

TEENS, DRUGS & DRIVING

PARENTS. THE ANTI-DRUG.

Drugged driving, or driving under the influence of drugs, is a significant public health and public safety threat and may be a bigger issue than generally recognized. According to the first-ever analysis of drug involvement from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) census, one in three motor vehicle fatalities (33 percent) with known drug test results tested positive for drugs in 2009.¹

New and young drivers are the most at-risk for crashes on the roads and are at risk for the most harmful effects of drug use. As teens take to the roads, parents can take action by talking about the dangers of drunk, drugged, and distracted driving. It's important that our youngest drivers learn how to drive safely and make healthy choices.

Below are the most recent teen driving and substance use trends.

THE FACTS

- ✓ Motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death for 15- to 19-year-olds in 2007.²
- ✓ More than six percent of 16 or 17 year olds and nearly 17 percent of 18 to 20 year olds reported driving under the influence of alcohol in the past year.³
- ✓ In a comprehensive study on unsafe driving by high school students, 30 percent of seniors reported driving after drinking heavily or using drugs, or riding in a car whose driver had been drinking heavily or using drugs, at least once in the prior two weeks.⁴

30%

Of high school seniors report driving, or riding in a car, after drinking heavily or using drugs

3/4

Nearly three quarters of students have consumed alcohol by the end of high school

- ✓ Nearly three quarters of students have consumed alcohol by the end of high school. More than half (54%) of 12th graders in 2010 report having been drunk at least once in their life and about half indicated they have tried an illicit drug with well over a third having used on one or more occasions in the prior 12 months.⁵
- ✓ Next to marijuana, prescription drugs are the most commonly abused drug by teens.⁶ The most commonly abused prescription drugs by teenagers include painkillers (e.g. Vicodin; OxyContin), tranquilizers, and stimulants (e.g. Adderall; Ritalin)
- ✓ In 2009, past month use of illicit drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol (including binge alcohol) was lower among youths aged 12 to 17 who reported that their parents always or sometimes engaged in monitoring behaviors than among youths whose parents "seldom" or "never" engaged in such behaviors.⁷

1 U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Traffic Safety Facts. Drug Involvement of Fatally Injured Drivers. November 2010 DOT HS 811 415.

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (extracted June 2011). <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10.html>

3 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Prevalence Estimates and Samples Sizes Table Types A, B, and N. Part 4 of 4. Rockville, MD.

4 O'Malley, P.M., and Johnston, L.D. Drugs and driving by American high school seniors, 2001-2006. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 68(6):834-842, 2007.

5 Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2011). Monitoring the Future national results on adolescent drug use: Overview of key findings, 2010. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan. <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2010.pdf>

6 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings (Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No. SMA 10-4856Findings). Rockville, MD. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9Results.htm#2.2>

7 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings (Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No. SMA 10-4856Findings). Rockville, MD. <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9Results.htm>