MARIJUANA: DRUG ABUSE AMONG YOUTH

ISSUE

The effects of marijuana use include: (1-2)

- Becoming addicted to the drug which seriously interferes with everyday living (chemically dependent).
- Impaired motor coordination and slowed reaction time, which negatively impacts driving.
- Impaired short-term memory, which makes it hard to learn.
- Lower levels of educational attainment.

The most commonly abused illegal drug by adolescents is marijuana. (2-3)

FINDINGS

Marijuana use increases substantially between middle school and the end of high school. Thurston County youth have similar rates of marijuana use when compared to Washington State youth.

- In 2010 an estimated: (3)
  - 1 in 10 (9%) of Thurston County 8th graders currently use marijuana.
  - 2 in 10 (21%) of Thurston County 10th graders currently use marijuana.
  - 3 in 10 (29%) of Thurston County 12th graders currently use marijuana.

![Percent of Youth Currently Using Marijuana by Grade in School, Thurston County and Washington State 2010 (3)](chart.png)
DETAILED DATA

- During the past decade marijuana use among Thurston County youth declined, but began to increase in recent years.

![Graph showing percent of youth currently using marijuana by grade in school, Thurston County 2002-2010](image)

- Marijuana use is similar in rural and urban Thurston County school districts.

![Graph showing percent of youth currently using marijuana by rural or urban school district enrollment, Thurston County 2006-2010 Combined](image)
Marijuana use among Thurston County 10th graders varies by race and ethnicity.

![Bar graph showing percent of youth currently using marijuana by race or ethnicity, Thurston County 10th Graders 2006-2010 Combined.](image)

- NH/OPI = Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native

Thurston County middle and high school youth use marijuana at higher rates than cigarettes.

![Line graph showing current marijuana and cigarette use by grade in school, Thurston County 2010.](image)
CITATIONS


NOTES

− Current marijuana use = any use in the past 30 days. Healthy Youth Survey question “During the past 30 days, on how many days did you: Use marijuana or hashish (grass, hash, pot)?”
− Current cigarette use = any use in the past 30 days. Health Youth Survey question “During the past 30 days, on how many days did you: Smoke cigarettes?”
− 6th graders are usually age 11-12, 8th graders age 13-14, 10th graders age 15-16 and 12th graders age 17-18.
− Rural school district = Griffin, Rainier, Rochester, Tenino and Yelm. Urban school district = North Thurston, Olympia and Tumwater.

MORE INFORMATION

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