

October 2010

**Data in this report
is from the**

2009-2010 school year

West Bloomfield Schools

- PRIDE survey - 8th, 10th and 12th grades
- WBHS Junior/Senior survey on alcohol and marijuana use while driving
- ACHC Parent Survey November 2009

Our mission is to build community partnerships to reduce high risk behaviors including alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, to help ensure that our youth may grow to their greatest potential.

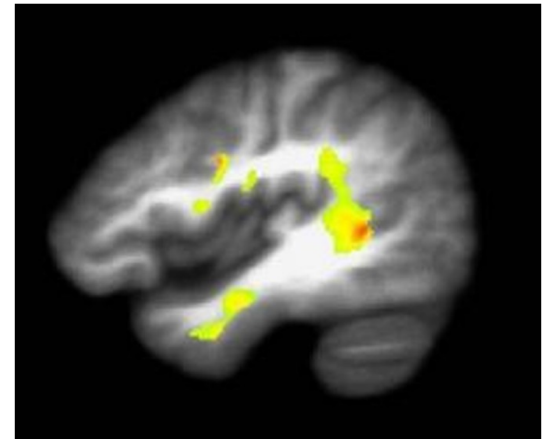
www.gwbcoalition.org

Heavy Marijuana Use May Damage Developing Brain In Teens

The use of marijuana can produce adverse physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral effects. It can impair short-term memory and judgment and distort perception.

Multiple studies have shown an association between chronic marijuana use and increased rates of anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, and schizophrenia. At the present time, the strongest evidence links marijuana use and schizophrenia and/or related disorders. High doses of marijuana can produce an acute psychotic reaction; in addition, use of the drug may trigger the onset or relapse of schizophrenia in vulnerable individuals. A recent study found that marijuana use at age 15 increased the risk of schizophrenia disorder at age 26 from 3% to 10% (Areseneault et al. 2002). Another study found that for individuals who met criteria for marijuana dependence at age 18 and 21, the risk for psychosis was 3.7 and 2.3 times greater than for individuals without marijuana dependence (Fergusson et al. 2003).

Both of these studies suggest the earlier the marijuana use, the greater the risk for schizophrenia.



Yellow areas in the brain of a heavy marijuana smoker show brain regions with the most significant abnormalities. These areas correspond with those under development during normal adolescent years. (Credit: The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia)

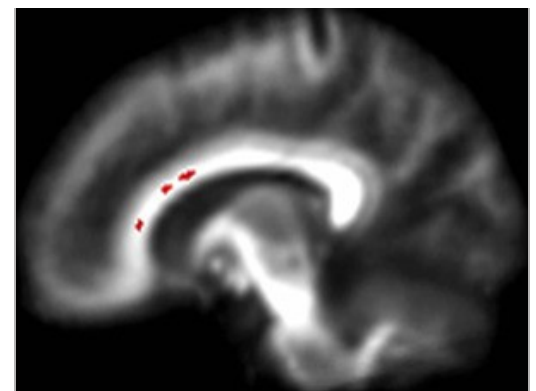
For teenagers, the effects of a drunken night out may linger long after the hangover wears off

A recent study led by neuroscientist Susan Tapert of the University of California, San Diego compared the brain scans of teens who drink heavily with the scans of teens who don't.

Tapert's team found damaged nerve tissue in the brains of the teens who drank. The researchers believe this damage negatively affects attention span in boys, and girls' ability to comprehend and interpret visual information.

"First of all, the adolescent brain is still undergoing several maturational processes that render it more vulnerable to some of the effects of substances," Tapert says.

In other words, key areas of the brain are still under construction during the adolescent years, and are more sensitive to the toxic effects of drugs and alcohol.

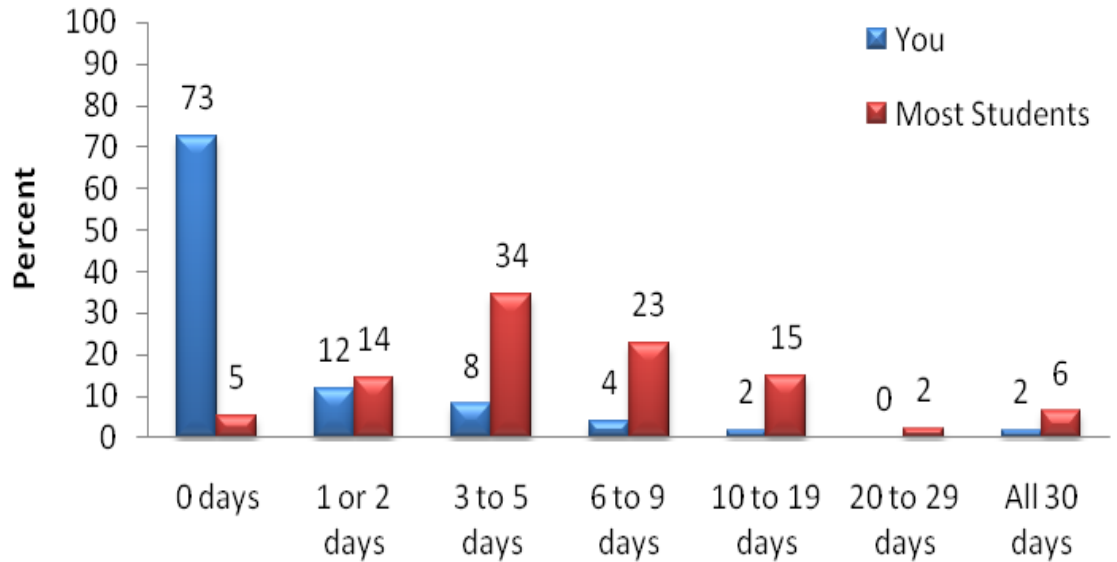


The red specks highlight where the integrity of the brain's white matter is significantly less in the teens who binge drink, compared to those who do not. Courtesy of Susan Tapert/Tim McQueeny, UCSD

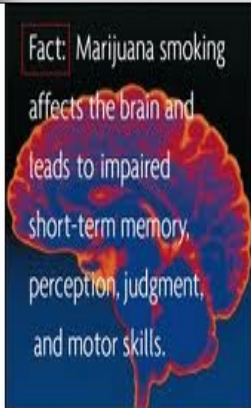
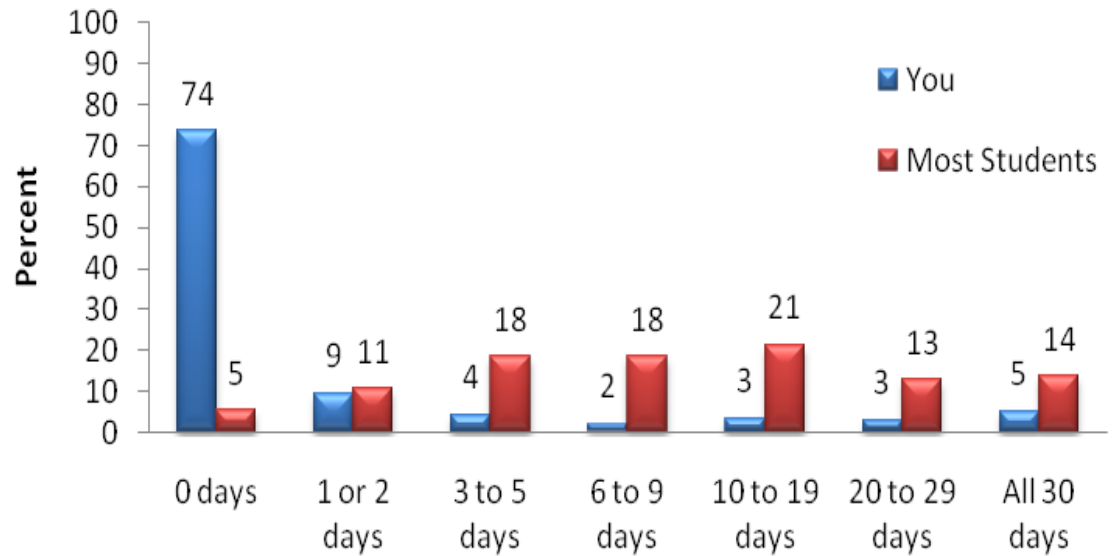
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Alcohol is still the #1 drug of choice for teens in West Bloomfield & Nationwide. Our data shows the #1 way our kids are getting alcohol is from older siblings or older friends. (11%) The #2 place they get it is either your home with your knowledge (6%) or from a friends home without parent knowledge. (7%) Our data shows that more teens are driving while smoking marijuana (18.5%) than while drinking (7%). However, MOST of our West Bloomfield students are not drinking or smoking weed while driving.

During the past 30 days, on how many days do you think (including you) the following people drank alcohol?

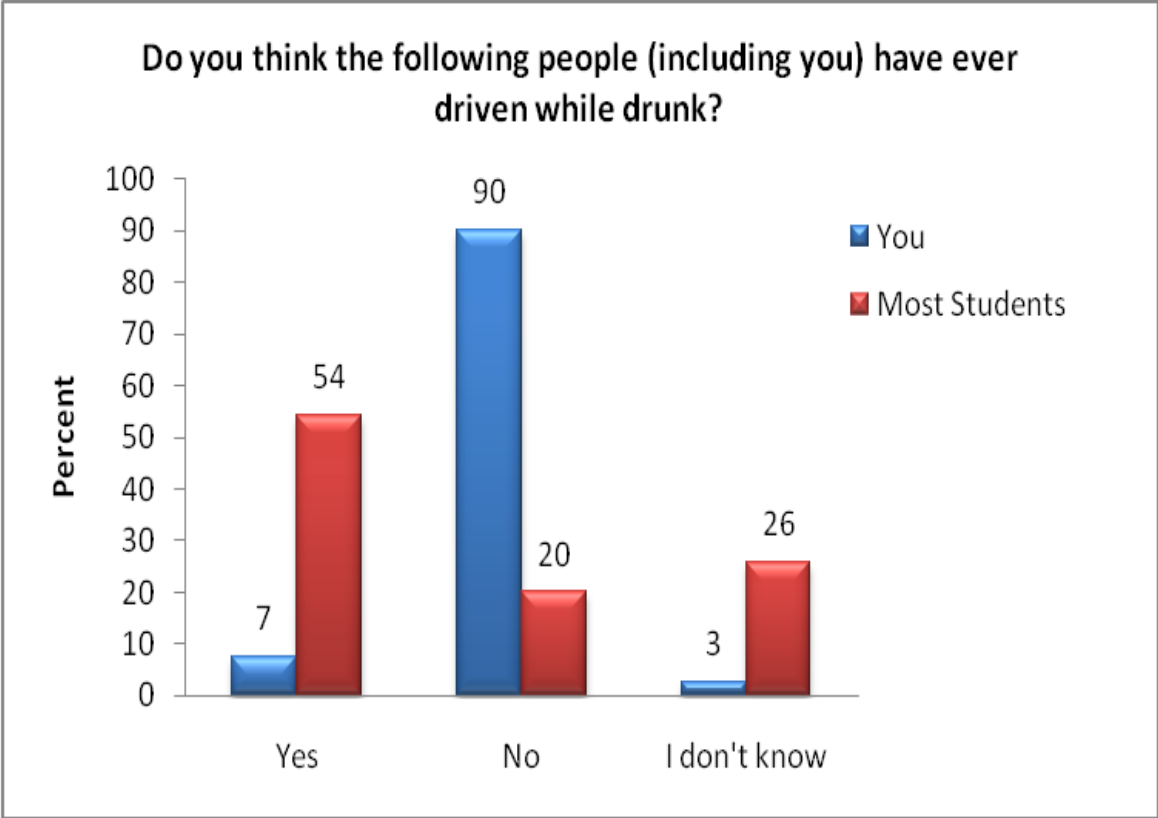


During the past 30 days, on how many days do you think the following people (including you) smoked marijuana?



Teens believe that "everyone is doing it" but we know through our surveys that MOST of our teens are not using. Charts reflect use and perception of use.

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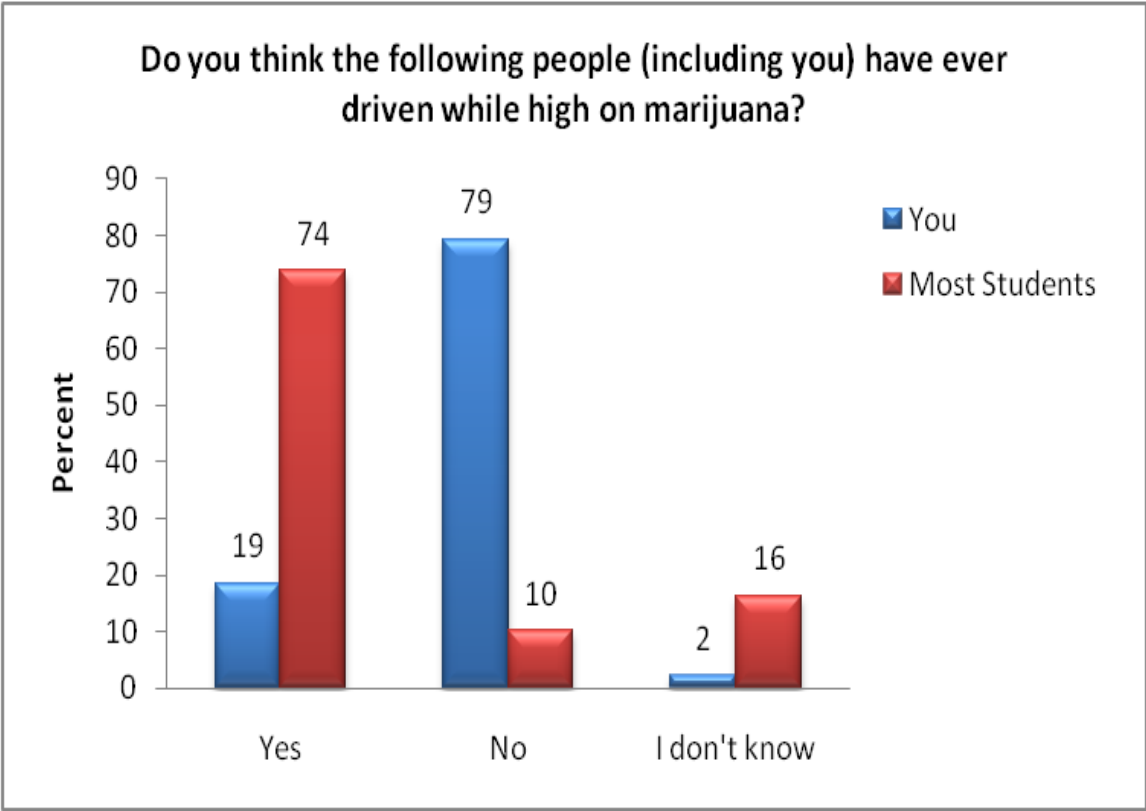


Sharing the Facts with our Young Drivers

Marijuana affects many skills required for safe driving: alertness, concentration, coordination, and reaction time. Marijuana use can make it difficult to judge distances and react to signals and sounds on the road.

There is data showing that marijuana can play a role in motor vehicle crashes. Studies show that approximately 4-14 percent of drivers who sustained injury or died in traffic accidents tested positive for THC. In many of these cases, alcohol was detected as well. When users combine marijuana with alcohol, as they often do, the hazards of driving can be more severe than with either drug alone.

In a study conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a moderate dose of marijuana alone was shown to impair driving performance; however, the effects of even a low dose of marijuana combined with alcohol were markedly greater than those of either drug alone.



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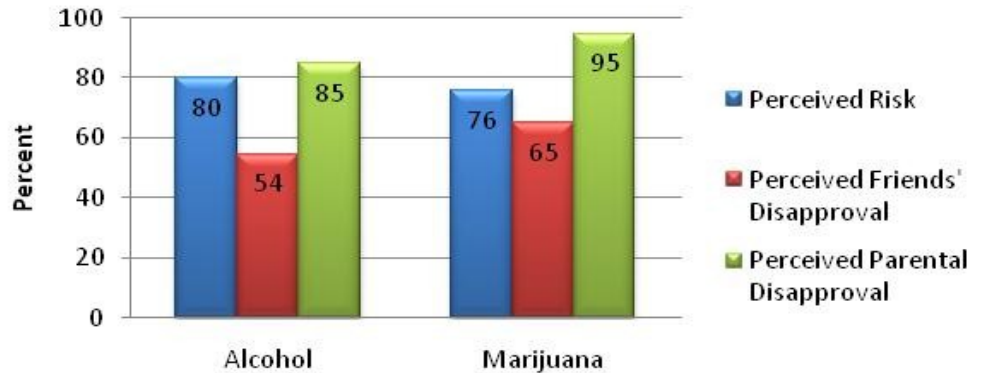
Research shows that the #1 reason kids do not use drugs or alcohol is that they don't want to disappoint their parents.

In order to talk to your teens, you need to be educated about what is going on out there. One of the roles of our Coalition is to educate parents. Stay connected with us and we will help you. Also, the internet has tremendous resources if you know where to look. We can help with that as well.



"If you set clear rules for me, make sure you have consequences if I break them. I am looking to you for guidance."

West Bloomfield 8th, 10th, 12th Grade Perceived Risk of Harm Friends' and Parental Disapproval



By 12th grade only 50% of students say that their parents would believe that alcohol is very wrong for them to use.

Only 27% of 12th grade students feel that their friends would believe it is very wrong to use alcohol. Only 17% of 12th graders feel that their friends would believe it is very wrong to use marijuana.

What else are our West Bloomfield 8th, 10th and 12th grade students telling us?

- 70% of WEST BLOOMFIELD 12th grade students and 54% of 10th grade students surveyed report that it is fairly easy or very easy to get alcohol products.
- 60% of WEST BLOOMFIELD 12th grade students and 44% of 10th grade students surveyed report that it is fairly easy or very easy to get marijuana products.
- Almost 50% of WEST BLOOMFIELD students surveyed report that the most important person to talk to if they needed help with a drug or alcohol problem would be their parents. 36% said they would ask a friend for help.
- Over 40% of WEST BLOOMFIELD students surveyed say that their parents never or seldom talk about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.
- 78% of WEST BLOOMFIELD students surveyed report that their parents set clear rules for them often or a lot. Only 53% of WEST BLOOMFIELD students surveyed report that their parents punish them when they break the rules.

In our ACHC Parent survey from 2009, over 23% of West Bloomfield parents admit that they never or seldom talk about drugs and alcohol with their kids