PROJECTALERT

2017 Prevalence of Use Statistics

Young people are using drugs. And when students think everyone is doing it--using tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, inhalants, e-cigarettes, or opioids--they may feel more pressure to use them too.

When students overestimate the number of their peers who are involved in drug use, they are less likely to perceive social support for refusing offers to use drugs. Actually, most youth don't use drugs.

As a Project ALERT teacher, you strive to make this point with your students in Lesson 4, Activity 3 – the Prevalence of Use Activity. To make your point with credibility, you need to be aware of current statistics.

The 2017 National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Monitoring the Future Study reports the following national usage patterns for eighth graders:

	Percent change from 2016
• 1.9% smoked cigarettes in the last month	-0.7
• 5.5% used marijuana in the last month	0.0
• 8.0% used alcohol in the last month	+0.7
• 2.1% used inhalants in the last month	+0.4
• 6.6% used e-cigarettes in the last month	+0.4
• 3.9% used opioids without a prescription in the last month*	NA

Yes, the numbers are high. But nationally, most young people don't use drugs!

The complete Monitoring the Future Study can be found at: www.monitoringthefuture.org

* Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD. Available at: https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf

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