## Drug Use and Related Behaviors

### Trends in Current Drug Use, Grades 9–12, New Mexico, 2003–2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Type</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painkillers to get high</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1** Trends in current drug use, Grades 9–12, New Mexico, 2003–2011
Most past 30-day drug use rates have been relatively stable in recent years.

Marijuana use did not exhibit a significant trend from 2003 to 2009. The apparent decrease in current marijuana use from 2003 to 2007 disappeared by 2009, and the rate has remained relatively stable since then.

Painkiller use to get high did not exhibit a significant trend from 2007 to 2011. Painkiller use was not assessed before the 2007 YRRS.

Ecstasy use increased from 2007 (5.1%) to 2009 (8.0%). There was no significant trend from 2007 to 2011 (6.4%). Past 30-day ecstasy use was not assessed before 2007.

In 2011, among NM high school students (grades 9–12):

- 27.6% were current marijuana users (8 students in a class of 30).
- 18.5% used marijuana before age 13 (6 students in a class of 30).
- 9.7% used marijuana on school property (3 students in a class of 30).
- 11.0% used painkillers to get high (3 students in a class of 30).
- 6.7% were current inhalant users (2 students in a class of 30).
- 6.4% were current ecstasy users (2 students in a class of 30).
- 5.2% were current cocaine users (2 students in a class of 30).
- 3.9% were current methamphetamine users (1 student in a class of 30).
- 3.2% were current heroin users (1 student in a class of 30).
- 2.0% of girls were current heroin users (fewer than 1 of 30 girls).
- 4.3% of boys were current heroin users (1 of 30 boys).
- 3.8% ever used illegal injection drugs (1 student in a class of 30).

In 2011, among NM middle school students (grades 6–8):

- 15.9% ever used marijuana (5 students in a class of 30).
- 5.0% used marijuana before age 11 (2 students in a class of 30).
- 10.1% were current marijuana users (3 students in a class of 30).
- 11.8% ever used inhalants (4 students in a class of 30).
- 8.0% ever used prescription drugs without a prescription (2 students in a class of 30).
- 4.9% ever used painkillers to get high (1 student in a class of 30).
- 3.6% ever used cocaine (1 student in a class of 30).
Marijuana is the most commonly used drug among both middle and high school students. Among middle school students, lifetime marijuana use is followed in prevalence of use by lifetime inhalant use, current marijuana use, lifetime improper prescription drug use, painkillers to get high, and lifetime cocaine use. Among high school students, current marijuana use is followed in prevalence of use by painkillers to get high, inhalants, ecstasy, cocaine, methamphetamines, and heroin.
There were very few differences by gender for drug use indicators.

Among middle school students, boys had a higher prevalence than girls for “Used marijuana before age 11” and girls had a higher prevalence than boys for lifetime inhalant use.

Among high school students, boys had a higher prevalence than girls for “Used marijuana before age 13” and current heroin use.
Current marijuana use and lifetime improper prescription drug use increased in prevalence with increasing grade level from 6th to 11th grades. Lifetime use of painkillers to get high increased with grade level from 6th to 8th grade. Current use of painkillers to get high increased with grade level from 9th to 12th grade. Lifetime cocaine use did not significantly vary from 6th to 8th grade, while the prevalence was higher among 11th and 12th graders than among 9th and 10th graders. Lifetime inhalant use increased with grade level from 6th to 8th grades. Current inhalant use did not vary significantly by grade level from 9th to 12th grades. There was not a statistically significant difference between 11th and 12th graders for any substance use.
Figure 5  Drug Use By Race/Ethnicity, Grades 6–8 and 9–12, 2011

Among middle school students, Hispanic students (11.2%) had a higher rate than White students (5.3%) of current marijuana use. Hispanic students (7.6%) had a higher rate than White students (3.8%) of high risk drug use. Other differences by race/ethnicity were not statistically significant.

Among high school students, American Indian students (41.4%) had a higher rate than White (21.8%) or Hispanic students (27.7%) of current marijuana use. American Indian students had a higher rate than White students of high risk drug use. Other differences by race/ethnicity were not statistically significant.
Lifetime use of illegal injection drug use was reported by 3.8% of high school students. The rate of lifetime injection drug use among high school students did not vary significantly by gender or grade level. Asian or Pacific Islander (10.6%) and Black or African American (9.7%) students had higher rates of lifetime injection drug use than American Indian (4.7%), Hispanic (2.7%), or White students (2.6%).
More than one-third (34.5%) of high school students were sold, offered, or given drugs on school property in the past 12 months. Two thirds (66.2%) said it would be “Very easy” or “Sort of easy” to get marijuana, and 28.2% said it would be “Very easy” or “Sort of easy” to get hard drugs (cocaine, LSD, methamphetamines, or other illegal drug). Most students knew at least one adult who either used drugs (60.6%) or sold drugs (41.0%) in the past year.
**Figure 8** Current Marijuana and High Risk Drug Use by Ease of Obtaining Illegal Drugs and Acquaintance With Adults Who Use Drugs, Grades 9–12, 2011

- Among those who said it was "Very easy" or "Sort of easy" to get illegal drugs, 40.7% used marijuana.
- Among those who said it was "Very hard" or "Sort of hard" to get illegal drugs, 22.3% used marijuana.
- Among those who didn’t know an adult who used drugs, 10.3% used marijuana.
- Among those who knew at least one adult who used drugs, 38.8% used marijuana.

Those who had easier access to or greater exposure to drugs were more likely to use drugs than other students. Those who reported it was “Very easy” or “Sort of easy” to get drugs were more likely than those who said “Very hard” or “Sort of hard” to use marijuana (40.7% vs. 22.3%) and to use high risk drugs (28.3% vs. 6.9%). Those who knew at least one adult who used drugs were more likely than those who didn’t know an adult who used drugs to use marijuana (38.8% vs. 10.3%) and to use high risk drugs (18.8% vs. 3.8%).

*Past 30 day use of painkillers to get high, cocaine, methamphetamines, or heroin.*
In both middle school and high school, students were more likely to use high risk drugs if they drank alcohol or engaged in binge drinking, were current cigarette smokers, were victimized by sexual or dating violence, felt sadness or hopelessness or had suicidal ideations, or if they got poor grades at school. Among middle and high school students, being bullied electronically was associated with using high risk drugs, but being bullied at school was associated with using high risk drugs only among high school students.
Drug Use and Related Behaviors

Figure 10 • High Risk Drug Use by Selected Risk Behaviors, Grades 9–12, 2011

HOW TO READ THIS CHART

Among high school students...

- Among non-drinkers, **3.5%** used high risk drugs in the past 30 days.
- Among current drinkers who did not binge drink, **12.2%** used high risk drugs in the past 30 days.
- Among binge drinkers who binged once in the past 30 days, **19.8%** used high risk drugs in the past 30 days.
- Among binge drinkers who binged twice or more in the past 30 days, **41.4%** used high risk drugs in the past 30 days.
**Figure 11** *High Risk Drug Use by Resiliency Factors, Grades 6–8, 2011*

**How to Read This Chart**

Students were asked how true it was that “In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who listens to me when I have something to say.” Among those who responded...

- **“Very much true,”** 4.3% used high risk drugs.
- **“A little true” or “Pretty much true,”** 7.9% used high risk drugs.
- **“Not true at all,”** 16.0% used high risk drugs.
Among middle school students, the prevalence of high risk drug use was more highly associated with resiliency or protective factors in the home than for protective factors in the school, community or with peers.

**In the home:** Those who said it was “Very true” that a parent or other adult in the home listened to them when they had something to say or talked with them about their problems, or who said a parent or guardian knew where they were when they were out of the house, had a lower prevalence of high risk drug use than other students.

**In the school:** Those who said it was “Not true at all” that in the school there were clear rules about what kids can and cannot do were more likely to use high risk drugs than those who said “Very true” or a “Little bit or Very much true.” There was not a statistically significant relationship between high risk drug use and a teacher or other adult “who really cares about me.”

**In the community:** Students who said it was “Very true” that they were involved in group activities outside the home or school were less likely to use high risk drugs than those who said “Not true at all.” There was no statistically significant relationship between high risk drug use and “an adult who really cares about me” outside the home or school.

**With peers:** There was not a statistically significant relationship between high risk drug use and “a friend my own age who really cares about me.”
Figure 12 - High Risk Drug Use by Resiliency Factors, Grades 9–12, 2011

HOW TO READ THIS CHART

Students were asked how true it was that “In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who is interested in my school work.” Among those who responded…

- “Very much true,” 8.2% used high risk drugs.
- “A little true” or “Pretty much true,” 16.5% used high risk drugs.
- “Not true at all,” 24.7% used high risk drugs.
Among high school students, the relationship between high risk drug use and low levels of resiliency factors was strongest for those factors related to the home, but the relationship was also strong for all factors related to the school, community, and peer relationships.

**In the home:** While low levels of all three resiliency factors were strongly associated with high risk drug use, “My family has clear rules and standards for my behavior” had the strongest relationship compared to “In my home, a parent or other adult believes I will be a success” and “In my home, a parent or other adult is interested in my school work.”

**In the school:** Of the four school-based resiliency factors, low resiliency levels for relationships with teachers (A teacher or other adult “…really cares about me” and “…believes I will be a success”) and clear behavioral standards had the strongest relationships with high risk drug use. There was no statistically significant difference in high risk drug use between those who said it was “Not true at all” or “Little bit or Pretty much true” that they were involved in extra-curricular activities, but those who said “Very much true” were far less likely to use high risk drugs than either of the other two groups.

**In the community:** Involvement in group activities and having a trusted adult were highly associated with a low prevalence of high risk drug use.

**Self:** Those with plans to continue education after high school were far less likely to use high risk drugs than other students.

**With peers:** Having “a friend my own age who really cares about me” was strongly associated with not using high risk drugs.
Definitions

**Binged once in 30 days:** drank 5 or more drinks of alcohol on a single occasion (i.e., in a row or within a couple of hours) on one and only one of the past 30 days.

**Binged 2+ times in 30 days:** drank 5 or more drinks of alcohol on a single occasion (i.e., in a row or within a couple of hours) on two or more of the past 30 days.

**Bullied at school:** ever bullied at school (middle school); bullied at school in the past 12 months (high school).

**Bullied electronically:** ever bullied electronically (middle school); electronically bullied in the past 12 months (high school). Electronic bullying is bullying through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting.

**Current cigarette smoker:** smoked cigarettes on at least one of the past 30 days.

**Current drinker (not binge):** drank at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days.

**“Current use” or “Past-30 day use”:** used drugs, alcohol, or tobacco at least once in the past 30 days.

**“Ever used” or “Lifetime use”:** used drugs, alcohol, or tobacco at least once in lifetime.

**High risk drug user:** used cocaine or painkillers to get high on at least one occasion in the past 30 days (middle school); used cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, or painkillers to get high on at least one occasion in the past 30 days (high school).

**Injection drug use:** used a needle to inject an illegal drug at least once in lifetime.

**It would be easy to get hard drugs:** responded “Sort of easy” or “Very easy” to the question “If you wanted to, how hard or easy would it be for you to get cocaine, LSD, methamphetamines, or other illegal drug?”

**It would be easy to get marijuana:** responded “Sort of easy” or “Very easy” to the question “If you wanted to, how hard or easy would it be for you to get marijuana?”

**Knew an adult who sold drugs:** responded “1 adult” or more to the question “How many adults have you known personally who, in the past year, have sold or dealt drugs?”

**Knew at least one adult who used drugs:** responded “1 adult” or more to the question “How many adults have you known personally who, in the past year, have used marijuana, cocaine, or other drugs?”

**Non-drinker:** did not drink alcohol in the past 30 days.

**Sold, offered, or given drugs on school property:** responded “Yes” to the question “During the past 12 months, has anyone offered, sold, or given you an illegal drug on school property?”

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For more information about the YRRS, including methodology, comprehensive state level reports, or county level reports, and more, see [www.youthrisk.org](http://www.youthrisk.org).