

2020 INDIANA YOUTH SURVEY

SUMMARY REPORT

This report summarizes the results of the 2020 Indiana Youth Survey conducted by Prevention Insights in the spring of 2020. This is the 29th year that the Indiana Youth Survey (formerly called the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use Survey) has been conducted. The survey is funded by the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction to monitor behaviors, experiences, and other factors that influence the health and well-being of Indiana youth.

All schools in Indiana were invited to participate in the survey, using either an on-line or paper format. Students in 6th- through 12th-grade were surveyed, with a shorter questionnaire used for 6th-grade students. Students' participation in the survey was voluntary (they could choose not to participate) and anonymous.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection was ended on March 20, 2020 (the date that all Indiana schools were required to close and move to online-only education). As a result, schools that had planned to participate in the final two weeks of the survey cycle were unable to do so. A total of 281 schools and 90,794 youth participated in the survey, resulting in 85,827 usable surveys. A full report of the 2020 methodology and findings, as well as previous years' reports can be found at www.inys.indiana.edu.

Substance Use

Alcohol was the most frequently used substance reported by students in all of the surveyed grades. Nearly five percent of 6th-grade students (4.5%) reported drinking alcohol in the past month, and over one-fourth of 12th-grade students (28.5%) did so. While male students in 6th grade were more likely than females to report consuming alcohol in the past month, in all other grades female students were more likely to do so. Approximately one in eight 12th-grade student reported binge drinking in the past two weeks. Female students were more likely to report binge drinking through the 10th-grade, while older male students reported higher rates than females. Rates of past-month alcohol use were lower in 2020 compared to 2018 for all grades except 6th. Fewer students reported binge drinking in 2020 than in 2018 for all grades.

Electronic vapor products were the second-most prevalent substance used by Indiana youth, with almost one-fourth (23.0%) of 12th-grade students reporting having used them in the past month. The survey does not ask students what substances (nicotine, marijuana, etc.) were used with the vaping device. Female students reported higher rates of vaping than male students in all grades except 12th. Past-month prevalence of using electronic vapor products decreased significantly from 2018 rates for 8th- through 12th- grades, with the 12th-grade rate falling 5.6 percentage points from the 2018 survey.

Rates of marijuana use in the past month ranged from 1.0% of 6th-grade students to nearly one in six 12th-grade student (17.3%). Rates did not vary significantly by gender for any grade. While there was little

change in past month marijuana use from the 2018 rates for most grades, significant decreases were reported for 9th- and 11th- grades.

Use of cigarettes in the past month ranged from 1.2% of 6th-grade students to 6.7% of 12th-grade students. Rates of cigarette use did not vary significantly by gender, except for 12th-grade, where more male students reported using them. Past-month prevalence rates of cigarette use decreased significantly from 2018 rates for 8th- through 12th- grades, with the 11th-grade rate falling 3.9 percentage points from the 2018 survey.

Approximately one percent of 7th-grade students (1.3%) reported using prescription drugs without a doctor's order, while nearly three percent of 12th-grade students (2.8%) did so. Rates of misusing prescription drugs were lower than in 2018 for grades 9 through 12, and remained statistically similar for grades 7 and 8.

Table 1. Percentage of Students Who Reported Using Select Substances in the Past Month, by Grade and Gender, 2020

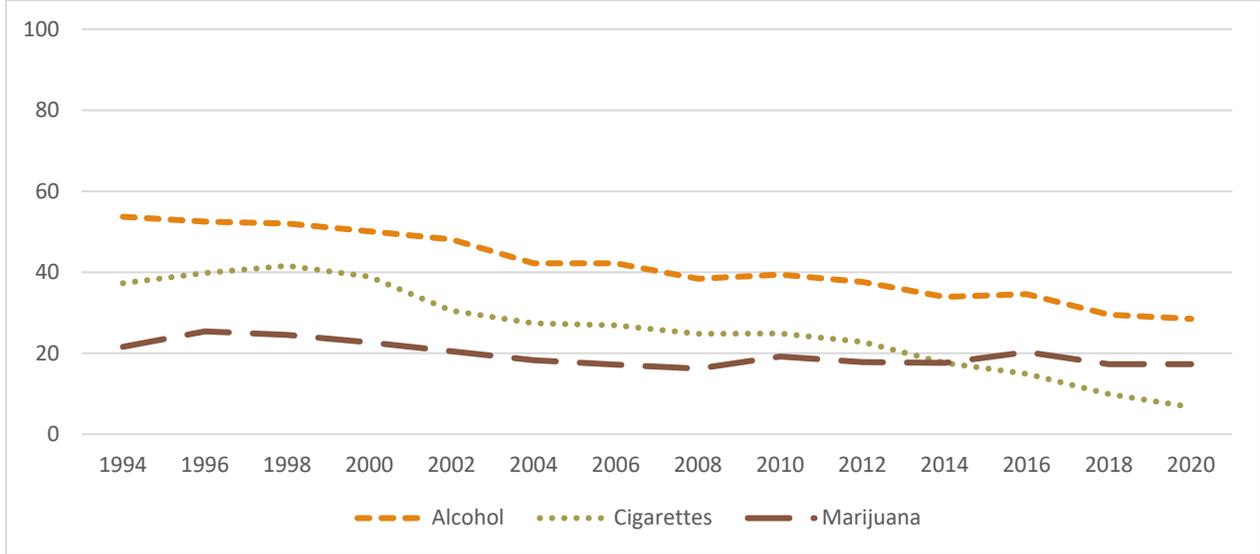
		6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Alcohol	Overall	4.5	7.8	11.2	14.4	19.5	20.8	28.5
	Male	4.9 *	7.2	9.9	12.6	17.4	19.0	27.8
	Female	4.0	8.4 *	12.5 *	16.1 *	21.4 *	22.4 *	29.2
Binge Drinking ^a	Overall	--	2.3	3.5	5.2	7.5	8.8	12.7
	Male	--	1.7	3.0	4.5	6.9	9.0	14.1 *
	Female	--	2.8 *	4.0 *	5.8 *	8.1 *	8.6	11.5
Electronic vapor products	Overall	--	6.5	10.0	13.0	17.3	18.2	23.0
	Male	--	5.8	8.8	11.5	15.7	17.4	23.6
	Female	--	7.2 *	11.1 *	14.5 *	18.7 *	18.9	22.4
Marijuana	Overall	1.0	2.8	5.5	8.2	12.2	12.9	17.3
	Male	1.1	2.9	5.2	7.7	11.9	12.7	18.0
	Female	0.9	2.8	5.8	8.6	12.5	13.1	16.7
Cigarettes	Overall	1.2	2.1	2.6	3.4	3.8	4.7	6.7
	Male	1.3	2.1	2.4	3.3	4.0	5.1	8.5 *
	Female	1.1	2.2	2.8	3.5	3.7	4.4	5.2
Prescription Drugs	Overall	2.4	1.3	1.9	2.0	2.6	2.4	2.8
	Male	2.8 *	1.2	1.6	1.6	2.5	2.3	3.1
	Female	2.0	1.3 *	2.2 *	2.4 *	2.6	2.6	2.5

Note. ^aBinge drinking was defined as consuming five or more drinks in a row in the past two weeks.

-- These substances were not included on the 6th-grade instrument.

* Difference between male and female rates is statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Figure 1. Percentage of 12th-Grade Students Who Reported Using Select Substances in the Past Month, 1994 – 2020 (Even Years Only)



Note. Significant changes in the methodology for calculating prevalence rates were made in 2015. Those changes generally resulted in higher percentages than would have been recorded with the previous methodology. Interpretation of changes in prevalence rates over time can appropriately be done for all years prior to 2015, and **separately** for 2016 through 2020.

Risk Factors

Availability

Parents were the primary source of alcohol for youth in 7th and 8th grades who drank alcohol in the past year, while older students (9th through 12th grade) who drank alcohol in the past year were most likely to report getting it at a party. Providing money to someone to purchase alcohol for the student became increasingly more common as students aged, with 30.0% of 12th-grade students reporting that they used that method to obtain alcohol. Very few students reported purchasing alcohol themselves from a retailer, ranging from 0.8% of 9th-grade students to 4.7% of 12th-grade students.

Table 2. Percentage of Students Who Drank Alcohol in the Past Year Who Reported Accessing Alcohol by Select Methods, by Grade, 2020

	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
My parents gave it to me	40.0	35.3	29.2	24.3	27.3	22.5
I got it at a party	21.0	29.6	36.5	44.5	48.6	50.3
I took it from home or a store	21.0	24.6	25.5	25.1	19.8	14.7
I gave someone money to buy it for me	3.0	6.2	9.1	16.2	24.2	30.0
I bought it at a restaurant, store, or public event	1.1	1.2	0.8	1.7	3.6	4.7

Note. Out of students who reported drinking alcohol in the past year (n = 16,473). Students could mark all that applied; percentages do not sum to 100%.

Perception of Risk

Approximately half of the students said they think there is no risk or only slight risk of harm from taking one or two drinks of alcohol nearly every day. There was little variance between grades. The percentage of students who said that they believe there is no risk or only slight risk of harm from smoking marijuana once or twice per week increased with grade-level. Over two-thirds of 12th-grade students (67.8%) reported believing there is negligible risk of harm from participating in the behavior. Approximately one-third of students reported believing that there is no or slight risk of harm from smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day, while approximately one-quarter of students felt that misusing prescription drugs did not present significant risk of harm.

Table 3. Percentage of Students Who Thought There Is No or Slight Risk of Harm for Select Behaviors, by Grade, 2020

	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Taking 1-2 alcoholic drinks per day	48.8	48.6	48.7	48.6	51.1	51.7
Smoking marijuana once or twice per week	41.3	45.8	54.0	58.6	63.4	67.8
Smoking 1+ packs of cigarettes per day	34.9	33.1	33.2	33.3	34.2	34.9
Using prescription drugs not prescribed to them	24.9	22.9	23.1	22.3	23.7	22.5

Perception of Peer Behavior

Students' perception of how other students behave influences their own choices. A heightened perception of peer substance use is generally associated with higher levels of actual use. In the 2020 Indiana Youth Survey, for all measured substances, students believed that a much higher percentage of their peers had used each substance than the percentage who had actually used that substance. For example, 12th-grade students on average reported that they believed half of the students in their school (51.0%) drank alcohol in the past month, whereas only 28.5% of 12th-grade students actually reported drinking alcohol in the past month. Likewise, for marijuana, while 12th-grade students on average estimated that half of the students at their school (50.1%) used marijuana in the past month, only 17.3% actually reported using it in the past month.

Table 4. Average of Students' Estimations of the Percentage of Students at Their School Who Used Select Substances in the Past Month, by Grade, 2020

	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Alcohol	22.1	27.7	43.4	47.0	49.4	51.0
Marijuana	20.8	28.5	44.3	48.2	49.0	50.1
Cigarettes	20.6	21.7	31.1	30.1	31.0	32.0
Prescription Drugs	21.0	22.1	29.6	28.7	26.5	25.4

Consequences

The percentage of students who reported performing poorly on a test or project in the past year due to their drinking or drug use ranged from 5.5% of 12th-grade students to 8.9% of 8th-grade students. Approximately six percent of students in 7th through 11th grades reported missing class in the past year because of their drinking or drug use.

Table 5. Percentage of Students Who Reported Experiencing Select Consequences as a Result of Their Drinking or Drug Use in the Past Year, by Grade, 2020

	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Performed poorly on a test or project	8.7	8.9	8.7	8.3	7.5	5.5
Missed class	5.7	6.2	6.6	6.3	6.1	5.1

Note. These questions were not included on the 6th-grade instrument.

Mental Health

The Indiana Youth Survey includes three questions on mental health. The percentage of students who said they felt so sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row in the past year that they stopped doing usual activities ranged from over one-fourth of 6th-grade students (28.9%) to 39.2% of 10th-grade students. Half of the female students in 10th grade (49.8%) reported experiencing this level of sadness. Questions on considering and attempting suicide also had the lowest rates among 6th-grade students and the highest rates reported by 10th-grade students. Over one in nine 6th-grade student (11.8%) reported that they had seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, while almost one in five 10th-grade student (19.3%) did so. Nine percent of 6th-grade students said they had made a plan about attempting suicide in the past year, ranging to 14.3% of 10th-grade students.

Female students reported dramatically higher rates of experiencing all of the mental health indicators included on the survey. In grades 7 through 9 female students were more than twice as likely to have experienced each of the emotions or behaviors, with approximately one-quarter of female students in 8th through 10th grades reporting that they had considered attempting suicide in the past year, and almost one-fifth of 8th-grade female students (19.3%) reporting that they had made a plan to attempt suicide.

Table 6. Percentage of Students Who Reported Select Mental Health Behaviors in the Past Year, by Grade and Gender, 2020

		6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Felt sad or hopeless for 2+ weeks in a row	Overall	28.9	30.5	33.5	35.2	39.2	36.6	36.0
	Male	23.3	20.2	21.5	22.7	27.6	26.5	27.4
	Female	34.4	40.6	45.5	46.8	49.8	45.3	43.5
Considered attempting suicide	Overall	11.8	15.2	17.6	18.0	19.3	17.9	17.3
	Male	7.8	9.0	10.5	11.4	13.0	13.4	13.6
	Female	15.8	21.3	24.5	24.1	25.1	21.9	20.5
Made a plan about attempting suicide	Overall	9.0	11.7	13.3	13.1	14.3	13.1	12.2
	Male	5.8	6.8	7.3	7.8	10.1	10.3	10.0
	Female	12.1	16.6	19.3	18.1	18.1	15.6	14.2

Note. All differences between male and female rates are statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Gambling

A student who reported having bet/gambled money in at least one of the behaviors investigated on the survey was considered to have gambled. Prevalence rates of past-year gambling among 7th- to 12th-grade students ranged from a low of 32.7% (11th grade) to a high of 40.4% (8th grade). Male students were much more likely to report having gambled in the past year, with approximately half of them in all grades reporting participating in at least one form of gambling. Male students in 10th and 11th grades were twice as likely to report gambling than female students.

Table 7. Percentage of Students Who Reported Any Gambling in the Past Year, by Grade and Gender, 2020

	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Overall	37.6	40.4	37.1	34.6	32.7	37.6
Male	47.7	51.0	47.9	46.6	44.6	49.0
Female	27.4	29.8	26.7	23.5	22.2	27.5

Note. Gambling questions were not included on the 6th-grade instrument. All differences between male and female rates are statistically significant ($p < .001$).

With the exception of students in 12th grade, for whom playing the lottery was the most frequent gambling behavior, students uniformly reported gambling on video games (via skins or loot boxes) more often than any other gambling behavior; this prevalence rate approached one quarter of students in 8th grade (23.3%). The prevalence rates for many forms of gambling were higher for students in 8th grade than for students in any other grade.

Table 8. Percentage of Students Reporting Select Gambling Behaviors in the Past Year, by Grade, 2020

	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Video game (e.g., skins, loot boxes)	21.3	23.3	19.8	18.7	16.2	15.5
Lottery	13.7	15.1	13.3	11.6	10.9	19.5
Card games	13.1	14.1	12.6	11.6	10.5	10.8
Competitive video gaming (Esports)	9.5	10.0	7.5	7.2	6.2	5.2
Charitable gambling	7.3	7.5	6.6	6.3	6.0	6.4
Other sports betting	6.9	7.5	6.6	5.6	5.1	4.8
Fantasy sports	6.2	7.0	6.8	6.1	6.0	6.5
Pools (e.g., March Madness)	6.0	7.4	7.7	7.3	7.1	7.8
Gambled in other ways	5.8	6.0	4.3	4.2	2.8	3.2
Online gambling (e.g., poker, casino-style games)	3.0	3.2	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.6
Horse track betting	1.9	2.5	2.2	2.6	1.9	2.7
Casino	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.6

Note. Gambling questions were not included on the 6th-grade instrument.