

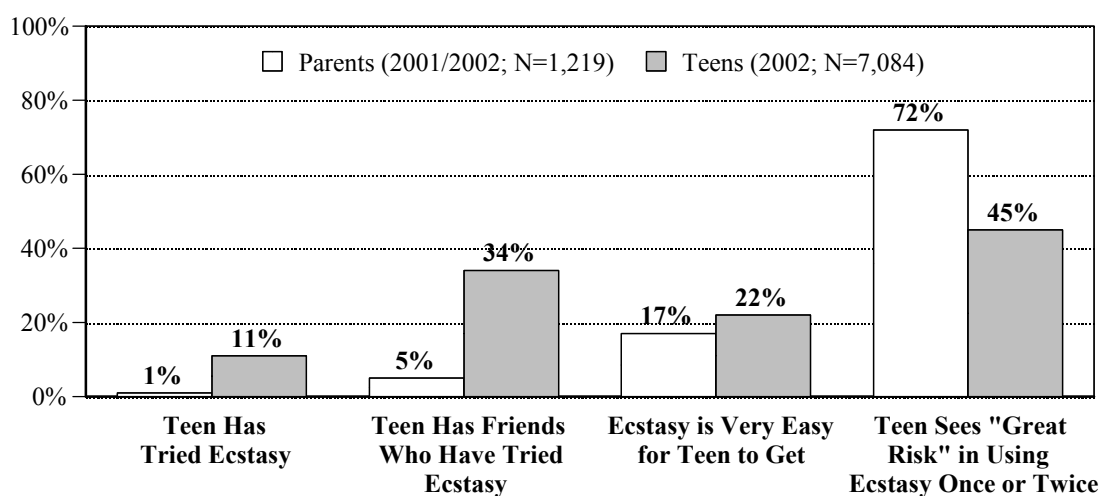
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Parents And Teens Have Differing Perceptions of Ecstasy

Parents underestimate the level of teen exposure to ecstasy, while overestimating the level of teen understanding of the drug's risks, according to a study from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. While nearly all parents of teens have heard about ecstasy (93%), their perceptions of teenagers' exposure to the drug are considerably different than those of the teens themselves. Only 1% of parents of teens believe their child may have tried ecstasy, while 11% of a separate teen sample report they have tried the drug. Furthermore, 5% of parents of teens believe their teen has friends who have tried ecstasy, while nearly seven times as many teens (34%) say they have close friends who use ecstasy. Additionally, 72% of parents think there is a great risk associated with using ecstasy once, while only 45% of teens agree (see figure). The authors suggest, "An opportunity exists to build on high parent awareness of ecstasy, translating awareness into a deeper knowledge of the drug and discussion of it with children" (2003; p. 20).

Percentage of Parents and Teenagers Reporting Ecstasy Use, Availability, and Risk, 2001-2002



NOTES: The parent survey was a self-administered in-home survey of a nationally projectable sample of parents in households with children under the age of 19 conducted from December 2001 through January 2002. The teen survey was a self-administered school survey of a nationally projectable sample of students in grades 7-12 conducted from April through June 2002. The margin of error was $\pm 2.8\%$ for the adult survey and $\pm 1.5\%$ for the teen survey. Both surveys were conducted by Roper ASW, Inc.

SOURCES: Adapted by CESAR from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, *Partnership Attitude Tracking Study—Parents 2001-2002*, 2002 and Partnership for a Drug-Free America, *Partnership Attitude Tracking Study—Teens 2002*, 2003. Copies of the reports are available online (www.drugfreeamerica.org).

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