

## A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

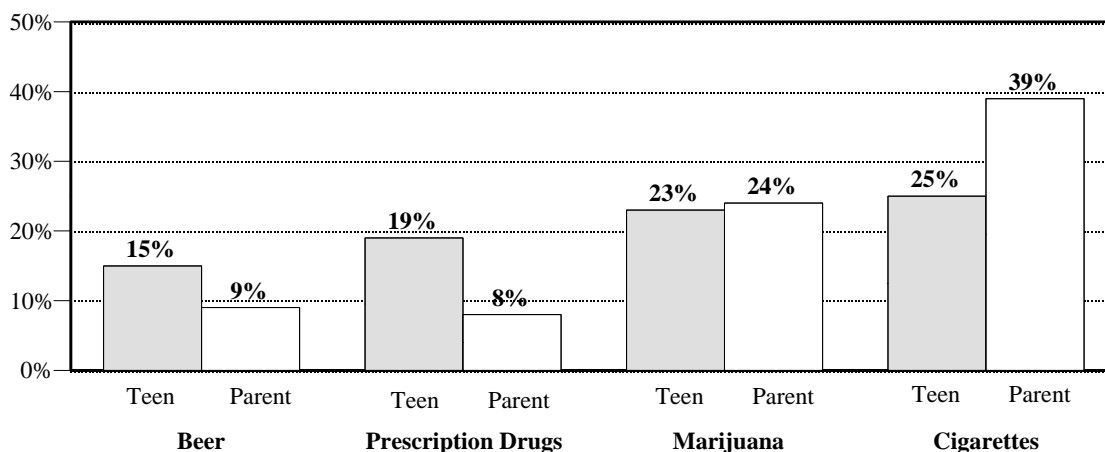
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### *Parents Overestimate Teens' Access to Cigarettes; Underestimate Access to Beer and Prescription Drugs*

Parents of teenagers overestimate how easy it is for teens to buy cigarettes, according to a recent national telephone survey. Thirty-nine percent of parents said that cigarettes are the easiest for teens to buy, compared to one-fourth of teens. In contrast, parents underestimate how easy it is for teens to buy beer and prescription drugs. Fifteen percent of teens say that beer is the easiest for them to buy and 19% cite prescription drugs as the easiest. Only 9% and 8%, respectively, of parents said that these drugs were the easiest for teens to buy. The prescription drug findings are particularly concerning given the recent research—reported in the media—showing that teens are using prescription drugs (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 17, Issue 2) and that these drugs can be bought on the internet without a prescription (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 17, Issue 29).

#### **Percentage of Teens (Ages 12 to 17) and Parents of These Teens Reporting Which Is the Easiest for Teens to Buy, 2008**

(n=1,002 teens and n=312 parents)



\*Teen respondents were asked, "Which is easiest for someone your age to buy: cigarettes, beer, marijuana, or prescription drugs such as Oxycontin, Percocet, Vicodin or Ritalin, without a prescription?" Parent respondents were asked "Which is easiest for someone your teenager's age to buy..." Other responses provided were "the same" (7% teens; 6% parents) and "don't know/no response" (12% teens; 13% parents).

NOTES: Data are from a random sample of households in the 48 continental states who had a youth ages 12 to 17 living in the household. Telephone interviews were conducted between April 3 and May 13, 2008 with 1,002 teens and between April 17 and June 3, 2008 with 312 parents of interviewed teens. The margin of error is +/-3.1 percent for the teen survey and +/-5.5 percent for the parent survey.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA), *National Survey of American Attitudes on Substance Abuse XIII: Teens and Parents*, August 2008. Available online at <http://www.casacolumbia.org/articlefiles/380-2008%20Teen%20Survey%20Report.pdf>.