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ACROSS OUR DESKS TO YOURS

Hoosier Youth: Right On Track!

By Ruth Gassman, Ph.D.

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Prevention efforts in the state of Indiana continue to make strides toward reducing drug use among children and adolescents. The recent release of the 2005 results from the national Monitoring the Future survey has given us the opportunity to examine gateway drugs (alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana) prevalence rates specific to Indiana with the rest of the nation. Comparing the Indiana Prevention Resource Center's (IPRC) *Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use by Indiana Children and Adolescents 2005 Survey* findings to national surveys helps to provide a snapshot of Indiana's progress and areas needing improvement in contrast to the rest of the nation. For this brief report we looked at self-reported prevalence rates of 8th and 12th grade students between years 2004 and 2005.

Cigarette Use

Although reported 30-day trends in cigarette use have not yet reached national levels, the decrease seen in Indiana for 8th graders was statistically significant (from 13.4% to 12.5%), whereas the national level

held steady (9.2% to 9.3%). For grade 12, slight decreases occurred in monthly cigarette use in both Indiana and the nation. Furthermore, an encouraging trend is that 12th graders both in Indiana and nationally reported a meaningful (i.e. statistically significant) decrease in daily use of cigarettes (see table below).

Daily Cigarette Use Among 12th graders (percent)

	2004	2005
Indiana	18.0	16.4*
Nation	15.6	13.6*

*Statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

At the same time, daily cigarette use among Indiana 12th graders continues to exceed the national rate.

Binge Drinking

Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks in a row at least once in the prior two weeks. Indiana 8th grade students reported a meaningful decrease in binge drinking (from 13.4% to 11.6%) compared to students nationally who reported a slight decrease (from 11.4% to 10.5%). Although *Next page*

New Drug Info

PREVALERT: Candy Tobacco

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS:

- **Heroin: An Educational Perspective**
- **Methamphetamine in Indiana**

Available at: www.drugs.indiana.edu

Hoosier Youth: Right On Track!

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By Ruth Gassman, Ph.D.

Indiana 8th graders have not yet reached national levels, Hoosiers have made substantial progress as demonstrated by the 2005 level, which is approximately at the 2004 national prevalence rate. For grade 12, slight decreases occurred in binge drinking both in Indiana and the nation. In 2005, Indiana 12th graders have continued the recent trend of remaining below the national average for binge drinking (25.9% vs. 28.1%, respectively).

Marijuana Use

Eighth and 12th grade 30-day trends in marijuana use showed slight decreases in Indiana, whereas they appear to have leveled off nationally. Indiana 8th graders continue to narrow the prevalence gap with their national counterparts. In 2004, marijuana use among Indiana 8th graders was 3.4 percentage points higher than the national level (9.8% vs. 6.4%) and in 2005, only 2.7 points higher (9.3% vs. 6.6%). In 2005, Indiana 12th graders continued the trend of remaining below the national average for marijuana use (17.8% vs. 19.8%, respectively).

Conclusion

In 2005, meaningful decreases were seen in the percentage of Indiana 8th graders who used cigarettes and binge drank. At the same time, a slight decrease occurred in the percentage that used marijuana. In contrast, national 30-day marijuana use trends among 8th graders appeared level. For Indiana 12th graders, slight declines occurred in the percentage who smoked cigarettes, marijuana, and binge drank. The percentage of Indiana 12th graders who reported binge drinking remained below the national average. Finally, at the national level, small improvements were observed in the percentage of 12th graders who used cigarettes and binge drank, but use of marijuana leveled off and remained above Indiana's state average.

When compared with the national data, Indiana's prevention efforts are especially noticeable in use reductions among 8th graders.

Indiana's prevention successes with 12th graders are on par with the nation's for cigarette use and binge drinking, and appear to have continued the past progress toward reducing marijuana use. This is a very favorable report card tempered by the recognition that Indiana remains above the national average in several categories, including the use of cigarettes.

References:

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Notes:

By slight the author means small but not statistically significant.

According to the National Institutes of Health, statistically significant "describes a mathematical measure of difference between groups. The difference is said to be statistically significant if it is greater than what might be expected to happen by chance alone." (<http://www.nci.nih.gov/statistics/glossary>)

Upcoming Events

February 7 Indianapolis—IN Piece of the Pie Advocacy Day. www.insophe.org.

February 14—16 Washington—D.C. National Leadership Forum. <http://cadca.org>

February 22 Indianapolis, IN IU Conference on Healthy Living. <http://alumni.iupui.edu>

For more events, visit www.drugs.indiana.edu

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