

Section 3

Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use

Measurement

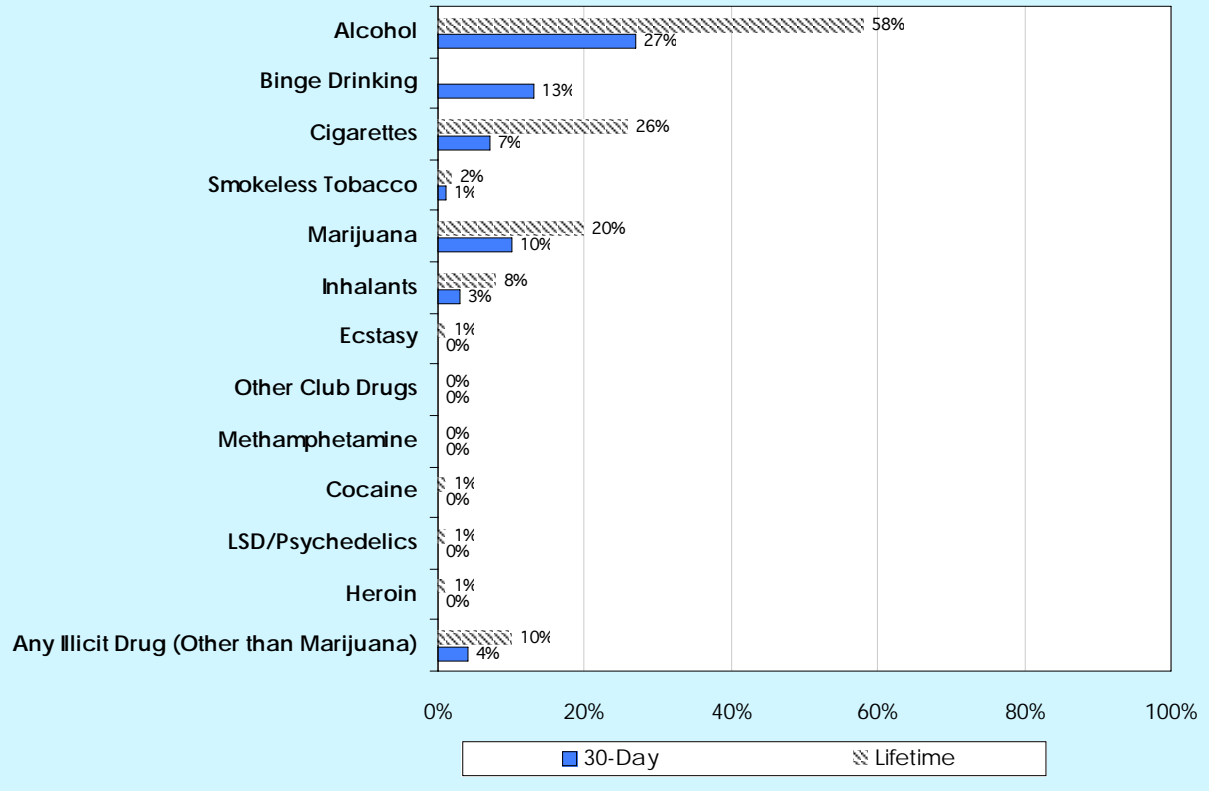
Drug use is measured by a set of 23 survey questions on the *Communities That Care*[®] *Youth Survey*. The questions are similar to those used in the *Monitoring the Future* study, a nationwide study of drug use by middle and high school students in the United States.

Prevalence-of-use tables and graphs are used to illustrate the percentages of students who reported using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATODs). These results are presented for both lifetime and past-30-day prevalence of use periods. Lifetime prevalence of use (whether the student has ever used the drug) is a good measure of student experimentation. Past-30-day prevalence of use (whether the student has used the drug within the last month) is a good measure of current use. In addition to the standard lifetime and past-30-day prevalence rates for alcohol use, binge drinking behavior (defined as a report of five or more drinks in a row within the past two weeks) is also measured.

A final indicator—“any illicit drug (other than marijuana)” —measures the use of one or more of the following drugs: Ecstasy, other club drugs, methamphetamine, cocaine, LSD/Psychedelics and heroin. The purpose of this drug combination rate is to provide prevention planners with an overall gauge of so-called “hard” drug use (Johnston, O’Malley and Bachman, 2003).

Overall Results

Graph 4. Overall Lifetime and Past-30-Day Prevalence of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use



ATOD prevalence rates for the combined sample of students in M2 through S4 are presented in Graph 4, and in the overall results column of Tables 5 and 6. As these results show, Bermuda’s public and private schools students recorded the highest lifetime prevalence-of-use rates for alcohol (58.0%), followed by cigarettes (25.7%), marijuana (19.7%), inhalants (8.2%) and smokeless tobacco (2.5%). Prevalence rates for the remaining drug categories—Ecstasy, cocaine, heroin, LSD/Psychedelics, methamphetamine and other club drugs—are notably lower, with lifetime use ranging from 0.2% for other club drugs to 1.0% for Ecstasy. These comparatively low rates are summarized by the indicator “any illicit drug (other than marijuana),” with 9.8% of surveyed students reporting use of any of the illicit drugs (excluding marijuana) in their lifetimes.

Past-30-day prevalence rates show a slightly different pattern, with 26.9% of students having reported that they had used alcohol at least once in the past 30 days, followed by marijuana (10.3%), cigarettes (6.5%), inhalants (2.9%) and smokeless tobacco (1.3%). Past-30-day prevalence rates for the remaining drug categories range from 0.0% for other club drugs to 0.5% for cocaine, with 3.7% having reported the use of any illicit drug (other than marijuana).

Grade-Level Results

ATOD prevalence rates for individual grade levels are presented in Graph 5 and Tables 5 and 6. Past-30-day drug use in Bermuda's public and private schools, as Graph 5 illustrates, generally increases as students enter higher grades. Most notably, alcohol use increases from 6.2% among students in M2 to 50.6% among

students in S4, marijuana use increases from 0.8% among students in M2 to 23.0% among students in S3, and cigarette use increases from 1.9% among students in M2 and 2.2% among students in M3 to 14.0% among students in S4. The decline in the prevalence of inhalant use (3.8% among students in M2 and 4.5% among students in M3 to 0.7% among students in S3) provides an exception to this pattern. In many communities, inhalant use is more prevalent with younger students, perhaps because it is often the easiest drug for them to obtain.

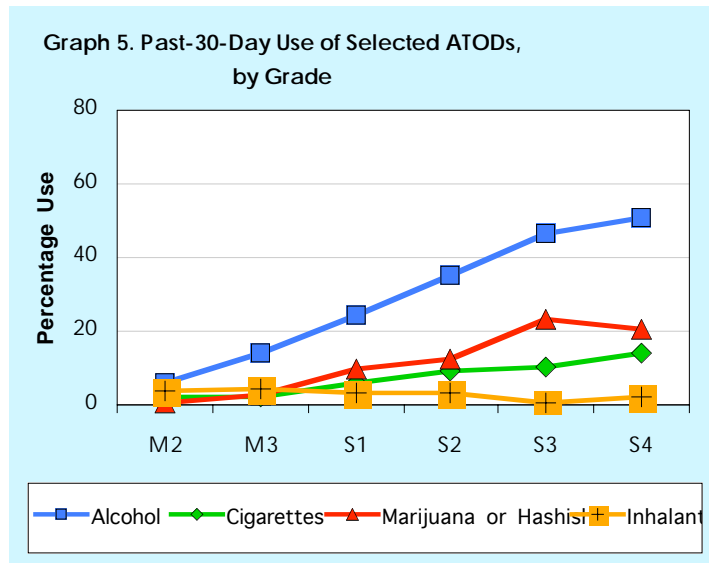


Table 5. Lifetime Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs for Surveyed Youth

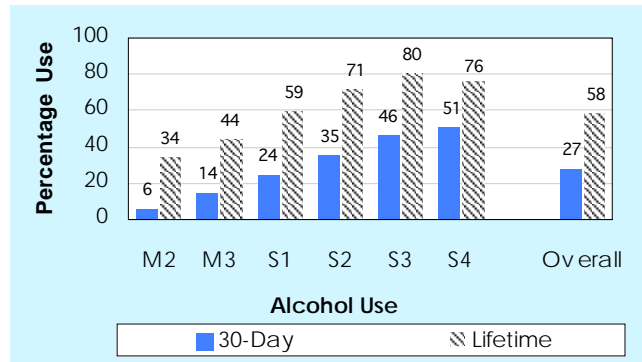
	<i>Bermuda Students</i>						Overall %
	M2 %	M3 %	S1 %	S2 %	S3 %	S4 %	
Alcohol	33.7	43.7	58.9	70.8	79.6	76.1	58.0
Cigarettes	8.6	16.5	27.3	32.7	41.3	38.4	25.7
Smokeless Tobacco	1.3	2.2	3.3	2.6	3.6	1.9	2.5
Marijuana	2.3	8.2	19.4	25.3	39.2	35.0	19.7
Inhalants	10.5	11.4	8.4	9.6	2.9	3.9	8.2
Ecstasy	0.2	1.0	0.5	2.2	1.0	1.6	1.0
Other Club Drugs	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2
Methamphetamine	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.3
Cocaine	0.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	0.5	2.3	0.8
LSD/Psychedelics	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.7
Heroin	0.6	0.3	1.6	0.9	0.5	0.0	0.7
Any Illicit Drug (Other than Marijuana)	11.0	12.8	9.9	11.5	5.1	6.9	9.8

Table 6. Past-30-Day Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs for Surveyed Youth

	<i>Bermuda Students</i>						Overall %
	M2 %	M3 %	S1 %	S2 %	S3 %	S4 %	
Alcohol	6.2	13.9	24.3	35.1	46.4	50.6	26.9
Binge Drinking	3.2	6.6	12.3	16.6	23.1	25.7	13.4
Cigarettes	1.9	2.2	5.9	9.0	10.5	14.0	6.5
Smokeless Tobacco	0.6	0.9	2.1	1.8	1.0	1.6	1.3
Marijuana	0.8	2.6	9.5	12.6	23.0	20.6	10.3
Inhalants	3.8	4.5	3.0	3.1	0.7	1.9	2.9
Ecstasy	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.4	0.4
Other Club Drugs	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Methamphetamine	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.2
Cocaine	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.6	0.2	1.9	0.5
LSD/Psychedelics	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2
Heroin	0.2	0.0	1.1	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.3
Any Illicit Drug (Other than Marijuana)	3.9	5.0	4.0	4.2	1.0	3.9	3.7

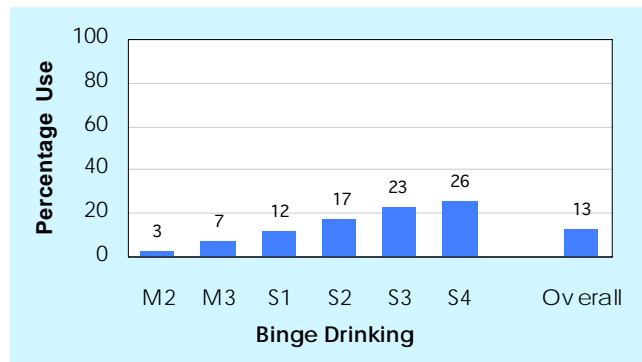
Alcohol

Alcohol, including beer, wine and hard liquor, is the drug used most often by adolescents today, so it is not surprising that alcohol is the most used drug among students in Bermuda's public and private schools.



- Lifetime prevalence of alcohol use ranges from a low of 33.7% for students in M2 to a high of 79.6% for students in S3. Overall, 58.0% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have used alcohol at least once in their lifetimes.
- Past-30-day prevalence of alcohol use ranges from a low of 6.2% for students in M2 to a high of 50.6% for students in S4. Overall, 26.9% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have used alcohol at least once in the past 30 days.

Binge drinking (defined as a report of five or more drinks in a row within the past two weeks) is extremely dangerous. Several studies have shown that binge drinking is related to higher probabilities of drinking and driving as well as injury due to intoxication. As with alcohol use in general, binge drinking tends to become more pervasive as students grow older.

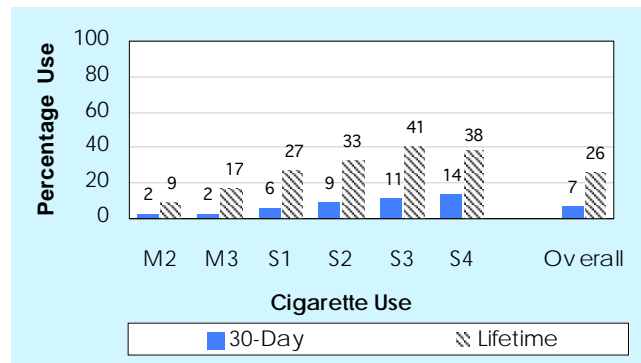


- Across grades, binge drinking prevalence rates range from a low of 3.2% for students in M2 to a high of 25.7% for students in S4. Overall, 13.4% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have reported at least one episode of binge drinking in the past two weeks.

Tobacco

After alcohol, tobacco (including cigarettes and smokeless tobacco) is the most commonly used drug among adolescents.

- Lifetime prevalence of cigarette use ranges from a low of 8.6% for students in M2 to a high of 41.3% for students in S3. Overall, 25.7% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have used cigarettes at least once in their lifetimes.

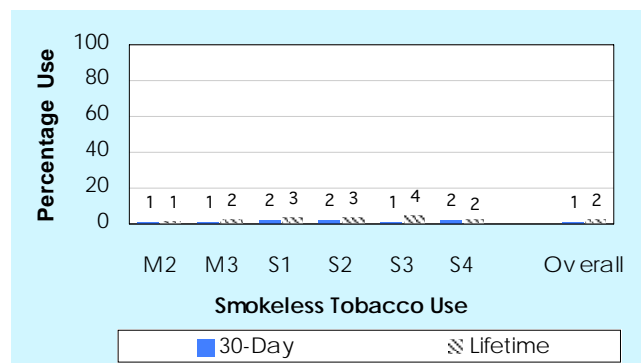


- Past-30-day prevalence of cigarette use ranges from a low of 1.9% for students in M2 to a high of 14.0% for students in S4. Overall, 6.5% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have used cigarettes at least once in the past 30 days.

- Lifetime prevalence of smokeless tobacco use ranges from a low of 1.3% for students in M2 to a high of 3.6% for students in S3.

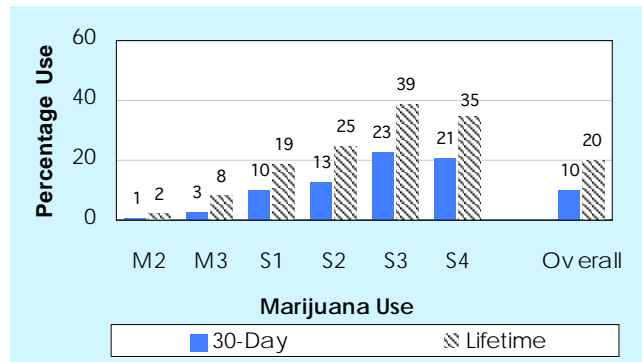
Overall, Bermuda's public and private schools students reported lower lifetime use of smokeless tobacco as compared with lifetime use of cigarettes (2.5% for smokeless tobacco, 25.7% for cigarettes).

- Past-30-day prevalence of smokeless tobacco use ranges from a low of 0.6% for students in M2 to a high of 2.1% for students in S1. Overall, Bermuda's public and private schools students reported lower past-30-day use of smokeless tobacco as compared with past-30-day use of cigarettes (1.3% for smokeless tobacco, 6.5% for cigarettes).



Marijuana

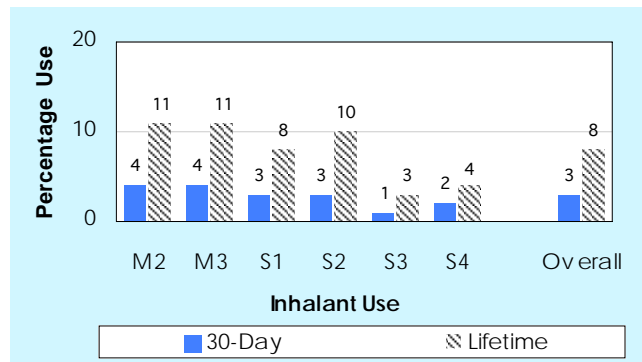
Marijuana is one of the most widely used illicit drugs among youth today. It impairs the user's coordination and concentration, leading to an increased risk of accidents. Long-term use has been shown to have serious health effects, including increased risk of cardiovascular and pulmonary damage.



- Lifetime prevalence of marijuana use ranges from a low of 2.3% for students in M2 to a high of 39.2% for students in S3. Overall, 19.7% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have used marijuana at least once in their lifetimes.
- Past-30-day prevalence of marijuana use ranges from a low of 0.8% for students in M2 to a high of 23.0% for students in S3. Overall, 10.3% of Bermuda's public and private schools students have used marijuana at least once in the past 30 days.

Inhalants

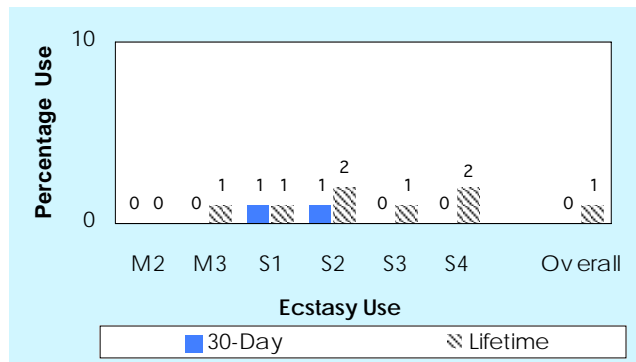
Inhalant use is more prevalent with younger students, perhaps because inhalants are often the easiest drugs for them to obtain. The health consequences of inhalant use can be substantial, including brain damage and heart failure. Inhalant use was measured by the survey question "On how many occasions (if any) have you used inhalants (whippets, butane, paint thinner, or glue to sniff, etc.)?"



- Lifetime prevalence of inhalant use ranges from a low of 2.9% among students in S3 to a high of 11.4% among students in M3. Past-30-day prevalence of inhalant use ranges from a low of 0.7% among students in S3 to a high of 4.5% among students in M3.
- Inhalant use typically peaks in middle school years and decreases throughout secondary school. In Bermuda's public and private schools, inhalant use generally follows this pattern. Lifetime and past-30-day prevalences of inhalant use peak among students in M3.

Ecstasy and Other Club Drugs

The category “club drugs” includes illicit drugs that are classified together because their use started at dance clubs and “raves,” not because they are of a similar class (like amphetamines). The *Communities That Care*[®] *Youth Survey* measures the use of Ecstasy and the use of “other club drugs” (including GHB, ketamine and Rohypnol). Note that this list is not meant to be exclusive, as other drugs are used at clubs and raves.



- Lifetime prevalence of Ecstasy use ranges from a low of 0.2% for students in M2 to a high of 2.2% for students in S2. Overall, 1.0% of Bermuda’s public and private schools students have used Ecstasy at least once in their lifetimes.
- The past-30-day prevalence rates for Ecstasy use reported by Bermuda’s public and private schools students are low, ranging from a low of 0.0% for students in M2 and S3 to a high of 0.9% for students in S2.
- Bermuda’s public and private schools students reported a very low prevalence of use for other club drugs: 0.2% overall lifetime use and 0.0% overall past-30-day use.

Other Drugs

The *Communities That Care*[®] *Youth Survey* also measures the prevalence of use for a variety of other drugs. This includes student use of the following: methamphetamine, cocaine, LSD/Psychedelics and heroin. The rates for prevalence of use of these other drugs are generally lower than the rates for alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, inhalants and club drugs. Additionally, use of these other drugs tends to be concentrated in the upper grade levels.

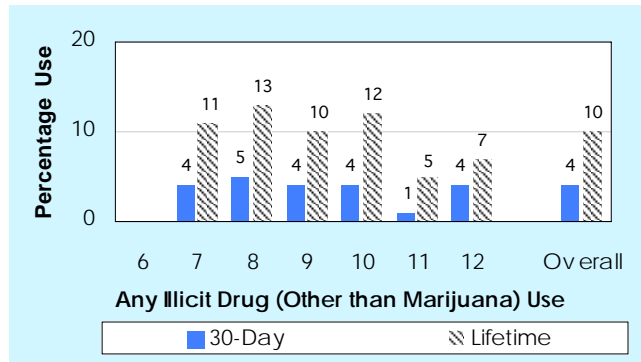
- Students in Bermuda’s public and private schools reported relatively little use of the other drugs that are measured by the survey. Specifically, no more than 0.8% of students indicated use of methamphetamine, cocaine, LSD/Psychedelics or heroin during their lifetimes.
- For the purposes of the *Communities That Care*[®] *Youth Survey*, methamphetamine was defined as “meth, crystal meth, crank.” Lifetime prevalence of methamphetamine ranges from a low of 0.0% for students in M2 and M3 to a high of 0.8% for students in S4. Overall, 0.3% of Bermuda’s public and private schools students have used methamphetamine at least once in their lifetimes.

- Lifetime prevalence of cocaine ranges from a low of 0.0% for students in M2 to a high of 2.3% for students in S4. The overall lifetime prevalence rate is 0.8%.
- Lifetime prevalence of LSD/Psychedelics ranges from a low of 0.4% for students in S1 to a high of 0.9% for students in S2. The overall lifetime prevalence rate is 0.7%.
- Lifetime prevalence of heroin ranges from a low of 0.0% for students in S4 to a high of 1.6% for students in S1. The overall lifetime prevalence rate is 0.7%.

Any Illicit Drug (Other than Marijuana)

The final ATOD indicator reports on the use of any illicit drug other than marijuana. This drug combination rate—which includes use of one or more of the following drugs: inhalants, Ecstasy, other club drugs, methamphetamine, cocaine, LSD/Psychedelics and

heroin—provides prevention planners with an overall indicator of so-called “hard” drug use. Marijuana use is excluded from this index because the higher prevalence of marijuana use tends to wash out the presence or absence of the other drugs. In other words, an indicator of “Any Illicit Drug Use (*Including* Marijuana)” primarily measures marijuana use.



- Lifetime prevalence of any illicit drug (other than marijuana) rises from a low of 5.1% among students in S3 to a high of 12.8% among students in M3. Overall, 9.8% of Bermuda’s public and private schools students have used an illicit drug (other than marijuana) at least once in their lifetimes.
- Past-30-day prevalence of any illicit drug (other than marijuana) rises from a low of 1.0% among students in S3 to a high of 5.0% among students in M3. Overall, 3.7% of Bermuda’s public and private schools students have used an illicit drug (other than marijuana) at least once in the past 30 days.