want the best for your children or other dependents. You may be concerned or have questions about certain behaviors they exhibit and how to ensure they get help.

Because children often can't understand difficult situations on their own, you should pay particular attention if they experience:

- Loss of a loved one
- Divorce or separation of their parents
- Any major transition – new home, new school, etc.
- Traumatic life experiences, like living through a natural disaster
- Teasing or bullying
- Difficulties in school or with classmates

How to Talk about Mental Health: Do you need help starting a conversation with your child about mental health? Make sure you actively listen to your child's response. Try leading with these questions.

- Can you tell me more about what is happening? How you are feeling?
- Have you had feelings like this in the past?
- Sometimes you need to talk to an adult about your feelings. I'm here to listen. How can I help you feel better?
- Do you feel like you want to talk to someone else about your problem?
- I'm worried about your safety. Can you tell me if you have thoughts about harming yourself or others?

It is important to be aware of warning signs that your child may be struggling. You can play a critical role in knowing when your child may need help. For observable behaviors for parents and caregivers to look for and other resources [click here](#).