

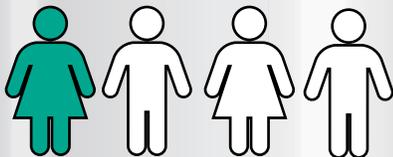


Youth Facts 2011

Drugs

17%

reported non-medical use of a prescription drug in the past year.



1 in 4 students reported they used cannabis in the past year.

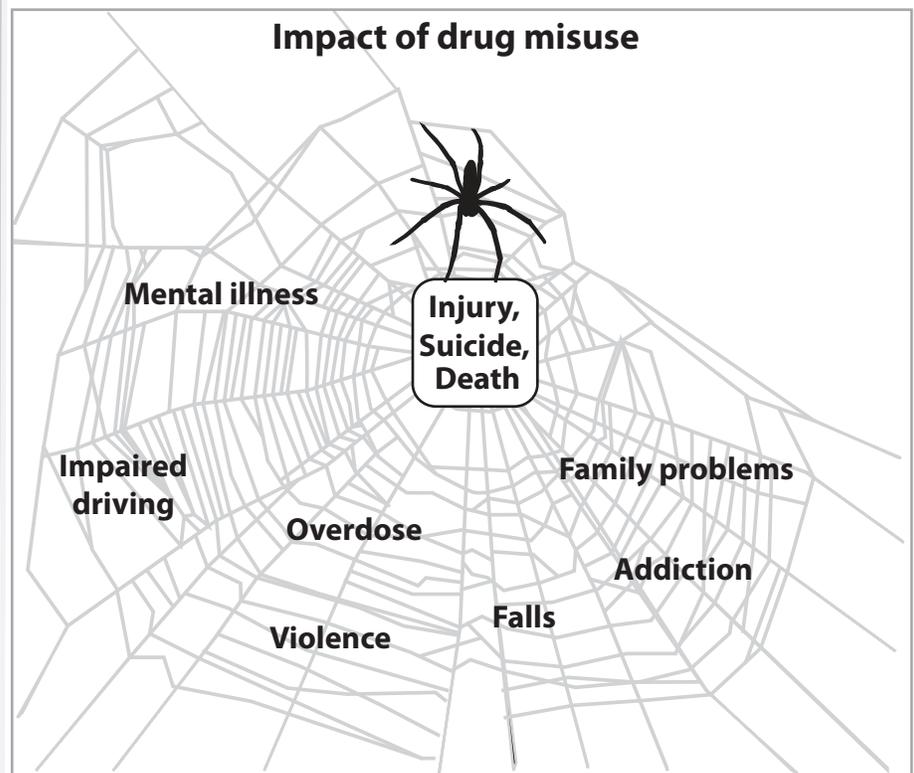
15%

of students with a driver's license reported driving high in the past year.



3 in 5 students in grades 9-12 thought it would be easy to get cannabis.

This *Youth Facts* outlines what Ottawa youth in grades 7 to 12 reported about their drug use, as well as their attitudes and beliefs toward drug use. It also provides information about what Ottawa Public Health (OPH) is doing and ways we can help.



Drug misuse is linked to higher rates of mental illness, impaired driving, overdose, violence, falls, and addiction. This can lead to injury, suicide or death. Drug misuse is a public health concern.

Youth Facts is a series that describes Ottawa results from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS). It was conducted during the 2010/11 school year for students in the public and Catholic school systems.

To learn more about this *Youth Facts* topic, including alcohol and tobacco, see www.ottawa.ca/healthreports. An [accessible version](#) is also available.



Building resilient youth

Parents and trusted adults can change youths' attitudes and behaviours about drug use.

Discuss the potential harms of drug misuse

- Share your values and attitudes about drug use.
- Discuss the potential harms of drug misuse.
- Ensure unused medications are disposed of properly or returned to the pharmacy.

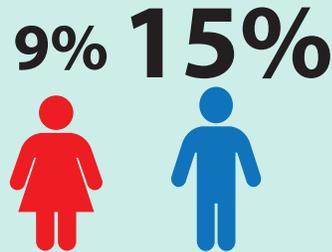


15%* of drivers in grades 10 through 12 reported they drove within an hour of using cannabis at least once during the past 12 months.



12% of Ottawa students reported they had been a passenger in a vehicle with a driver who had been using drugs.

In Ontario, male drivers were significantly more likely than female drivers to use cannabis and drive.



77%

Grades 7-8

47%

Grades 9-12

reported they think there is a great risk associated with smoking cannabis regularly.

62%
Ottawa

41%
Ontario

reported they had a class or presentation on cannabis during the past school year.

12%*

identified behaviours that indicated they may have a drug use problem.

OPH delivers the *Healthy Transitions* program to grade 7 and 8 students, parents, and teachers to promote resiliency in youth.

OPH develops and offers substance misuse prevention resources, training and health curriculum support to all Ottawa school boards.

OPH provides support and resources to the work of *Safer Roads Ottawa* on impaired and distracted driving.

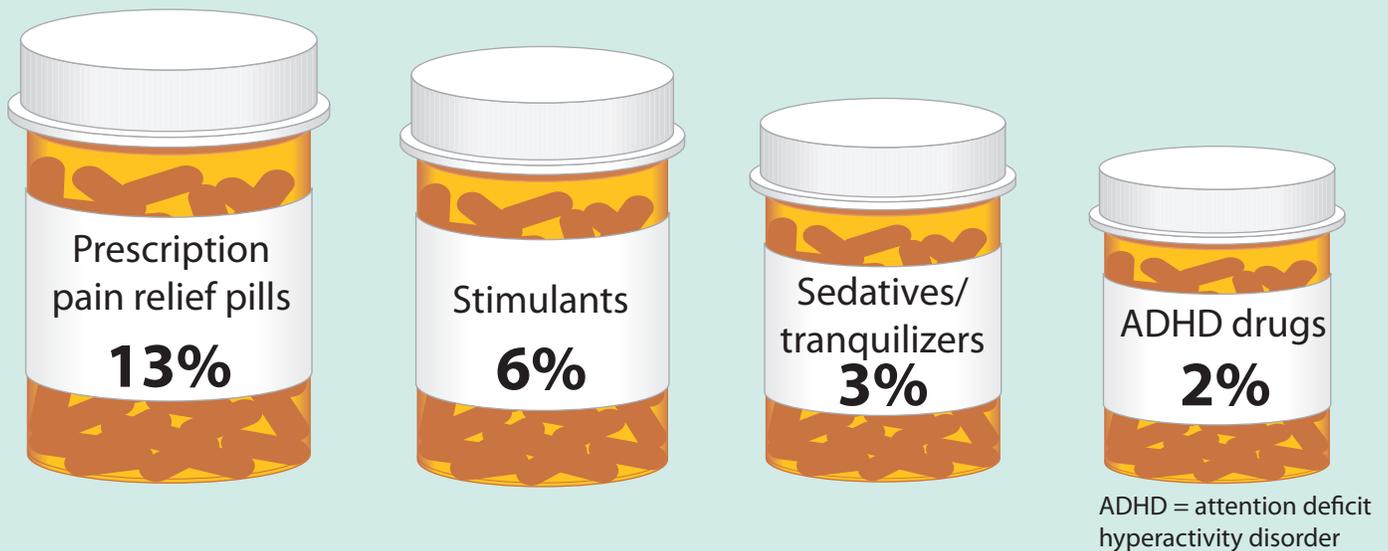
Reducing the availability of prescription drugs

Home is the number one location where youth obtain prescription drugs.

Among Ottawa students who used pain relievers non-medically in the past year, **70%** reported they got these drugs from a parent, sibling, or someone else they live with.

Non-medical use = without a doctor's prescription or without a doctor telling you to take them

The prescription drugs most commonly abused by Ottawa students are:



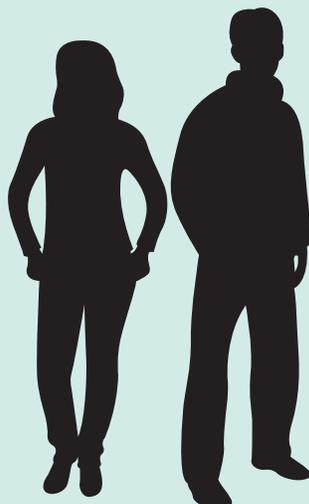
Non-medical use of prescription drugs decreased

21% 2009
17% 2011

20% Ottawa
13% Ontario

7% Grades 7-8
18% Grades 9-12

said it would be easy to get prescription pain relief drugs



Non-medical use of a prescription drug in 2011

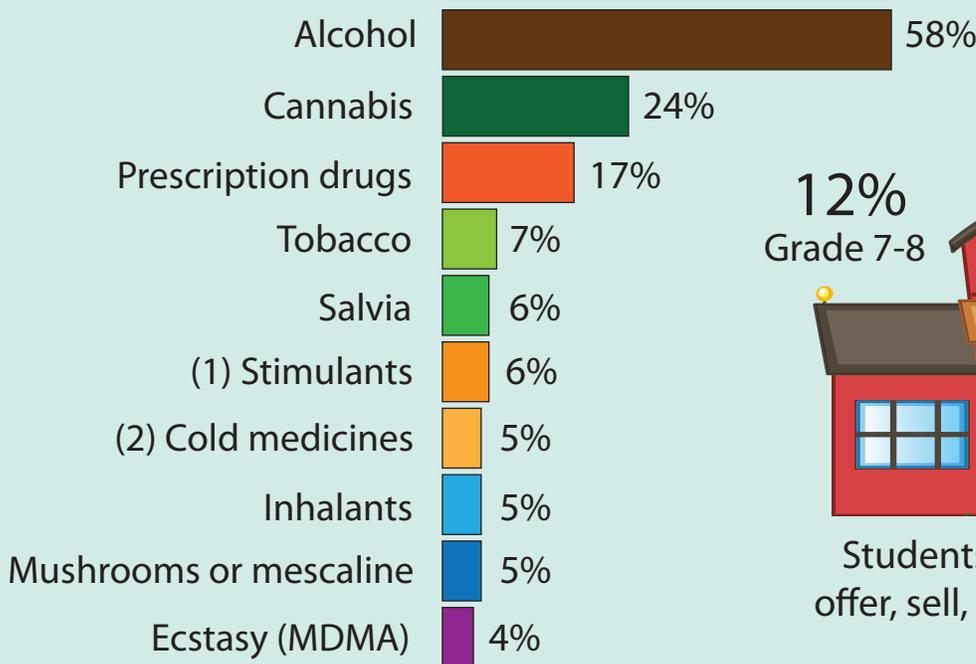
19% Females
14% Males



Reducing availability and use of illicit[†] drugs

A youth's brain is more at risk to the effects of drugs because the brain is still

Drug use of students in grades 7 to 12

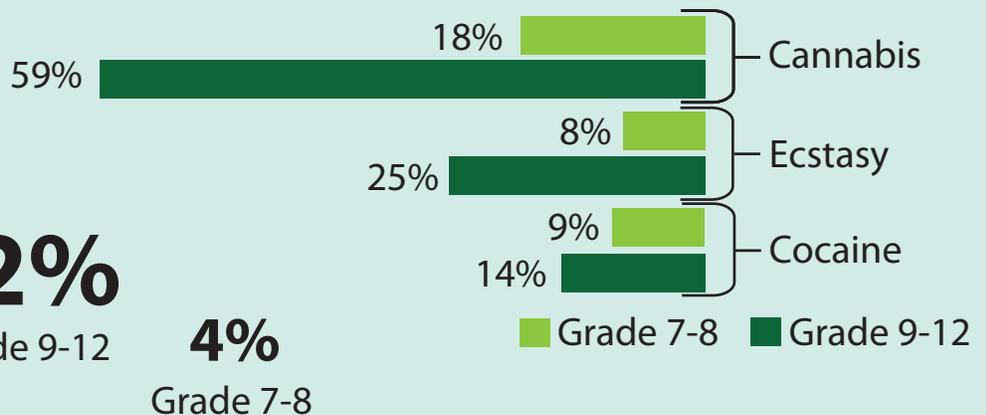


Students who had someone try to offer, sell, or give them an illegal drug at school

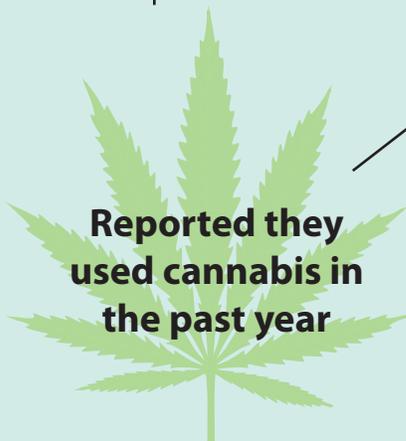
(1) E.g. Over-the-counter diet or stay awake pills
 (2) Over-the-counter cough and cold medicines containing dextromethorphan (DXM)

Students who reported it would be easy to get a drug.

24% Ottawa
 22% Ontario



32% Grade 9-12
 4% Grade 7-8



Reported they used cannabis in the past year

28% Students who spoke English at home

12% Students who spoke a language other than English or French at home

[†] Illicit drugs include cannabis, solvents, hallucinogens, salvia, cocaine and ecstasy.

Accessing Treatment Services

Resources



Warning signs of substance misuse

Speak to youth if you notice any of the following signs:

- A sudden change in behaviour, appearance, or attitude to you or other family members
- May become more secretive or less helpful
- School grades drop
- Money is missing or they have more money than usual
- Hanging out with new friends, or doesn't bring friends home any more

Signs of drug overdose : a person does not wake up to pain or react to loud noises, slow or shallow breathing or no breathing, lips or fingernails turn blue.



**Call
9-1-1**

Ottawa Public Health treatment and referral services

- OPH Site Needle & Syringe program provides access to sterile harm reduction supplies, safe disposal of injection equipment, health information, sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy testing and counselling.
- OPH is a member and funding partner of the Substance Abuse and Youth in School Coalition (SAYS). Addiction counsellors work with students who have drug misuse problems in and out of school.
- Ottawa Public Health Information Line (OPHIL) provides information about treatment and referral agencies for substance misuse. Contact 613 580-6744 or healthsante@ottawa.ca.

Community resources for youth drug misuse:

If you would like information about other community resources, call 211 or visit www.cominfo-ottawa.org.

Key community resources that OPH staff draw upon and support include:

- Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services provides services for adults, adolescents and family members who are or have been affected by substance misuse: www.rideauwood.org.
- Maison Fraternité provides services to the francophone population who have a substance use problem, including services for adults, adolescents, and specific programming for women: www.maisonfraternite.ca.
- Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre provides residential and community-based agency dedicated to helping youth (13-21) overcome substance misuse: www.davesmithcentre.org.
- Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa provides youth and family counselling and crisis support, including walk-in clinics: www.ysb.on.ca.
- The Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health provides comprehensive and culturally relevant services for Aboriginal (First Nation, Inuit and Métis) individuals, couples and families, including several programs for youth. These include "I Am Connected" is a holistic substance prevention programming for children and youth aged 10 to 24. The Centre also offers the "Wasa-Nabin Urban Youth Program," a one on one program offered to At-Risk Youth age 13-18, and the "Wabano Way Youth Diversion Program" which offers a culturally-sensitive prevention and intervention program that provides diversion from court www.wabano.com.
- Local Community Health and Resource Centres offer many programs and services for youth and families. Go to www.coalitionottawa.ca for a list of Community Health and Resource Centres.



More Information

For more information about healthy living, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Tumblr](#) and [Twitter @ottawahealth](#)

Acknowledgements

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Legend

* A high variability in the responses from students; these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Larger fonts indicate a number which is significantly larger.

