

1996 Hawaii Student Alcohol and Other Drug Use Survey

In the spring of 1996, the State of Hawaii Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, and the University of Hawaii Speech Department collaborated in a study designed to determine prevalence and trends in drug use, treatment needs, and related factors for public and participating private school students statewide. The survey was conducted among sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders in all the public schools and a quarter of the private schools in Hawaii. The sample included all students in these grades who received parental consent. Student participation was limited to students with parental consent, those who wanted to participate, and who attended school on the day of survey administration (N = 15,533). Surveys were administered to students by teachers using written administration and proctoring procedures during a regularly scheduled classroom meeting time. The 1996 Student Alcohol and Drug Use Survey assessed use through scales which utilized quantity-frequency measures for both alcohol and tobacco use. The scales included a six level scale for tobacco use and an alcohol use scale. In addition, DSM-III-R criteria focussing on problem behaviors associated with alcohol and drug use were incorporated into the instrument.

The key objectives pursued in this study were: 1) assessment of the need for substance abuse and dependence treatment; 2) development of an accurate picture of the current drug use situation among Hawaii adolescents in schools; 3) providing comparable data to that in previous Hawaii adolescent substance use surveys; and 4) development of data which facilitate prevention and intervention efforts, specifically the need for substance abuse treatment. This study represents a continued effort by the State of Hawaii to track trends in substance use by adolescents. It builds on studies conducted by the Hawaii Department of Education dating back to 1987, and will permit the development of comparable data for tracking trends in alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco use.

Findings:

Lifetime prevalence (which refers to any previous use) of illicit drug use and tobacco use have gradually increased since 1987, whereas any alcohol use has stabilized or decreased. Marijuana use is responsible for most of the increase in illicit drug use. All other illicit drug use has generally declined or increased very little since 1993. Since 1993, cigarette use has increased by approximately ten percentage points at each grade level with nearly twice as many sixth graders reporting lifetime use of cigarettes in 1996 as compared to 1993. Hawaii lifetime prevalence reports for tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs are generally similar to or slightly lower than nationwide reports. Lifetime prevalence reports of inhalant and smokeless tobacco use are lower in Hawaii compared to the nation.

Illicit drug use in the past 30 days increased for all grade levels, with 26.3% of twelfth graders reporting the use of an illicit drug during the previous 30 days in 1996 compared to 19.7% in 1993. Nearly four times as many sixth graders and nearly twice as many eighth graders in 1996, compared to 1993, reported monthly use of at least one illicit drug. Thirty day prevalence rates for marijuana use show the greatest increase since

Honolulu	N=57,045	1,681	2.9%	1,269	2.2%	1,678	2.9%	4,628	8.1%
Hawaii	N=13,753	691	5.0%	457	3.3%	765	5.6%	1,913	13.9%
Maui	N=10,086	475	4.7%	338	3.4%	480	4.8%	1,293	12.8%
Kauai	N= 5,210	192	3.7%	163	3.1%	237	4.5%	592	11.4%
All Public Schools	N=86,094	3,039	3.5%	2,227	2.6%	3,160	3.7%	8,426	<9.8%

* Based on Department of Education Enrollment Data

Source: *1996 Hawaii Student Alcohol and Drug Use Survey, Department of Health Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division through the University of Hawaii.*

Less than one-third of the students with treatment needs have utilized treatment facilities. The majority of the students who reported they needed help for an alcohol, tobacco, or other drug-use problem also reported that they had difficulty seeking help. For all grades, the four most common reasons reported for not seeking help were having no idea where to go for help, students thinking they could solve the problem themselves, students fearing that teachers or parents would find out, and being afraid that they would get in trouble with the law, or both.