

Characteristics of Clinton and Warren County Youth who Use Marijuana

During the 2008-2009 school year, 18 public junior and senior high schools in Clinton and Warren Counties administered the Ohio Youth Survey to 6th-12th graders. This survey included questions on attitudes, activities, assets, and risk-taking. A total of 7,969 students responded. Of these, 3,345 were Clinton County students and 4,624 were Warren County students. Unless otherwise noted, there were no statistically significant differences between the two counties in terms of student responses.

For more information about the survey, visit www.mhrsonline.org/ohioyouthsurvey.

The Clinton County Family and Children First Council, the Warren County Family and Children First Council, and Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren and Clinton Counties would like to thank the administrators, teachers, school staff, and students of the Clinton and Warren Schools who participated.

We would also like to thank Minuteman Press of Lebanon and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati for partnering with us to create these summaries.



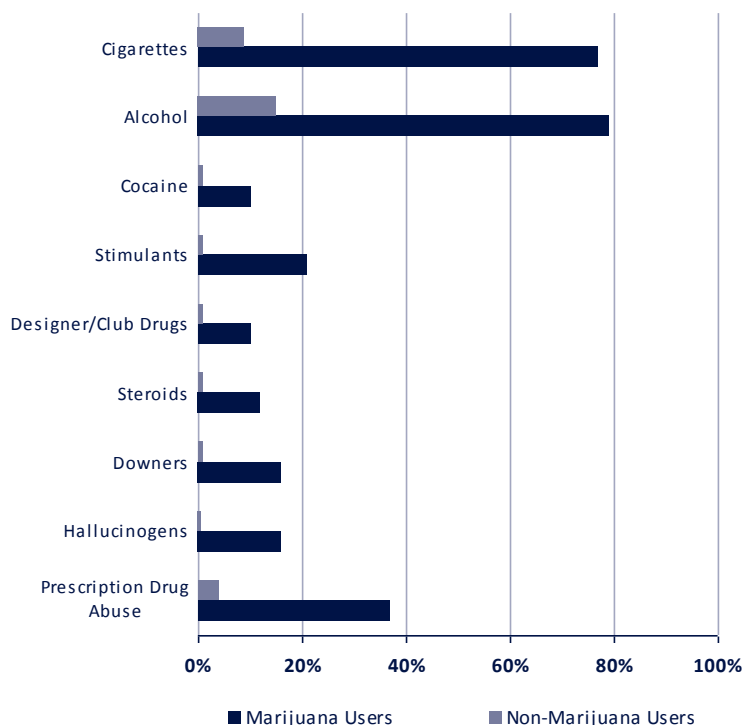
Nearly 1 in 10 6th-12th graders in Clinton and Warren Counties used marijuana in the prior 30 days, according to a survey conducted by the Warren and Clinton County Families and Children First Councils and Mental Health and Recovery Services of Warren and Clinton Counties.

There were no significant differences in marijuana use among youth of different genders, races, or family composition. However, the likelihood of use increased substantially in older students: nearly 1 in 5 students in 10th-12th grade (18%) reported using marijuana in the previous 30 days, compared to 1 in 30 students in 6th-8th grade (3%). Students who reported using marijuana also reported achieving lower grades in school.

Youth who Use Marijuana More Likely to Use Other Substances

These substances include cigarettes, alcohol, cocaine, stimulants, club drugs, steroids, downers, hallucinogens (such as LSD), and abuse of prescription

In the past 30 days, did you use...



drugs, which is defined as using a prescription drug that has not been prescribed to you.

Additionally, 79% of marijuana users also report drinking alcohol, with 66% reporting binge drinking on one or more occasion in the prior 30 days.

The most commonly reported age of first marijuana use was 13-14 years old.

Youth who Use Marijuana More Likely to Have Friends who Engage in Risky Behaviors

Youth who use marijuana were 3-6 times more likely than youth who did not use to report that their best friends engaged in risky behaviors such as:

- Being suspended from school
- Dropping out of school
- Using illegal drugs

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- Using alcohol or smoking cigarettes
- Selling illegal drugs, being arrested, or stealing/trying to steal a motor vehicle

Youth who Use Marijuana Less Likely to Perceive Community as Disapproving of Substance Abuse

The influences on youth who use marijuana are not limited to peers. Rather, they extend into the community. Marijuana users were substantially less likely to perceive that adults in their communities feel it is wrong for youth to use marijuana, drink alcohol, or smoke cigarettes.

Signs of Drug Use

PERSONALITY:

- Becomes disrespectful—is verbally and physically abusive
- Is angry a lot, acts paranoid or confused, or suffers from extreme mood swings
- Seems depressed and less out-going
- Is secretive and lies about whereabouts or activities
- Is stealing or “losing” possessions
- Seems to have a lot of money or is always asking for money
- Withdraws from the family and family activities

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:

- Not taking care of hygiene and grooming
- Not sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Hyperactive or too little energy

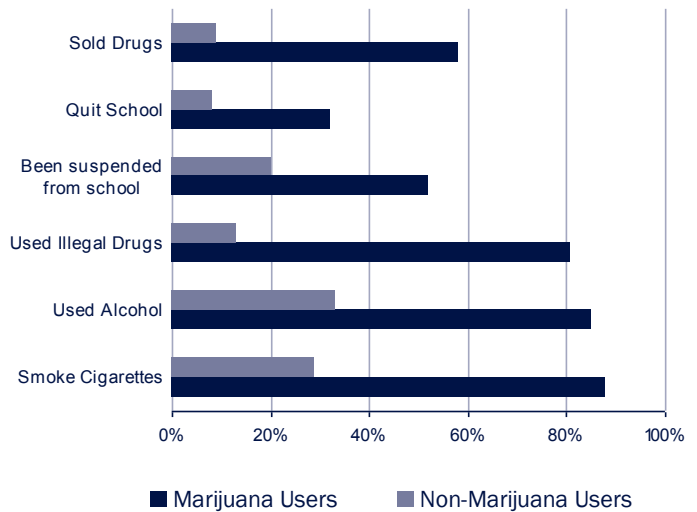
SOCIAL/SCHOOL ACTIVITY:

- Drops old friends and activities
- Skips school
- Loses interest in school work and gets low grades
- Sleeps in class
- Loses concentration and has trouble remembering things

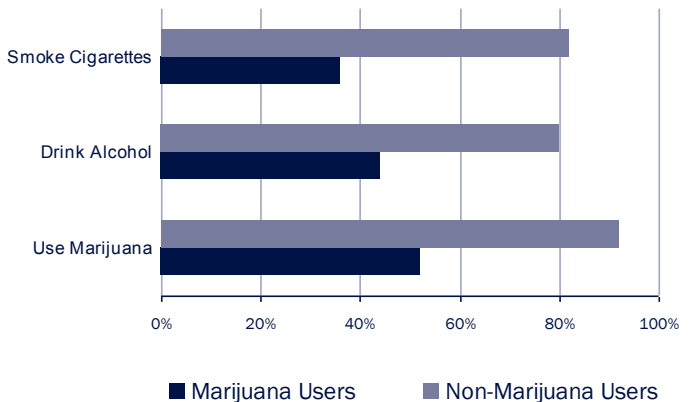
DRUG SPECIFIC SIGNS for Marijuana Use:

Mood swings, euphoria, slow thinking and reflexes, dilated pupils, increased appetite, dryness of mouth, increased pulse rate, delusions, hallucinations

In the past 12 months, how many of your best friends have...



How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age to... (Graph presents youth who answered “very wrong” or “wrong”)



What this Means for Parents and Adults

- Parents should talk early and often to their children about marijuana risks. Parents should set and enforce rules that show they care about their children’s well being and safety.
- Having family dinners 5-7 times per week has shown to decrease the likelihood of youth drug abuse.
- Adults should know the warning signs of youth drug use and investigate further if observed. Maintain clear channels of communication to instill trust and a sense of concern.
- Schools can ensure students feel connected to the school environment as this is proven to reduce the likelihood of a variety of risk behaviors, including alcohol and drug use.
- A community should support young people making positive decisions and create a culture where substance abuse is not acceptable.