

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission



Arizona Youth Survey 2010 Prescription Drug Fact Sheet

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Arizona

The Arizona Youth Survey (AYS)

December 2011

The 2010 administration of the Arizona Youth Survey (AYS) collected data from 63,784 students in 8th, 10th, and 12th grade from all 15 Arizona counties. Among the data collected were self-reported measures of lifetime and past 30-day substance use. The 2010 AYS data on lifetime and 30-day substance use revealed that prescription drugs were the fourth most used substance by 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students in Arizona, after alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana. This brief summarizes the results from the 2008 and 2010 AYS for youth prescription drug use relative to respondents' county of residence, demographics, risk and protective factors, type of prescription drug used, and how youth obtained prescription drugs.

Table 1. Percentage of Youth Who Reported Having Used Prescription Drugs by County

County	Lifetime		Past 30 Days	
	2008	2010	2008	2010
Apache	22.3	20.5	14.0	9.9
Cochise	24.7	20.4	11.9	8.9
Coconino	25.9	20.6	10.4	9.2
Gila	24.3	24.0	11.8	10.8
Graham	21.2	20.9	11.2	11.4
Greenlee	26.9	27.0	15.4	12.9
La Paz	27.7	23.8	14.3	10.0
Maricopa	21.4	21.0	10.4	10.1
Mohave	27.7	26.3	12.4	13.5
Navajo	25.8	19.3	12.8	9.2
Pima	23.3	25.7	10.3	12.0
Pinal	24.1	22.3	12.3	10.8
Santa Cruz	18.3	19.4	8.2	8.7
Yavapai	26.1	23.7	12.1	11.5
Yuma	17.8	19.3	8.7	11.0
State of Arizona	22.4	21.5	10.7	10.4

Lifetime and 30-Day Prescription Drug Use by Arizona Youth

In 2010, 21.5 percent of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade youth in Arizona reported having used prescription drugs, without a doctor telling them to, in their lifetime (Table 1). This is a slight decrease (4.0 percent) from the lifetime prescription drug abuse rate in 2008. While this overall decrease is promising, the 2010 AYS revealed that youth in seven of Arizona's 15 counties reported higher lifetime prescription drug usage rates compared to the state average. Greenlee, Mohave, and Pima counties reported the highest lifetime prescription drug usage rates that were 1.3 times, 1.2 times, and 1.2 times higher than the state, respectively. Navajo, Yuma, and Santa Cruz counties had the lowest lifetime prescription drug usage rates.

The 2010 AYS also revealed that 10.4 percent of Arizona students reported having used prescription drugs during the 30 days prior to taking the 2010 survey (Table 1). Like the lifetime data, 30-day prescription drug use decreased slightly (2.8 percent) from 2008 to 2010. In 2010, eight Arizona counties reported higher 30-day prescription drug usage compared to the state. Mohave, Greenlee, and Pima counties reported the highest rates of 30-day prescription drug use that were 1.3 times, 1.2 times, and 1.2 times higher than the state, respectively. While Greenlee county reported a higher usage rate compared to the state, prescription drug use did decrease by 16.2 percent in the county. Conversely, 30-day usage rates in Mohave and Pima county increased between 2008 and 2010; 8.9 percent and 16.5 percent, respectively. Also, while Yuma county youth reported lower lifetime prescription drug usage rates compared to the state, the county experienced a 26.4 percent increase in 30-day usage between 2008 and 2010. Santa Cruz, Cochise, Coconino, and Navajo counties reported the lowest 30-day prescription drug usage rates. Additionally, Apache county reported the largest decrease in 30-day prescription drug use from 2008 to 2010, (29.3 percent lower).

Risk and Protective Factors

At the core of the Arizona Youth Survey are questions based on a risk and protective factor prevention model. This model is based on research that has identified several risk and protective factors for delinquency and substance use. The 2010 AYS data reveal that as risk factors accumulate in youth's lives, the percentage of youth who reported using prescription drugs in the past 30 days also increases. Conversely, as protective factors increase, the percentage of youth who report prescription drug use decreases (Chart 1). These data clearly illustrate the potential impact of prevention strategies that aim to reduce the risk factors and increase the protective factors in youths' lives.

Chart 1. Relationship Between Those Youth Who Used Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days and Accumulated Risk and Protective Factors

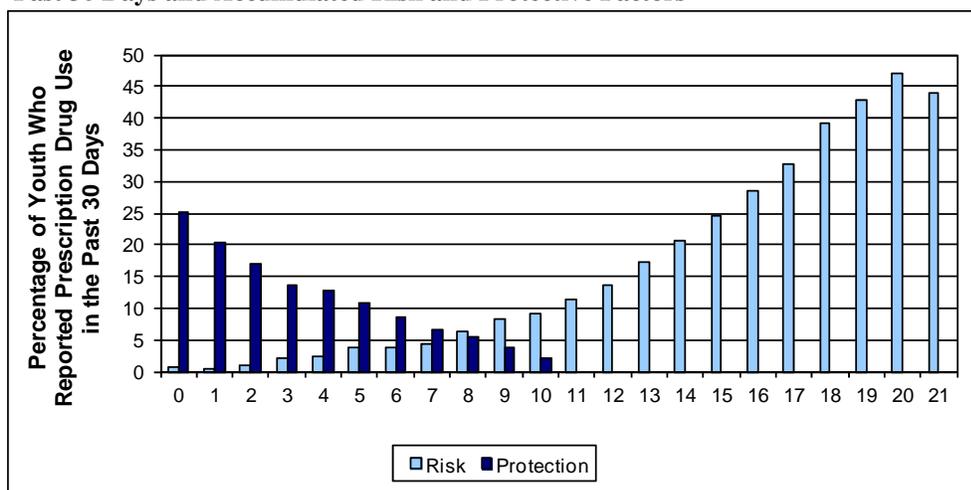


Table 2. Percentage of Youth Who Reported Having Used Prescription Drugs by Demographics

	Lifetime		Past 30 Days	
	2008	2010	2008	2010
Overall	22.4	21.5	10.7	10.4
Grade				
8th Grade	17.1	16.5	8.6	8.2
10th Grade	25.7	23.7	12.2	11.8
12th Grade	28.7	27.3	13.1	12.4
Gender				
Male	20.1	19.9	9.5	9.8
Female	24.7	23.1	11.9	10.9
Race				
Asian	12.0	9.6	4.5	3.8
Pacific Islander	21.2	21.1	10.6	9.9
Native American	25.2	22.0	12.7	11.0
Black	15.5	16.0	8.2	8.4
White	25.0	22.5	11.7	10.4
Multi-Racial	25.5	23.8	13.2	10.7
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	20.1	21.6	9.8	10.9
Non-Hispanic	24.0	21.6	11.4	10.1

Types of Prescription Drugs Used

2010 AYS data also revealed that Arizona youth reported using prescription pain killers at much higher rates than prescription sedatives and stimulants (Table 3). Overall, males used prescription pain killers 2.3 times more than prescription sedatives and 3.5 times more than prescription stimulants. Females reported usage rates of prescription pain relievers 1.6 times higher than prescription sedatives and 3.7 times higher than prescription stimulants.

30-day usage rates of prescription pain killers varied by county for males and females. In most counties, females reported higher 30-day usage rates of prescription sedatives compared to their male counterparts; the exceptions were Cochise, Coconino, and Gila counties. Males in most counties reported higher usage rates of prescription stimulants compared to their female counterparts. Females in Mohave, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yavapai counties reported higher 30-day prescription stimulant use than males.

Table 4. Where Youth Obtained Prescription Drugs

If you used prescription drugs in order to get high, not for a medical reason, how did you get them?	Overall	Male	Female
Friends	65.9	64.4	67.5
Family/Relatives	22.0	19.8	23.9
Parties	28.0	27.5	28.5
Home	28.6	23.0	33.5
Doctor/Pharmacy	17.9	18.4	17.5
School	19.3	20.5	18.4
Over the Internet	2.3	3.3	1.4
Outside the United States	6.7	9.6	3.9
Other Source	17.4	19.9	15.0

Note: Students could indicate multiple responses; total will not sum to 100%

Lifetime and 30-Day Prescription Drug Use by Respondent Demographics

As mentioned earlier, in 2010, 10.4 percent of Arizona youth reported using prescription drugs during the 30 days preceding the survey, which was a slight decrease from 2008. Usage rates for prescription drugs increased with grade level, with 8th graders using prescription drugs the least, followed by 10th graders, and then 12th graders (Table 2). AYS data from 2008 and 2010 revealed that prescription drug use decreased for nearly every demographic in 2010. The exceptions were for males, black youth, and Hispanic youth. Lifetime prescription drug usage rates for males decreased from 2008 to 2010; however, males reported a slight increase in 30-day, or recent, prescription drug use from 2008 to 2010. For black youth, both lifetime usage rates and 30-day usage rates of prescription drugs increased slightly between 2008 and 2010. Hispanic youth also reported increases in both lifetime and 30-day prescription drug use between 2008 and 2010, 7.5 percent higher and 11.2 percent higher, respectively. While males did report a slight increase in 30-day prescription drug use from 2008 to 2010, female youth continued to report higher usage rates of prescription drugs than their male counterparts. Although Native American youth reported higher usage rates than any other racial group, this population did experience a 13.4 percent decrease in reported 30-day prescription drug use between 2008 and 2010. Asian youth reported substantially lower prescription drug usage rates compared to the other races.

Table 3. Percentage of 30 Day Prescription Drug Use by Gender and Drug Type

	Male			Female		
	Prescription Pain Relievers	Prescription Sedatives	Prescription Stimulants	Prescription Pain Relievers	Prescription Sedatives	Prescription Stimulants
Apache	7.1	2.6	2.2	9.3	4.4	1.5
Cochise	6.6	4.7	1.7	5.2	3.4	1.6
Coconino	7.8	3.2	2.0	4.5	3.0	1.2
Gila	9.9	4.0	2.6	7.8	3.8	0.0
Graham	8.3	3.0	1.5	8.5	5.7	1.8
Greenlee	10.7	4.1	1.7	8.8	5.6	1.6
La Paz	7.3	2.6	1.6	7.9	5.5	0.6
Maricopa	7.2	3.4	2.3	7.4	5.0	2.2
Mohave	10.1	4.8	1.6	11.3	7.6	2.2
Navajo	7.2	2.2	1.4	8.0	4.5	0.7
Pima	9.6	3.9	2.3	9.1	5.5	2.3
Pinal	8.4	2.4	1.5	8.8	4.9	1.8
Santa Cruz	7.0	1.7	0.5	6.9	3.2	1.2
Yavapai	9.7	3.8	1.8	8.8	5.2	2.0
Yuma	6.5	1.7	2.3	9.9	4.8	2.3
State of Arizona	7.6	3.3	2.2	7.8	5.0	2.1

How Youth Obtained Prescription Drugs

Among those youth that reported abusing prescription drugs, 65.9 percent reported getting them from their friends. Other common sources for obtaining prescription drugs included getting them from home, parties, family/relatives, and school. Strategies aimed at educating students, parents and educators about the dangers of prescription drug use and simple strategies for prevention, such as restricting access to prescription drugs, may help reduce these usage rates. Future administrations of the AYS will allow for a more comprehensive longitudinal analysis of prescription drug use by Arizona's youth.

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