

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

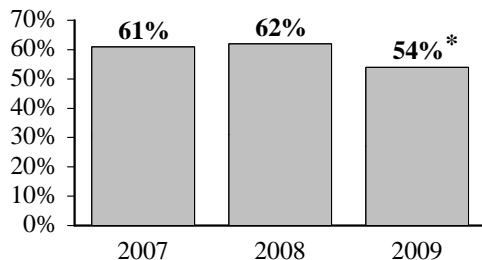
University of Maryland, College Park

High School Students' Perceptions of Risks from Marijuana Use Declined from 2008 to 2009

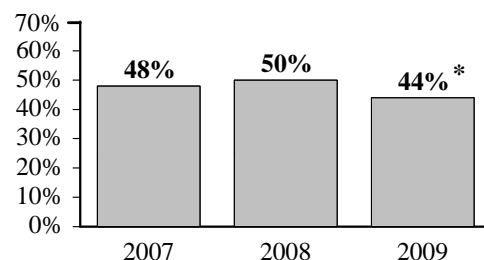
High school students' perceptions of risks from using marijuana declined significantly from 2008 to 2009, according to recently released data from the Parents and Teens Attitude Tracking Study (PATs). In 2009, 54% of students in 9th to 12th grades reported that using marijuana posed a great risk in making their problems worse, down from 62% in 2008. Students were also less likely to believe that marijuana would affect getting depressed (44% vs. 50%), putting themselves or others in danger (60% vs. 68%), and impairing their judgment (57% vs. 65%). Factors that may have influenced these declines include a decrease in learning about the risks of marijuana use and an increase in things that may suggest to youth that marijuana use is benign (e.g., the number of states with medical marijuana laws, the number of movies and music/internet videos portraying marijuana use as normal behavior without consequences).

Percentage of U.S. High School Students Reporting That Using Marijuana Would Pose a Great Risk in . . .

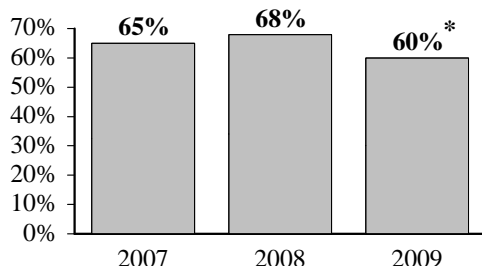
. . . Making Their Problems Worse



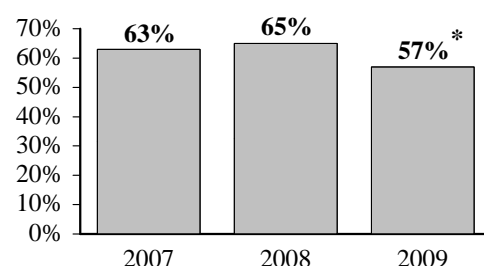
. . . Getting Depressed



. . . Putting Themselves or Others in Danger



. . . Impairing Their Judgement



*Difference between 2008 and 2009 is significant at the .05 level.

NOTE: 2009 data are from a nationally projectable sample of 3,287 students in grades nine through twelve, conducted by the Roper Public Affairs Division of GfK Custom Research North America from March to June 2009. . The margin of error is +/- 2.3 percent. Data from the 2006 teen survey are omitted because the study investigators believe them to be inaccurate due to sampling error.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, *2009 Parents and Teens Attitude Tracking Study Report*, March 2, 2010. Available online at http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/DrugIssue/Research/Teen_Study_2009/TRACKING_STUDY_PATS_2009.