



2021 STUDENT DRUG & ALCOHOL SURVEY RESULTS

Joseph J. Occhino, Principal
Northern Highlands Regional High School

Background Information

- Last student drug survey administered 2015
- Pride Surveys of International Surveys Associates
- Survey is completely anonymous
- In order for students to participate, parents granted their child permission to participate through active consent form.
- Approximately 71% of students surveyed (924 students)
- 50.3% of students surveyed were female; 46.8% were male.

Grade	Grade Total	Male	Female
9	250	119	126
10	233	114	114
11	232	106	117
12	209	94	108
9-12	924	433	465
Total	924	433	465

General Findings

- Results show that alcohol and marijuana are the drugs of choice for students on an annual and monthly basis.
- E-cigarettes use is greater than cigarette use.

DRUG	ANNUAL	MONTHLY
Tobacco	6.0	2.3
Cigarettes	–	2.2
E-cigarettes	15.3	12.5
Alcohol	42.2	33.2
Marijuana	14.8	9.6
Cocaine	0.7	0.4
Inhalants	0.5	0.2
Hallucinogens	1.3	0.4
Heroin	0.3	0.2
Steroids	0.5	0.5
Ecstasy	0.4	0.2
Meth	0.2	0.2
Prescription Drugs	1.1	0.7
Over-the-Counter Drugs	1.2	0.5
Opioid Pain Killers	0.4	0.3
Any Illicit Drug	16.7	10.2

Northern Highlands Student's Use vs. National Average (past 12 months)

DRUG/Location	9th	10th	11th	12th
Alcohol				
2020-2021	16.8	37.8	55.6	63.6
2019-2020 NS	22.6	35.1	43.0	54.2
diff	-5.8	2.7	12.6	9.4
Marijuana				
2020-2021	2.8	11.2	17.5	30.6
2019-2020 NS	10.4	17.2	25.1	29.4
diff	-7.6	-6.0	-7.6	1.2
Prescription Drugs				
2020-2021	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.9
2019-2020 NS	3.0	3.3	3.7	5.5
diff	-2.2	-2.4	-2.8	-3.6
Cocaine				
2020-2021	0.0	0.4	0.9	1.4
2019-2020 NS	0.9	1.4	1.5	3.1
diff	-0.9	-1.0	-0.6	-1.7
Inhalants				
2020-2021	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.0
2019-2020 NS	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.5
diff	-1.3	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5
Heroin				
2020-2021	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.0
2019-2020 NS	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.6
diff	-0.6	-0.6	-0.9	-0.6

- Alcohol use is above the national average for all grade levels with the exception of 9th grade
- Marijuana use is below national average for 9th, 10th, and 11th grades; use is above national average for 12th grade
- Student use of prescription drugs, cocaine, inhalants, and heroin are all below the national average

Northern Highlands Student's Use vs. National Average (past 30 days)

- Alcohol use among the 9th grade is below the national average; all other grades are above
- Marijuana use is below national average for 9th, 10th, and 11th grades; use is above national average for 12th grade
- Student use of prescription drugs, cocaine, inhalants, and heroin are all below the national average

DRUG/Location	9th	10th	11th	12th
Alcohol				
2020-2021	16.8	37.8	55.6	63.6
2019-2020 NS	22.6	35.1	43.0	54.2
diff	-5.8	2.7	12.6	9.4
Marijuana				
2020-2021	2.8	11.2	17.5	30.6
2019-2020 NS	10.4	17.2	25.1	29.4
diff	-7.6	-6.0	-7.6	1.2
Prescription Drugs				
2020-2021	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.9
2019-2020 NS	3.0	3.3	3.7	5.5
diff	-2.2	-2.4	-2.8	-3.6
Cocaine				
2020-2021	0.0	0.4	0.9	1.4
2019-2020 NS	0.9	1.4	1.5	3.1
diff	-0.9	-1.0	-0.6	-1.7
Inhalants				
2020-2021	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.0
2019-2020 NS	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.5
diff	-1.3	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5
Heroin				
2020-2021	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.0
2019-2020 NS	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.6
diff	-0.6	-0.6	-0.9	-0.6

Age of Northern Highlands Student When Alcohol and Marijuana Were First Used

Students report age at the time of first use of alcohol and marijuana ranges from an average of 14 to 15 years old.

At what age did you first drink alcohol?

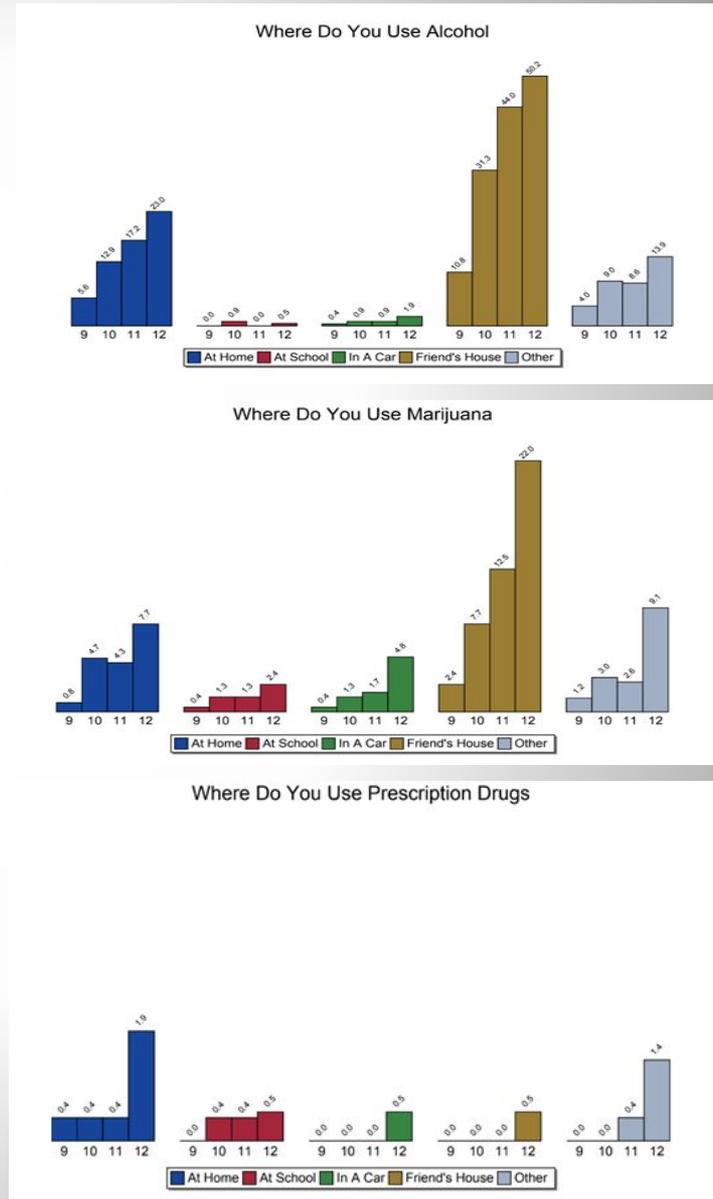
RESPONSE	9th	10th	11th	12th	9-12th	TOTAL
Never used	76.4	56.7	38.6	29.4	51.5	51.5
10 or under	2.4	2.1	1.8	0.5	1.8	1.8
11	0.0	1.3	0.4	2.0	0.9	0.9
12	2.4	2.6	1.8	0.0	1.8	1.8
13	8.1	8.6	2.7	5.5	6.3	6.3
14	9.8	14.2	16.1	19.4	14.6	14.6
15	0.4	13.7	24.7	18.4	13.8	13.8
16	0.4	0.9	11.7	13.9	6.3	6.3
17 or older	0.0	0.0	2.2	10.9	3.0	3.0
N of Valid	246	233	223	201	903	903
N of Miss	4	0	9	8	21	21

At what age did you first smoke marijuana?

RESPONSE	9th	10th	11th	12th	9-12th	TOTAL
Never used	96.4	88.4	80.1	62.9	82.8	82.8
10 or under	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
11	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
12	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.3
13	1.6	1.3	1.8	2.0	1.7	1.7
14	1.6	3.4	4.0	7.9	4.1	4.1
15	0.4	5.6	6.2	10.4	5.4	5.4
16	0.0	0.0	6.6	9.9	3.9	3.9
17 or older	0.0	0.0	1.3	6.4	1.8	1.8
N of Valid	248	233	226	202	909	909
N of Miss	2	0	6	7	15	15

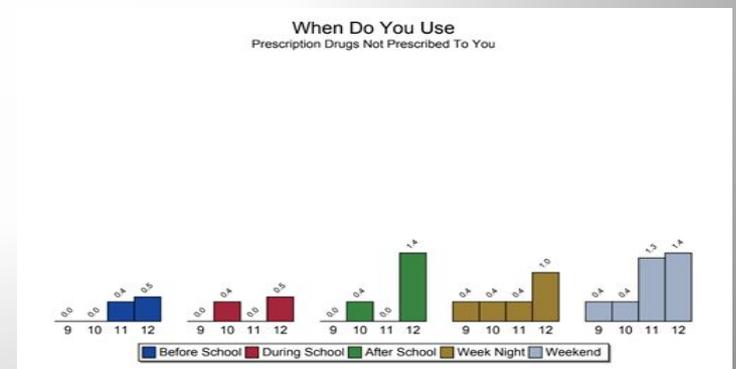
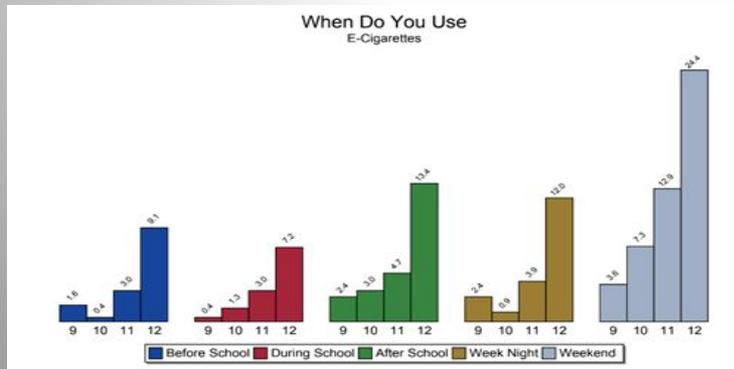
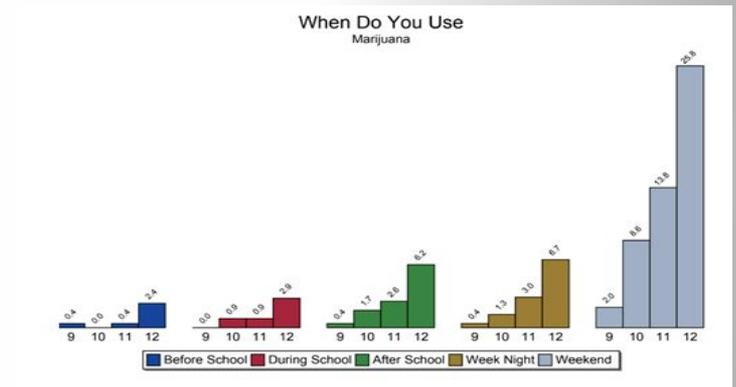
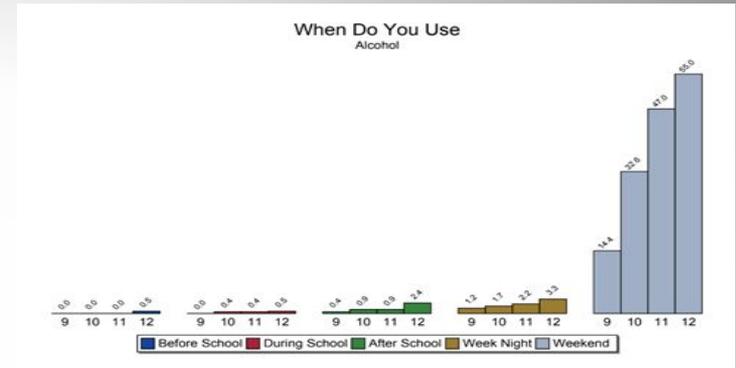
Where Do Students Use Substances?

- All indications show that use of substances take place at a home—the student’s own home or that of a friend.
- The survey does indicate that less students are drinking and driving as compared to the percentages reported in 2015.
- There is a small percent of students reporting the use of substances at school.



When Do Students Use Substances?

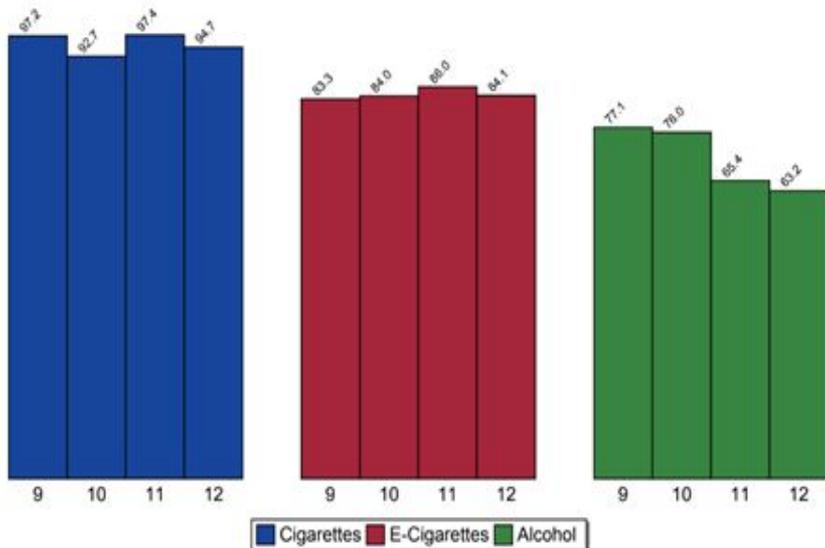
- The overwhelming majority of students surveyed report using substances on weekends.
- A small percentage of students (mostly seniors) report using prescription drugs on weeknights and after school.
- Students seem to use e-cigarettes at various locations.



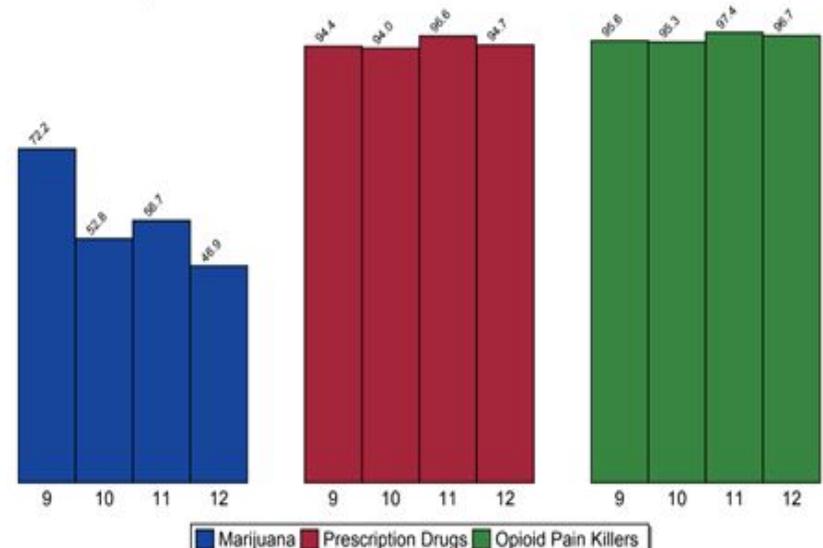
Student Perception of Drug and Alcohol Use

- The perception of risk (Moderate Risk or Great Risk) for alcohol and marijuana tends to decrease as a child gets older.
- Students continue to perceive cigarettes to be more harmful than marijuana.

% Of Students Who Perceive Cigarettes, E-Cigarettes & Alcohol As Moderate Risk Or Great Risk

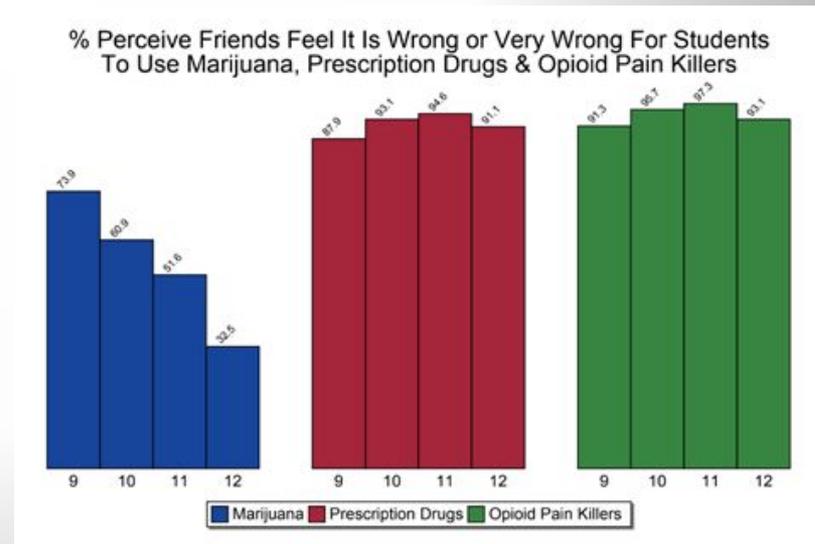
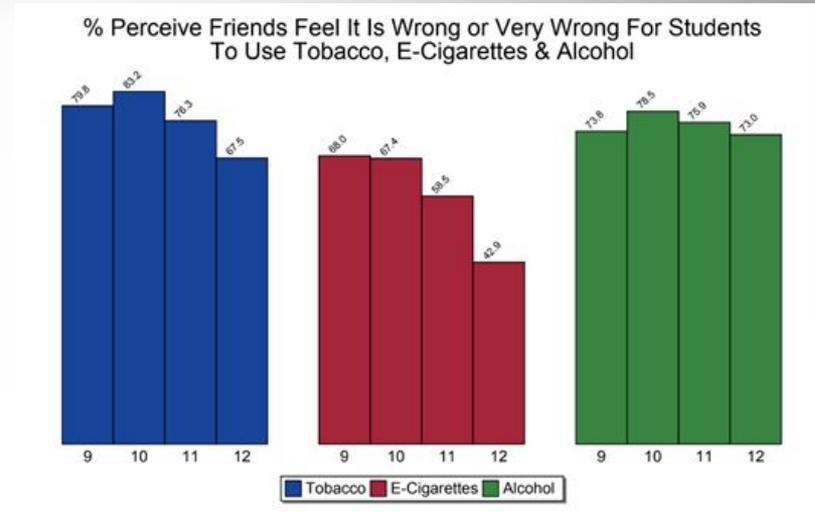


% Of Students Who Perceive Marijuana, Prescription Drugs & Opioid Pain Killers As Moderate Risk Or Great Risk



Student Perception of Drug and Alcohol Use (cont'd)

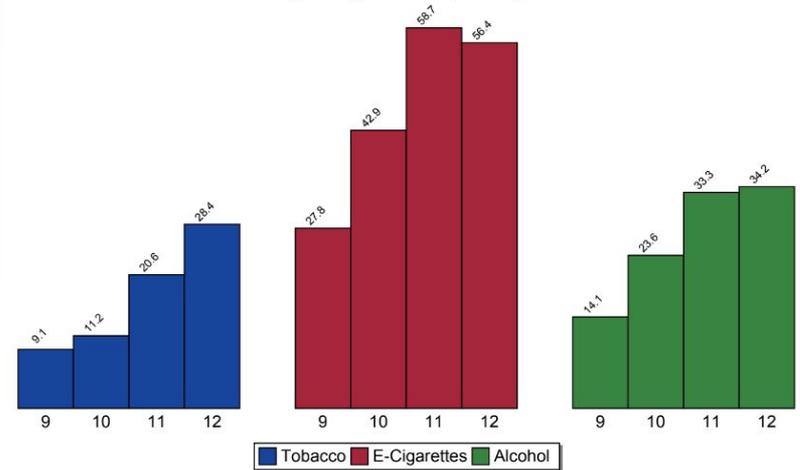
- Approximately 50% of juniors and 70% of seniors surveyed feel it is acceptable to use marijuana.
- It should be noted that in 2015, 70% of juniors and 79% of seniors felt it was acceptable to use marijuana.
- Additionally, as students get older there is more of an acceptance to use marijuana according to students surveyed. This is consistent among male and female students.



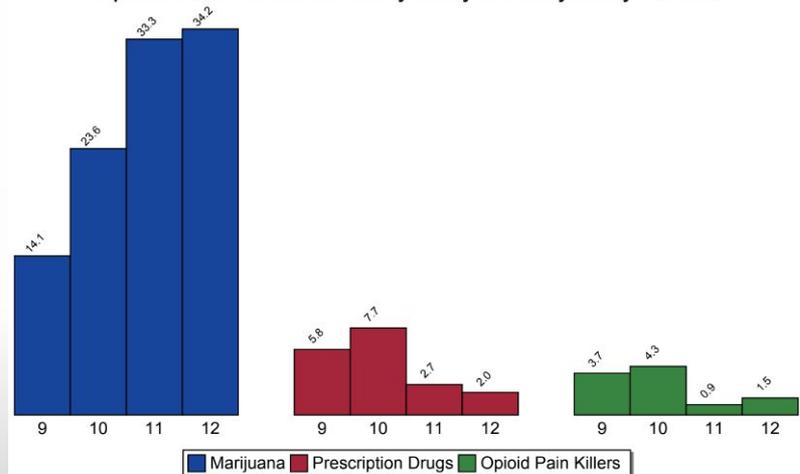
Student Accessibility to Substances

- On average, approximately 26% of students surveyed find it fairly easy or very easy to get alcohol. This is a 47% decrease from those students surveyed in 2015.
- 26% find it easy to get marijuana, an 18% decrease from 2015.
- 5% find it is easy to get prescription drugs, a decrease of 17%.
- As students get older, they find alcohol and marijuana more acceptable to use and easier to get.

% Students Who Perceive Tobacco, Alcohol & Marijuana As Fairly Easy Or Very Easy To Get



% Students Who Perceive Marijuana, Prescription Drugs & Opioid Pain Killers As Fairly Easy Or Very Easy To Get



Prevention Efforts

- Students surveyed report a strong sense that parents feel use of drugs and alcohol are very wrong.
- Students also stated the school has set clear rules for drugs, threats, and bullying in school.
- However, 32% of students surveyed report that their parents speak to them about the dangers of drugs and alcohol seldom or never; 42% report parents do so sometimes; 26% often and a lot.
- Over half of students (54%) report that teachers speak of these issues seldom or never.

Do your parents talk with you about the problems of tobacco, alcohol and drug use?

RESPONSE	9th	10th	11th	12th	9-12th	TOTAL
Never	12.9	11.7	10.9	10.0	11.5	11.5
Seldom	19.8	18.3	23.0	23.0	20.9	20.9
Sometimes	36.3	40.4	47.0	43.1	41.5	41.5
Often	22.6	22.2	15.2	18.2	19.6	19.6
A Lot	8.5	7.4	3.9	5.7	6.4	6.4
N of Valid	248	230	230	209	917	917
N of Miss	2	3	2	0	7	7

Do your teachers talk with you about the problems of tobacco, alcohol and drug use?

RESPONSE	9th	10th	11th	12th	9-12th	TOTAL
Never	21.6	15.1	25.1	19.1	20.3	20.3
Seldom	37.2	29.3	31.2	39.7	34.3	34.3
Sometimes	28.4	31.5	30.7	29.7	30.0	30.0
Often	8.8	18.5	10.4	9.6	11.8	11.8
A Lot	4.0	5.6	2.6	1.9	3.6	3.6
N of Valid	250	232	231	209	922	922
N of Miss	0	1	1	0	2	2

Change Over Time: Comparison with Previous Survey Data

Grades 9 & 10: Use of alcohol, marijuana, prescription drugs, and inhalants among underclassmen have experienced an overall decline.

Percent of Northern Highlands Regional High School 9th Graders Who Have Used Each Drug in the Last 12 Months				
	1999-2000	2004-2005	2014-2015	2021-2022
Alcohol	65%	59%	36.5%	16.8%
Marijuana	5%	12%	8.1%	2.8%
Cocaine	1%	2%	0%	0%
Prescription drugs	N/A	N/A	2.2%	0.8%
Inhalants	2%	6%	1.8%	0.4%
Heroin	N/A	N/A	0%	0%

Percent of Northern Highlands Regional High School 10th Graders Who Have Used Each Drug in the Last 12 Months				
	1999-2000	2004-2005	2014-2015	2021-2022
Alcohol	73%	67%	56.5%	37.8%
Marijuana	20%	19%	14.3%	11.2%
Cocaine	0%	1%	0.9%	0.4%
Prescription drugs	N/A	N/A	1.7%	0.9%
Inhalants	4%	3%	1.7%	0.4%
Heroin	N/A	N/A	0.4%	0.4%

Change Over Time: Comparison with Previous Survey Data

Grades 11 & 12: Use of alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, prescription drugs, and inhalants among upperclassmen have experienced an overall decline. As depicted on the charts below, alcohol and marijuana use are more prevalent among seniors.

Percent of Northern Highlands Regional High School 11th Graders Who Have Used Each Drug in the Last 12 Months				
	1999-2000	2004-2005	2014-2015	2021-2022
Alcohol	83%	71%	66.1%	55.6%
Marijuana	32%	33%	37.1%	17.5%
Cocaine	1%	6%	2.2%	0.9%
Prescription drugs	N/A	N/A	3.9%	0.9%
Inhalants	4%	1%	1.3%	0.4%
Heroin	N/A	N/A	0.4%	0.0%

Percent of Northern Highlands Regional High School 12th Graders Who Have Used Each Drug in the Last 12 Months				
	1999-2000	2004-2005	2014-2015	2021-2022
Alcohol	84%	86%	85.4%	63.6%
Marijuana	53%	46%	50.7%	30.6%
Cocaine	4%	7%	2.9%	1.4%
Prescription drugs	N/A	N/A	8.2%	1.9%
Inhalants	4%	5%	2.4%	1.0%
Heroin	N/A	N/A	1.0%	1.0%

Additional Points of Interest

The Pride Survey not only measures student experience and perceptions of drugs and alcohol, it also asks students about violence indicators and student safety. The following findings are points of interest that must be addressed:

- Back in 2015, 7.3% of the students surveyed indicated that the number one location was the parking lot and 6.6% indicated the school bus. This year, as seen in the following chart, the same percentage of students (6.6%) still feel unsafe on the school bus; however, a greater percentage of students (7.3%) now feel unsafe in the bathrooms.
- 12.3% of students stated at some point, they are afraid at school. This was the same percentage in 2015.
- The percentage of students who have thought about suicide (5.6%) is a 2.3% decrease of what was reported in 2015 (7.9%).

Recommendations

- Public presentation of results for the community
- Send a letter to parents/guardians with the results of the survey
- Ongoing identification of at-risk students through quarterly Wellness Check-ins and SAC student referrals
- Enhance monitoring of at-risk students through planned interventions
- Continue to provide substance use education to all students through the health classes
- Address issues of substance abuse, where applicable, across the curriculum
- Streamline and enhance substance use programming to students through schoolwide presentations and speakers
- Educate students on healthy coping mechanisms
- Update Substance Use procedures and policies at Northern Highlands
- Educate teachers and school personnel on signs of substance use and Northern Highlands protocol.
- Provide increased parent education on substance use topics through NHPASS
- Educate parents on Means Safety & Mental Health Signs & Symptoms
- Conduct a Prom Car Crash simulation on a semi-annual basis
- Work with local police departments to conduct and promote Operation Take Back
- Continue with established student mentoring programs including SADD, Highlands Heroes, Boomerang Project, and the Wellness Club
- Provide greater availability of counseling services through school counselors, Child Study Team, and other available resources.
- Partner with the USRA and other municipal alliances to educate parents on signs, symptoms, and the dangers of substances.
- Conduct another Student Drug and Alcohol Survey during the 2024-2025 school year.