



Youth ATOD Survey 2016 Combined Report

A Summary of Key Findings

Laredo Independent School District

and

United Independent School District

Laredo, Texas

Fall 2015 & Spring 2016

Basic Demographic Data on Survey Respondents

- A total of 2,340 middle school and high school students participated.
- Approximately one-half of the survey participants (49.4%) were students in middle school ($n = 1140$), while the other half (50.6%) were in high school students ($n = 1167$).
- The gender distribution of the participants who responded to this demographic question was nearly evenly split between 47.7% males and 52.3% females.
- Of those students who reported a racial or ethnic identity, 87.5% indicated their ethnicity to be White or Hispanic or Latino descent, while only 3.2% of the students identified themselves as White non-Hispanic.

All Student Participants by School District

School District	Frequency	Percent
LISD	972	41.5
UISD	1368	58.5
Total	2,340	100.0

Tobacco

- Less than one-fifth (17.2%) of the respondents indicated that they had smoked cigarettes at least once or more in their lifetimes, and only 5.3% indicated having used smokeless tobacco at some point in their lives.
- The average age that students began smoking cigarettes was 13.29 years, with less than one-fifth (17.4%) of students indicating that they had used cigarettes at some point in their lives on this particular survey item.
- More than half (53.3%) of all the students felt there was “great risk” if they smoked one or more packs of cigarettes per day, and three-fifths (60.0%) thought it was “very wrong” for someone their age to smoke cigarettes.
- More than three-quarters (79.4%) of the students believed that their parents would consider cigarette smoking to be very wrong.

Tobacco - Continued

- In regards to tobacco use across the lifetime, there was no significant gender difference in cigarette smoking, but the boys were significantly more likely than girls to have used smokeless tobacco at some point in their lives.
- Female students perceived significantly greater risk in regular tobacco use than did their male counterparts. Conversely, the boys tended to attribute lower risk to daily smoking of one or more packs of cigarettes.

Alcohol

- When asked if they had ever consumed alcoholic drinks on one or more occasions (more than a few sips), about one-third (34.8%) of the students surveyed in the two public school districts of Laredo reported that they had drunk alcohol on more than a couple of occasions in their lifetimes. Less than one-fifth (17.3 %) of the students said that they had been drunk once or more in their lifetimes, and a fifth (20.3%) of the respondents reported drinking four to five drinks at a party at least once.
- The average age for students to begin drinking alcohol is 13.61 years; with 31.9% of students indicating that they had consumed alcohol at some point in their lives on this particular survey item.
- One-third (34.7%) of the students perceived “great risk” associated with the daily use of alcohol, and 44.2% reported that they thought it was “very wrong” for someone their age to use alcohol regularly.

Alcohol - Continued

- Two-thirds (68.6%) of the students believed that their parents would consider the regular consumption of alcohol to be very wrong; while nearly four percent (3.7%) said that their parents would consider alcohol use to not be wrong at all.
- Although there were no statistically significant gender differences on the alcohol-related lifetime use, there was a significant difference between males and females on the average age of first use of alcohol with boys beginning drinking at a younger age than the girls.
- The male students perceived significantly less risk than did their female counterparts on the regular and daily consumption of alcohol.

Marijuana

- Less than one-sixth (15.8%) of the respondents in the two Laredo public school districts reported using marijuana at least once or more in their lifetimes while about five percent (5.5%) indicated that they had used synthetic marijuana at some point in their lives.
- The average age of the first use of marijuana was 13.83 years, with 14.6% of students indicating that they had used marijuana at some point in their lives on this particular survey item. The average age of onset for marijuana use is older than the age for first use of alcohol and tobacco.
- The mean age of the first use of synthetic marijuana was 14.10 years, with 4.7% of students indicating that they had used synthetic marijuana at some point in their lives on this particular survey item.
- More than two-fifths (44.4%) of the students indicated that they believed there was “great risk” associated with regular use of marijuana, but a little more than a quarter (28.3%) felt there was “great risk” involved in trying marijuana once or twice.

Marijuana - Continued

- One-half (48.5%) of the youths surveyed indicated that they perceived “great risk” in trying synthetic marijuana once or twice, while nearly two-thirds (62.7%) believed there was “great risk” in the regular use of synthetic marijuana.
- More than three-fifths (62.5%) of the students thought it was “very wrong” to smoke marijuana, while 73.9% felt that it was “very wrong” to use synthetic marijuana.
- More than four-fifths (83.8%) of the respondents believed that their parents would consider marijuana use as “very wrong,” while 88.0% felt that their parents would consider the use of synthetic marijuana to be “very wrong.”
- In regards to the gender differences found in the analyses of the marijuana and synthetic marijuana use data, although there were no significant gender differences in the lifetime use of synthetic marijuana, there was a statistically significant difference between males and females on the lifetime use of marijuana. Male students were more likely than their female counterparts to report using marijuana at some point in their lifetimes.
- In contrast to marijuana use, there were no significant differences between males and females on the use of synthetic marijuana.

Prescription Drugs

- Less than seven percent (6.8%) of the Laredo students reported using prescription drugs in their lifetimes in order to have fun or to get high.
- The average age that students began using prescription drugs for recreational purposes was 13.87 years; with 5.1% of students indicating that they had used prescription drugs at some point in their lives on this particular survey item. No significant gender differences were found on prescription drug use.
- A little more than two-fifths (43.2%) of the youth respondents believed there was “great risk” associated with “trying” prescription drugs for recreational purposes once or twice.
- When asked about the potential risk involved in the “regular” use of prescription drugs for recreational purposes, three-fifths (60.7%) of the students indicated that there was “great risk” involved.

Prescription Drugs - Continued

- Female students were significantly ($p < .0001$) more likely to report greater risk than their male classmates associated with trying prescription drugs recreationally once or twice and using prescription medications for recreational purposes on a regular daily basis.
- Less than three-quarters (73.7%) said that it was “very wrong” to use prescription drugs for recreational purposes (for fun or to get high).
- Students believed strongly that their parents would disapprove of their using prescription drugs for fun or to get high, as 88.3% indicated their parents would consider the use of prescription drugs to be “very wrong.”

Frequencies of Lifetime Use

- The frequencies of **lifetime use** indicate that the three (3) most commonly used substances among the students in the two school districts resulted in the following order:
 - **Alcohol Consumption (34.8%)**
 - **Cigarette Smoking (17.2%)**
 - **Marijuana Use (15.8%)**

Mean Ages for First Use

- The **mean ages** for the first use of substances among the students in the two school districts resulted in the following order:
 - Inhalant Use (12.46 years)
 - **Cigarette Smoking (13.29 years)**
 - **Alcohol Consumption (13.61 years)**
 - **Marijuana Use (13.83 years)**
 - Prescription Drug Use (13.87 years)
 - Synthetic Marijuana Use (14.10 years)

Students' Perceived Risk of Use

- The high-low **classification of risk** across all students of the two school districts resulted in the following rank order of substances:
 - Regular use of synthetic marijuana (84.2%)
 - Regular use of prescription medications for recreation (83.3%)
 - **Daily use of cigarettes (80.2%)**
 - Trying synthetic marijuana once or twice (76.9%)
 - Trying prescription medications for recreational purposes once or twice (74.4%)
 - **Regular use of marijuana (70.5%)**
 - **Daily use of alcohol (63.5%)**
 - Trying marijuana once or twice (54.5%)