



Gender Differences in Inhalant Use



Inhalant 30-Day Use Rates

Inhalants are the most frequently used class of illicit drugs by both male and female 8th grade students in Arkansas. Among 8th grade Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA) respondents, females reported significantly higher rates of inhalant use. The most recent APNA results for 2007 show that 7.4% of 8th grade females, compared to 5.5% of 8th grade males, reported using inhalants in the 30 days prior to the survey. Figure 1 compares inhalant 30-day use rates for both males and females in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 for 2007.

Figure 1. Arkansas 30-Day Inhalant Use by Grade, 2007

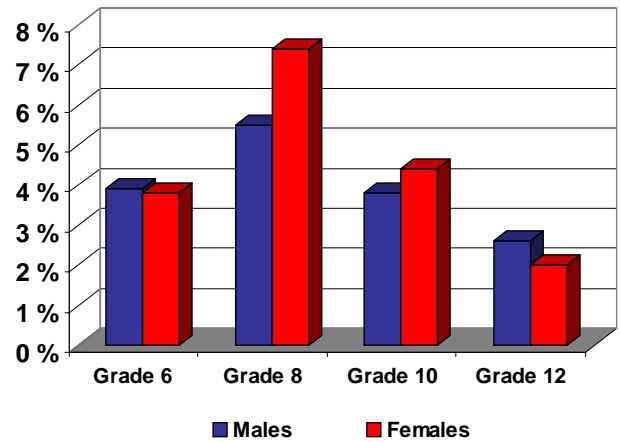
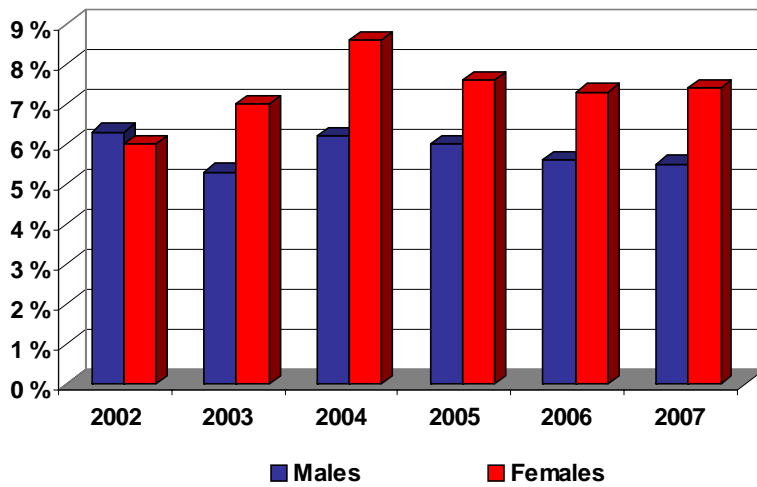


Figure 2: Arkansas 30-Day Inhalant Use Trends by Gender, 2002-07



Inhalant 30-Day Use Trends

Combined data on male and female inhalant 30-day use rates indicate that 8th grade inhalant use has increased only slightly, from 6.2% in 2002 to 6.5% in 2007. However, when sorted by gender, the data also indicate that 8th grade males have generally decreased inhalant use between 2002 and 2007. Eighth grade female inhalant use has varied over the course of the APNA. As noted previously, more female than male 8th graders use inhalants. This gender difference began in 2003 and has continued in each subsequent year. In 2002, 6.0% of 8th grade females reported inhalant use, increasing through 2003 and peaking at 8.6% in 2004. Since 2004, 8th grade female inhalant use has declined to 7.4% in 2007. These yearly changes have resulted in an overall increase in female inhalant use from 6.0% to 7.4% for the period 2002-2007. Figure 2 compares male and female 8th grade 30-day inhalant use trends for 2002-07.¹

Implications

Substance use rates are rarely the same for males and females of the same age groups. Generally, males are more likely to use substances at higher rates than females. It is important for prevention purposes to recognize that this typical gender pattern may vary by substance.

¹ From the Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA) Survey, State Report 2007: <http://www.arkansas.pridesurveys.com>.

Coming next month:

Alcohol Consumption and Pregnancy