

Table 2.98

High school seniors' perceptions of the harmfulness of drug use, alcohol use, and cigarette smoking

By type of drug and frequency of use, United States, 1984-96

Question: "How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways), if they...?"

(Percent saying "great risk"^a)

Type of drug and frequency of use	Class of 1984 (N=3,262)	Class of 1985 (N=3,250)	Class of 1986 (N=3,020)	Class of 1987 (N=3,315)	Class of 1988 (N=3,276)	Class of 1989 (N=2,796)	Class of 1990 (N=2,553)	Class of 1991 (N=2,549)	Class of 1992 (N=2,684)	Class of 1993 (N=2,759)	Class of 1994 (N=2,591)	Class of 1995 (N=2,603)	Class of 1996 (N=2,449)
Try marijuana once or twice	14.7%	14.8%	15.1%	18.4%	19.0%	23.6%	23.1%	27.1%	24.5%	21.9%	19.5%	16.3%	15.6%
Smoke marijuana occasionally	22.6	24.5	25.0	30.4	31.7	36.5	36.9	40.6	39.6	35.6	30.1	25.6	25.9
Smoke marijuana regularly	66.9	70.4	71.3	73.5	77.0	77.5	77.8	78.6	76.5	72.5	65.0	60.8	59.9
Try LSD once or twice	45.4	43.5	42.0	44.9	45.7	46.0	44.7	46.6	42.3	39.5	38.8	36.4	36.2
Take LSD regularly	83.8	82.9	82.6	83.8	84.2	84.3	84.5	84.3	81.8	79.4	79.1	78.1	77.8
Try PCP once or twice	NA	NA	NA	55.6	58.8	56.6	55.2	51.7	54.8	50.8	51.5	49.1	51.0
Try cocaine once or twice	35.7	34.0	33.5	47.9	51.2	54.9	59.4	59.4	56.8	57.6	57.2	53.7	54.2
Take cocaine occasionally	NA	NA	54.2	66.8	69.2	71.8	73.9	75.5	75.1	73.3	73.7	70.8	72.1
Take cocaine regularly	78.8	79.0	82.2	88.5	89.2	90.2	91.1	90.4	90.2	90.1	89.3	87.9	88.3
Try crack once or twice	NA	NA	NA	57.0	62.1	62.9	64.3	60.6	62.4	57.6	58.4	54.6	56.0
Take crack occasionally	NA	NA	NA	70.4	73.2	75.3	80.4	76.5	76.3	73.9	73.8	72.8	71.4
Take crack regularly	NA	NA	NA	84.6	84.8	85.6	91.6	90.1	89.3	87.5	89.6	88.6	88.0
Try cocaine powder once or twice	NA	NA	NA	45.3	51.7	53.8	53.9	53.6	57.1	53.2	55.4	52.0	53.2
Take cocaine powder occasionally	NA	NA	NA	56.8	61.9	65.8	71.1	69.8	70.8	68.6	70.6	69.1	68.8
Take cocaine powder regularly	NA	NA	NA	81.4	82.9	83.9	90.2	88.9	88.4	87.0	88.6	87.8	86.8
Try heroin once or twice	49.8	47.3	45.8	53.6	54.0	53.8	55.4	55.2	50.9	50.7	52.8	50.9	52.5
Take heroin occasionally	70.7	69.8	68.2	74.6	73.8	75.5	76.6	74.9	74.2	72.0	72.1	71.0	74.8
Take heroin regularly	87.2	86.0	87.1	88.7	88.8	89.5	90.2	89.6	89.2	88.3	88.0	87.2	89.5
Try amphetamines once or twice	25.4	25.2	25.1	29.1	29.6	32.8	32.2	36.3	32.6	31.3	31.4	28.8	30.8
Take amphetamines regularly	67.1	67.2	67.3	69.4	69.8	71.2	71.2	74.1	72.4	69.9	67.0	65.9	66.8
Try crystal methamphetamine (ice) once or twice	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	61.6	61.9	57.5	58.3	54.4	55.3
Try barbiturates once or twice	27.4	26.1	25.4	30.9	29.7	32.2	32.4	35.1	32.2	29.2	29.9	26.3	29.1
Take barbiturates regularly	68.5	68.3	67.2	69.4	69.6	70.5	70.2	70.5	70.2	66.1	63.3	61.6	60.4
Try one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor)	4.6	5.0	4.6	6.2	6.0	6.0	8.3	9.1	8.6	8.2	7.6	5.9	7.3
Take one or two drinks nearly every day	23.0	24.4	25.1	26.2	27.3	28.5	31.3	32.7	30.6	28.2	27.0	24.8	25.1
Take four or five drinks nearly every day	68.4	69.8	66.5	69.7	68.5	69.8	70.9	69.5	70.5	67.8	66.2	62.8	65.6
Have five or more drinks once or twice each weekend	41.7	43.0	39.1	41.9	42.6	44.0	47.1	48.6	49.0	48.3	46.5	45.2	49.5
Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day	63.8	66.5	66.0	68.6	68.0	67.2	68.2	69.4	69.2	69.5	67.6	65.6	68.2
Take steroids	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	63.8	69.9	65.6	70.7	69.1	66.1	66.4	67.6

Note: These data are from a series of nationwide surveys of high school seniors conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research for the National Institute on Drug Abuse from 1975 through 1996. The survey design is a multistage random sample of high school seniors in public and private schools. Depending on the survey year, from 58 to 80% of the schools initially invited to participate agreed to do so. Completed questionnaires were obtained from 77 to 86% of all sampled students in participating schools each year. Beginning in 1991, eighth and tenth grade students also were included in the survey. All percentages reported are based on weighted cases; the N's that are shown in the tables also refer to the number of weighted cases. "Crack" is a highly potent and addictive form of cocaine. Alcohol and cigarette use are included in selected tables. Readers interested in responses to this question for 1975 through 1983 should consult previous editions of SOURCEBOOK. For survey methodology and definitions of terms, see Appendix 7.

^aAnswer alternatives were: (1) no risk, (2) slight risk, (3) moderate risk, (4) great risk, and (5) can't say, drug unfamiliar.

Source: Lloyd D. Johnston, Patrick M. O'Malley, and Jerald G. Bachman, *National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1996*, Vol. 1, Secondary School Students, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Drug Abuse (Washington, DC: USGPO, 1997). Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff.