

C. OTHER SUBSTANCE ABUSE

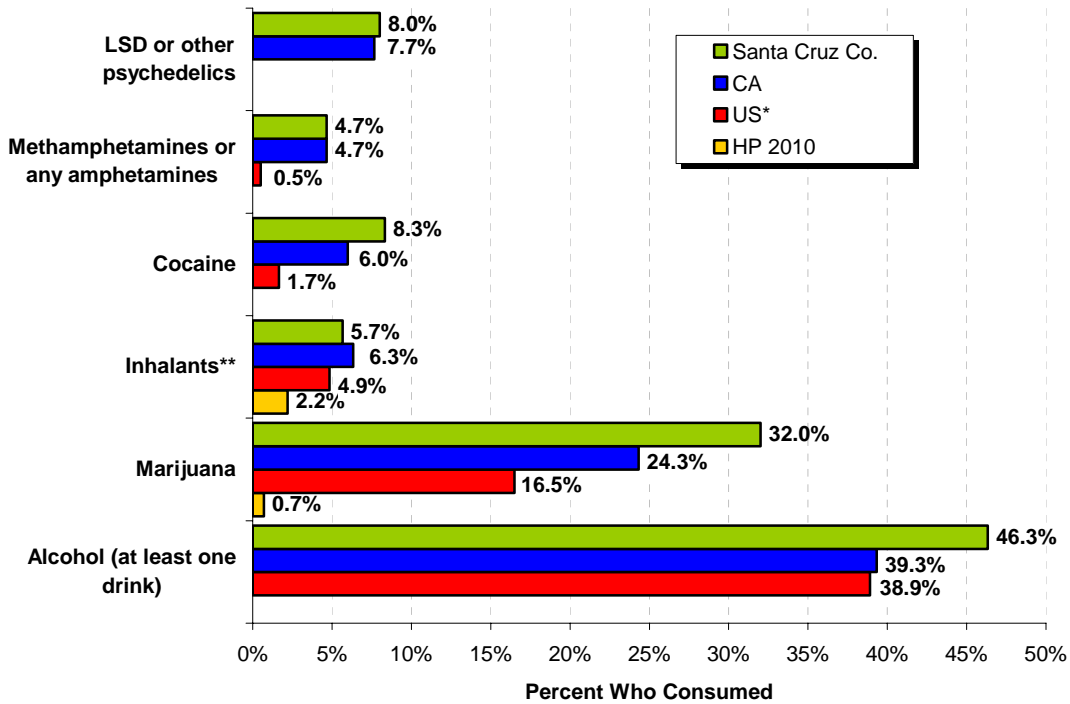
<p>Importance</p>	<p>The impact of illicit drug use and addiction is far-reaching. Cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and lung disease can all be associated with and/or affected by drug abuse,¹ as can fatal and nonfatal overdose and other diseases associated with high-risk behavior and sexual transmission. There is a body of literature and research that details the complex and sometimes reciprocal linkages between illegal drug use and negative health and social experiences.</p>
<p>Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the 2008-2009 school year, a higher proportion of 9th graders than 11th graders responding to a survey reported using or ingesting cocaine, methamphetamines, inhalants, and psychedelics.^{2,3}
<p>Healthy People 2010 Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inhalant use in the past year by adolescents 2.2% ▪ Adolescent past month use of marijuana 0.7% ▪ Adult past month use of an illicit drug 3.2%

Drugs with abuse potential have been shown to alter gene expression and brain circuitry, and consequently may permanently affect human behavior. When drug abuse occurs, a person's ability to exert self-control becomes seriously impaired. Brain imaging studies from drug-addicted individuals show physical changes in areas of the brain that are critical to judgment, decision-making, learning and memory, and behavior control. Scientists believe that these changes alter the way the brain works, and may help explain the compulsive and destructive behaviors of addiction. Some of these effects occur only when drugs are used at high doses or after prolonged use; however, some may occur after just one use.¹

Adolescents are especially at risk for the negative and often life-long impacts of drug abuse, because their brains are still maturing – specifically, “the prefrontal cortex – the part of the brain that enables us to assess situations, make sound decisions, and keep our emotions and desires under control. The fact that this critical part of an adolescent’s brain is still a work-in-progress puts them at increased risk for poor decisions (such as trying drugs or continued abuse). Thus, introducing drugs while the brain is still developing may have profound and long-lasting consequences.”¹

The proportions of high school students in Santa Cruz County who have recently used illicit substances are similar to the statewide rates, except for *cocaine, marijuana, and alcohol usage, for which Santa Cruz County is, notably, 17%-25% higher than California* (Figure IIC-1).^{4,5} While the U.S. data represented in Figure 5.7 comes from a different source (10th and 12th grade, 2008 data from NIDA) and may not be dependably comparable with the source used for Santa Cruz County and the state of California (9th and 11th grade data collected between 2006 and 2008 from CHIS), it is worth noting that methamphetamine and cocaine usage are 9.4 and 4.8 times higher in Santa Cruz County than in the U.S.^{4,5} Both inhalant and marijuana use in Santa Cruz County are far higher than the 2010 national objectives (Figure IIC-1).^{4,5}

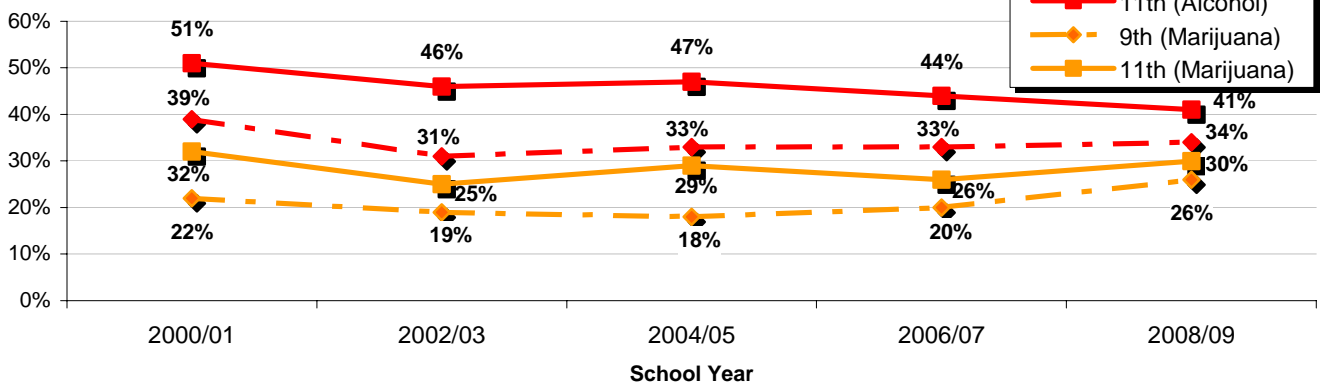
Figure IIC-1: Percent of 9th, 11th and Non-traditional High School Students Who Consumed the Following Substances in the 30 days* prior to the survey, 2006-2008^{4,5}



Note: US Data for Grades 10 and 12 is 2008; *Inhalant Use is for the last 12 months.

Between the 2000-2001 and 2008-2009 school years, there has been little or no reduction in the proportions of 11th graders who have used in the last 30 days, with the exception of a 10% decrease in alcohol consumption. *The proportion of 9th graders who have used has increased for every substance asked about except alcohol.* For all but alcohol and marijuana, a higher proportion of 9th graders than 11th graders reported using in the 2008-2009 school year (Figures IIC-2 to IIC-6).^{2,3}

Figure IIC-2: Percent of 9th and 11th Grade Students Who Used Marijuana At Least Once or Drank at Least One Alcoholic Beverage in the Last 30 Days, Santa Cruz County, 2000-2009^{2,3}



Note: Data are weighted.

Figure IIC-3: Percent of 9th and 11th Grade Students Who Used Cocaine At Least Once in the Last 30 Days, Santa Cruz County, 2000-2009^{2,3}

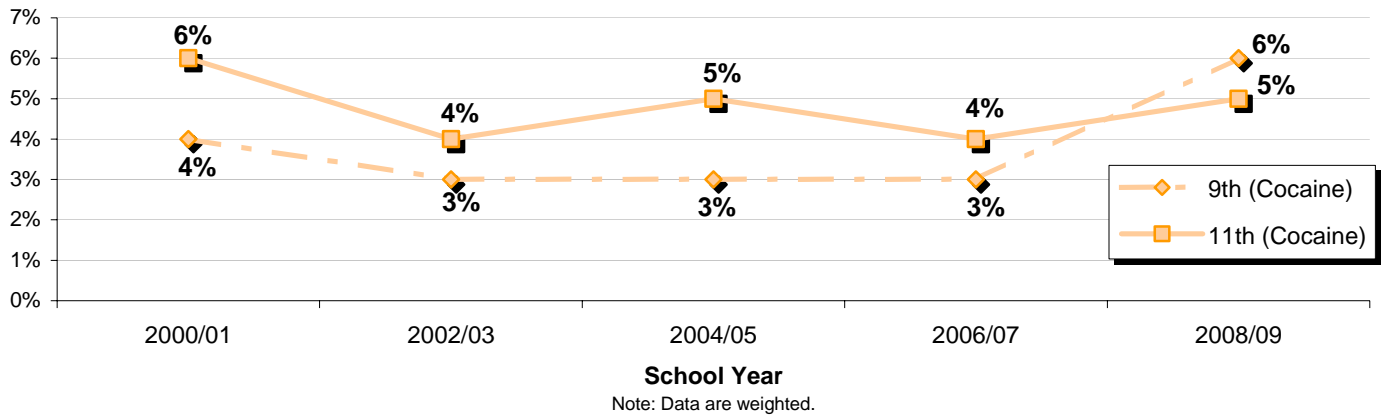


Figure IIC-4: Percent of 9th and 11th Grade Students Who Used Methamphetamines* At Least Once in the Last 30 Days, Santa Cruz County, 2000-2009^{2,3}

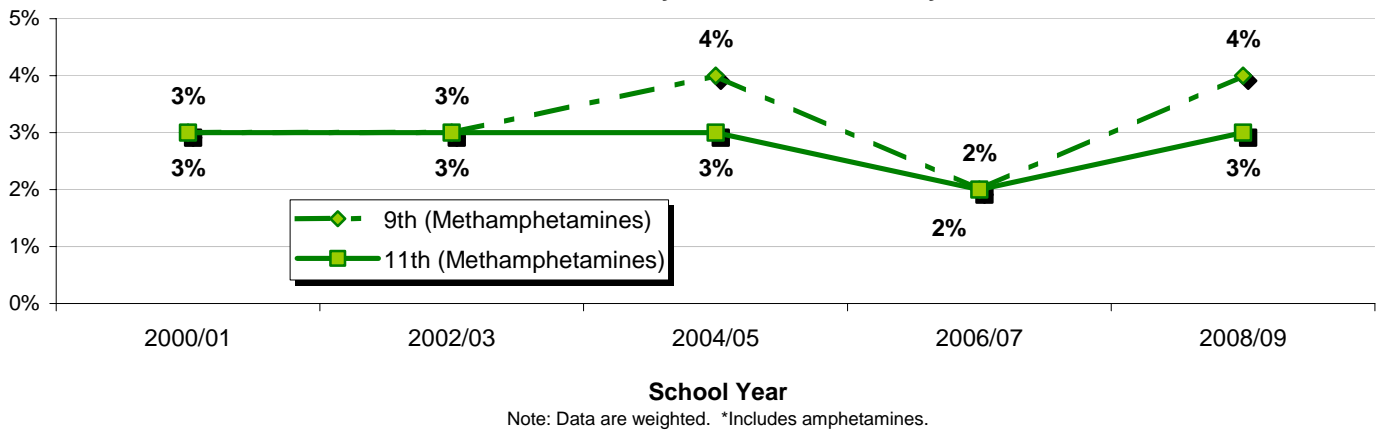


Figure IIC-5: Percent of 9th and 11th Grade Students Who Used Inhalants At Least Once in the Last 30 Days, Santa Cruz County, 2000-2009^{2,3}

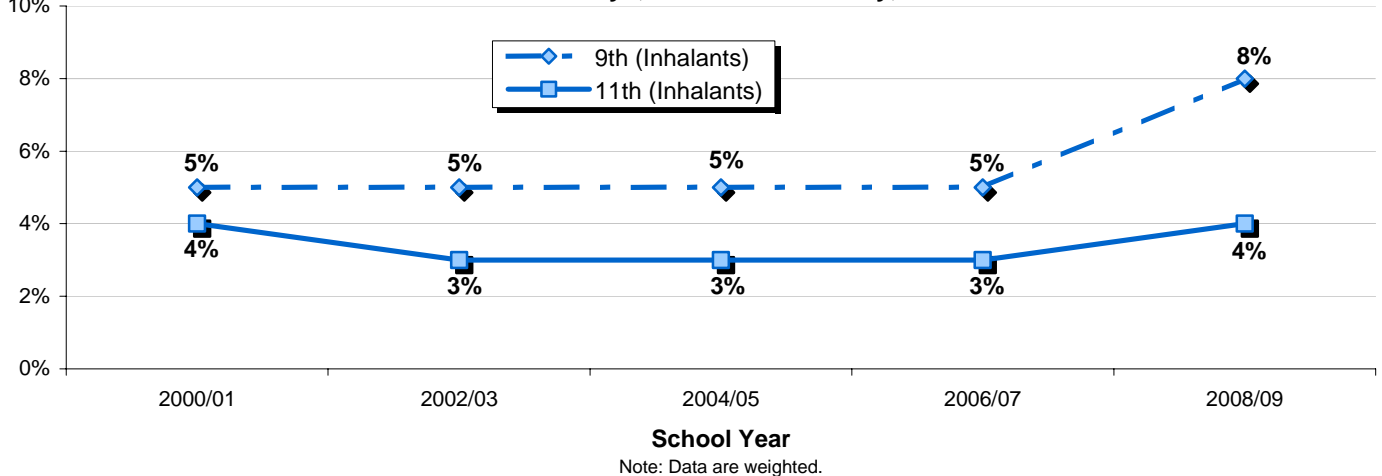
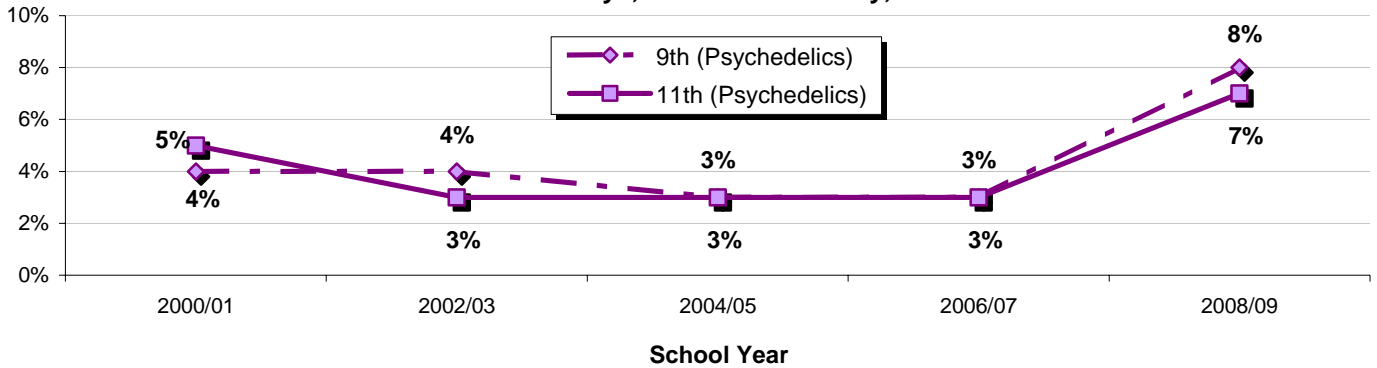


Figure IIC-6: Percent of 9th and 11th Grade Students Who Used Psychedelics* At Least Once in the Last 30 Days, Santa Cruz County, 2000-2009^{2,3}



Note: Data are weighted. *Includes Ecstasy, LSD, or other psychedelics.

Primary Prevention Activities

- **Santa Cruz County Friday Night Live Partnership** comprises the Friday Night Live (FNL) and Club Live (CL) programs. These programs are multi-cultural and youth-driven and -led, designed to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among middle school and high school students.

Sources

1. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Drugs, Brains, and Behavior: The Science of Addiction," printed April 2007, reprinted February 2008.
2. California Health Interview Survey. AskCHIS. 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. Accessed April-May 2010 at <http://www.chis.ucla.edu>.
3. Applied Survey Research. Life in Santa Cruz County, Year 13, 2007: Community Assessment Project: Comprehensive Report 13. San Jose, CA: United Way of Santa Cruz, 2007.
4. "Santa Cruz County Technical Report 2006-2008." West Ed / Healthy Kids. 31 Mar 2010. California Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office. Accessed 12 April 2010 at http://www.wested.org/cs/chks/print/docs/chks_home.html.
5. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. January 2010. <http://www.drugabuse.gov/infofacts/HSYouthtrends.html>.