



ADDICTIONS FOUNDATION OF MANITOBA

Executive Summary Alcohol and Other Drugs: Students in Manitoba - 2007

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*Building
hope for over
50 years*

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Addictions Foundation of Manitoba

The Addictions Foundation of Manitoba is responsible for providing rehabilitation and prevention services for Manitoba citizens relating to substance use and problem gambling.

VISION:

Manitobans living free from the harms of alcohol, other drugs and gambling.

MISSION:

To enhance the health of Manitobans by reducing the harm of alcohol, other drugs and gambling through leadership in education, prevention, and rehabilitation.

VALUES:

We believe our greatest asset is our staff, and acknowledge their contribution and passion in supporting the following organizational values:

- § The dignity and diversity of each individual;*
- § The capacity of clients and communities for change;*
- § Collaborative relationships with stakeholders, partners and the self-help community;*
- § Continuous improvement and best practices;*
- § A continuum of services and programs; and*
- § A safe and respectful work environment.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Alcohol and other Drugs: Students in Manitoba - 2007

In the fall of 2007 the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba conducted a prevalence survey of alcohol and other drug use with Manitoban middle and high school students. The study was designed to provide insight into substance use in school-aged youth, prevalence of impaired driving, perceived parental use, and attitudes towards substance use and abuse. The information may be useful in policy making, program evaluation and development and program planning.

A total of 55 randomly selected schools in Manitoba agreed to participate in the study. Overall, surveys were collected from 4992 students in the province who provided information about their use of tobacco, alcohol, and various drugs and their opinions about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. A nearly equal number of males and females completed the survey, which was stratified across grades¹ to ensure that each grade was properly represented in proportion to the actual number of students in each grade, province-wide. Public, private and independent schools were all eligible to participate, and though most participating schools were considered public, several private and independent schools are included here as well.

Alcohol, cannabis and other drug use prevalence

Alcohol and other drug use in the Manitoba student population is common. Table 1 below shows the percentage of males and females in each grade who have used alcohol, cannabis and other drugs in their lifetime and in the past year.

Table 1. Percentages of males and females² who report using alcohol, cannabis and other drugs.

	<u>Alcohol</u>		<u>Cannabis</u>		<u>Other Drugs</u>
	lifetime	past year	lifetime	past year	past year
males					
grade 7	35.7	20.6	6.6	4.6	6.1
grade 8	48.4	35.6	13.7	10.8	9.7
senior 1	63.9	51.5	24.9	17.7	11
senior 2	71.2	60.5	32.6	26.3	17.7
senior 3	82.4	73.8	47.4	40.4	29.1
senior 4	84.6	82	42.4	33.5	24.6
females					
grade 7	25.9	16.5	5.5	3.8	8
grade 8	41.1	27.9	8.8	7.2	9.4
senior 1	65.4	55.1	28.8	20.3	20.5
senior 2	77.1	68.4	35.2	28.9	22
senior 3	84.7	76	45.3	35.9	26
senior 4	88.5	82	46.2	31.9	17.7

¹ It should be noted that the provincial department of education in Manitoba recently reverted back to the use of “grades” in their terminology of the senior years (versus seniors 1-4).

² All students.

Over 80% of senior 4 students have used alcohol in the past year. The numbers for the early grades are lower with approximately 30% of grade 7 students and over 40% of grade 8 students reporting lifetime use of alcohol. Male students are generally more likely to use alcohol, cannabis and other drugs compared to females. However, in this study females in seniors 1 and 2 used alcohol and cannabis at a higher frequency than their male counterparts in the past year.

Cannabis is the most commonly used substance excluding alcohol. Just over 6% of grade 7 students have used cannabis and the number grows steeply from there each year; by senior 3 nearly half of all students have used it in their lifetime.

More Highlights

Alcohol

- § Over half (54.8%) of all students report past year drinking.
- § 69% of all senior grade students report past year drinking.
- § Almost one half of all past year drinkers have had 5 or more drinks on one occasion of drinking. Approximately a quarter have had 8 or more drinks within the same time period.
- § According to the Atlantic Alcohol Risk Continuum, 11.5% of grade 7 and 8 students and 17% of senior students meet the criteria of being high risk - alcohol dependency.
- § Approximately 25% of senior 4 students meet the criteria for alcohol dependency.
- § A significant proportion (27%) of senior students meet the criteria for medium risk for alcohol dependency.
- § There is a consistent steep increase in alcohol use (and other substances) from grade 8 to senior 1. This highlights the importance of prevention efforts in the middle year grades.

Impaired Driving

- § Nearly 7% of all students have driven within an hour of having two or more drinks of alcohol.
- § Nearly 40% of all students have been in a car with a driver who has been drinking.
- § 5.5% of students have driven within an hour or two of using cannabis.
- § 22% of students have been in a car with a driver who has been using cannabis.
- §

Cannabis

- § 22% of all students report past year cannabis use.
- § 29% of all senior grade students report past year cannabis use.
- § Of cannabis users, approximately 67% first used the drug before the age of 15.
- § Over 10% of cannabis users smoke daily or more than once a day.
- § By their final year of high school, 10% of all students are smoking cannabis at least twice a week.
- § Males are more likely to spend their own money on cannabis than females – for senior 3 and senior 4 students they are almost twice as likely.
- § Nearly 10% of cannabis users have tried to cut down or quit but failed.

Tobacco

- § Approximately 20% of all students smoked cigarettes in the past year.
- § Over 13% of all students smoked in the past month.
- § Just over 40% of smokers had their first cigarette by age 12.

Attitudes

- § 12.4% of past year drinkers reported using alcohol to cope with problems.
- § 30% of all students think using alcohol is an acceptable way to relax.
- § Nearly 4% of all students do not see a problem with drinking and driving.
- § Almost 20% do not see a problem with using cannabis and driving.
- § Two-thirds of all students consider alcohol as dangerous as other drugs.

A note about changes in substance use over time

School-based prevalence studies are conducted every few years in Manitoba. Studies were done in the 1990's and then in 2001 and most recently in 2004. Information collected from these studies is useful for monitoring substance use among students and the results can lead to changes and improvements to prevention and intervention services in schools. However, comparisons across surveys can be very difficult or unreliable due to methodological and administrative differences. Most significantly, are the sampling differences between the studies with the last two surveys (2004 and 2007) based on random selection and the previous studies (in the 1990's and 2001) on purposive sampling (due to their involvement with AFM's School-Based services). Therefore, please use caution when interpreting Table 2 at the end of this section.

Some important changes were made to the 2004 survey in addition to the continued improvement of questions and processes. Most importantly, this survey was developed in conjunction with a national planning committee. This committee was formed to ensure that school surveys across the country would be similar in key areas, allowing for cross-provincial and territorial prevalence comparisons. Although effort was put into maintaining consistency with previous surveys in Manitoba, many substantial changes were made which increases the difficulty in making provincial year-to-year comparisons.

The most significant change that was made in consideration of the national committee's recommendation was the altering of the questions on the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT). This means that the AUDIT cannot be scored on this survey. Instead, the Atlantic Alcohol Risk Continuum (AARC) and the Atlantic Drug Risk Continuum (ADRC) were used. These measures were used in the 2007 school surveys in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and they are seen as improvements over the AUDIT as they allow for a broader range of categories for identifying problem use. The AARC and ADRC categorize substance use into levels of risk, dependent on a number of yes/no responses, meaning that problem drinking rates in the current report will not be compared to previous rates.

Table 2. Percentage of senior 1 to senior 4 students who report past year alcohol and cannabis use by study year.

	<u>1995</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2007</u>
Alcohol	79.7	77.8	80.4	73.0	68.7
Cannabis	37.4	38.8	37.9	33.3	29.2

Note: Only 2004 and 2007 studies were based on random selection methodology.



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