



## **2016 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey**

### ***Guide to Information and Resources: Substance Use***

#### **What is the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey?**

The Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) is a crucial source of information on adolescent health, behaviors, and perceptions. In fall 2016, over 230,000 students participated in this biennial statewide school-based survey. Over 1,000 schools administered the survey, representing all 39 Washington counties and 236 school districts.

Because students anonymously complete the survey, with this information we can:

- Gain an understanding of the health risks students are experiencing
- Identify trends and patterns in order to plan and evaluate initiatives to address the risks
- Develop policies and improve programs to better serve youth

#### **Why is it important to know about youth substance use?**

Because the teen brain is still developing, teens are at increased risk from use of substances such as alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and opioids, compared to those 21 and older. National data identifies the following risks:

- Poor grades and not graduating
- Serious injuries and death
- Unwanted and unplanned sexual activity
- Depression, anxiety, and suicide
- Addiction

#### **What decreases the risk that youth will use substances?**

A child or teen is less likely to use alcohol or other drugs when:

- They believe this would harm their health and future
- They know that their parents/caregivers would disapprove
- They have friends who don't use
- They believe substances are hard to get
- They know their community has, and enforces, laws against underage use

#### **What can we do to help teens avoid use of alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs and their negative consequences?**

##### Parents and other adults:

- Parents are the number one influence on their children's decisions about drug use. Talk with children early and often about the risks. Get facts and tips at [www.StartTalkingNow.org](http://www.StartTalkingNow.org).
- Monitor what they do. Know where your teens are and with whom.
- Bond with them: Love them unconditionally, value them, and stay involved in their lives.
- Help teens to act independently and resist peer pressure.
- Set clear rules and enforce logical consequences.
- Get help if you see warning signs. Call the Washington Recovery Help Line for free support and referrals to treatment: 1-866-789-1511. Help Line for teens to call: 1-866-833-6546.

### Communities:

All sectors of our communities, including schools, faith-based organizations, health care providers, businesses, and law enforcement can play a role in building an environment that supports youth in making healthy choices. Some ways to do that are:

- Start or join a coalition that works to keep youth healthy and safe.
- Assess your community environment to determine what messages youth are seeing that have a positive or a negative impact on their perceptions and behaviors.
- Enforce policies and laws around substance use.
- Educate community members and parents about the facts around youth substance use and ways to prevent it.
- Provide opportunities for youth to participate in safe and fun activities, learn new skills, and be rewarded for their achievements.

More ideas can be found on [www.StartTalkingNow.org](http://www.StartTalkingNow.org) under the Communities tab.

### **Where can I find more information and resources?**

Several websites provide both information and materials that can be downloaded or ordered.

- [www.AskHYS.net](http://www.AskHYS.net) – Current and past WA Healthy Youth Survey data, including fact sheets and frequency reports.
- [www.StartTalkingNow.org](http://www.StartTalkingNow.org) – Tips for parents and communities, including toolkits, parent guides, and Know the Facts (marijuana) cards in multiple languages.
- <http://lcb.wa.gov> – Education pages for alcohol and marijuana; licensing, enforcement, and rules regarding alcohol, marijuana, tobacco and vapor products.
- [www.LearnAboutMarijuanaWA.org](http://www.LearnAboutMarijuanaWA.org) – Science-based information and resources for parents, teens, and adult consumers.
- <http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Tobacco> - Data, laws, and resources regarding tobacco use in Washington State.
- <http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Tobacco/HowtoQuit> – Resources for quitting tobacco use for various populations.
- <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/PublicHealthEducation/PublicEducationCampaigns/TheRealCostCampaign/default.htm> – National Campaign resources for preventing youth tobacco use.
- [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org) – Resources for parents/caregivers and families that address a broad range of substance use topics.
- [www.WaRecoveryHelpLine.org](http://www.WaRecoveryHelpLine.org) –24-hour referral and support line for mental health, substance abuse, and problem gambling.