

TEEN DRUG USE TRENDS

According to this-year's "Monitoring the Future" survey from NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse) there are some promising trends. "Past-year use of illicit drugs *other than marijuana* are holding steady at the lowest levels in over two decades—6.1 percent of 8th graders, 9.6 percent of 10th graders, and 12.4 percent of 12th graders. Among 12th graders, the rate of past-year use of illicit drugs other than marijuana has declined by 30.0 percent in the past five years." The survey also found a disturbing trend in teen attitudes toward vaping. 18% of 8th graders, 32% of 10th graders and 37% of 12th graders report vaping in the past year. Overall, this is a 57% INCREASE in just 1 year.

For teens, vaping THC concentrates has become the most popular way to ingest the drug. Vape pens are small and can be easily hidden. One popular THC extraction method uses butane, a highly flammable solvent, which is put through an extraction tube filed with marijuana. The butane evaporates leaving a sticky liquid known as "wax" or "dab." This extraction method is dangerous because butane is a highly explosive gas. There are other dangers as well. In just 60 days, 215 vaping teens and young adults in 25 states reported severe respiratory illnesses. Many have been hospitalized; some with lingering lung problems that required use of a ventilator or extensive monitoring in intensive care units.

UNFORTUNATELY, IF IT CAN GET YOU HIGH, SOME KIDS WILL TRY IT.

Hand Sanitizers contain 64% ethyl alcohol and some kids drink it to get high. Others use salt to distill the sanitizer and separate the alcohol before drinking it. Detailed instructions on how to distill hand sanitizers can be found on the Internet . . . along with just about everything else.

Drinking cough syrup (also called "Robotripping") is a popular high among teens. Dextromethorphan or DXM is the active ingredient in cough syrups like Robitussin. Some kids drink the cough syrup straight while others mix it with soda or Sprite before drinking it. Many call the Sprite and cough syrup mixture "Clear." Add candy (Jolly Ranchers) to the concoction and it is called "Sizzurp." Drinking and making Sizzurp is featured in many YouTube videos and glamorized in popular music. 1 in every 10 teens surveyed, admits to drinking Sizzurp. *Prescription* cough syrup is highly valued by both "Sizzurp" and "Clear" users.

Digital drugs are another trend. Some digital audio files can alter brain waves and disrupt the mental state. The high is similar to that of narcotics. These audio files can be purchased online, but many are readily available and can be downloaded free, from YouTube.

Cooking spices can get you high. That's right . . . spices! Both nutmeg and anise contain myristicin, a natural compound known to cause hallucinations and euphoria when taken in large quantities. The "cinnamon challenge" is a popular watch on YouTube. Teens try to swallow a spoonful of cinnamon in less than a minute. Many teens have experienced throat and lung damage doing so.

Whip-it, or any can of aerosol spray whipped cream, contains nitrous oxide, laughing gas. The high only lasts a few seconds to a few minutes so kids often use too much. In higher doses, nitrous oxide can cause unconsciousness. Users exhale all the air from their lungs and then inhale the nitrous from the can of whipped cream.

For teens, alcohol remains the number 1 drug of choice. 8% of 8th graders, 19% of 10th graders and 30% of 12th graders report drinking alcohol the previous month. ("Monitoring the Future" survey)

