

Heroin

Heroin, the most abused opiate, is processed from morphine. The drug is highly addictive and is often “cut” with other substances ranging from sugar, starch, and powdered milk to strychnine or other poisons. Because the user is often unaware of the actual strength of the drug, risk of overdose is quite high.

Heroin can be injected, sniffed, or smoked. The immediate effects of heroin use include a pleasurable sensation or “rush” feeling that is often accompanied by dry mouth, heavy feeling of extremities, and warm flushing of the skin. Heroin clouds the users mental function, and slows cardiac and breathing function, sometimes to the point of death. The substance is extremely addictive because of how rapidly it crosses the blood-brain barrier. Long-term effects include addiction, collapsed veins, abscesses, infection of heart lining and valves, liver and kidney disease, arthritis, and contraction of infectious diseases. For more information on the effects of heroin, go to:

www.nida.nih.gov/ResearchReports/heroin/heroin.html.

Hawaii Prevalence and Trends in Use

Lifetime prevalence reports of heroin use were at their highest point in Hawaii in 1987 with 1% of 6th graders, 3% of 8th graders, 4% of 10th graders, and 6% of 12th graders reporting they had tried heroin at least once. Since that time, reports of having ever tried heroin have decreased among Hawaii students, with a substantial decrease occurring in 1996 among 10th- and 12th-grade students. Current reports of heroin use by Hawaii students are currently 1% in grades 8 and 10, and 2% in grade 12. Lifetime prevalence reports for heroin use nationwide are just under 2% in grades 8, 10, and 12.

Hawaii Subgroup Differences

In the upper grades, lifetime prevalence reports of heroin use are higher among males than females; among White students, compared to Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Native Hawaiian students; and among students from Hawaii County, compared to other counties. In the lower grades, heroin is reportedly used by 1% or less of students in all groups.

Harmfulness

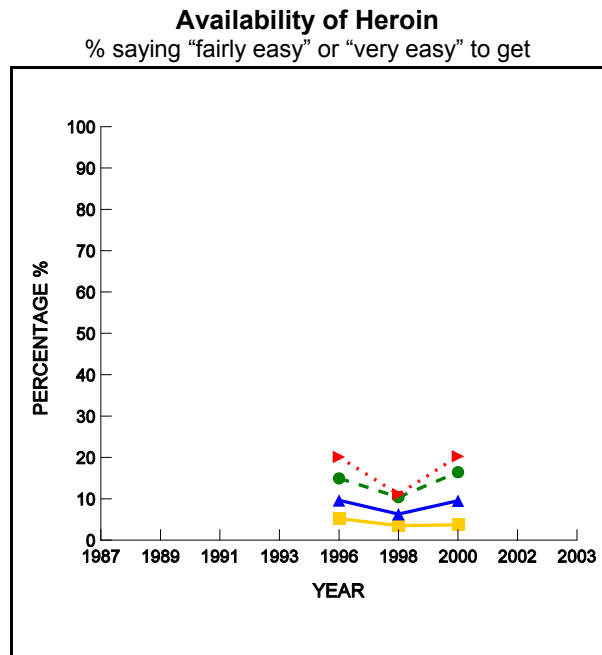
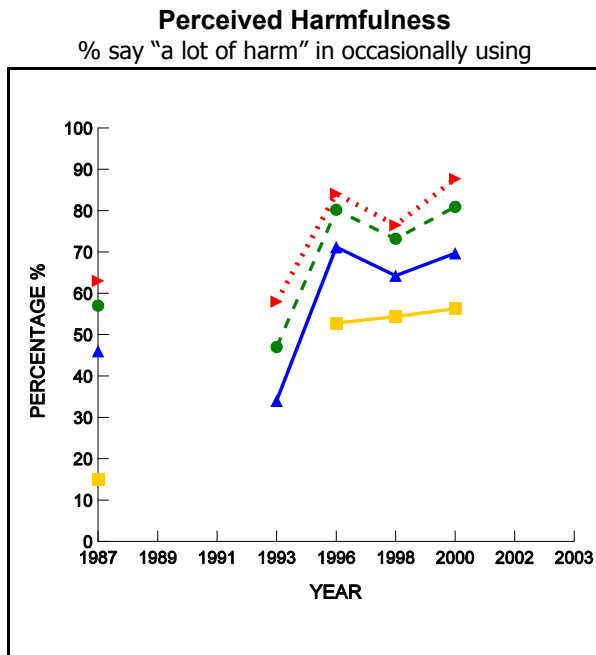
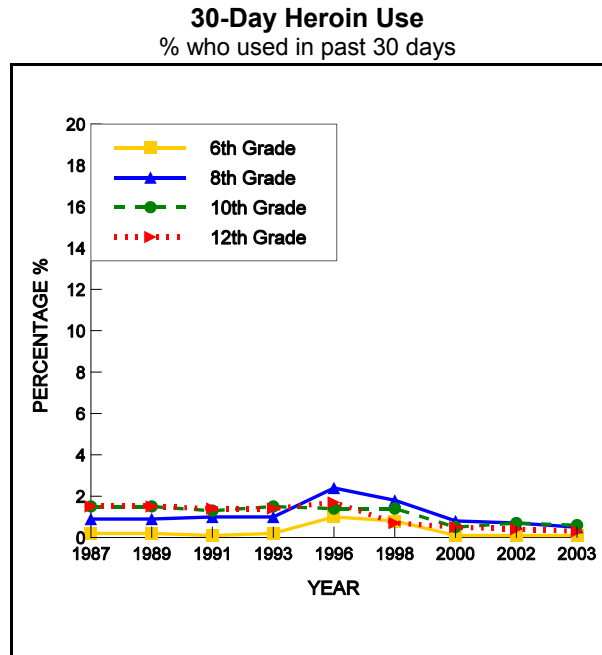
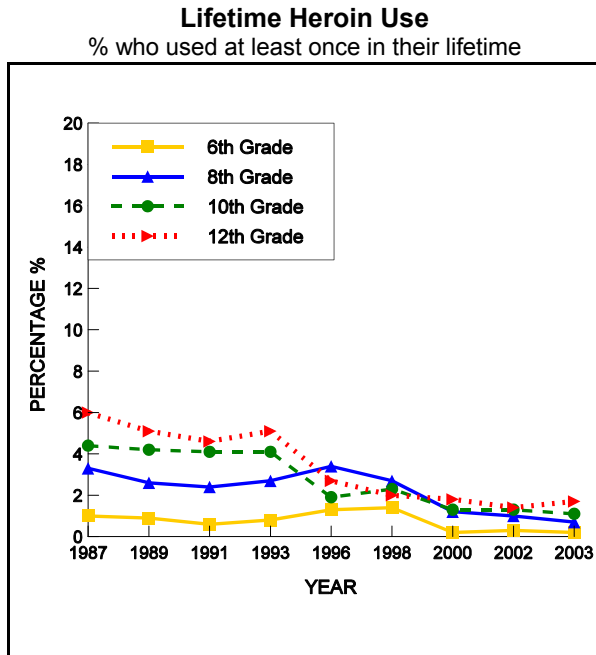
Over the years, a large percentage of Hawaii students have viewed the occasional use of heroin as entailing a lot of risk for the user. Risk perceptions among Hawaii students drastically increased from 1993 to 1996. In 1993, 34% of 8th graders, 47% of 10th graders, and 58% of 12th graders in Hawaii viewed the use of heroin as entailing a lot of risk for the user, compared to 64%, 73%, and 77% in the same grades in 1998. Heroin risk perceptions were last assessed in Hawaii in 2000, with 56% of 6th graders, 70% of 8th graders, 81% of 10th graders, and 88% of 12th graders reporting a lot of risk associated with heroin use.

Availability

Perceived availability of heroin was assessed in Hawaii during 1996, 1998, and 2000. Compared to other illicit drugs, heroin has been viewed by the smallest proportions of Hawaii students as easily obtainable. In 2000, 4% of 6th graders, 10% of 8th graders, 16% of 10th graders, and 20% of 12th graders reported that they thought heroin would be “fairly easy” or “very easy” to get if they wanted some. The percentages of students in Hawaii viewing heroin as easily obtainable have been considerably less than nationwide percentages in the same grades.

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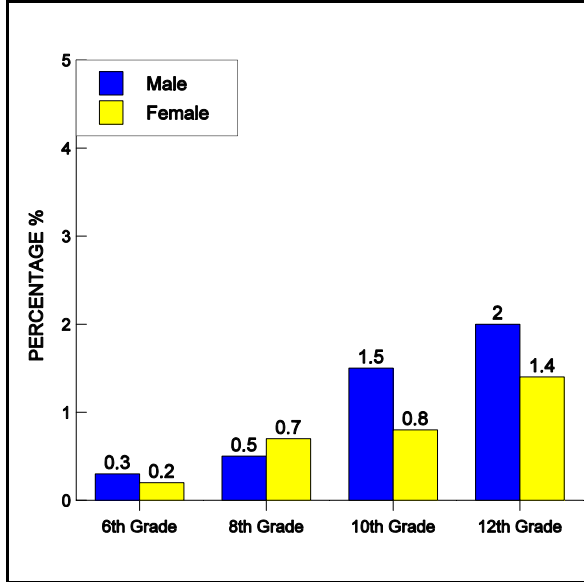
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Harmfulness, and Availability Sixth, Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth Graders, 1987-2003



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

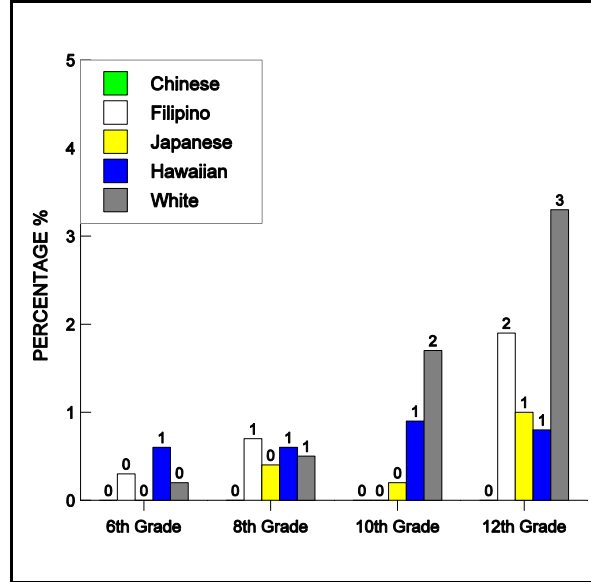
Sex Differences

% who used Heroin at least once in their lifetime



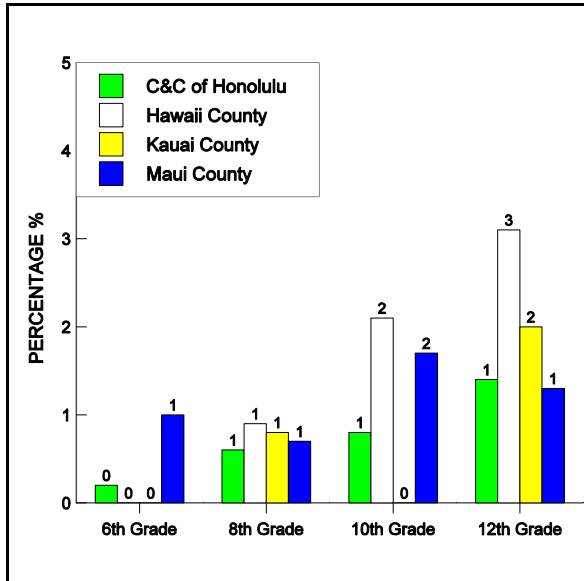
Ethnic Differences

% who used Heroin at least once in their lifetime



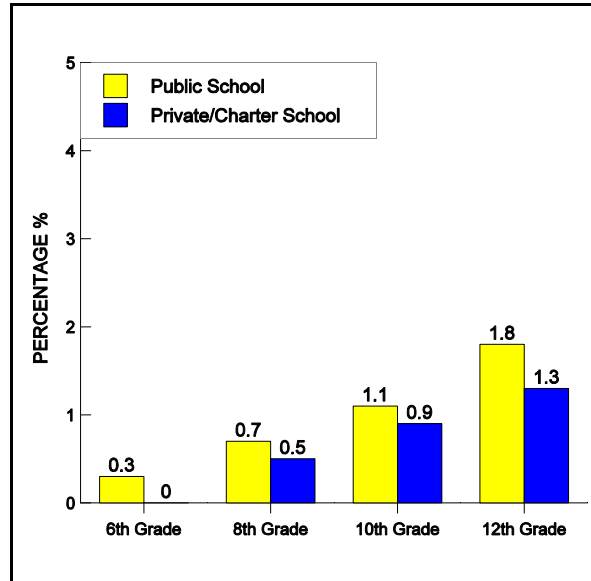
County Differences (Place of Residence)

% who used Heroin at least once in their lifetime



School Type Differences

% who used Heroin at least once in their lifetime



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

Heroin Table
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Harmfulness, and Availability
Grades 6 through 12, 1987-2003

(Entries are percentages %)

	Hawaii Results									Nationwide Results
	1987	1989	1991	1993	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	2003
Lifetime Prevalence ^a										
6th Grade	1.0	0.9	0.6	0.8	1.3	1.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.4	–
8th Grade	3.3	2.6	2.4	2.7	3.4	2.7	1.2	1.0	0.7	1.6
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	–
10th Grade	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1	1.9	2.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.5
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	–
12th Grade	6.0	5.1	4.6	5.1	2.7	2.0	1.8	1.4	1.7	1.5
30-Day Prevalence ^b										
6th Grade	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.0	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.3	–
8th Grade	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	2.4	1.8	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.4
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.5	–
10th Grade	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.3
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.3	–
12th Grade	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.7	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4
Perceived Harmfulness ^c										
6th Grade	15.0	–	–	–	52.8	54.4	56.3	–	–	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
8th Grade	46.0	–	–	34.0	71.2	64.3	69.7	–	–	77.8
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
10th Grade	57.0	–	–	47.0	80.2	73.2	80.9	–	–	83.5
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
12th Grade	63.0	–	–	58.0	84.1	76.5	87.7	–	–	75.5
Perceived Availability ^d										
6th Grade	–	–	–	–	5.2	3.5	3.7	–	–	–
7th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
8th Grade	–	–	–	–	9.6	6.3	9.5	–	–	15.6
9th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
10th Grade	–	–	–	–	14.9	10.4	16.4	–	–	18.8
11th Grade	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
12th Grade	–	–	–	–	20.1	11.1	20.3	–	–	27.9

- (a) Lifetime Prevalence is the % using heroin at least once in their lifetime.
(b) 30-Day Prevalence is the % using heroin at least once in the past 30 days.
(c) Perceived Harmfulness is the % reporting a “lot of harm” associated with occasional heroin use.
(d) Perceived Availability is the % reporting “fairly easy” or “very easy” to get heroin.