

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission



Arizona Youth Survey 2006 Prescription Drug Fact Sheet

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Arizona

May 2008

In the 2006 administration of the Arizona Youth Survey (AYS) questions were added to capture lifetime and past 30-day prescription drug abuse. Specifically, the prescription drug use questions asked respondents about their use of prescription drugs (such as Valium, Xanax, Ritalin, Adderal, Oxycontin, or sleeping pills) without a doctor telling them to take them.

Table 1: Percentage of Arizona Students Who Have Used Drugs in Their Lifetime

	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	Total
Alcohol	50.4	67.6	74.5	61.7
Cigarettes	30.8	43.8	50.0	39.6
Marijuana	18.3	34.0	42.6	29.2
Prescription Drugs	9.8	16.0	20.0	14.3
Sedatives	10.0	14.3	17.4	13.2
Inhalants	15.2	11.9	9.8	12.9
Smokeless Tobacco	8.0	11.8	15.6	11.0
Cocaine	3.6	7.6	11.6	6.8
Stimulants	3.4	7.1	8.5	5.9
Methamphetamines	2.6	5.0	6.6	4.3
Hallucinogens	2.1	4.1	5.6	3.6
Ecstasy	1.9	3.4	4.4	3.0
Heroin	1.4	2.1	2.8	2.0
Steroids	1.6	2.0	2.2	1.9

Prescription Drug Use Among Arizona Youth

Table 1 shows the percentage of youth who reported using various substances during their lifetime and Table 2 shows the percentage of youth who reported drug use during the 30 days prior to taking the survey. For both measures of use, prescription drugs are abused by the fourth highest percentage of respondents, behind alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana, with 14.3 percent reporting abuse in their lifetimes and 6.3 percent reporting use in the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Prescription Drug Use Across the 15 Counties

Chart 1 shows the percentage of youth who reported abusing prescription drugs during the 30-days prior to taking the survey across the 15 counties in Arizona. Of the 15 counties, Greenlee (11.8%), Mohave (9.6%), Graham (8%), and Cochise (7.4%) have the highest rates of reported prescription drug abuse. In contrast, Yuma, Santa Cruz, and Apache counties have the lowest prescription drug abuse rates among the remaining counties, with rates at five percent or lower.

Chart 1: Percentage of Youth Reporting Prescription Drug Use by County

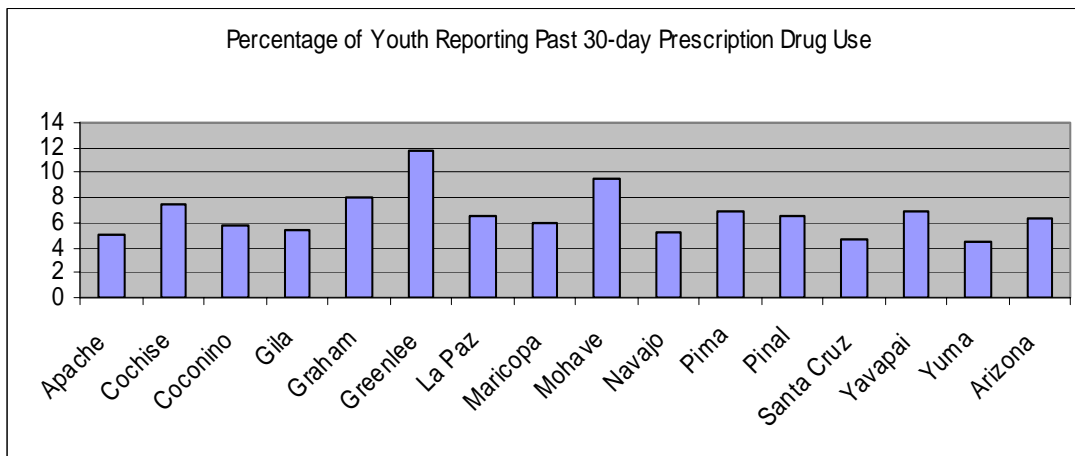


Table 2: Percentage of Arizona Students Who Have Used Drugs in the Past 30 Days

	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	Total
Alcohol	24.1	39.2	47.0	34.4
Cigarettes	10.5	17.1	21.8	15.3
Marijuana	8.5	15.7	18.1	13.1
Prescription Drugs	4.5	7.3	8.1	6.3
Sedatives	4.5	6.6	7.1	5.8
Inhalants	6.2	3.1	1.7	4.1
Smokeless Tobacco	2.7	4.0	5.4	3.8
Cocaine	1.7	2.9	3.3	2.5
Stimulants	1.5	2.9	2.6	2.2
Hallucinogens	1.0	1.7	1.7	1.4
Methamphetamines	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.3
Ecstasy	0.8	1.0	0.9	0.9
Steroids	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.9
Heroin	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7

Methodology:

The 2006 Arizona Youth Survey was administered in schools representing all 15 counties in Arizona. The 2006 AYS consisted of data from 362 schools and 60,401 students. This is a significant increase over the 2004 AYS, which was comprised of 266 schools with a sample of 40,960 students. Data from the 2008 AYS will be available in the fall.

Table 3: Multiple Drug Use

	Non-Prescription Drug Users	Past 30-day Prescription Drug Use	Males Who Report Prescription Drug Use	Females Who Report Prescription Drug Use
Past 30-day Alcohol Use	31.6	76.8	77.5	76.4
Past 30-day Cigarette Use	13.2	48.4	50.7	46.5
Past 30-day Chewing Tobacco Use	3.1	12.1	19.5	5.9
Past 30-day Marijuana Use	10.9	46	53.8	39.3
Past 30-day Inhalant Use	3.3	16.2	14.3	18
Past 30-day Hallucinogen Use	.9	8.8	10.7	7.2
Past 30-day Cocaine Use	1.7	13.6	15.6	11.8
Past 30-day Sedative Use	2.6	54.7	51.6	57.6
Past 30-day Stimulant Use	.8	23.3	22.3	24
Past 30-day Ecstasy Use	.4	6.8	8.8	4.8
Past 30-day Heroin Use	.3	6.4	9.2	3.9
Past 30-day Methamphetamine Use	.9	7.2	7.2	7.1
Past 30-day Steroid Use	.5	6	9.1	3.2
Past 30-day Any Drug Use	18	80	81.2	80.5

Table 4: Antisocial Behavior by Prescription Drug Use

	Non-Prescription Drug Users	Past 30-day Prescription Drug Use	Males Who Report Prescription Drug Use	Females Who Report Prescription Drug Use
Suspended From School	14.4	27.3	34.9	20.9
Carry a Gun	6.5	15.6	25.2	7.8
Sell Drugs	5.6	31	42.4	21.4
Steal a Vehicle	3.4	12.3	16.6	8.8
Been Arrested	7.2	21.8	28	16.5
Attacked to Harm	14.4	37.9	45.8	31.4
Drunk at School	14.8	56.7	60.3	53.4
Taken a Gun to School	1.1	4.4	7	2.3

Limitations

Though the data presented in this fact sheet is a good benchmark of overall prescription drug use among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Arizona there, the data collected does not allow for an understanding of which prescription drugs are most frequently abused by Arizona youth. To get a better understanding of any variation in the types of prescription drugs being abused by Arizona youth, the questions regarding prescription drug use have been expanded in the 2008 AYS. The 2008 survey includes questions that differentiate between the abuse of prescription pain relievers, prescription stimulants, and prescription sedatives. In an attempt to also measure the abuse of other substances that are available over-the-counter, the 2008 survey has included a question that will measure the use of over-the-counter drugs.

Prescription Drug Abuse and Other Substances

Table 3 shows the percentage of past 30-day substance use for those youth who reported prescription drug abuse in the 30 days prior to taking the survey compared to those youth who reported no use. The table also includes the differences in substance use between males and females who have reported prescription drug use in the past 30-days. Not surprisingly, youth who reported prescription drug abuse reported much higher rates of other substance use than those reporting no use. For example, 76.8 percent of youth who reported prescription drug use in the past 30-days also reported using alcohol. In contrast, 31.6 percent of respondents who did not report the abuse of prescription drugs reported past 30-day use of alcohol. Although young females and males report similar rates of past 30-day prescription drug abuse, 6.4% and 6% respectively, males who have used prescription drugs report other drug use at higher rates than females. This is true for almost all substances asked about with the exception of inhalants, sedatives, and stimulants, where a higher percentage of females who reported abusing prescription drugs reported using these drugs.

Antisocial Behavior and Prescription Drug Abuse

Table 4 presents data on self-reported antisocial behavior among those youth who have also reported prescription drug abuse in the 30 days prior to administering the survey, compared to youth who reported no use. Youth who reported abusing prescription drugs reported much higher rates of antisocial behavior. For example, 56.7 percent of those who reported abusing prescription drugs reported being drunk or high at school compared to 14.8 percent of those did not report the abuse of prescription drugs. The table also compares the data on males and females who reported prescription drug use in the past 30-days. The data shows that while females who have used prescription drugs report antisocial behavior at higher rates than the state average for non-prescription drug abusers, males who have used prescription drugs report much higher rates of antisocial behavior than females who have abused prescription drugs in all categories.

This fact sheet was prepared by:
Michelle Neitch,
 Research Analyst
 Arizona Criminal Justice
 Commission
 1110 W. Washington, Suite 230
 Phoenix, Arizona 85007
 (P) 602.364.1146