



KEY FINDINGS OF THE 2009 PARTNERSHIP/ METLIFE FOUNDATION ATTITUDE TRACKING STUDY (PATS)

The Partnership/ MetLife Foundation Attitude Tracking Study (PATS) shows a reversal in the declines in teen abuse of drugs and alcohol that we've seen since 1998. The national study also highlights the critical need for parents to take immediate action as more teens are using alcohol, Ecstasy and marijuana.

PATS 2009 – Teen Key Findings:

After a decade of consistent declines in teen drug abuse, in which methamphetamine use dropped by over 60 percent, and past-month alcohol and marijuana use were reduced by 30 percent, the 2009 study points to marked upswings in use of drugs that teens are likely to encounter at parties and in other social situations.

- *The number of teens in grades 9-12 that used alcohol in the past month has grown by 11 percent, (from 35 percent in 2008 to 39 percent in 2009),*
- *Past year Ecstasy use shows a 67 percent increase (from 6 percent in 2008 to 10 percent in 2009),*
- *Past year marijuana use shows a 19 percent increase (from 32 percent in 2008 to 38 percent in 2009).*

Underlying these increases are negative shifts in teen attitudes, particularly a growing belief in the benefits and acceptability of drug use and drinking.

- *The percentage of teens agreeing that "being high feels good" increased significantly from 45 percent in 2008 to 51 percent in 2009.*
- *Those saying that "friends usually get high at parties" increased from 69 percent to 75 percent over the same time period.*
- *The study found a significant drop in the number of teens agreeing strongly that they "don't want to hang around drug users" – from 35 percent in 2008 to 30 percent in 2009.*

KEY FINDINGS:

Partnership/MetLife Foundation Attitude Tracking Study 2009

There has been no significant change in teen abuse of prescription (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines.

- *Teen abuse of Rx medicines has remained stable with about 1 in 5 teens in grades 9-12 (20 percent) or 3.2 million reporting abuse of a prescription medication at least once in their lives.*
- *1 in 7 teens (15 percent) or 2.4 million teens reporting abuse of a prescription pain reliever in the past year and eight percent or 1.3 million teens reported OTC cough medicine abuse in the past year.*
- *More than half, or 56 percent, of teens in grades 9-12 believe Rx drugs are easier to get than illegal drugs.*
- *62 percent believe most teens get Rx drugs from their own family's medicine cabinets.*
- *63 percent believe Rx drugs are easy to get from their parent's medicine cabinet, up significantly from 56 percent just last year.*

PATS 2009 – Parent Key Findings:

The study finds that many parents are not acting early enough to protect their children from the risks of drugs and alcohol. The resurgence in teen drug and alcohol use comes at a time when pro-drug cues in popular culture – in film, television and online – abound, and when funding for federal prevention programs has been declining for several years. This creates an urgent need for parents to take immediate action as soon as they suspect or know their child is using.

- *20 percent of parents say their child (ages 10-19) has already used drugs or alcohol beyond an “experimental” level.*
- *Among parents of teens ages 14-19, that percentage jumps to 31 percent, nearly one third.*
 - *Of those parents of teens who have used, nearly half (47 percent) either waited to take action or took no action at all.*

PATS 2009 – Other Trends in Teen Smoking and Drug Use:

- *Teen smoking rates have remained stable with 25 percent of teens reporting smoking cigarettes in the past month.*
- *Teen inhalant use remains steady at 10 percent for past year use, yet only 66 percent of teens report that “sniffing or huffing things to get high can kill you,” significantly less than the 70 percent of teens who agreed just last year.*
- *Steroid and heroin use among teens remains low at 5 percent for lifetime use.*

#

KEY FINDINGS:

Partnership/MetLife Foundation Attitude Tracking Study 2009