Illicit Drug Use By Teens Down Since 1997

Teens in America are turning to drugs less frequently and are finding illicit drug use less acceptable, according to the results of three major surveys that track drug use and attitudes among teens in the United States.

The surveys show that while teen drug use climbed through the early- and mid-1990s, since 1997 there has been a slow, steady decline. Usage rates stabilized between 1999 and 2000.

"We are greatly encouraged by the results of the studies," said acting ONDCP Director Edward H. Jurith. "The National Drug Control Strategy is working. We have seen increased efforts in communities and nationwide lead to a continued downward trend in overall drug use among youth."

The 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) shows a decline in the rate of past-month use of any illicit drug among youth age 12-17 during the period of 1997-2000. Past-month use decreased from 11.4 percent in 1997 to 9.9 percent in 1998 and to 9.0 percent in 1999, according to the survey.

The trend in prevalence of marijuana – consistently the most widely used illicit drug – was similar to the trend for use of any illicit drug, peaking in 1997 and slowly declining through 2000. According to the NHSDA, past-month marijuana use for youth age 12-17 decreased from 9.4 percent in 1997 to 8.3 percent in 1998 and to 7.0 percent in 1999.

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Attitudes toward marijuana use have also taken a positive turn. The 2000 Monitoring the Future (MTF) surveyed 45,200 8th, 10th and 12th grade students in public and private schools across the country. The study shows that more recent classes of 8th graders perceive the risks of using marijuana as greater, and have become more disapproving of its use. MTF shows that 8th graders' disapproval of trying marijuana once or twice increased from 70.7 percent in 1999 to 72.5 percent in 2000, a continuation of a trend started in 1997 when 67.6 percent of 8th graders expressed disapproval.

The 2000 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS), released in November 2000, surveyed 7,290 teens nationwide and offers positive news about Campaign messages. PATS reports that fewer teens see marijuana users as cool or popular. Since 1997, the number of young people seeing or hearing anti-drug ads every day has jumped and teens "agreed a lot" that anti-drug ads make them more aware of the risks of using drugs.

Not all of the news in the studies was encouraging. Use of MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy, a synthetic drug with amphetamine-like and hallucinogenic properties, has risen steadily in recent years. PATS reports that trial use of ecstasy jumped significantly from 1999 to 2000, and doubled between 1995 and 2000. According to MTF, the proportion of 8th graders reporting any use of ecstasy in the prior 12 months rose from 1.7 percent in 1999 to 3.1 percent in 2000. Among 10th graders, use grew from 4.4 percent to 5.4 percent; among 12th graders, from 5.6 percent to 8.2 percent.

### NATIONAL STUDIES SHOW DRUG USE DECLINE

The Campaign utilizes information from these studies and others to monitor effectiveness of its messages and to plan future program direction. The studies cited are:

- Monitoring the Future, funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is available at www.monitoringthefuture.org;
- The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, conducted by the Partnership for a Drug Free America, is available at www.drugfreeamerica.org; and
- The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is available at www.samhsa.gov.

## Teen Drug Use Down

Drugs and among those included in a series of Campaign TV, radio and print ads being developed by Merkley Newman Harty and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. More on Brandon and Heather appears on pages 6 and 7.

The initiative's success would not have been possible without the significant outreach efforts from more than 40 of the nation's largest service organizations. They include Girl Scouts of the USA, YMCA of the USA, U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute, United National Indian Tribal Youth, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Youth Service America and the National Urban League Partnership.

The Campaign invited youth age 9-17 to share their Anti-Drugs and used selected examples to develop a special supplement distributed in 22 million copies of the November 27, 2000, edition of USA TODAY.

Take a look at the myriad of creative responses and encourage young people to add new ones to the What's Your Anti-Drug? area of www.freevibe.com. The USA TODAY supplement is downloadable through www.mediacampaign.org or available by calling (800) 666-3332.
Increased teen use of club drugs – particularly ecstasy – and anabolic steroids prompted Oxygen Media, The Hollywood Reporter and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency to partner with the Campaign and initiate several entertainment industry roundtable discussions about the drugs.

The events were designed to educate entertainment writers, network executives and magazine feature writers about the dangers of the drugs. "Ecstasy 101" discussions on club drugs were held in Los Angeles in September and New York in December.

The Hollywood Reporter co-hosted the Los Angeles event and Oxygen Media co-hosted the New York City roundtable. The discussions drew writers, executives and producers from a variety of ABC Television, CBS Television and PBS shows, Channel One, David E. Kelley Productions, Family Circle and other magazines, Oxygen Media, Teen People and Home Box Office.

The speakers included a mother whose son died of a drug overdose, two former users who are currently in treatment and an undercover narcotics detective from Miami, Fla.

The events covered a wide range of topics including the physical and psychological effects of ecstasy, trends in use, misconceptions young people have about the drug and signs that may indicate to parents that their children are using ecstasy. After brief presentations from the speakers, an hour-long question and answer session was held.

As a result of the roundtable, several writers have requested additional information for television programs or educational meetings focusing on ecstasy.

At press time, The Hollywood Reporter and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency were working with the Campaign to finalize plans for anabolic steroids roundtables in New York and Los Angeles, which will focus on the relationship between athletic pursuits and body image and the increased risk of substance abuse.

Learn more about the Campaign’s entertainment industry outreach at www.mediacampaign.org.

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Broadcasts Look at Drug Myths

The May discussion will dispel prevalent myths about ecstasy.

Ecstasy is the street name for methylenedioxymethamphetamine, a chemical substance that combines properties of methamphetamine and hallucinogens. The drug produces immediate side effects, and some – such as confusion, depression, sleep problems, anxiety and paranoia – can occur weeks after it is taken.

A July 19 broadcast will focus on heroin; marijuana will be the subject of a September 20 program.

ONDCP is sponsoring the broadcasts in partnership with the National Guard, the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

To participate, locate a downlink site or for more information on the broadcasts, contact Ed Kronholm or Stephanie Scott at (480) 820-0305 or toll-free at (877) 820-0305, or by e-mail at dlnets@aol.com.

Seizing the opportunity to reach millions of tweens and teens each week, the Campaign is maximizing its outreach to faith-based organizations throughout the United States.

Although many faith institutions have addiction-recovery programs, few incorporate substance-abuse prevention messages or curricula into youth activities. The Campaign is developing materials to help youth leaders incorporate substance-abuse messages and up-to-date information on drug prevention into existing programs.

The materials include a brochure that introduces ways for clergy and faith leaders to elevate youth substance-abuse prevention on faith agendas.

The Campaign, with assistance from the Minnesota Institute of Public Health, also is developing a "Youth Leader Activity Guide," a resource to help youth workers lead discussions and activities that promote critical thinking, drug-resistance and decision-making skills and healthy life choices.

The guide will include discussion questions to help parents talk to their children about drugs, role-play exercises and drug-education materials for those involved with youth or youth programs.

In addition to these new resources, the Campaign is collaborating with the Associated Church Press to engage the religious media in substance-abuse prevention issues.

The faith-based materials will be available online in a special faith section of www.theantidrug.com this summer.
Mural Project

Kids Use Art to Express

What Stands Between Them and Drugs

When it comes to understanding what comes between kids and drugs, the writing is on the wall.

Last fall, youth across America sketched and painted their "Anti-Drugs" at "What's Your Anti-Drug?" mural events held in seven cities around the country. The murals are part of the Campaign's movement to encourage youth to creatively express to their peers and communities the one thing in their lives that stands between them and drugs.

According to the 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 72 percent of youth age 12-17 have never used illicit drugs. Most youth are involved in hobbies, athletics and youth organizations. They have fun with their friends and families, and they have goals that are important to them. Those activities and goals are the Anti-Drugs that keep these kids and their friends healthy and drug free.

Schools and youth-serving organizations, including ASPIRA (a national nonprofit organization devoted to the education and leadership development of Latino youth), 100 Black Men of America and SHINE (Seeking Harmony in Neighborhoods Everyday), partnered with the Campaign to host or help coordinate the mural events in schools, shopping malls and places where youth congregate.

Four temporary murals were painted at cultural festivals and permanent murals are on display in the following locations:
> Sharpestown Mall, Houston, Texas;
> Greenbriar Mall, Atlanta, Ga.;
> Fairfax High School, Los Angeles, Calif.;
> Victoria Ward Center Movie Complex, Honolulu, Hawaii;
> Carolina Plaza, Carolina, Puerto Rico; and
> Antonia Pantoja High School, Chicago, Ill.

Approximately 5,000 youth participated in the mural activities in 2000. Additional murals will be created in New York City and Washington, D.C., this summer.

Youth can join the national movement by submitting their "Anti-Drugs" to the "What's Your Anti-Drug?" area of www.freevibe.com. Electronic submissions will become part of an interactive mosaic that will remain viewable online.

Clockwise from top left: A boy in Atlanta explains his artwork to a local cameraman; Puerto Rican salsa singer Michael Stuart chats with fans during preparation of the mural in Plaza Carolina; young girls in Atlanta line up to have their Anti-Drugs included in the mural there; and a boy in Los Angeles adds his Anti-Drug to the mural at Fairfax High School.
Web Sites Integrated to Improve Reach, Messages

Americans are spending more time on the Internet, making the Campaign's online presence increasingly important in the ongoing effort to spread drug-prevention messages. To improve reach to youth and adults, the Campaign has redesigned and integrated several of its Web sites.

The successful "What's Your Anti-Drug?" initiative, launched in September 2000, continues to draw responses to the WhatsYourAntiDrug.com Web site as youth share their "Anti-Drugs." Freevibe, www.freevibe.com, the Campaign's popular youth-oriented Web site, continues to blend healthy lifestyle messages with pop culture. To increase exposure to both sites, the Campaign integrated WhatsYourAntiDrug.com into an active area of Freevibe.

In this newly developed "My Anti-Drug" section of the site, visitors are encouraged to submit their Anti-Drugs and to check out other kids' Anti-Drugs. Interactive features make the experience dynamic and fun, and message boards hold postings created by youth. Other areas of the site support the "My Anti-Drug" section through related content such as celebrity interviews, anti-drug activity suggestions and more.

In addition, the Campaign recently launched a new version of TheAntiDrug.com to reach parents and other adult caregivers. Regularly updated content provides parents with current tips and the resources they need to raise healthy, drug-free kids.

In keeping with the Campaign's parenting themes of truth, honesty, love and communication, TheAntiDrug.com site carries expert-developed, drug-specific information and parenting tips, with an expanded array of hard facts, offering parents greater support in facing this difficult issue. New site features include drug-specific information, scientific studies, "ask the expert" questions and answers and guest and celebrity features. The site also hosts a message board that allows parents and other adult caregivers to share advice and lessons learned.

Because teachers play a major role in children's lives and their decisions about drugs, the Campaign collaborated with the National Education Association to update the content and classroom activities and redesign TeachersGuide.org. The Campaign also incorporated the site into a "Learn" section of TheAntiDrug.com.

Children whose parents use illicit drugs or abuse alcohol are up to four times more likely to develop substance-abuse problems than children whose parents do not, according to the National Association for Children of Alcoholics. In the United States, more than 11 million children are affected by parental addiction.

A new Campaign initiative is designed to reach youth with substance-dependent parents. The program will help these youth realize they can get help and feel better about themselves and their families even if their parents continue using illegal drugs or abusing alcohol.

Through a variety of communication vehicles that include the Internet and posters, the initiative reaches out to middle-school students and their teachers, counselors, school nurses, coaches and other adults who are in daily contact with at-risk tweens and teens.

The initiative encourages adult caregivers to assure youth that they are not at fault for or alone in their family situations. The initiative also speaks to peers of children of substance abusers who may not face the same challenges at home, but who may provide support for their friends and classmates.

Information for children whose parents use drugs is available online at www.freevibe.com. The site features coping skills information and resources for youth. Visitors to www.theantidrug.com can learn about the challenges faced by children of substance abusers through articles written by Campaign partners in a special guest column area.
Brandon appears in the Campaign TV ad "Drawing," airing this spring.

Brandon Kimball of Franklin, Pa., is a typical 15-year-old. He runs cross-country, plays basketball and lifts weights. He attends Franklin Area High School. And architectural drawing is his Anti-Drug.

Brandon talks enthusiastically about architecture: "I started drafting and my grandfather saw talent in my drawings, so I started thinking about it as a career."

Brandon says, "I know friends that do drugs. I don't approve of it. I don't try to control it, but it just never appealed to me. They can do whatever, I'm just not going to do it."

Brandon's drawing was featured in a USA TODAY special "What's Your Anti-Drug?" supplement. To request a free copy of the supplement (while supplies last), call (800) 666-3332.

PRINT ADS AVAILABLE FOR USE BY COMMUNITY GROUPS

Civic, service, fraternal and women's organizations have a new set of tools to get out the message that adults do make a difference in kids' decisions to remain drug free.

A series of four print ads aimed at reaching out to adult influencers are available for use by organizations throughout the country.

The ads feature the theme "Love: The Anti-Drug" and were developed for the Campaign by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America to help galvanize the anti-drug efforts of individuals belonging to groups comprising the Prevention Through Service Alliance (PTSA). Generic versions are also available. Each ad has a section for organizations to insert local contact information. The ads are available electronically or on printed ad slicks.

To receive the ads for your organization, send an e-mail request with contact information indicating PTSA or generic versions to nyac@aed.org, fax to (202) 884-9448 or write to the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, c/o AED, 1825 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Calling All Shoppers!

The Mills Corporation, which owns interests in, develops and manages 12 regional, entertainment-oriented shopping mega-malls, has donated more than $1 million in advertising to the Campaign through its closed-circuit Mills-TV system and other promotional opportunities.

Mills-TV broadcasts a constant stream of music videos, advertising and public service announcements (PSAs) throughout the company's mega-malls. In 2000, Mills featured several of the Campaign's parent/caregiver-oriented PSAs and youth-audience messages starring skateboarder Andy MacDonald, singer Mary J. Blige, musical group Dixie Chicks and tennis star Venus Williams.

The Mills Corporation also provided the Campaign with other opportunities to promote drug-prevention messages. At a Mills/Radio Disney event at suburban Philadelphia's Franklin Mills, the Campaign was invited to set up a kiosk where more than 10,000 kids, parents and other adult caregivers picked up drug-prevention materials.

Mills also promoted the youth-focused "What's Your Anti-Drug?" initiative through some of its retailers.

ONDCP Steps Up Efforts to Reach American Indians and Alaska Natives

American Indian and Alaska Native youth have among the highest drug-use rates in the United States. A new $3 million Campaign initiative makes reducing illicit drug use among these populations a priority.

The 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse shows 46.5 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native youth age 12-17 have used illicit drugs in their lifetimes compared to 27.6 percent of youth overall. Past-month use among all youth is 10.9 percent, while the rate among American Indians and Alaska Natives is 19.6 percent.

The new initiative includes grassroots activities, non-advertising media outreach and new TV, radio and print ads specially crafted for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Additionally, communities working on substance-abuse prevention programs may apply for funding through drug-free community grants available through ONDCP and the U.S. Department of Justice.

To develop the ads, 24 focus groups were conducted. They included 211 Native American and Alaska Native tweens, teens and parents representing 32 tribes.

Heather Mitchell of Pembroke, Mass., is an active 18-year-old with a bright future. And it doesn’t include using drugs.

Among her activities is a senior class project called the “You Lead Program,” in which Heather and other drug-free teens teach middle-school students about the dangers of drug use. “I believe this issue is [the] most pressing with kids and teenagers today. Perhaps being taught at a younger age level would give them insight, and [help] combat the problems which are apparent later on,” she says. “All in all, my ultimate Anti-Drug is the future – the future of not only myself, but of the people around me...Why ruin it?”

The Campaign has an advertising presence in national magazines that target American Indian and Alaska Native audiences and in 79 local tribal newspapers. The Campaign also airs messages on 14 local radio stations with specific reach to American Indian audiences, 29 radio stations that reach Alaska Native communities and on TV throughout Alaska.

Additionally, the Campaign’s drug-prevention messages and parenting tips have reached more than 5 million American Indians and Alaska Natives through articles and stories published or aired by American Indian newspapers and stations.

Ads targeted to American Indians and Alaska Natives can be viewed online in the Ad Gallery section of www.mediacampaign.org. A news release on the Indian Self-Determination Summit on Tribal Strategies to Reduce Alcohol Abuse and Violence, at which the new initiative was announced, is available at www.mediacampaign.org/newsroom/press00/090600.html.

### READ ALL ABOUT IT!

*Media Campaign Flash*, a periodic e-mail messaging service, features the Campaign’s latest initiatives, as well as breaking news, information resources and partnership opportunities.

*Update*, the Campaign’s quarterly newsletter, available through U.S. Mail and on the Web at www.mediacampaign.org, provides Campaign progress reports, highlights national, regional and local success stories; and offers resources, contacts and partnership opportunities to help tie local groups’ prevention efforts and programs to the Campaign.

For free subscriptions to *Media Campaign Flash* and *Update*, please fax your name, title, organizational affiliation, address, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail address to (202) 884-8448, Attn: Partner Database. To subscribe electronically, click on www.mediacampaign.org/getinvolved/flashform.html, or send an e-mail message with the necessary information to nyac@aed.org.
FREE AIRTIME: Media Match Update

Under the Campaign's distinctive pro bono matching strategy mandated by Congress, media outlets must donate time or space equal to the full value of purchased advertising. This enables the Campaign to effectively double its investment and share public service announcement (PSA) opportunities with organizations for their own PSAs that advance Campaign goals.

Ads developed by the organizations listed at the right are categorized by theme. The organizations are but a few of those that have benefited from the more than 400,000 radio and television PSAs run as part of the program.

The Campaign is actively seeking eligible PSAs for national or local media match placements. If you represent a national organization and want to learn more about the match program, contact Jeb Kampil at the Ad Council at (212) 984-1925 or visit www.adcouncil.org/ondcp. Local organizations should contact Jessica Chatham at the American Advertising Federation (AAF) at (202) 371-2335, or at jchatham@aaf.org or visit www.aaf.org/club/public_ondcp.

AAF has produced a brochure to promote the local pro bono media match program to nonprofit organizations, anti-drug coalitions and state and local government agencies. This resource includes the form organizations need to use to submit PSAs to a local review panel.

The brochure is available at www.mediacampaign.org; through AAF at (800) 999-2231, or online at www.aaf.org/club/public_ondcp; and through the National Association of State Alcohol/Drug Abuse Directors at www.nasadd.org.

Theme: Fostering High Expectations/ Self-Esteem for Youth
Educational Excellence Partnership, Kids Peace, U.S. Army/Operation Graduation

Theme: Providing Opportunities for Youth
Big Brothers Big Sisters, Citizenship Through Sports Alliance, C.S. Mott Foundation/Afterschool Alliance, Girls on the Move, Harvard Mentoring Project, National Mental Health Awareness, National Mentoring Partnership

Theme: Fostering High Expectations/ Self Esteem for Youth
Oregon Children's Foundation (Portland, Ore.), Regional Drug Initiative (Portland, Ore.), Lahey Clinic (Boston, Mass.)

Theme: Greater Parental and Caregiver Involvement in a Child's Upbringing and Effective Drug-Prevention Strategies
Oregon Department of Human Services (Portland, Ore.), Regional Drug Initiative (Portland, Ore.), Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (Baltimore, Md. and Washington, D.C.)