

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

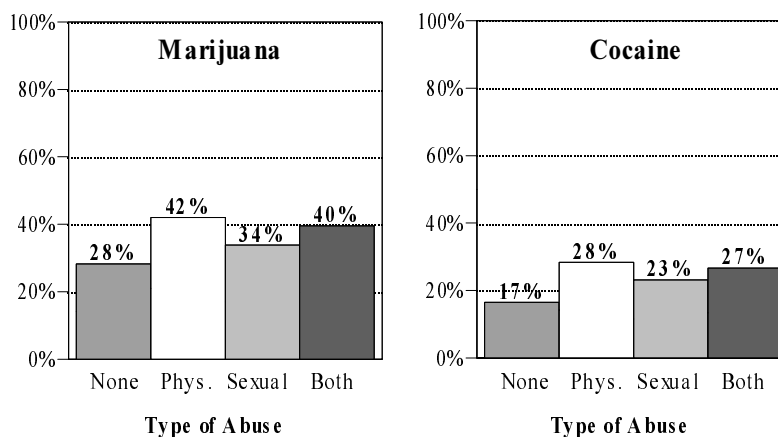
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Physically and Sexually Abused Youths More Likely to Report Drug Use

The relationship between adolescent illicit drug use, physical abuse, and sexual abuse was recently examined in a sample of Mexican-American and non-Hispanic White youths living in the southwest United States. Results revealed that youths who report physical and/or sexual abuse are significantly more likely to report illicit drug use than those who have never been abused. For example, 42% of youths who have experienced physical abuse report using marijuana in the last month, while only 28% of youths who have never been abused report using the drug within that time. These findings were independent of factors such as academic achievement and family structure, and they suggest that treatment directed at abused adolescents should include drug use prevention, intervention, and education components.

**Percentage of Youths Reporting Past Month Marijuana or
Past Year Cocaine Use, by Type of Abuse**

(N=2,468)



NOTE: These analyses were based on data collected between 1988 and 1992 for the Mexican-American Drug Use and Dropout Survey, a yearly survey of Mexican-American and non-Hispanic White school dropouts and a comparison group of enrolled students from one school district in each of three communities in the southwestern United States (see Chavez, Oetting, & Swaim, 1994).

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Pérez D.M., "The Relationship Between Physical Abuse, Sexual Victimization, and Adolescent Illicit Drug Use," *Journal of Drug Issues* 30(3):641-662, 2000. For more information, contact Deanna Pérez at dperez@crim.umd.edu.

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