

Adolescent Marijuana Use in Arkansas

Marijuana use by adolescents in Arkansas is a serious health and safety problem...

Of the over 85,000 students (grades 6, 8, 10, and 12) who participated in the 2008 Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA) survey¹,

- 33% say it would be easy to get marijuana
- 15.4% have used marijuana sometime in their lives

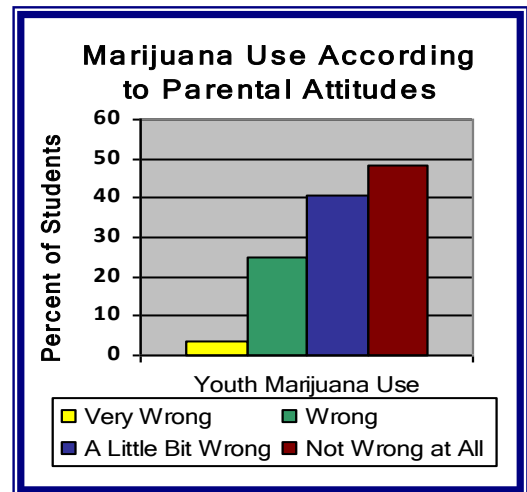
Regarding "regular" use (having used in the past 30 days)^{1,2},

- 6.6% have used marijuana during the past 30 days
- Arkansas students in grades 8, 10, and 12 report lower use than their peers throughout the Nation
- 1 in 7 of Arkansas' 12th graders report using marijuana in the past 30 days

Other interesting facts about adolescent marijuana use in Arkansas¹:

- The average age of first use is 13.7 years old (this is 4 months earlier than students report "regular" alcohol use)
- 4 out of 5 teens who use marijuana also drink alcohol
- Marijuana use is down from 2002 (from 10.6% to 6.6%)
- One in three don't see "great risk" in smoking marijuana regularly

Parents' attitudes about marijuana use dramatically impact students' use



Today's marijuana is estimated to be anywhere from 5-25% more potent than the marijuana smoked in the 1970s.³

Parents and other adults should talk with young people about these consequences of marijuana use:

- Failing students (earning Ds and Fs) are 6 times more likely to report marijuana use than students earning A's (APNA, 2007)
- The part of the brain responsible for memory and emotion can be damaged by marijuana (Office of National Drug Control Policy)
- Marijuana smoke can contain 3-5 times more tar and carbon monoxide than cigarette smoke (Office of National Drug Control Policy)
- Marijuana affects alertness, concentration and reaction time—skills needed for safe driving (National Institute on Drug Abuse)

¹ Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment, 2008 (the APNA student survey is conducted annually by the AR Department of Human Services)

² Monitoring the Future, 2008 (the MTF Survey is a project of the National Institute on Drug Abuse—NIDA)

³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, <http://www.family.samhsa.gov/set/marijuana.aspx>