

Marijuana

Over the years, marijuana has been the most prevalent illicit drug in Hawaii and nationwide. The substance can be taken orally, smoked, or mixed with food.

Marijuana causes an individual's heart to beat more rapidly, the bronchial passages to relax and become enlarged, and the blood vessels in the eyes to expand. The user feels euphoric, and then may feel sleepy or depressed. Marijuana impairs memory, coordination, and reaction time, and can result in feelings of anxiety, fear, or panic. The effects of marijuana begin immediately after the drug enters the brain and last as long as 4 hours.

Persistent and long-term health consequences associated with marijuana use include impaired memory and learning skills; addiction; increased risk of chronic cough, bronchitis, and emphysema; and increased risk of head, neck, and lung cancer. Studies have also shown that marijuana use increases users' difficulty in trying to quit smoking tobacco. For additional information on the effects of marijuana go to:

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/ResearchReports/Marijuana>

Hawaii Prevalence Rates

Marijuana ranks as the most prevalent illicit drug for Hawaii students in grades 8, 10, and 12. In grade 6, marijuana prevalence is second only to inhalants. In 2003, 2% of 6th graders, 12% of 8th graders, 31% of 10th graders, and 44% of 12th graders indicated that had used marijuana at least once in their lifetimes.

Hawaii lifetime prevalence reports for marijuana use are lower than nationwide reports for students in grades 8 (12% versus 18%), 10 (31% versus 36%) and 12 (44% versus 46%). Hawaii monthly marijuana

prevalence reports by students in grades 8, 10, and 12 (7%, 15%, and 18%, respectively) are also lower than nationwide monthly marijuana prevalence reports by students in the same grades (8%, 17%, and 21%, respectively).

Trends in Use

In Hawaii, lifetime prevalence reports for marijuana use peaked in 1996 for 6th (5%) and 8th graders (22%) and peaked in 1998 for 10th (39%) and 12th graders (48%). Use declined among all grades in 2000. In 2002, Hawaii's lifetime marijuana prevalence reports held fairly steady for all grades, except grade 10 where marijuana use went from 33% to 36%. The downward trajectory picked up again in 2003 across all grades, with some decreases as much as 5 percentage points. Nationwide, lifetime marijuana prevalence reports are also down in 2003, but the decreases were less dramatic than those noted in Hawaii.

Hawaii monthly marijuana prevalence reports peaked in 1996 in grades 6 (3%), 8 (15%), and 12 (25%); and in 1998 in grade 10 (22%). Monthly marijuana prevalence reports then started on a downward trajectory. In 2002, monthly prevalence reports stabilized in grades 6 and 8, rose slightly in grade 10, and continued to decline in grade 12. In 2003, monthly prevalence reports remained stable in grade 6, but declined in all other grades.

Hawaii Subgroup Differences

In the lower grades, marijuana prevalence reports are equivalent between males and females in Hawaii. In the upper grades, more males than females report having tried marijuana. Sex differences are most pronounced in grade 12, with 46% of the males and 43% of the females reporting they have tried marijuana.

Native Hawaiian and White students have consistently had higher marijuana prevalence rates over the years than Japanese, Filipino, and Chinese students, and the trend continues in 2003. In grade 8, 20% of Native Hawaiian students and 15% of White students reported trying marijuana, compared to 10% of Filipino students, 3% of Japanese students, and 2% of Chinese students. In grade 10, Native Hawaiians again have the highest prevalence rates (43%), followed by White students (33%), Filipino students (27%), Japanese students (18%), and Chinese students (12%). A similar pattern is noted in grade 12, with 58% of Native Hawaiian students, 56% of White students, 36% of Filipino students, 31% of Japanese students, and 20% of Chinese students reporting they have tried marijuana.

Marijuana prevalence rates are lower in the City & County of Honolulu than in other counties and typically highest in Hawaii and Maui Counties. For instance, over half of the 12th graders in Hawaii (62%) and Maui Counties (54%) reported having tried marijuana, compared to 45% of the seniors in Kauai County and 39% of the seniors in the City & County of Honolulu.

Marijuana lifetime prevalence rates are higher among public school students in grades 8, 10, and 12 than among private/charter school students in the same grades. Twice as many 8th-grade public school students (14%) reported having tried marijuana than 8th-grade private/charter school students (7%).

Treatment Needs

More Hawaii students are classified as needing treatment for marijuana abuse than for abuse of any other illicit drug. Marijuana treatment needs in 2003 are <1% for 6th graders, 2% for 8th graders, 6% for 10th graders, and 10% for 12th graders. All other illicit drugs are abused by less than 2% of the students in all grade levels.

Harmfulness

The occasional use of marijuana is viewed as less harmful than the occasional use of other substances by Hawaii students in grades 8, 10, and 12. The majority of the students in all grades, however, view the occasional use of marijuana as harmful to the user.

The percentages of Hawaii students reporting harm associated with using marijuana are substantially higher than nationwide. Nationwide, only 48% of 8th graders, 35% of 10th graders, and 27% of 12th graders associate harm with using marijuana. In Hawaii, 68% of 8th graders, 57% of 10th graders, and 52% of 12th graders in Hawaii responded that they associate a lot of harm with the occasional use of marijuana.

The percentages of Hawaii students associating harm with marijuana use were on the rise from 1987 to 1996, but then dropped among upper-grade students in 1998. From 2000 to 2002, perceived harm associated with marijuana climbed nearly 10 percentage points for 6th graders (56% to 65%), but remained relatively unchanged in all other grades. The percentages of students associating harm with marijuana use rose across all grade levels in 2003.

Availability

Marijuana is viewed by more Hawaii students, in all grades, as "very easy" or "fairly easy" to obtain, compared to all other illicit drugs. The percentages of Hawaii students viewing marijuana as easy to obtain dropped in 2003 to 8% in grade 6, 26% in grade 8, 56% in grade 10, and 70% in grade 12. These percentages are at least 17 percentage points lower than nationwide results.

Disapproval

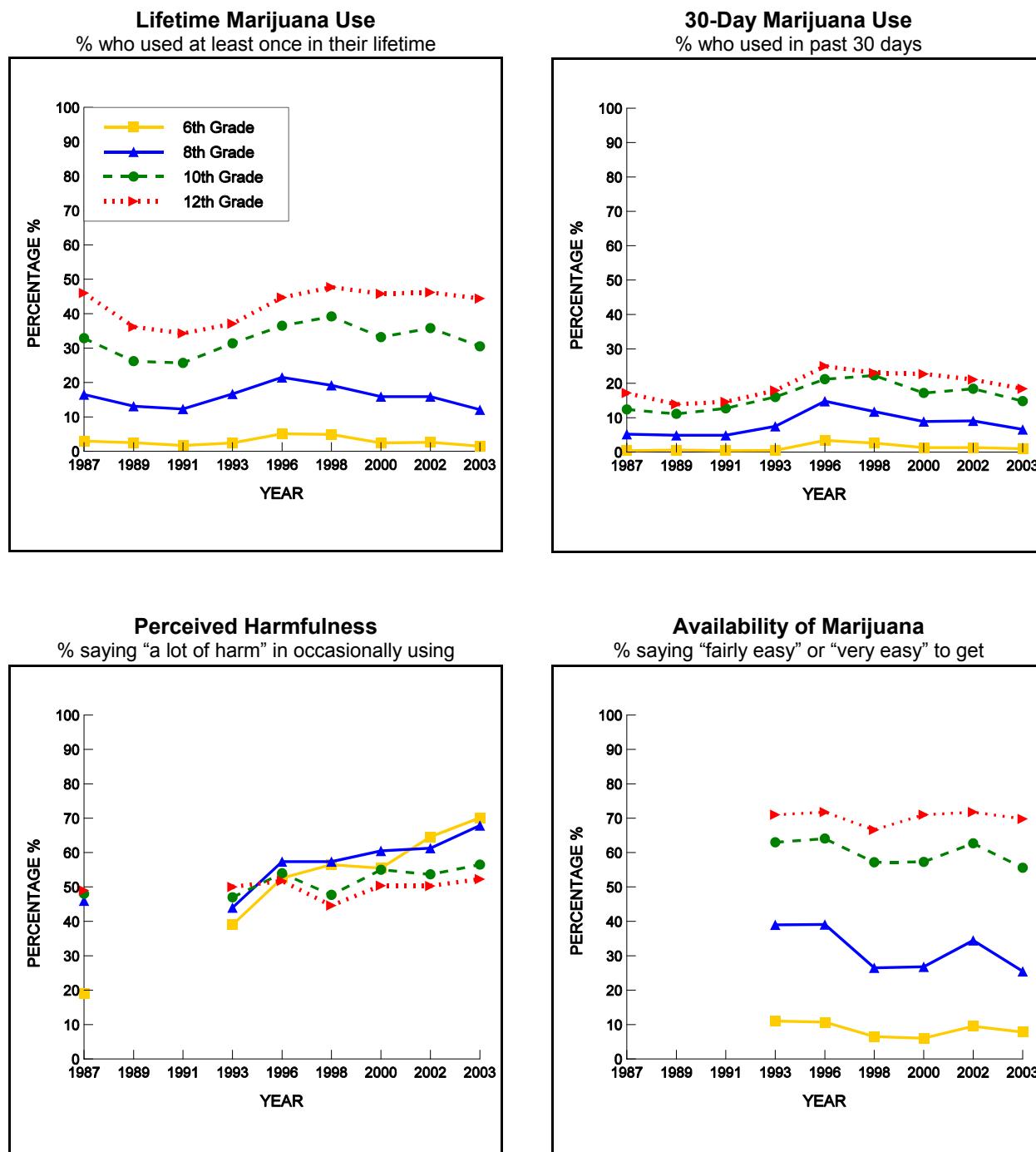
Disapproval ratings for occasional marijuana use are within a few percentage points of disapproval ratings associated with weekend binge drinking and are slightly lower than disapproval ratings for cigarette smoking in the upper grades. A greater percentage of students in 2003, compared to 2002, responded that their friends would disapprove of them using marijuana occasionally. In 2003, 90% of 6th graders, 82% of 8th graders, 70% of 10th graders, and 63% of 12th graders reported that their friends would not condone their use of marijuana. The increases in disapproval ratings in 2003, coincide with decreases in marijuana prevalence reports.

Parents' Attitudes Toward Marijuana Use

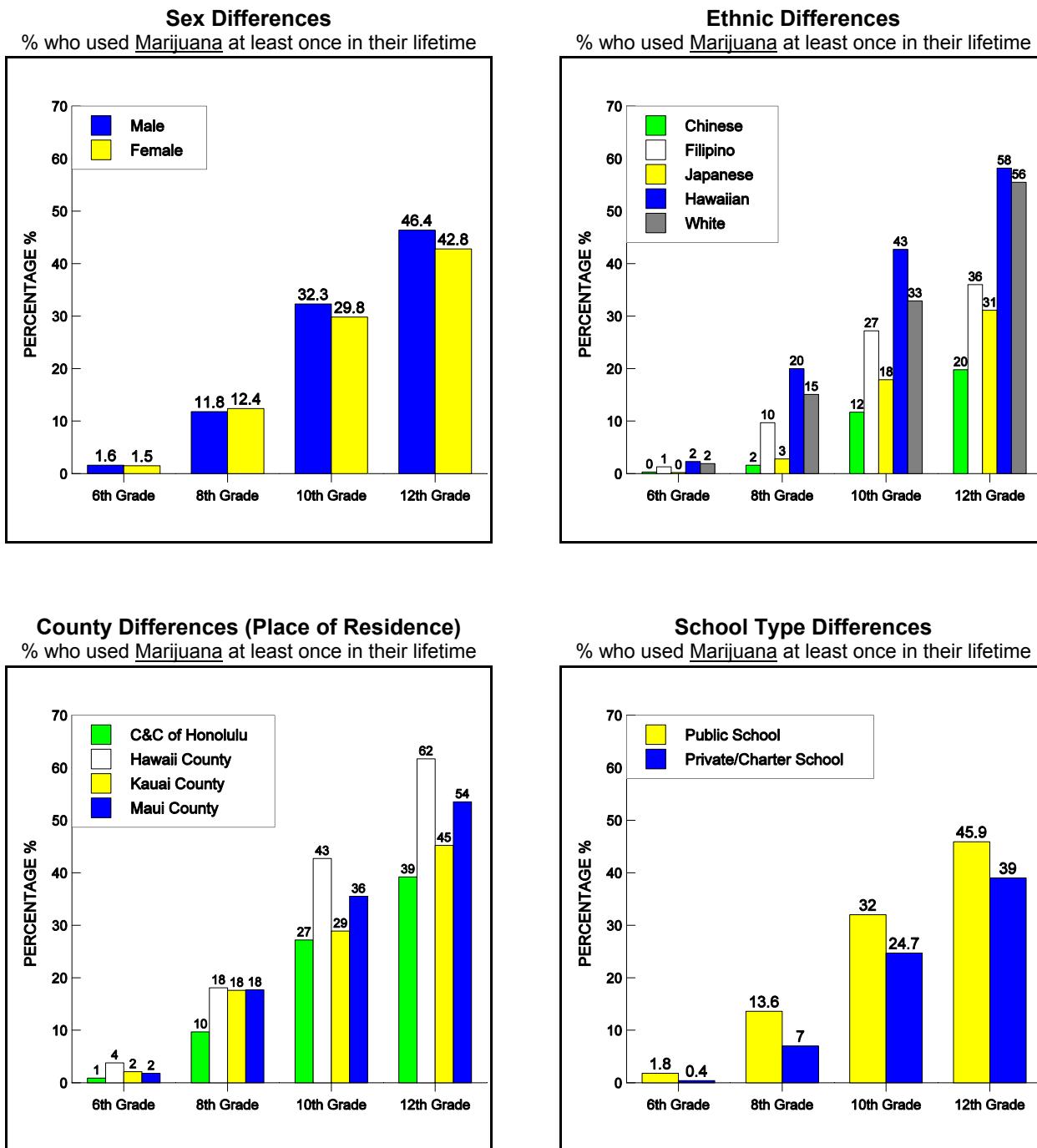
Students were asked if they would be in trouble if their parents caught them using marijuana and how wrong their parents feel it would be for them to smoke marijuana. In comparison to other illegal drugs, fewer students reported that they would be in trouble if they were caught smoking marijuana. For instance, 93% of the seniors reported that there would be repercussions if their parents caught them using illegal drugs other than marijuana, whereas only 81% of the seniors reported that there would be repercussions if their parents caught them smoking marijuana.

The majority of students in grades 6 (94%), 8 (92%), 10 (88%), and 12 (81%) believe that they would be in trouble by their parents if they were caught smoking marijuana. A slightly larger proportion of students in the same grades reported that they thought their parents would feel it would be wrong for them to smoke marijuana (98%, 95%, 89%, and 85%, respectively).

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



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



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

Marijuana Table
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Treatment Needs, and Attitudes
Grades 6 through 12, 1987-2003

(Entries are percentages %)

	Hawaii Results									Nationwide Results
	1987	1989	1991	1993	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	
Lifetime Prevalence ^a										
6th Grade	3.0	2.5	1.7	2.4	5.1	4.9	2.4	2.6	1.5	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5.4	—
8th Grade	16.5	13.1	12.3	16.7	21.5	19.2	15.9	15.9	12.1	17.5
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21.4	—
10th Grade	32.9	26.2	25.7	31.4	36.5	39.2	33.2	35.8	30.5	36.4
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	35.8	—
12th Grade	46.0	36.2	34.3	37.1	44.7	47.7	45.8	46.2	44.4	46.1
30-Day Prevalence ^b										
6th Grade	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.5	3.4	2.6	1.3	1.3	1.0	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.3	—
8th Grade	5.2	4.9	4.9	7.5	14.8	11.8	8.9	9.1	6.6	7.5
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10.8	—
10th Grade	12.4	11.1	12.7	16.0	21.2	22.3	17.2	18.4	14.8	17.0
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15.7	—
12th Grade	17.2	13.9	14.6	17.9	25.0	23.0	22.7	21.1	18.4	21.2
Daily Prevalence ^c										
6th Grade	—	—	—	—	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.5	—
8th Grade	—	—	—	—	3.1	2.4	1.5	1.6	1.0	1.0
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.1	—
10th Grade	—	—	—	—	4.2	4.7	3.4	4.4	3.0	3.6
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.6	—
12th Grade	—	—	—	—	6.4	5.2	4.6	4.8	4.4	6.0
Marijuana Treatment Needs ^d										
6th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	1.4	0.5	0.4	0.3	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.8	—
8th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	7.1	4.3	3.3	1.9	—
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.9	—
10th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	16.3	12.4	10.2	6.3	—
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8.4	—
12th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	18.8	17.0	12.8	10.0	—

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Marijuana Table (continued)
Hawaii Trends in Prevalence, Treatment Needs, and Attitudes
Grades 6 through 12, 1987-2003

(Entries are percentages %)

	Hawaii Results									Nationwide Results
	1987	1989	1991	1993	1996	1998	2000	2002	2003	
Perceived Harmfulness^e										
6th Grade	19.0	—	—	39.0	52.6	56.5	55.5	64.6	70.1	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	69.2	—
8th Grade	46.0	—	—	44.0	57.4	57.4	60.5	61.3	67.9	48.6
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	61.1	—
10th Grade	48.0	—	—	47.0	54.0	47.7	55.0	53.7	56.5	34.9
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	54.8	—
12th Grade	49.0	—	—	50.0	51.8	44.6	50.4	50.3	52.3	26.6
Perceived Availability^f										
6th Grade	—	—	—	11.0	10.7	6.5	6.0	9.5	7.8	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14.3	—
8th Grade	—	—	—	39.0	39.1	26.5	26.8	34.5	25.5	44.8
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	42.1	—
10th Grade	—	—	—	63.0	64.1	57.2	57.3	62.7	55.6	73.9
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	62.1	—
12th Grade	—	—	—	71.0	71.8	66.6	71.0	71.8	69.8	87.1
Peer Disapproval^g										
6th Grade	—	—	—	—	85.5	85.5	86.9	88.7	89.7	—
7th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	86.6	—
8th Grade	—	—	—	—	73.3	74.9	75.7	77.8	82.0	—
9th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	75.0	—
10th Grade	—	—	—	—	67.2	63.0	66.6	64.3	69.7	—
11th Grade	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	67.6	—
12th Grade	—	—	—	—	62.0	58.8	59.0	59.3	63.2	—

- (a) Lifetime Prevalence is the % using marijuana at least once in their lifetime.
- (b) 30-Day Prevalence is the % using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days.
- (c) Daily Prevalence is the % using marijuana on 20 or more occasions in the past 30 days.
- (d) Marijuana Treatment Needs is the % meeting the DSM-III-R diagnosis for marijuana abuse or marijuana dependency.
- (e) Perceived Harmfulness is the % reporting a "lot of harm" associated with occasional marijuana use.
- (f) Perceived Availability is the % reporting "fairly easy" or "very easy" to get marijuana.
- (g) Peer Disapproval is the % reporting friends would "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove" of them using marijuana.