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## CHEMICAL HEALTH TREND CORNER:

### Meth Is Cheaper, More Potent, and More Common than Ever



IMAGE: DAVID HANDSCHUH/NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES

By [Josh Meyer](#) November 13, 2019

Meth's big comeback has been driven by large-scale production, and it's riding the long tail of the opioid crisis.

Meth, the drug that sparked those exploitative ['before and after'](#) police mugshots so beloved of the police and media, is making a comeback. But why is this?

The highly addictive drug is in good supply, more than ever before. It is much cheaper, far more potent, and consumed across a wider geographic swathe of the United States, by a broader demographic group. It's also killing more people than ever before—[in some areas more even than fentanyl](#).

The resurgence of meth, especially given how cheap and potent it is, is causing alarm among

U.S. officials, who worry about a double-whammy in which users addicted to fentanyl start also using meth, according to Michael Braun, the former chief of operations for the DEA.

“Any time in our history, when we have had a period of high opioid abuse, like we have been experiencing over the past few years, ultimately, it's followed by an increased level of abuse and addiction of powerful central nervous system stimulants like methamphetamine,” Braun said. “And the traffickers know this full well,”

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### Parents, "Is Big Tobacco on your kids desk?"



### High School Drug Use Facts & Statistics

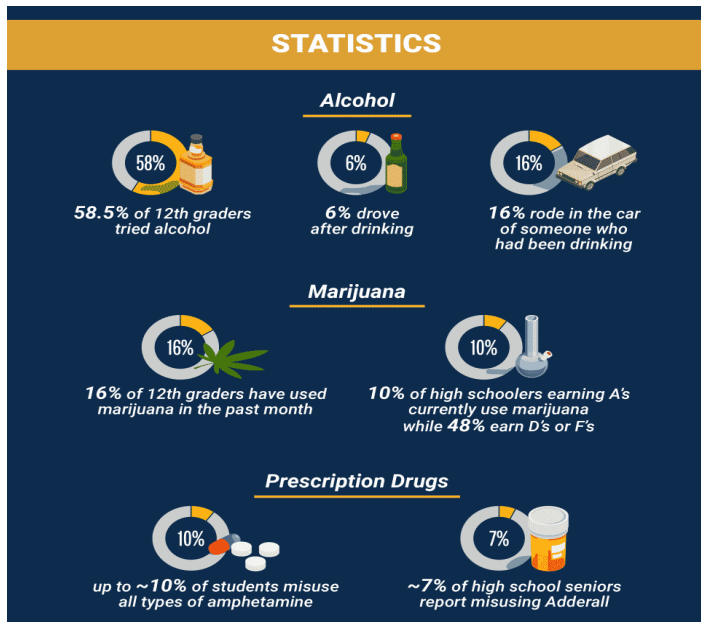


The Recovery Village®  
Editor Camille Renzoni, Updated on 01/12/21

### High School Drug Use Statistics

Though not all teens abuse drugs or alcohol, most teenagers know somebody who does. Drug prevalence and [availability is high](#) as well. The latest statistics show that nearly [20% of high school students](#) have been offered, sold or given drugs, on school property, in the past year.

Fortunately, the fact is that drug use among teenagers is declining: a recent study found that [4.3% of high schoolers](#) had used drugs in the month before being surveyed, which is lower than previous years.



### Other Drugs Used by High Schoolers

Nearly a quarter of American high schoolers use at least one type of illicit drug. Many use more than one, or combine them with alcohol

or tobacco. Common drugs used by teenagers (besides marijuana) include:

- [Amphetamines](#)
- [Cough medicine](#)
- [Hallucinogens](#)
- [Ecstasy](#) (MDMA)
- [LSD](#)
- [Cocaine](#)
- [Inhalants](#)
- [Salvia](#)

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### What to know about Alcohol Poisoning



MedicalNewsToday  
Medically reviewed by [University of Illinois](#) — Written by [Tim Newman](#) on December 8, 2020

A person has alcohol poisoning if they have consumed a toxic amount of alcohol, usually over a short period. Their blood alcohol level is so high it is considered toxic (poisonous).

The person can become extremely confused, unresponsive, disoriented, have shallow breathing, and can even pass out or go into a [coma](#).

Alcohol poisoning can be life-threatening and usually requires urgent medical treatment.

Binge drinking is a common cause of alcohol poisoning. However, it can also occur if somebody intentionally or unintentionally drinks alcohol-containing household products (much less common).



### Fast facts on alcohol poisoning:

- Alcohol poisoning is a serious condition.
- Even when someone stops drinking, there is risk of alcohol poisoning for some time afterward.
- Symptoms include confusion, abnormal breathing, and vomiting.
- In severe cases, alcohol poisoning is life-threatening.

[Read more](#) on the signs and symptoms of alcohol poisoning

## THE STAGES OF ADDICTION: HOW CASUAL USE EVOLVES INTO DEPENDENCE

Journey Press, Feb, 27, 2020 by ADMIN  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020 | BY ADMIN



Addiction is one of the greatest public health concerns facing the United States today. More than 21 million people are addicted to drugs and alcohol, and thousands of people die each year due to drug and alcohol-related overdoses. In fact, a startling 130 people die each day of opioid overdoses alone, never mind any other addictive substance. But these individuals are typically not those who have just begun using drugs or alcohol, rather they tend to be those who have struggled with the disease of addiction and the development of it.

Like most diseases, it takes time for addiction to progress. Of course, there are cases where someone loses his or her life early on in his or her substance abuse or even during a period of experimentation, however it is much more common to see a progression occur over time. When someone experiments with drugs or alcohol, he or she is not planning on becoming an addict or an alcoholic, however in some instances, that is what occurs. That is because experimentation can lead to regular use, which can then lead to risky use, dependence, and the eventual development of addiction.

Click [here](#) to read more

## Most Teens Don't Drink Alcohol or Use Other Drugs

By Partnership to End Addiction

It may surprise you that most teens actually do not use nicotine, alcohol, marijuana or other drugs.



In fact, according to data from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, numbers are in the single digits among 12-17-year-olds who smoke (2%), drink alcohol (9%) or use marijuana (7%).

Research over the past two decades has taught us a lot that we didn't know before. Using substances as a teen can be harmful and interferes with healthy brain development — especially in the parts of the brain that control memory, learning, judgment and emotions. It also significantly increases the risk of lifetime addiction.

Substances today are a lot different than those that you may have encountered as a teen. They are more potent and addictive, and many are marketed in ways that directly appeal to kids.

The good news is that there are things you can do to prevent your teen from experimenting with substances or to intervene if they have. The majority of teens say that their parents are the most important influence on their decisions about whether or not to use substances.

Click [here](#) to read more

## What Happens When You Quit Smoking?

Medically reviewed by [Debra Sullivan, Ph.D., MSN, R.N., CNE, COI](#)

**Overview** Smoking releases thousands of chemicals into your body. The result isn't only damage to your lungs, but also your heart and many other body structures. But even if you've smoked for many years, you can reverse these effects and experience health benefits from the first hours you stop smoking to the decades after you quit.

Below are some of the many health milestones you can experience by quitting smoking today.

**What Happens When You Quit Smoking? Highlight and click on anytime link below for a specific answer or click on the link to view all answers:**

<https://www.healthline.com/health/what-happens-when-you-quit-smoking>

- [20 minutes](#)
- [8 hours](#)
- [24 hours](#)
- [48 hours](#)
- [72 hours](#)
- [One week](#)
- [Two weeks](#)
- [One month](#)
- [Three months](#)
- [Six months](#)

- [One year](#)
- [Three years](#)
- [Five years](#)
- [10 years](#)
- [15 years](#)
- [Takeaway](#)

tell your child that alcohol can be bad for his or her growing brain, interferes with judgment, and can make him or her sick. Underage drinking has severe consequences, including injury or death from accidents; unintended, unwanted, or unprotected sexual activity; academic problems; and drug use. Young people who drink are also more likely to have health issues such as depression and anxiety disorders. Once children hear the facts and your opinions about them, it is easier for you to make rules and enforce them.



Substance Use  
Prevention

### SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration  
Jun 11, 2020

- Some questions about alcohol and other drugs can be hard to answer, so it's important to be prepared.
- Use this opportunity to start an open, honest conversation about drinking and drug use, and to establish or reinforce your rules about alcohol and drug use and outline the behavior you expect.
- Peer pressure can be powerful among youths, and having a plan to avoid underage drinking and drug use can help children make smart choices.

Because some questions can be difficult to answer, it is important to be prepared.

The following are common questions and answers about underage drinking and drug use:

#### Questions About Alcohol

##### "Why is alcohol bad for me?"

Don't try to scare your child about drinking or tell him or her, "You can't handle it." Instead,

##### **"I got invited to a party. Can I go?"**

Ask your child if an adult will be present at the party or if he or she thinks children will be drinking. Remind your child that even being at a party where there is underage drinking can get him or her into trouble. Use this time to reinforce your rules about alcohol and remind your children of the behavior you expect. Let them know they can say "no" or text a family member a code word if they're put in a situation that makes them uncomfortable.

##### **"Did you drink when you were a kid?"**

Don't let your past stop you from talking to your child about underage drinking. If you drank as a teenager, be honest. Acknowledge that it was risky. Make sure to emphasize that we now know even more about the risks to children who drink underage. Consider telling your children relatable stories about making smart decisions when it comes to alcohol. These could be stories that show the consequences of engaging in risky behavior.

##### **"Why do you drink?"**

Make a distinction between alcohol use among children and among adults. Explain to your child your reasons for drinking: whether it is to enhance a meal, share good times with friends,



or celebrate a special occasion. Point out that, for adults, drinking in moderation is not harmful to their bodies, and if you choose to drink, it is always in moderation. Tell your child that some people should not drink at all, including underage children.

### **“What if my friends ask me to drink?”**

Helping your child say “no” to peer pressure is one of the most important things you can do to keep him or her alcohol-free. Work with your child to think of a way to handle this situation, whether it is simply saying, “No, I don’t drink,” or “I have a game tomorrow,” or “I have to go to work tomorrow.”

### **“You drink alcohol, so why can’t I?”**

Remind your child that underage drinking is against the law and for good reason. Point out that adults are fully developed mentally and physically, so they can handle drinking. Children’s minds and bodies, however, are still growing, so alcohol can have a greater effect on their judgment and health.

### **Questions About Marijuana**

#### **“Why is marijuana bad for me?”**

Tell your children that marijuana use in any form is not safe for the growth of their brain. Explain that if children smoke marijuana, they could have issues with attention, concentration, and learning, which could cause them to do poorly in school, and creates a lack of balance and coordination, which could increase injury risk when playing sports or driving. Once children hear the facts and your opinions about them, it is easier for you to make rules and enforce them.

#### **“I got invited to a party. Can I go?”**

Ask your child if an adult will be present at the party or if he or she thinks children will be

trying marijuana. Remind your child that even being at a party where there is drug use can get him or her into trouble. Use this time to discuss the risks of marijuana and remind your children of the behavior you expect. Let them know they can say “no” or text a family member a code word if they’re put in a situation that makes them uncomfortable.

#### **“Did you try marijuana when you were a kid?”**

An estimated 1.2 million youths aged 12 to 17 tried marijuana for the first time in 2017—that’s approximately 3,300 kids each day. Don’t let your past stop you from talking to your child about marijuana use. If you tried marijuana as a teenager, be honest. Acknowledge that it was risky. Make sure to emphasize that we now know even more about the risks of marijuana use for children. Consider telling your children relatable stories about making smart decisions when it comes to marijuana. These could be stories that show the consequences of engaging in risky behavior.

#### **“If marijuana is legal in my state, why can’t I use it?”**

If marijuana is legal in your state, young people may also have more exposure to the drug. State laws allowing medical or recreational marijuana use for adults could prompt more youths to believe that the drug is safe. It’s important to have a conversation with your children and remind them about the drug’s potential harms, and that recreational marijuana is still illegal for those under 21.

#### **“What if my friends ask me to try marijuana?”**

Talk with your children about having an “exit plan” if they are offered marijuana. Peer pressure can be powerful among youths, and



having a plan to avoid drug use can help children make smart choices. Talk with your children about what they would do if faced with a decision about drugs, such as texting a code word to a family member or practicing saying “no” in a safe environment. Work with your child to think of a way to handle this situation, whether it is simply saying, “No, I don’t smoke,” or “I have a game tomorrow,” or “I have to go to work tomorrow.”

## **New survey shows Youth Vaping remains a Serious Challenge in Minnesota as Data indicate many Young People who use E-cigarettes Show Signs of Dependence**

Author: Minnesota Department of Health Prevention Alliance News Release Feb., 2021

Minnesota kids are still vaping at very high rates, with one in five high school students using e-cigarettes and 70% of high school and middle school users reporting signs of nicotine dependence, according to new data from the 2020 Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey.

The Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS) has been conducted by the Minnesota Department of Health since 2000 to provide information about the commercial tobacco use of young people and to design and evaluate prevention efforts.

The survey suggests public health efforts have slowed the rapid growth of e-cigarette use seen in recent years. E-cigarette use held steady in 2020 compared to 2017. Overall tobacco use declined to 20.5% of high school and 4.1% of middle school students having used a tobacco product in the past 30 days,

compared to 26.4% (high school) and 5.2% (middle school) in 2017.

The new Minnesota data also shows about four in five Minnesota students (78.4%) reported that the first tobacco product they ever tried was flavored.

“This research suggests our public health efforts are working but also that there is a need for continued work,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm. “In particular, the data on youth vaping alarms us, as we see how this industry continues to use flavors, advertising, internet sales and other tactics to keep addicting youth to harmful nicotine.”

Youth vaping remains at epidemic levels. One recent study published in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) showed an estimated 3.6 million youth in the United States use e-cigarettes.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the need to reduce commercial tobacco addiction and improve lung health. Current and former smokers are at higher risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19. E-cigarette aerosol may damage lung tissue, especially concerning during a respiratory pandemic.

### **Nicotine dependence results**

The 2020 state survey included for the first time a four-item nicotine dependence scale for e-cigarettes. Overall, 70.4% of students who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days reported one or more signs of dependence; these products are being used with greater intensity.

“These new data are consistent with conversations I’ve had with teens over the past three years in focus groups we conducted about youth vaping behavior and in our vaping prevention workshops,” said Elyse Levine Less, executive director at the Tobacco-Free Alliance. “Teens do not intend to get addicted to nicotine and underestimate the risk.”

Nicotine can harm the developing adolescent brain. Because the brain is still developing until about age 25, youth and young adult exposure to nicotine can lead to addiction and disrupt attention and learning. No amount of nicotine is safe for youth.

They are surprised how easy it is to lose control and become nicotine dependent, something that they never could imagine happening to them,” Less said. “I’ve heard kids say, ‘I wish I didn’t have to do this [vape]’ but can’t pinpoint when they lost their choice in the matter.”

The survey also provided insight into youth who vape marijuana. Among students who use e-cigarettes, 65.1% of high school and 71.7% of middle school students had ever vaped marijuana, a statistically significant increase from 2017.

“The good news is that we know what it takes to make a positive change; we just need to act,” said Commissioner Malcolm. “Minnesota needs a comprehensive approach to reverse the youth tobacco epidemic.”

Minnesota’s cities and counties already have the authority to limit the sale of menthol and other flavored commercial tobacco products, which are known to appeal to youth. Some communities have already taken these steps.

These new data do offer some good news. The use of cigarettes and cigars has dropped to the lowest rates ever recorded by the survey. Just over 3% of high school students report smoking cigarettes over the last 30 days – a steep decline from 2017. Cigar use among high school students is now also just as low.

Preventing youth commercial tobacco use, including the use of e-cigarettes, requires a sustainable and comprehensive approach. Large-scale prevention efforts, such as counter-marketing to raise awareness of the dangers of these products and measures to reduce youth access to these products in their communities, have been shown to be effective.

For youth ready to break free from nicotine addiction, Minnesota has a new program to help them quit. My Life, My Quit™, part of the state’s Quit Partner™ family of programs, is completely free and confidential. My Life, My Quit coaches can help teens develop a quit plan, cope with stress, learn about nicotine, and get ongoing support. Teens can chat with a coach online at:

[MyLifeMyQuit.com](http://MyLifeMyQuit.com) or text “Start” to 36072.