

# Parenting for Prevention

Student Assistance Services Corp., 660 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York, 10591, February, 2017

## Good News

Overall, the news from the National Monitoring The Future, 2016 results are encouraging and trending in the right direction. However, there is work to be done as youth substance use is still too high.

The results indicate that the prevention initiatives being done by coalitions, school-based interventions and other community based efforts are having an impact on attitudes and are changing behaviors. The data that has been collected in Westchester is showing, for the most part, the same positive trends although there are concerns about marijuana, prescription drug misuse and heroin among older teens.

What we can say is that prevention works and the accompanying strategies and initiatives are having a positive impact on our students. For those of us in this field, it can be discouraging when we get disturbing news about teenage alcohol and other drug use. However, I suggest that we celebrate surveys' findings and use the results as a catalyst to renew our energy and commitment to prevention efforts.

Patricia M. Warble, MSW, CPP

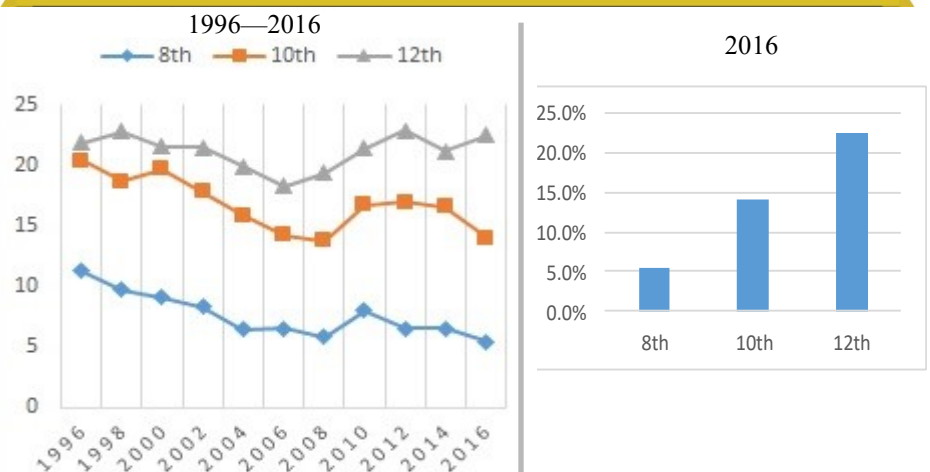
## Trends for Teens, 2017

The data from the latest Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey is encouraging. MTF is a survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students that has been conducted annually since 1975. The 2016 results released in late December 2016 indicated that teenagers use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs declined in 2016 and the rates are at the lowest since the 1990s.

**Marijuana** This is the most widely used illicit drug by teens and its use among eighth graders dropped in 2016 to 9.4%, which means that one in 11 students reported they used marijuana in the past 12 months. Marijuana use also declined among tenth graders, though not by a statistically significant amount, to 24% or about one in every four 10th graders used this drug. Marijuana use has been declining gradually among eighth graders since 2010 and among 10th graders since 2013. However, marijuana use among twelfth graders is higher at 36% and has held steady there since 2011.

Daily or near daily use of marijuana which is defined as use on 20 or more occasions in the previous 30 days also declined this year among the eighth graders to 0.7% and to 2.5% among tenth graders. However, there was no change among twelfth graders in daily use, which remains high at 6% or approximately one in every 17 twelfth grader, which is about where it has been since 2010.

### PAST-MONTH MARIJUANA USE MOSTLY STEADY



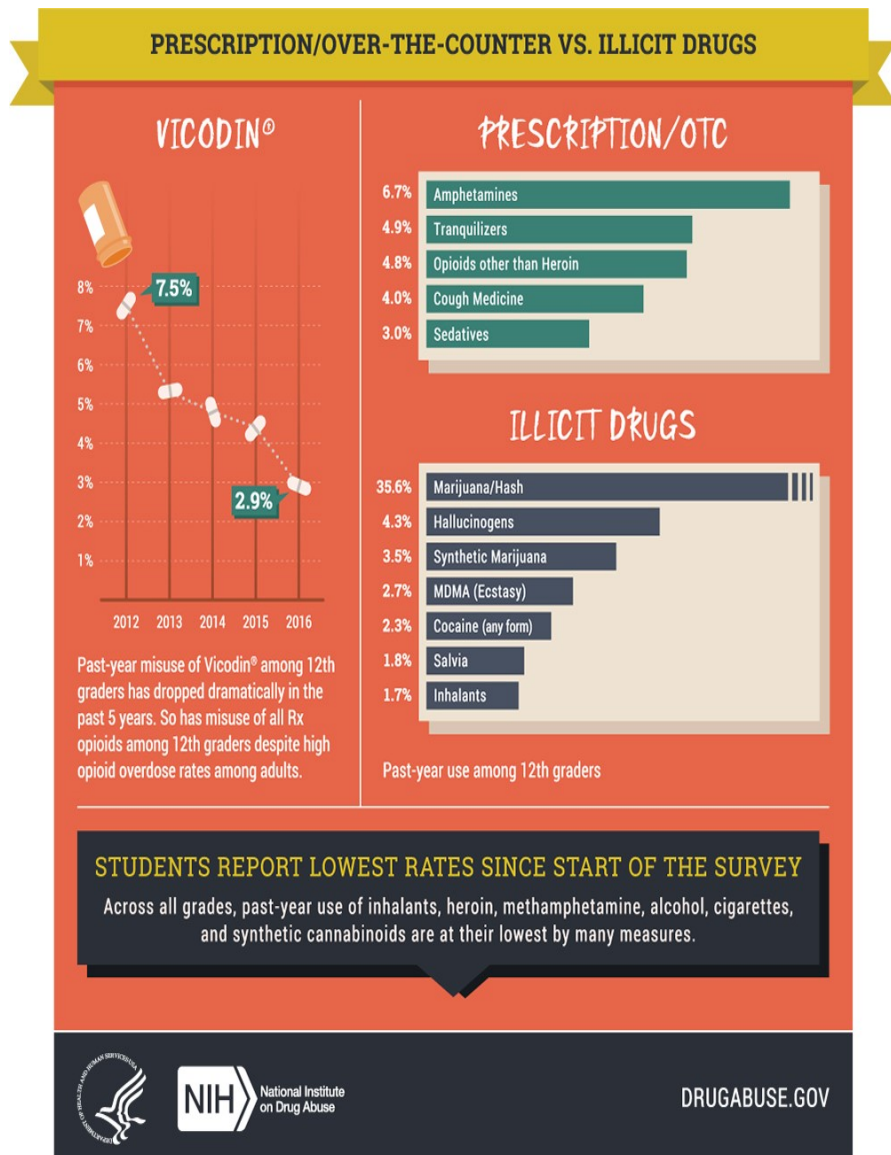
68.9% OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS DO NOT VIEW REGULAR MARIJUANA SMOKING AS HARMFUL, BUT 68.5% SAY THEY DISAPPROVE OF REGULAR MARIJUANA SMOKING



NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse

DRUGABUSE.GOV

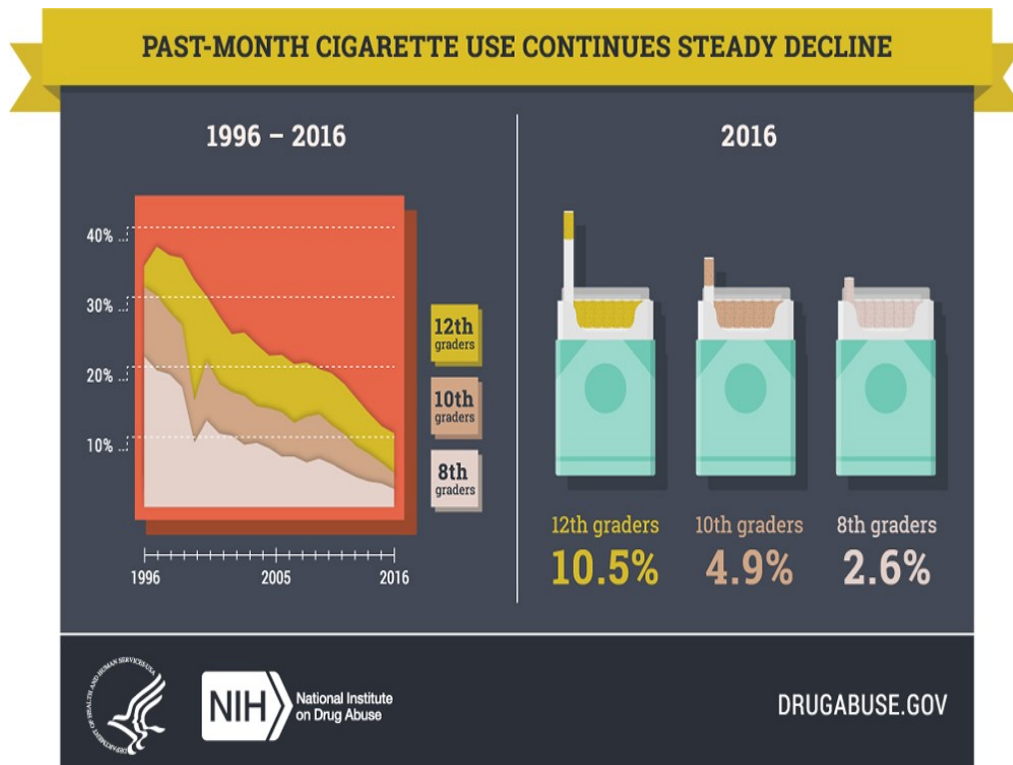
**Prescription narcotic drugs** This classification of drugs has become of great concern in the past few years with a large increase in the number of overdose deaths and emergencies resulting from their use. The use of these drugs when a medical professional has not been involved has declined among high school seniors, the only age group that narcotics use is reported. In, 2004, 9.5% of twelfth graders or nearly 1 in 10 reported misusing a prescription narcotic in the last 12 months. The 2016 results report that the percentage is down to 4.8%. “That’s still a lot of young people using these dangerous drugs without medical supervision but the trending is in the right direction.” said Lloyd H. Johnson, the study’s principal investigator. “Fewer are risking overdosing as teenagers and hopefully more will remain abstainers as they pass into their twenties, thereby reducing the number who become casualties in those high-risk years.” Users of narcotic drugs without medical supervision were asked where they got the drugs they misuse. About 4 in every 10 teens said that they got them from a prescription they had been prescribed by a licensed medical professional be it a dentist or a medical doctor. Dr. Johnston went on to say, “That suggests that physicians and dentists may want to consider reducing the number of doses they routinely prescribe when giving these drugs to their patients, and in particular to teenagers.



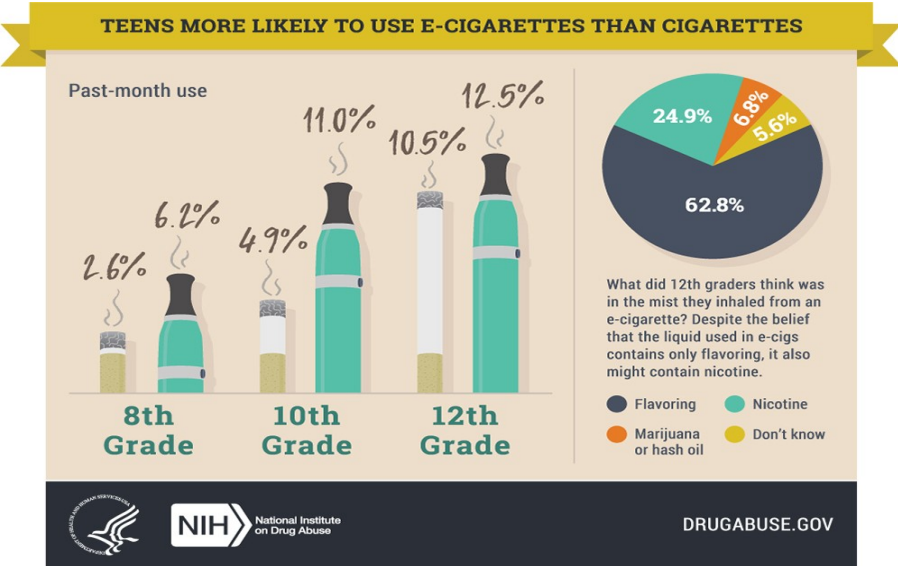
**Alcohol** The use of alcohol by adolescents is more prevalent than the use of marijuana, but it is trending down, continuing a long term decline. The study shows the use of alcohol is at historic lows since the Monitoring the Future data was collected. Heavy alcohol use is also down and binge drinking has fallen by half or more at each grade level since the peak rates were reached in the 1990s. Today, the percentage of students who binge drink are 3%, 10% and 16% in grades 8, 10 and 12, respectfully. Dr. Johnson also reports the prevalence of “extreme binge drinking,” defined as having 10 or more drinks has also declined.

**Heroin** This is another narcotic drug and the study indicates that there is no evidence that the use of heroin has risen as the use a prescription narcotics has fallen, at least not in the population of adolescents still in school. Heroin use among high school students has declined since recent peak levels reached in the late 90s. Johnston, says “So among secondary school students, at least, there is no evidence of heroin coming to substitute for prescription narcotic drugs, a dynamic that has occurred in other populations. Certainly there will be individual cases where that happens, but overall the us of herion and prescription narcotics both have declined appreciably and largely in parallel among secondary school students.”

**Tobacco** Cigarette smoking among teens in grades 8, 10 and 12 continued to decline in 2016 and reached the lowest level since the tracking began 42 years ago. “Since the peak in 1997, the number of students currently smoking has dropped by more than three-quarters, an extremely important development for the health and longevity of this generation of Americans,” said Dr Johnston. Such a decline will positively impact the hundreds of thousands of people who will not develop serious diseases that result in a diminished quality of life and premature deaths because they smoked. An important cause of these declines in current smoking is the fact that many fewer teens have ever started to smoke. In 1996, 49% of 8th graders said they had tried cigarettes, but by 2016, only 10% had tried cigarettes. Overall there has been an 80% decline in smoking initiation over the past twenty years.



**E-Cigarettes** These are the most common vaping device and in the past two years the percentage of students who believe that using e-cigarettes is harmful increased in all three grades. A concern of health professionals is that using e-cigarettes may lead to use of regular cigarettes. According to the Monitoring The Future Study, an increasing number of studies are showing that vaping predicts future cigarette smoking. The studies also show that students who had little predisposition to smoking cigarettes, do so after vaping. In addition, there is increased use of using vaping devices for marijuana and other drugs.



**Hookah use** A hookah is a device for smoking. The user breathes through a mouth piece attached to a rubber hose to inhale smoke that passes through water. Hookah use declined among 12th graders in 2016, the first significant drop since the survey began tracking hookah use in 2010. This decline is significant since the decline in e-cigarettes and hookah use, portends a reduction in nicotine use among teenagers.

**Academy Award Nominations Raise Awareness**

The week of February 13<sup>th</sup> was National Children of Addicted Parents week. The purpose of the week is to raise awareness about the impact of parent substance abuse on children and to help the children realize they

are not alone, help is available, and that despite challenges they can be successful. Two of the 2017 Academy Awards’ best picture nominations depict the negative impact of parental alcohol and drug abuse on children. “By the Sea in Manchester” shows how even just one night of a parent getting drunk can have tragic results for children. “Moonlight” shows how chronic drug use can also take a serious toll.

**Upcoming Events**

**March 15 7 to 8:30pm**  
 Hendrick Hudson School Library  
*The Teen Brain: Parenting for Academic Success*  
 Michael Nerney  
 Contact:: 914-734-1052

**March 21 2:45-4:45pm or 7-8:30pm**  
 Hendrick Hudson School Library  
*In Plain Sight*  
 Jermaine Galloway  
 Contact:: 914-734-1052

**March 21 7:30-8:30pm**  
 Fox Lane Middle School  
*Creating Connections That Count*  
 Ty Sells, Contact:234-3227