

“Club Drugs” – Ecstasy, GHB, Ketamine, and Rohypnol

“Club drugs” refer to a wide variety of drugs that are being used by young adults at all-night dance parties such as “raves”, bars, and dance clubs. Some of the party drugs gaining popularity over the years include MDMA (ecstasy), GHB (liquid ecstasy), ketamine (special K), and Rohypnol. Club drugs are associated with a number of serious health consequences, including death. Emergency room visits related to club drug use more than doubled from 1994 to 1999 but began to decline in 2000 (<http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/>).

Ecstasy is a synthetic, psychoactive drug with both stimulant and hallucinogenic properties. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the chemical structure of ecstasy is similar to other synthetic drugs known to cause brain damage, such as methamphetamine. Although ecstasy is usually taken in pill form, some users snort it, inject it, or use it in a suppository form.

GHB, Rohypnol, and ketamine were first introduced to the survey in 2002. These illicit drugs are predominantly central nervous system depressants, which emerged a few years ago as “date rape” drugs. **GHB**, often known as “Liquid Ecstasy” on the street, has euphoric, sedative, and anabolic (body building) effects. In 2002, GHB was the second most prevalent of the club drugs used in Hawaii. GHB is currently no more prevalent than Rohypnol or ketamine, which have been tried by 1% or fewer of Hawaii students.

Ketamine is an anesthetic that is legally sold for veterinary uses. Ketamine can cause dream-like states and hallucinations, and at high doses can cause “delirium, amnesia, impaired motor function, high blood pressure, depression, and potentially fatal respiratory problems” (NIDA, 2003).

Rohypnol is the club drug most commonly associated with date rape, and when used can cause individuals to forget events they experience while under the drug’s effects.

For additional information on the effects of various club drugs go to:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/ClubAlert/Clubdrugalert.html>

Hawaii Prevalence Rates of Ecstasy

In recent years, ecstasy has become one of the most prevalent illicit drugs among 10th and 12th graders in Hawaii. Lifetime prevalence rates for ecstasy are currently 1% in grade 8, 4% in grade 10, and 6% in grade 12. In 2002, ecstasy was the second most prevalent illicit drug in Hawaii, preceded only by marijuana. Years previous, hallucinogens were much more prevalent than ecstasy. In 2003, reports of ecstasy and hallucinogen use among Hawaii students are similar to one another.

In 2003, fewer Hawaii students in grades 8, 10, and 12 reported having tried ecstasy (1%, 4%, and 6%) than students in the same grades nationwide (3%, 5%, and 8%). Monthly prevalence reports for ecstasy use in Hawaii are equivalent to nationwide reports where 1% of the students in grades 8, 10, and 12 reported that they had used ecstasy in the past 30 days.

Trends in Ecstasy Use

Nationwide, lifetime prevalence reports of ecstasy use had been rising each year, but started on a downward trajectory in 2002 and continued on that course in 2003. In Hawaii, ecstasy use continued to rise in 2002, but finally dropped in 2003. Among Hawaii 10th and 12th graders, 2003 ecstasy prevalence rates are 4 percentage points lower than 2002 prevalence rates.

Hawaii students' reports for having ever tried ecstasy have been approximately 1 to 2 years behind nationwide reports. For instance, in 1999, nationwide lifetime prevalence rates of ecstasy use in grades 8, 10, and 12 were 3%, 6%, and 8%; in 2000, Hawaii lifetime prevalence rates of ecstasy use in the same grades were 2%, 5%, and 8%. In 2000, nationwide lifetime prevalence reports for ecstasy use in grades 8, 10, and 12 rose to 4%, 7%, and 11%, which were similar to the 2002 Hawaii ecstasy reports in the same grades (3%, 7%, and 11%, respectively). In 2001, nationwide lifetime prevalence reports for ecstasy in grades 8, 10, and 12 continued to rise to 5%, 8%, and 12%, and then dropped to 4%, 7%, and 11% in 2002 and dropped down again in 2003 to 3%, 5%, and 8%. Hawaii's 2003 ecstasy prevalence reports decreased so dramatically in 2003 that Hawaii reports in grades 8, 10, and 12 (1%, 4%, and 6%) are currently much lower than nationwide rates.

Hawaii's monthly ecstasy prevalence rates nearly doubled in grades 10 and 12 from 1998 to 2000, but started on a downward trajectory in 2002 and dropped substantially in 2003. In 2002, 2% of 8th and 10th graders and 3% of 12th graders reported they had used ecstasy in the past 30 days; in 2003, only 1% of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders reported monthly ecstasy use.

Hawaii Subgroup Differences

In 2000 and 2002, Hawaii females in grades 10 and 12 had higher ecstasy prevalence rates than males in the same grades. In 2003, females in grades 8, 10, and 12 are quite similar to males, with differences less than 1 percentage point.

Over the years, White students have had among the highest ecstasy prevalence reports – particularly in grade 12. In 2003, White students continue to have the highest lifetime prevalence rates for ecstasy use in grade 12, but have some of the lowest

ecstasy prevalence rates in all other grades. In grade 12, 9% of Whites students, 8% of Native Hawaiian students, 5% of Japanese students, 4% of Chinese students, and 3% of Filipino students reported they had tried ecstasy. Native Hawaiian students have the highest ecstasy prevalence rates in grades 8 and 10.

Unlike other illicit drugs where prevalence rates are typically much lower in the City and County of Honolulu than other counties, ecstasy prevalence rates have been among the highest in the City & County of Honolulu over the years. In 2003, Hawaii County exceeded or equaled other counties in the percentages of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students reporting they had tried ecstasy. County differences are most extreme in grade 12 where 9% of the students in Hawaii County reported trying ecstasy, compared to 7% in the City & County of Honolulu, 4% in Maui County, and 1% in Kauai County.

Harmfulness

On the Hawaii survey, students were asked to indicate how much they think people harm or hurt themselves if they use ecstasy or other club drugs occasionally. Ecstasy and other club drugs are viewed by the majority of Hawaii students as entailing a lot of harm for the occasional user and the percentages associating harm with these drugs are on the rise in Hawaii. However, fewer Hawaii students associate a lot of harm with using ecstasy or other club drugs than with using other stimulants such as cocaine or methamphetamine. The occasional use of ecstasy or club drugs is viewed as entailing a lot of harm for the user by 64% of 6th graders, 72% of 8th graders, 76% of 10th graders, and 79% of 12th graders in Hawaii.

Availability

Nationwide reports of perceived availability of ecstasy started to decline the last few years, but the percentages reporting easy access to

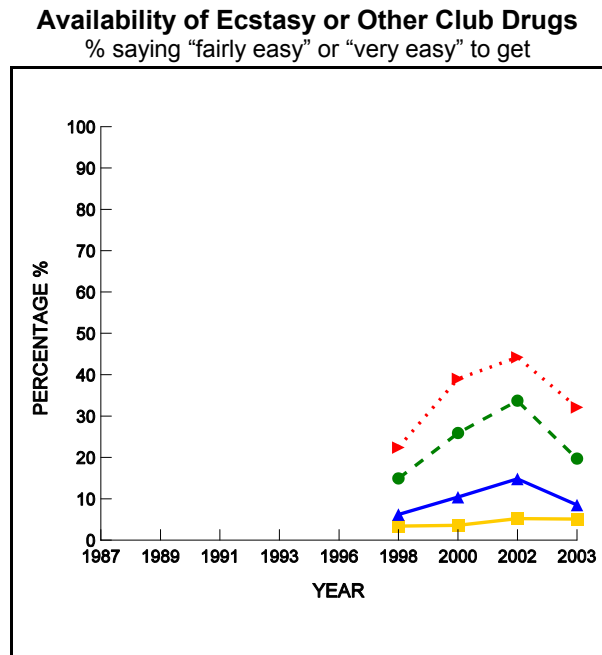
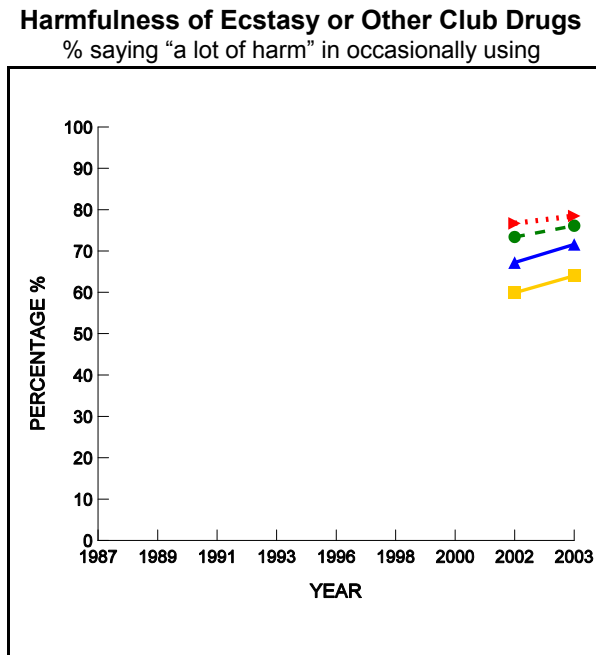
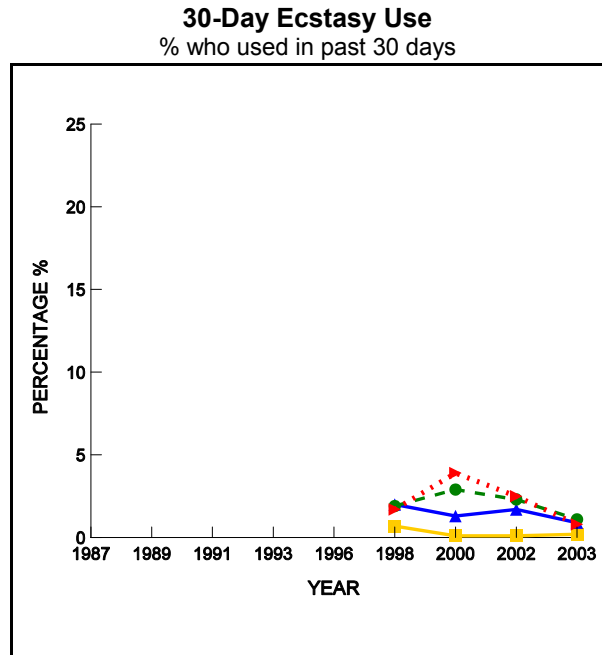
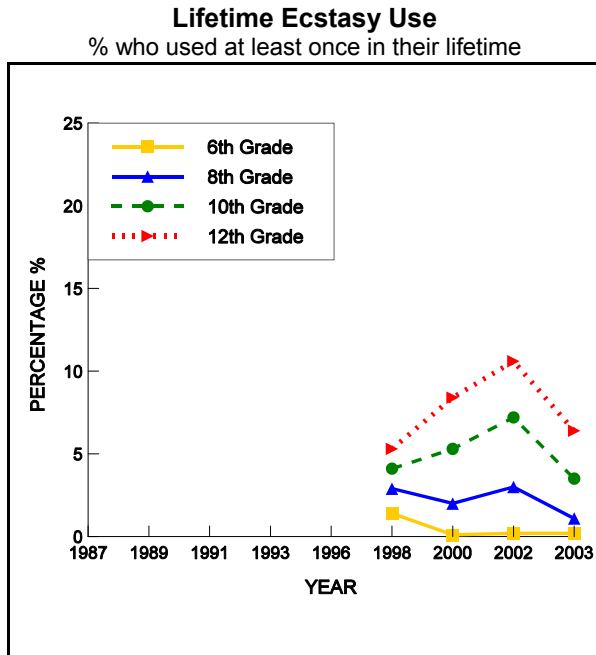
ecstasy nationwide remain higher than Hawaii reports. In 2003, 5% of 6th graders 9% of 8th graders, 20% of 10th graders, and 32% of 12th graders in Hawaii indicated that ecstasy or other club drugs would be “very easy” or “fairly easy” to get. Nationwide reports are substantially higher, with 22% of 8th graders, 36% of 10th graders, and 58% of 12th graders reporting easy access to ecstasy.

The percentages of Hawaii students indicating easy access had been on the rise over the last few years. In 1998, 3% of 6th graders, 6% of 8th graders, 15% of 10th graders, and 22% of 12th graders in Hawaii reported that ecstasy was easy to obtain. The percentages rose to 5%, 15%, 34%, and 44% in the same grades in 2002. In 2003, availability perceptions finally declined in grades 8, 10, and 12 to 9%, 20%, and 32%; grade 6 availability perceptions remain at 5%.

Disapproval

In years past, peer disapproval ratings among Hawaii students for occasional ecstasy use in grades 10 and 12 were less than those related to the occasional use of many other illicit drugs. In 2003, Hawaii peer disapproval ratings for ecstasy use climbed dramatically, making use of ecstasy just as frowned upon as use of most other illicit drugs. In 2003, nearly 90% of the students in all grades indicated their friends would disapprove of them using ecstasy.

Ecstasy and Other "Club Drugs"
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Harmfulness, and Availability
Sixth, Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth Graders, 1987-2003

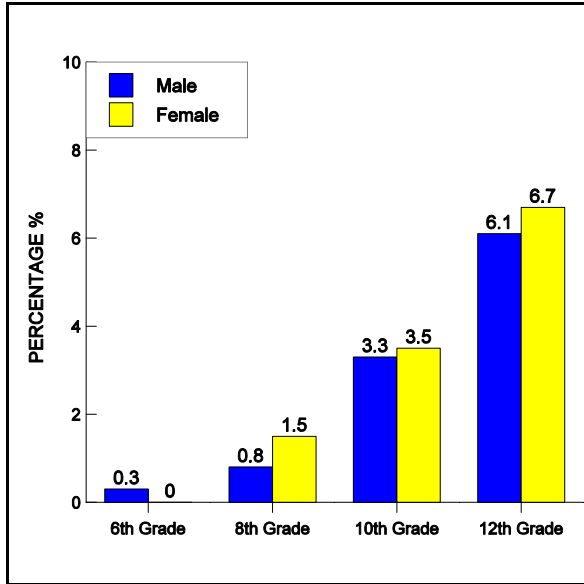


Notes: Other club drugs include GHB, Rohypnol, and ketamine.

Ecstasy
Hawaii Subgroup Differences in Lifetime Prevalence Reports, by Grade, 2003
 (Entries are percentages %)

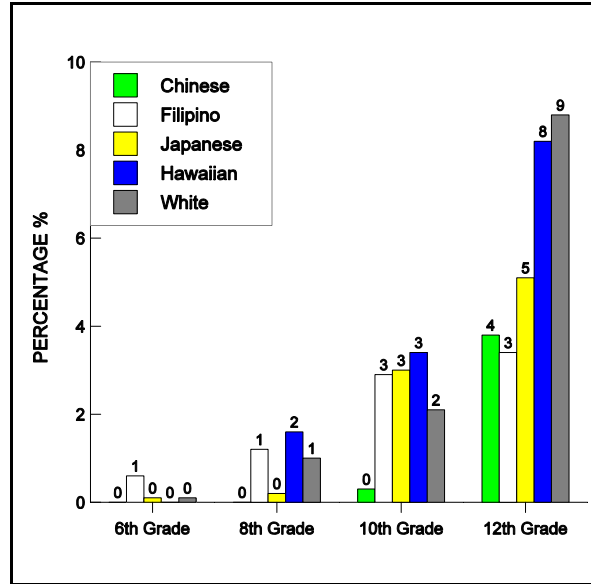
Sex Differences

% who used Ecstasy at least once in their lifetime



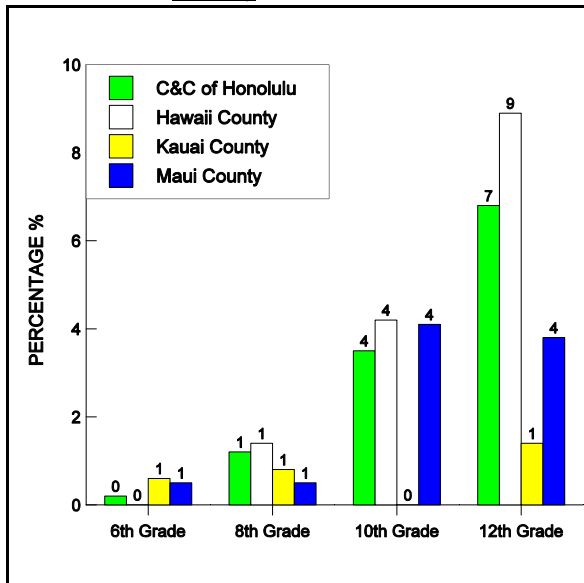
Ethnic Differences

% who used Ecstasy at least once in their lifetime



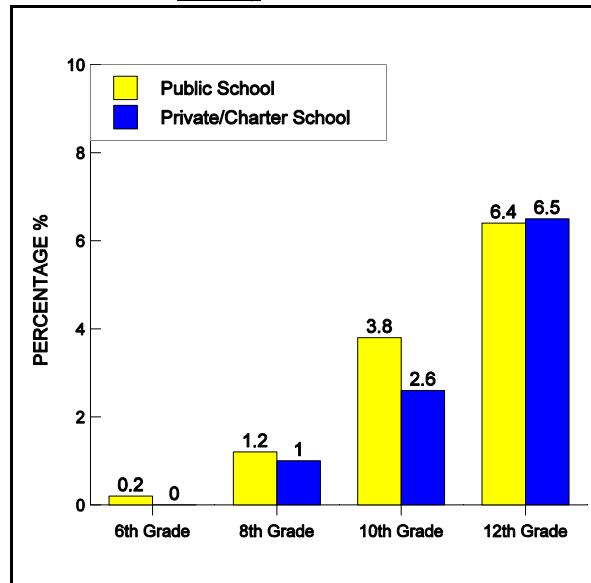
County Differences (Place of Residence)

% who used Ecstasy at least once in their lifetime



School Type Differences

% who used Ecstasy at least once in their lifetime



Notes: County includes public, private, and charter school students who reside in that particular county.

Ecstasy and Other “Club Drugs” Table
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Harmfulness, Availability, and Disapproval
Grades 6 through 12, 1987-2003

(Entries are percentages %)

	Hawaii Results									Nationwide Results
	1987	1989	1991	1993	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2003
Ecstasy Lifetime Prevalence ^a										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	1.4	0.1	0.2	0.2	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.5	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	2.9	2.0	3.0	1.1	3.2
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2.0	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	4.1	5.3	7.2	3.5	5.4
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4.3	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	5.3	8.4	10.6	6.4	8.3
Ecstasy 30-Day Prevalence ^b										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.2	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.4	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	2.0	1.3	1.7	0.9	0.7
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.1	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	1.9	2.9	2.3	1.1	1.1
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.8	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	1.7	3.9	2.5	0.8	1.3
GHB Lifetime Prev. ^a										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.1	0.2	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.3	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.4	0.6	–
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2.0	1.1	–
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2.6	1.2	–
Rohypnol Lifetime Prev. ^a										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.2	0.1	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.4	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	0.5	1.0
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.0	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.3	0.8	1.0
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.7	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	0.8	–

(Table continued on next page)

Ecstasy and Other “Club Drugs” Table (continued)
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Harmfulness, Availability, and Disapproval
Grades 6 through 12, 1987-2003

(Entries are percentages %)

	Hawaii Results									Nationwide Results
	1987	1989	1991	1993	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2003
Ketamine Lifetime Prev. ^a										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.2	0.4	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.6	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.8	0.8	–
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.0	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.4	0.6	–
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.7	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.7	1.3	–
Perceived Harmfulness ^c										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	59.9	64.0	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	66.5	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	67.2	71.6	65.8
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	73.3	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	73.4	76.1	71.7
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	79.6	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	76.7	78.5	56.3
Perceived Availability ^d										
6 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	3.4	3.6	5.2	5.1	–
7 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	6.5	–
8 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	6.2	10.4	14.8	8.5	21.6
9 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	14.3	–
10 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	14.9	25.9	33.7	19.7	36.3
11 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	23.3	–
12 th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	22.4	39.0	44.2	32.1	57.5
Peer Disapproval ^e										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	90.1	90.4	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	89.6	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	85.4	89.8	–
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	89.0	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	83.3	89.4	–
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	89.8	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	84.4	88.7	–

- (a) Lifetime Prevalence is the % using ecstasy/GHB/Rohypnol/ketamine at least once in their lifetime.
(b) 30-Day Prevalence is the % using ecstasy at least once in the past 30 days.
(c) Perceived Harmfulness is the % reporting a “lot of harm” associated with using ecstasy or other “club drugs”.
(d) Perceived Availability is the % reporting “fairly easy” or “very easy” to get ecstasy or other “club drugs”.
(e) Peer Disapproval is the % reporting friends would “disapprove” or “strongly disapprove” of them using ecstasy.