

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

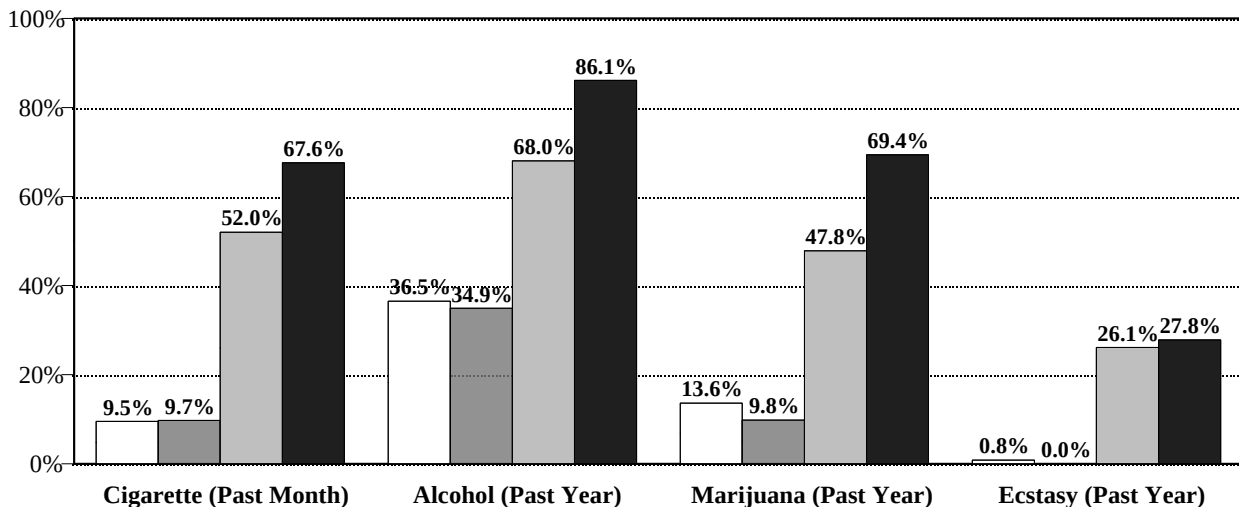
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ADHD Students Prescribed Stimulant Medications Less Likely to Abuse Other Drugs

Students who take prescription stimulant medications to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) report relatively low rates of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and ecstasy use compared to students who illicitly use prescription stimulants, according to a recent study of Detroit middle and high school students. One in ten (9.8%) students who used stimulant medications (i.e. Ritalin®, Dexedrine®, or Adderall®) as prescribed for them also reported past year marijuana use, a rate similar to that of non-stimulant users (13.6%). In contrast, nearly one-half (47.8%) of students who reported using prescription stimulants both licitly and illicitly and nearly 70% of students who reported only illicit use of prescription stimulants also reported using marijuana in the past year. Similar patterns were found for past month cigarette use and for past year alcohol and ecstasy use. According to the authors, “our findings provide evidence that middle and high school students who properly use prescribed stimulant medication for ADHD are not at higher risk for substance misuse” (p. 1107).

Percentage of Middle and High School Students Reporting Cigarette, Alcohol, Marijuana, and Ecstasy Use, by Lifetime Licit or Illicit Stimulant Use, Detroit, 2002

□ No Stimulant Use (n=1,279) □ Both Licit and Illicit Prescription Stimulant Use (n=26)
 ■ Licit Prescription Stimulant Use Only (n=63) ■ Illicit Stimulant Use Only (n=37)



SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from McCabe, S.E., Teter, C.J., Boyd, C.J. “The Use, Misuse and Diversion of Prescription Stimulants Among Middle and High School Students,” *Substance Use and Misuse* 39(7):1095-1116, 2004. For more information, contact Dr. Sean Esteban McCabe at plius@umich.edu.

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