2016

KALAMAZOO COUNTY

COMMUNITY TASK FORCE REPORT

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

MAKING CONNECTIONS

OUR COMMUNITY, OUR INITIATIVES, OUR HEALTH.

THE 2016 COMMUNITY REPORT IS DEDICATED TO THE WORK OF DR. MICHAEL LIEPMAN

The Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force, through its members and partnering agencies, was able to compile several sources of data into this user-friendly overview of what youth substance use in Kalamazoo County looks like, how it impacts areas such as health and education, and what you can do to prevent it. This report is a tool for anyone who works with youth; it can inform policies and practices, be used for education and training on youth substance use trends, or support initiatives that support prevention and promote healthy behaviors.

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A special thanks for the continued support of our major funders:

prevention WORKS engage change.™

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration SAMHSA

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health

This year, Task Force members and community partners volunteered over

2,000 hours

and drove more than

1,750 miles

to help make our community a healthy and safe place to live.

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Substance Use Disorders are a public health issue and have to be treated as the serious, pervasive concern that they are. There must be a comprehensive plan to address substance use in the community which begins with prevention strategies and enlists the support of the treatment and recovery community. The Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force provides a unique and valuable forum for stakeholders to come together to form a vehicle for change. Each member and community partner involved with the Task Force brings a unique viewpoint to the work and is able to support the mission in a different way. Prevention is a cornerstone of a comprehensive plan to change communities' alcohol and drug use patterns. I can confidently say that throughout the years, the Task Force has made a difference in the lives of the residents of Kalamazoo County as it has implemented its mission. Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health and I, personally, are proud to support the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force and to be part of its work.

Mindie Smith MA LLP CAADC
Director of Substance Use Disorders and Integrated Care

DISPOSE UNWANTED MEDICATIONS HERE

RED MED BOX

REDMEDBOX.COM

SINCE 2011, KALAMAZOO COUNTY
RED MED BOXES HAVE COLLECTED OVER

25,246 LBS. OF UNUSED AND UNWANTED MEDICATION.

THERE ARE SIX RED MED BOX COLLECTION SITES IN KALAMAZOO COUNTY.
Visit redmedbox.com for locations and more information.

AN AVERAGE OF 171 PRESCRIPTION PILLS WERE PRESCRIBED PER HOUSEHOLD IN KALAMAZOO COUNTY IN 2015.

131 OF THOSE WERE PRESCRIPTION PAINKILLERS

THAT'S 77% OPIOIDS

(Michigan Automated Prescription System).

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Substance use can be an overwhelming obstacle to a youth's ability to succeed and a major barrier to the future prosperity of our community….

Youth that use drugs and alcohol are at greater risk for **accidental overdose, teen pregnancy, and school drop-out**
(2014 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

In 2015, there were **276 alcohol-related traffic crashes** in Kalamazoo County
(Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning).

Estimates of the total overall costs of substance abuse in the United States, including productivity, health, and crime related costs exceed **$700 billion** annually
(2014 National Institute on Drug Abuse).

PREVENTION 101: RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Reducing the "risk factors" in the environments of children (i.e. those factors that increase the odds that they will become involved in high-risk behaviors, like substance use), while increasing the "protective factors" that buffer children from the full impact of such risk factors and other life dangers, should be the focus of every family, school, and youth-serving community organization.

EXAMPLES OF YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE RISK FACTORS:

- Alcohol and other drugs being readily available
- Community laws and norms that are favorable towards drug use
- Parents use of drugs or tolerance of youth use
- Students lacking commitment or sense of belonging in school
- Youth perception that most of their friends/peers use
- Starting to use at a young age

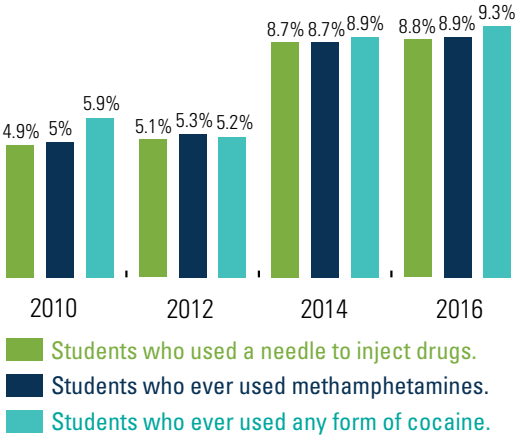
EXAMPLES OF YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

- Strong bonds between youth and adults
- Building the skills necessary for resisting pressures to use
- Opportunities for youth to have meaningful involvement in the community
- Recognition of youth achievement
- Clear rules that youth substance use is not acceptable, and consistently enforced consequences for substance use

HOW DO WE KNOW? A WORD ABOUT THE DATA

This brief report is a compilation of indicators collected from various sources — the largest of these sources being the Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth Survey (MiPHY). Kalamazoo County public school districts have participated in this state survey, providing a representative sample of the youth in Kalamazoo County. It is important to note, with all data presented in this report, causation is not implied.

Kalamazoo County Middle School Students Reported Rate of Ever Using Illicit Drugs



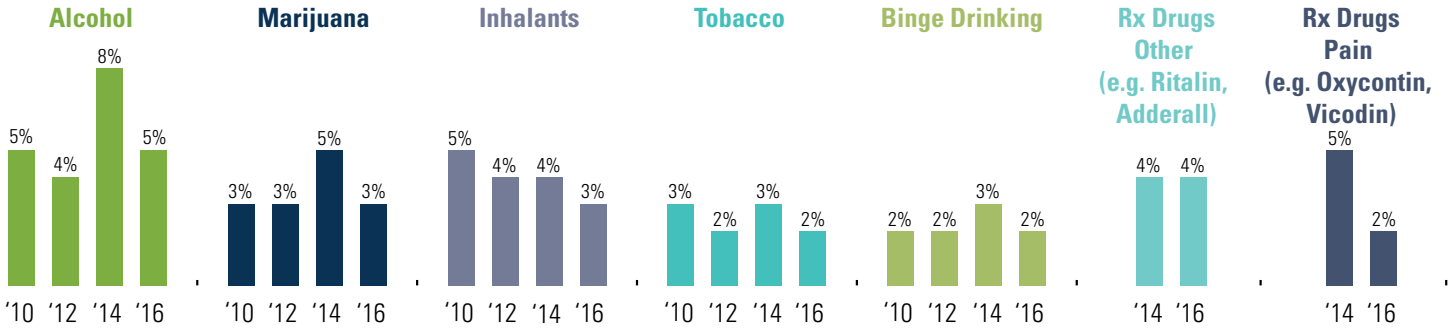
Source: MiPHY

The information in this data set is alarming. Note the increased lifetime use reported by 7th grade students in 2014, and staying stable at that rate in 2016. More work needs to be done targeting earlier ages with prevention.

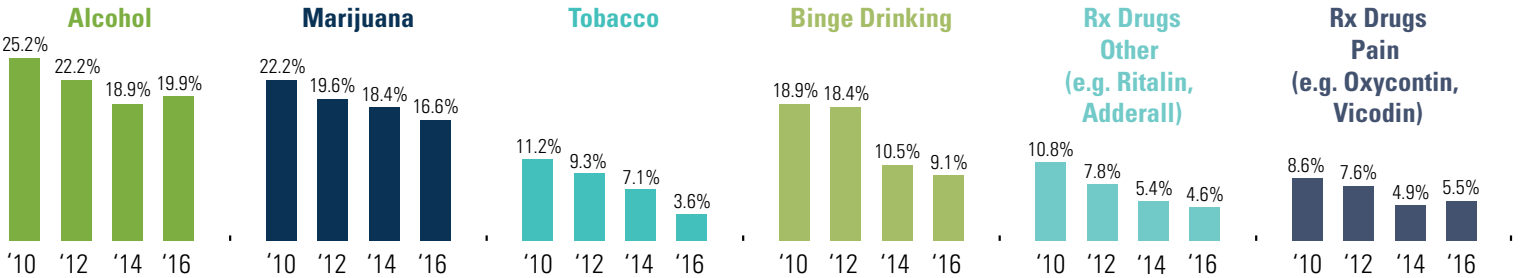
30 DAY USE HAS GENERALLY REMAINED BELOW 5% AMONG KALAMAZOO COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

30 Day Use Reported by Kalamazoo County Middle and High School Students *Source: MiPHY*

Middle School Students



High School Students



ALL ABOUT OUR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

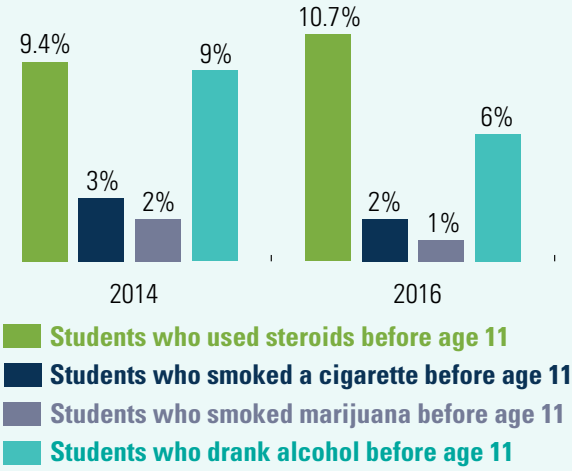
My personal and professional desire is that our youth become caring, responsible, and productive adults. Substance use is a roadblock to this goal. Research shows that youth with the most assets are least likely to engage in high-risk behavior, including alcohol and illicit drug use. The Search Institute created a list of 40 Developmental Assets which include support and empowerment of our youth and setting boundaries and expectations so that youth can develop positive values and a positive identity. I believe it is our job as a community to support and build developmental assets in the youth of our community.

The work of the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force is contributing to creating assets in our youth through the strategies it deploys. For example, the Task Force offers the community tools to keep substances out of the hands of our youth by supporting Red Med boxes and offering the Sticker Shock campaign. The Task Force has a Youth Action Team which engages and encourages youth to "Live Above the Influence." I am committed to the work of the Task Force in building a Kalamazoo community that supports the healthy development of our youth. I encourage you to join our work.

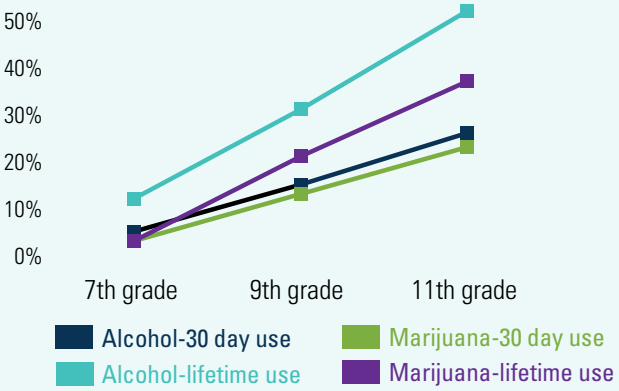
Diane Marquess, LPC
Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force Chair
Behavioral Health Services Director, Family & Children Services

YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE TRENDS — A COMPARISON *Source: MiPHY*

Kalamazoo County Middle School Students' Early Usage of Drugs and Alcohol

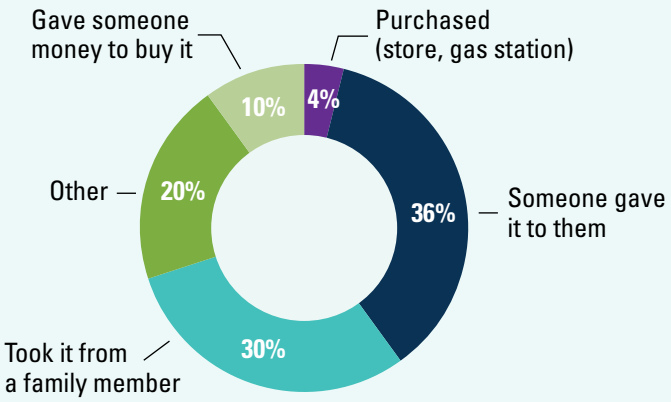


The Class of 2017 Reports Increased Use as They Get Older

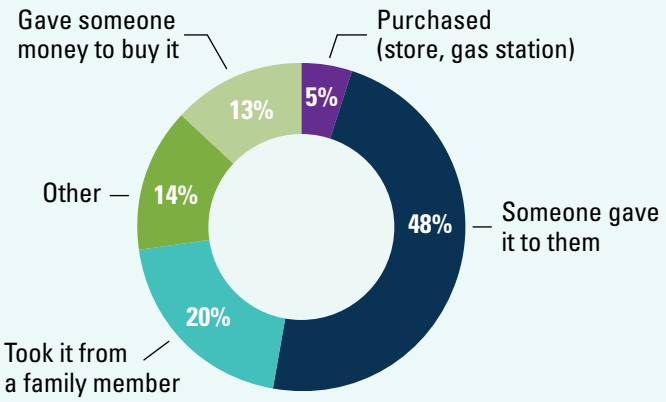


Where Kalamazoo County Middle and High School Students Are Accessing Alcohol

Middle School Students



High School Students



S.T.R.E.E.T. is an after school program provided by the Community Healing Centers designed to help homeless boys, age 10 to 17, who live on Kalamazoo's Northside, where alcohol and drug abuse is an issue in at least 1 out of 3 homes. The S.T.R.E.E.T. program teaches: **S**urvive, build relationships based on mutual respect and **T**rust, provide needed **R**esources, provide **E**ducation and opportunities to rebuilt self-esteem, **E**mpower young men to move forward…the results: **T**hey become productive, positive role models.

Malik Williams wrote: "I'm thankful for the S.T.R.E.E.T. program because it teaches me to deal with issues at home and school. I used to argue with my mother and not listen to her, talk back to my teachers, and get in trouble at school. The staff help me with my work, help me make better decisions, and improve my behavior. S.T.R.E.E.T. is a great place for me to attend."

For enrollment, referrals or more Information call 269-343-1651.

Charlene Taylor
Prevention/STREET Coordinator
Community Healing Centers

YOUTH BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE

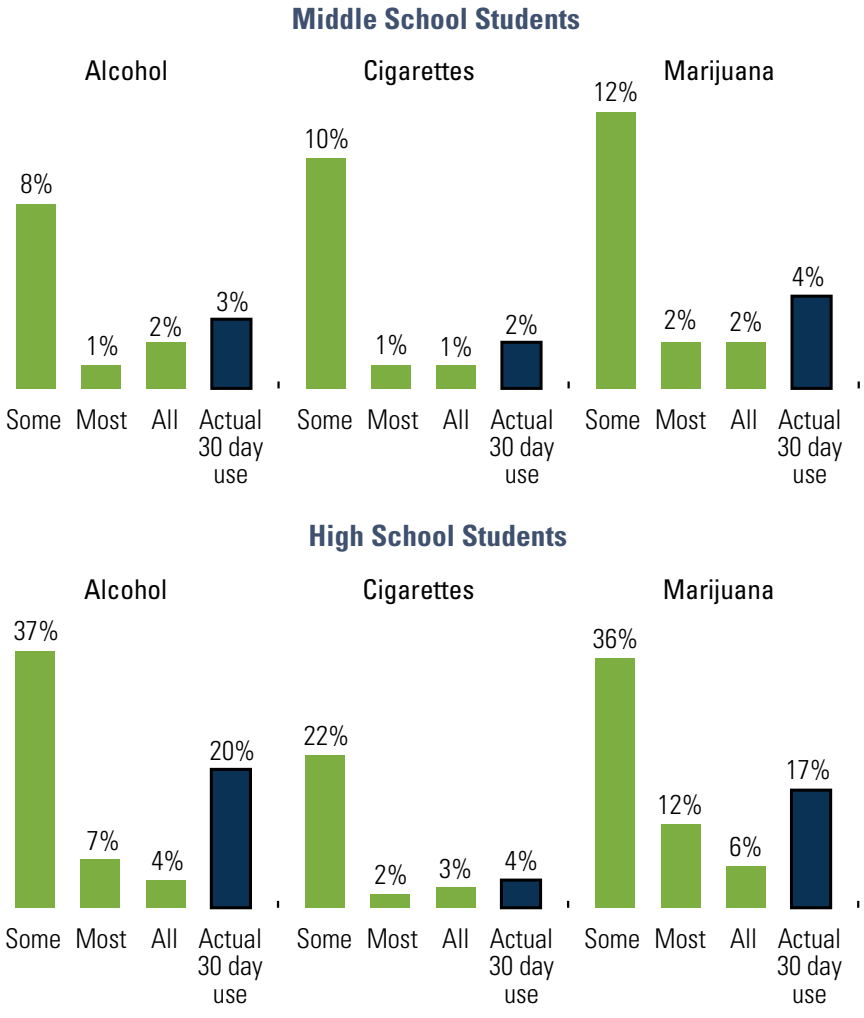
One reason that we see a gradual increase in use as youth get older has to do with one's perception or beliefs about the use of substances. The prevalence of youth substance use increases as their perception of harm around the use of substances decreases.

THE PREVENTION SCIENCE BEHIND SOCIAL NORMING

A skewed social norm is the belief that most people, or at least more people than what is actually accurate, are engaging in a particular behavior. If we can correct the "misperceptions" that exist, over the course of time behavior should reflect the more accurate norm.

Kalamazoo County Middle and High School Students Overestimate How Many of Their Peers Are Using Substances *Source: MiPHY*

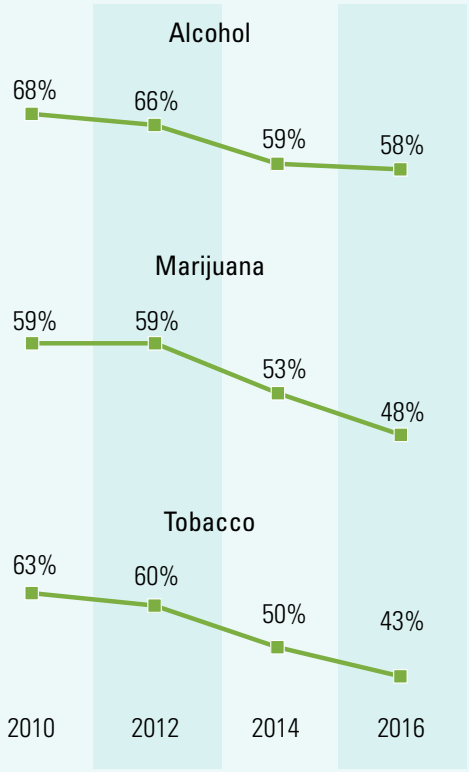
Students were asked how many of their peers they believed are using the following substances:



PERCEIVED EASE OF ACCESS

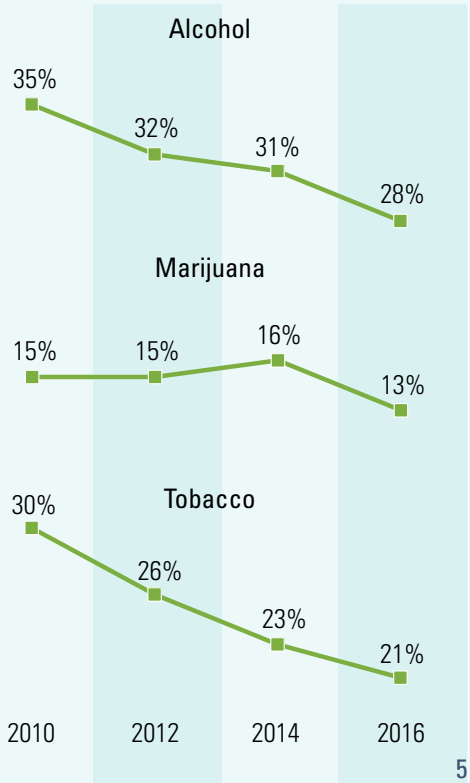
Fewer Kalamazoo County **High School Students** are Reporting that it is Easy or Very Easy to Obtain Alcohol, Marijuana, and Tobacco Each Year

Source: MiPHY



Fewer Kalamazoo County **Middle School Students** are Reporting that it is Easy or Very Easy to Obtain Alcohol, Marijuana, and Tobacco Each Year

Source: MiPHY



MARIJUANA: AN EMERGING ISSUE AMONG YOUTH

NOT YOUR TYPICAL IMPAIRED DRIVER

In January 2014, a jury convicted Lisa Bergman of two counts of second-degree murder after she killed two men while driving under the influence of drugs *(i.e., Oxycontin and Soma)*. She is currently serving 25 - 50 years in prison.

At trial, witnesses testified that Bergman's F-150 pickup truck crossed over the center-line and collided with another truck. The two men ages 19 and 20 were pronounced dead at the scene.

A deputy testified to the following at trial, "Bergman was one of the most impaired people I have ever seen operating a vehicle."[1] According to the prosecutors, this was not the first time the defendant drove under the influence of drugs.[2]

In another case this year, 18-year-old Trent Sheldon pled guilty to Operating While Intoxicated Causing Death. The defendant stated at his plea that he had consumed marijuana prior to driving his vehicle.[3] The victim's tow truck was facing northbound in the southbound lane with emergency lights activated. At the time, the victim was helping pull a car out of the ditch. The defendant was southbound when he swerved to the right onto the shoulder to avoid hitting the tow truck, striking and killing the victim.[4]

Our society is all too familiar with the dangers of drunk driving and distracted driving. Cases like Bergman and Sheldon bring to attention another growing problem — "drugged driving."

DRUGGED DRIVING IS RISING:

About 20 percent of drivers pulled over tested positive for at least one drug in 2014, up from 16.3 percent in 2007. Some 12.6 percent of drivers had evidence of marijuana use in their systems, up from 8.6 percent in 2007.

More than 15 percent of drivers tested positive for at least one illegal drug, up from 12 percent in 2007.[5]

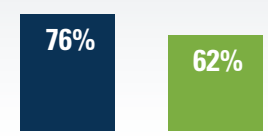
Use of illegal drugs or misuse of prescription drugs can make driving a car unsafe — just like driving after drinking alcohol.[6] Drugged driving puts not only the driver but also passengers and others who share the road at risk.

Kenneth Stecker
Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor
Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan

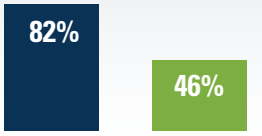
[1] CBS News, Detroit Article captioned "Woman Convicted of Murder in Drugged Driving Case," January 25, 2014, citing The Times Herald. [2] Id. [3] Times Herald Article, "Teen pleads guilty in tow truck driver's death," March 1, 2016. [4] Id. [5] www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/drugged-driving [6] Id.

Kalamazoo County Middle and High School Students Have Different Perceptions of the Health Risks Posed by Cigarettes as Compared to Marijuana

Two thirds of middle school students perceive regular marijuana use as a moderate or great risk to one's health.



Less than 50% of high school students perceive regular marijuana use as a moderate or great risk to one's health.



Source: MiPHY (2016)

EDIBLES AND MARIJUANA CONCENTRATES

With legalized medical marijuana laws in effect in Michigan and several other states, and legalized recreational marijuana use potentially on the horizon, the Task Force is putting an emphasis on education and awareness around youth use of illicit marijuana.

Edibles, such as cookies and chocolates, made from THC concentrates are typically 10x more potent than traditional joints. Higher THC levels may mean a greater risk for addiction if users are regularly exposing themselves to high doses. And because these items often look like regular candy or other children's foods, they can be ingested unknowingly.

Marijuana concentrates (Butane Hash Oil, also referred to as "dabbing") can be odorless and used in vaporizing pens, making it easier for people to conceal.

AN EYE ON COLORADO

Key safety and health impacts indicated after the legalization of recreational marijuana in Colorado in 2014 are as follows:

Public Safety: Fatalities with THC-only or THC-in-combination positive drivers **increased 44%, from 55 in 2013 to 79 in 2014.**

Public Health: According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, past 30 day **use of marijuana has increased significantly for young adults (18 to 25 years old), from 21% in 2006 to 31% in 2014.**

Youth Impact: Poison Control calls for exposure to marijuana for ages 0-17 have **increased from 60 in 2013, to 86 in 2014, to 111 in 2015.**

Reed, J. K., Hilkey, S., Smith, J. M., & English, K. (2016). Marijuana Legalization in Colorado: Early Findings (Rep.). Denver, CO: Colorado Department of Public Safety.

OTHER EMERGING TRENDS

E-CIGARETTES

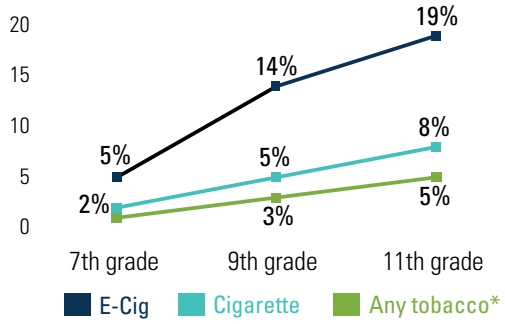
Electronic cigarettes and vapor devices are battery -operated mechanisms designed to deliver nicotine with flavorings and other chemicals to users as vapor instead of smoke.

16.1% **of middle and high school students nationally reported using an e-cigarette in the past 30 days**

19.4% **of middle and high school students nationally reported having tried an e-cigarette**

Source: CDC's 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey

Percentage of Kalamazoo County 7th, 9th, and 11th Grade Students who Reported Vaping Compared to Smoking a Cigarette in the Past 30-Days

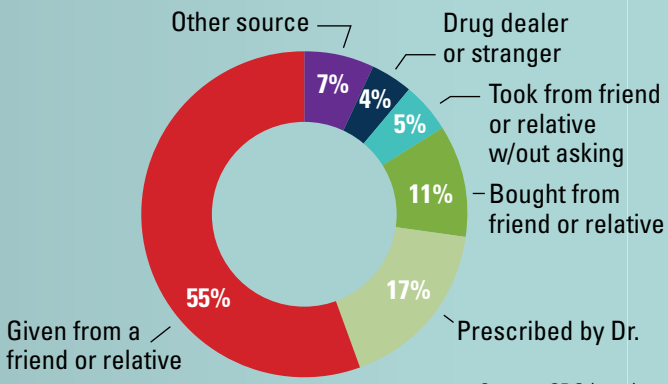


**Cigarettes, cigars, chew, snuff, and dip* *Source: MiPHY (2016)*

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Many teens think prescription drugs are safe because they were prescribed by a doctor, but taking them for non-medical use to get high or "self-medicate" can be dangerous and addictive. Misuse of prescription painkillers results in more deaths than cocaine and heroin COMBINED. *(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).*

Nationally, Students Report Accessing Prescription Medications, For Free, From Friends or Relatives More Than Any Other Source



Source: CDC (2012)

THE 2015 NATIONAL SURVEY ON DRUG USE AND HEALTH FOUND **6.5 MILLION AMERICANS** OVER THE AGE OF 12 USED CONTROLLED PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES NON-MEDICALLY DURING THE PAST MONTH. THIS IS SECOND ONLY TO MARIJUANA AND REPRESENTS MORE THAN THE PAST-MONTH USERS OF **COCAINE, HEROIN, AND HALLUCINOGENS COMBINED.**

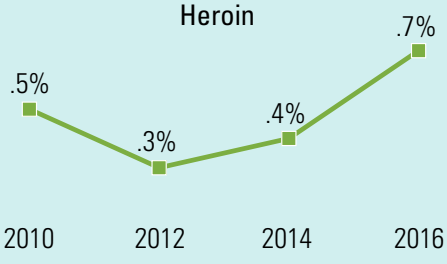
HEROIN

Heroin is an opioid drug that can have similar effects to prescription painkillers such as OxyContin and Vicodin. Nearly half of young people who inject heroin reported abusing prescription opioids before starting to use heroin. Some individuals reported started using heroin because it is cheaper and easier to obtain than prescription opioids.

Naloxone (also known as Narcan®) is a medication called an "opioid antagonist" used to counter the effects of an opioid overdose. Specifically, Naloxone is used in opioid overdoses to counteract life-threatening depression of the central nervous system and respiratory system, allowing an overdose victim to breathe normally. Naloxone only works if a person has opioids in their system; the medication has no effect if opioids are absent.

- 2 Kalamazoo County law enforcement agencies have been trained to use and carry Naloxone overdose reversal kits.
- From December 2015 - August 2016, 367 community members in Kalamazoo County were trained to use Naloxone.
- From January - September 2016, Kalamazoo County community members have reported using 5 Naloxone overdose reversal kits.

Kalamazoo County High School Students' Use of Heroin has Increased Over the Past 4 years



Source: MiPHY

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE

Students who use alcohol and drugs consistently face an array of possible consequences. A lowered commitment to education, declining grades, increased potential for dropping out, and higher truancy rates have all been linked to adolescent substance abuse. It is important to note that these associations do not prove causation, however, there is a prominent relationship between youth substance abuse and academic struggle.[1]

In Kalamazoo County, students who reported receiving grades of mainly Ds/Fs were more likely to report current alcohol and marijuana use and binge drinking within the past 30 days.

1 Schulenberg, J., Maggs, J.L. (2001). A Developmental Perspective on Alcohol and Other Drug Use During Adolescence and the Transition to Young Adulthood. Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Kalamazoo County Middle and High School Students' Substance Use by Academic Achievement *Source: MiPHY*

Middle School Students

Marijuana and Academic Achievement

	As/Bs	Ds/Fs
Avg. age of onset:	11.6 yrs	11.8 yrs
Tried marijuana before age 11	1%	5%
Smoked marijuana in the past 30 days	2%	18%

Alcohol and Academic Achievement

	As/Bs	Ds/Fs
Avg. age of onset:	10.7 yrs	11.5yrs
Tried alcohol before age 11	4%	10%
Drank alcohol in the past 30 days	4%	20%

High School Students

Marijuana and Academic Achievement

	As/Bs	Ds/Fs
Avg. age of onset:	14.3 yrs	12.2 yrs
Ever tried marijuana	22%	46%
Smoked marijuana in the past 30 days	13%	32%

Alcohol and Academic Achievement

	As/Bs	Ds/Fs
Avg. age of onset:	13.7 yrs	12.4 yrs
Ever tried alcohol	37%	57%
Drank alcohol in the past 30 days	18%	25%

As a former teacher and in my current role as Regional School Health Coordinator, I am constantly reminded of the obstacles that our youth face as they navigate through adolescence. A period marked by the difficulty to manage emotions, increased participation in risky behaviors, and constructing one's self-identify, this stage in life for some teens can prove to be an overwhelming task.

For some young adults, the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is a coping mechanism. According to 2015-2016 Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth Kalamazoo County level data for high school students, the three most recently used drugs are alcohol (19.9%), marijuana (16.6%), and electronic vapor products (16.1%). This tells us that most of our youth are not using substances, even though youth consistently overestimate use by their peers. When looking at social norms, students perceived 37% of their peers as recently using alcohol, but actual use was only 19.9%. Research has shown that when you correct this misperception of use, consumption goes down overall.

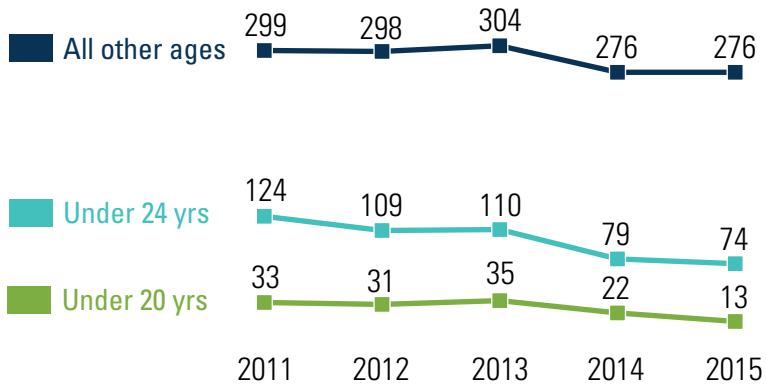
Prevention education is crucial for young adults in order to decrease substance use. By providing teens with positive coping strategies and focusing on skill development of decision-making skills and problem-solving skills, teens will be better equipped to deal with the obstacles and challenges they face during adolescence and become more resilient as they enter adulthood. Education is key!

Angela Blood
Regional School Health Coordinator (including Kalamazoo County)
Calhoun Intermediate School District

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT OF YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE

The link between involvement with the criminal justice system and reduced academic achievement among youth is a widely studied issue. In Kalamazoo, marijuana has become an issue amongst youth and their involvement in the criminal justice system. Additionally, it is a substance which continues to show increased use among youth in Kalamazoo County (MiPHY).

Alcohol Related Traffic Crashes Have Been Decreasing Over the Last 5 Years, Particularly Among Youth Under 24

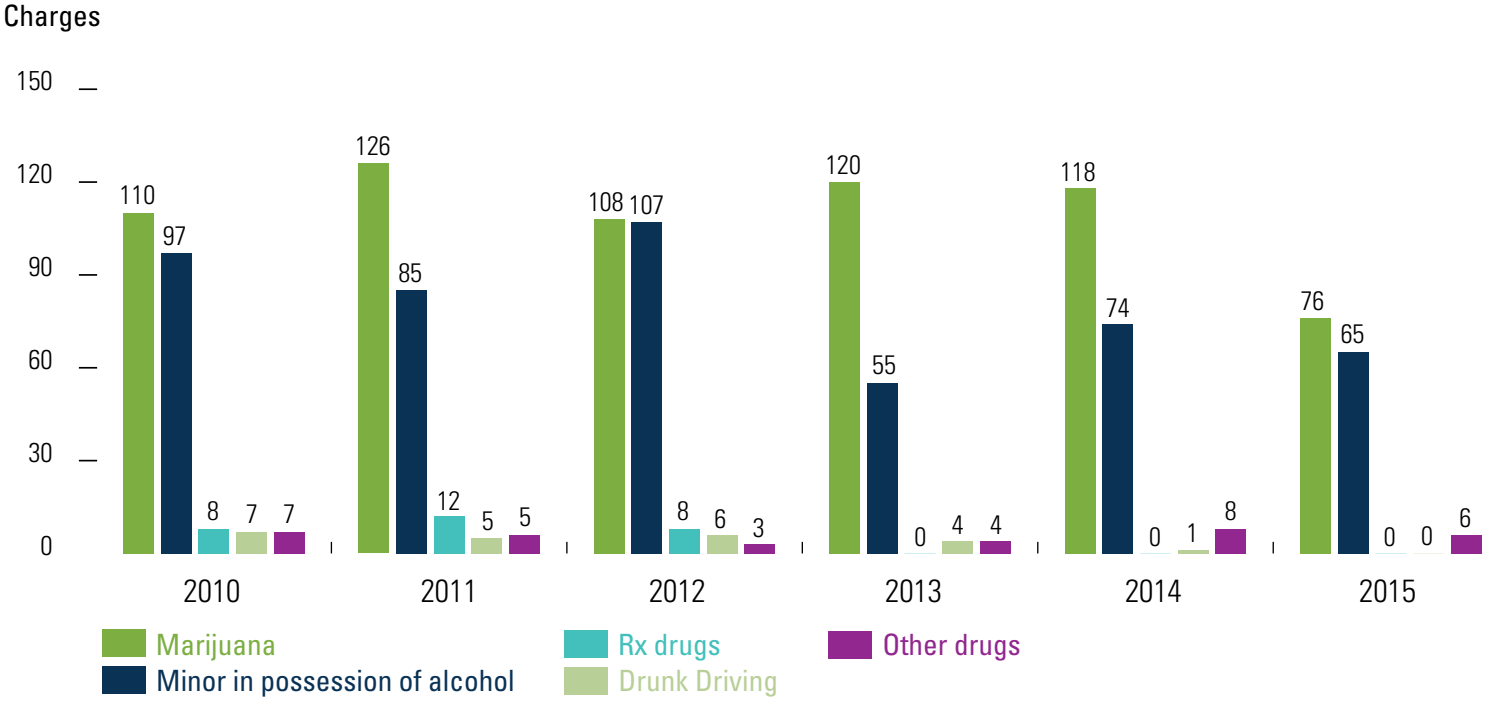


Source: Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (2015)

Prevention of crime is significantly preferred over reactive policing after crime has already occurred. If police can connect with youth prior to them getting involved with substance use, prevention of future juvenile criminal activity or substance dependency is more likely to occur. Studies consistently show that youth have a hard time stopping substance use after they start. Often, the problem is a lack of education or misinformation. Without the ongoing work of the Task Force, the education of youth would stop, and this would lead to a decrease in accurate information for today's youth and families. It would also lead to an increase in crime, stemming from increased substance use, due to a lack of prevention strategies. Prevention deters unnecessary exposure to the criminal justice system, lowers medical costs, and increases social worth. The duties of the Task Force allow police to save possible future victims of substance abuse before they are even aware they are susceptible.

Adam Dmoch
Community Policing Officer
Portage Department of Public Safety

Alcohol and Marijuana Make Up the Majority of Kalamazoo County Court Charges Brought Against Youth Below the Age of 17 Years; Charges of All Types Appear to be Falling Over the Past 5 Years



Source: Kalamazoo County Prosecuting Attorney (2016)

HEALTH IMPACT OF YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that alcohol and other drug use among our nation's youth remains a major public health problem at the national level *(2016)*. Local data shows that there is also a reason for concern around youth substance use in Kalamazoo County.

Youth substance use can increase the risk for injuries, violence, and accidental overdose, but the long-term health effects are also alarming. According to a study released by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 9 out of 10 Americans who meet the medical criteria for addiction started smoking, drinking, or using other drugs before age 18 *(2009)*.

Most of the Substance use Related Visits to Kalamazoo Area Hospitals Are Related to Alcohol and Marijuana

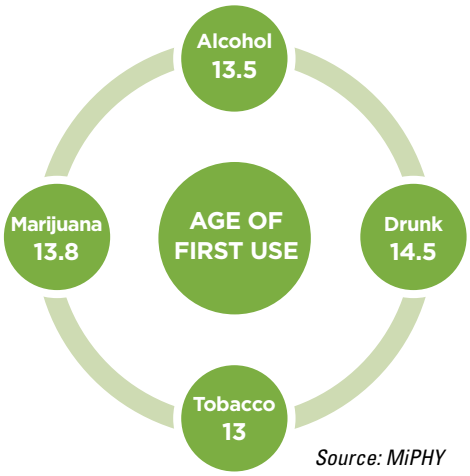
Source: Bronson and Borgess Hospital

Research shows that youth who start drinking before the age of 15

are FOUR TIMES more likely to meet the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their life

(National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism).

Age of First Use by Kalamazoo County High School Students



Source: MiPHY

Physicians, for a variety of reasons, contribute to the opioid problems in this country. Physicians are learning more about recognizing and treating addiction as well as avoiding contributing to it. The pendulum has swung from doctors being encouraged to prescribe opioids to treat pain to a much more cautious approach; "universal precautions." In 2016 the Center for Disease Control (CDC) released new guidelines for prescribing opioids for chronic pain. For many patients, long-term use and abuse of opioids begins with using them for pain from an injury or surgery. In these situations, it is now recommended to limit opioid prescriptions to 3 days or less. Anytime physicians write for controlled substances, they are encouraged, and in some states required, to use the state prescription drug monitoring program to determine whether the patient is receiving these medications from other providers and how often. Solving the opioid problem will require collaboration and communication among many organizations as well as physicians and patients.

Susan Faragher Bannon, MD FACP
Associate Professor
Western Michigan University Homer Stryker MD School of Medicine
Department of Internal Medicine

WHAT IS BEING DONE?

- ✓ Build partnerships between schools, health care providers, businesses, and beyond — mobilizing our community with the tools to build a healthier community.
- ✓ Develop effective awareness and education around risk and protective factors that affect unhealthy behaviors such as youth substance use.
- ✓ Continue to use data-driven, evidence-based strategies of providing information, enhancing skills, reducing barriers to services, and advocating for preventative health policies to create an annual blueprint to reduce youth substance use.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ✓ Address gaps in prevention programming services for younger elementary age students.
- ✓ Create more opportunities for safe prescription medication disposal. The Task Force has worked to implement Yellow Jug Old Drug disposal sites in local pharmacies, as well as continue to support the Red Med Boxes at local police departments.
- ✓ Drill deeper and continue to investigate local conditions that provide minors easy access to alcohol and other substances.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE TASK FORCE

Putting Data to Use: Data collection, analysis, and best-practice prevention recommendations for future programs and policies to address substance use issues.

Advocacy for Health Promotion Policies: Work with key stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels to advocate for policies that reduce youth access and the enforcement of laws.

Professional Trainings: Provide training designed to help community members and organizations recognize signs and symptoms of youth substance use and best-practice policies and guidelines for prevention/intervention.

Community Awareness: The promotion of information and tips for community members on local substance abuse trends and how local residents can help to prevent youth substance use.

Collective Impact: Members from over 12 different community sectors diligently work to unify efforts around specific community needs.

WHY SUSTAIN THIS WORK?

Reducing youth substance use requires community-based efforts to monitor the activities of youth, decrease youth access to drugs and alcohol, change community norms and attitudes around substance abuse and addiction, and spread awareness about the long-term consequences of youth substance use on communities.

Substance abuse underlies a host of other community problems, such as homelessness, poverty, unemployment, teen pregnancy, and juvenile delinquency.

Without the work of the Task Force, Kalamazoo County would be lacking a unified organization of diverse community members who partner, collaborate, and work as a team to develop strategies, connect and provide resources, and initiate prevention programs and practices that address youth substance use issues.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

PARENTS Set Boundaries. Monitor Activities. Stay Connected. Talk to your child about the dangers of using drugs and alcohol.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO VENDORS Do not sell to minors. Train and monitor your staff on the responsible sale of alcohol and tobacco.

EDUCATORS AND COACHES Keep an open dialogue with your students. Learn the signs and symptoms of substance use. Be aware of resources for youth substance use referrals in Kalamazoo County. Know your school's substance use policies and be prepared to help enforce them.

YOUTH Talk to your parents or a trusted adult about the risks of using alcohol and drugs. Make a plan; be prepared to stay above the influence of alcohol and drugs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT Team up with youth serving agencies to help prevent substance use early. Participate in and support positive youth development activities.

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS Implement substance abuse screening mechanisms for patients. Institute and enforce organizational systems and guidelines for prescribing opioids and other controlled substances.

GET INVOLVED

Join a Task Force Team. There are many opportunities for community members and organizations to use their skills and talents to actively help research, plan, and implement community-level prevention strategies. For more information on how to get involved, visit www.kzootaskforce.com.

THE MAIN GOAL OF THE KALAMAZOO COUNTY SUBSTANCE ABUSE TASK FORCE IS TO DECREASE AND PREVENT YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE BY ADDRESSING THE ISSUE THROUGH:

- Increasing the belief among youth that substance use is harmful and that there are consequences to use.
- Decreasing youth access to these substances through retailer/vendor education, responsible beverage service training, compliance checks, permanent disposal systems for prescription drug take-back, and healthcare worker training.
- Increasing the protective factors that lower the chance of youth substance use and decreasing the risk factors that can contribute to youth substance abuse.
- Working toward reviewing local policies/ordinances and developing model policies that would strengthen local enforcement strategies.

YOUTH ACTION TEAM QUOTES:

"Living in a society where culture is centered around substance abuse has made the promotion of **living above the influence** an important part of my life. In addition, being able to produce a positive impact on my community due to our efforts to combat substance abuse is a proud accomplishment of mine."

-Anna Heysteck, Youth Action Team, Portage Youth Advisory Council

"In today's society, people believe that substances are the only way to cope or the only way to have fun. I want to show others that **there is help** and there is entertainment out there that doesn't involve impairing substances."

-Paige Berry, Youth Action Team

TASK FORCE TEAMS

PREVENTION WORKS/TASK FORCE STAFF

COORDINATING COUNCIL
Makes data driven decisions regarding the Task Force annual action plan implementation.

COMMUNITY TRUSTEES
Key community leaders and stakeholders.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION TEAM
Responsible for carrying out the substance use prevention initiatives of the Task Force outlined in the annual action plan as they pertain to alcohol, tobacco, prescription medication abuse, and marijuana, as well as other emerging drug trends.

DATA AND EVALUATION TEAM
Provides access to community-level data, develops and implements evaluation strategies, and analyzes data for the Task Force.

YOUTH ACTION TEAM
Includes youth ages 14-19 within Kalamazoo County. Assists the Task Force with implementing substance use prevention strategies and implements their own initiatives, including the annual Sticker Shock event and the Live Above the Influence Youth Summit.

MAKE YOUR CONNECTION.

This Community Report is one of the mechanisms that brings together the various sectors within Kalamazoo. Its purpose is to provide data and information for informed decisions in regard to addressing substance use long term. This report should serve as a "call to action" for you to connect and lean in with the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force. We are a community that is better together.

Make Connections. Our Community. Our Initiatives, Our Health.

Danielle Sielatycki, BS, CPS
Executive Director, Prevention Works, Inc.

The Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force is a mosaic of dedicated partners and members who work collectively to help make Kalamazoo a healthy and safe place to live. With the connections created by the Task Force, and the support of Prevention Works, we are able to better address youth substance use in our community.

Ashley Bergeon, BA, CPS
Coordinator, Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force

DONATE...

Studies have shown that for every dollar invested into substance use prevention, $15 is saved in future treatment costs. Your help today will ensure a healthier Kalamazoo County tomorrow.

Prevention Works, Inc. is the legal fiduciary agent of the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force. Donate online at: www.prevention-works.org or make all cash donations payable to:

Prevention Works
611 Whitcomb, Suite A
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

KALAMAZOO COUNTY TASK FORCE SUBSTANCE ABUSE

For more information on how to get involved, visit www.kzootaskforce.com.

611 Whitcomb, Suite A • Kalamazoo, MI 49008 • 269.388.4200 • Fax: 269.388.2070