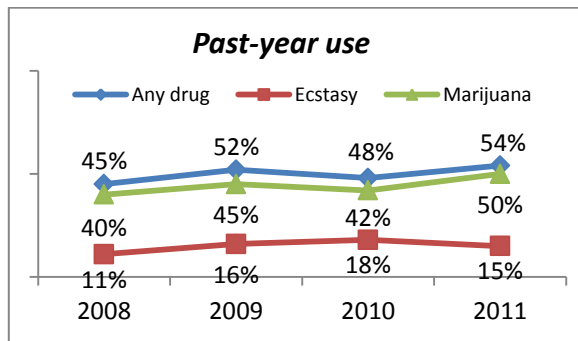


**THE PARTNERSHIP ATTITUDE TRACKING STUDY  
HISPANIC TEENS AND PARENTS**

After a decade of steady declines in teen abuse of drugs and alcohol, the 2011 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, (PATS) sponsored by MetLife Foundation, has shown that since 2008 there has been a significant increase in heavy marijuana use among teens in grades 9-12. Overall drug use among Hispanic teens has increased at alarming levels and Latino teens are abusing drugs and alcohol more than any other ethnic group.

Since 2008, Hispanic teens' past-year use of any illicit drug has increased 20 percent, past-year use of marijuana is up 25 percent and past-year use of Ecstasy is up 36 percent.



Hispanic teens' rate of abuse is higher than Caucasian or African-American adolescent drug use. Hispanic teens are nearly 40 percent more likely to use any illicit drug in the past year than Caucasian teens and nearly 30 percent more than Black teens.

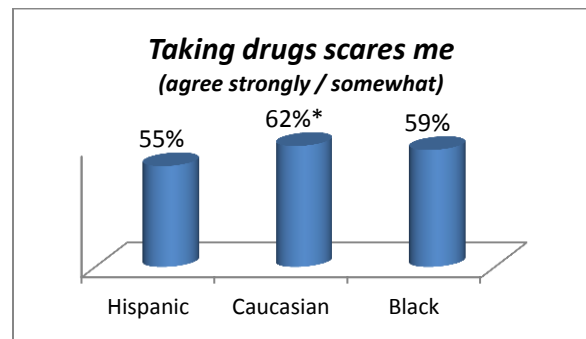
% Used at least once	Hispanic	Caucasian	Black
Lifetime Rx	23%*	16%	11%
Past yr illicit (any)	54%*	39%	42%
Marijuana	50%*	35%	40%
Ecstasy	15%*	6%	9%
Cocaine/crack	12%*	5%	4%
Pain Meds	12%	8%	11%

\*significantly higher than other groups

*Hispanic teens are more likely to abuse drugs than other teens.*

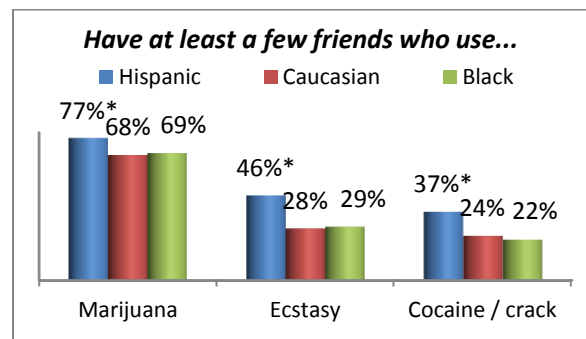
**Perceptions of Risk and Peer Pressure**

Research shows that teens are less likely to use a drug if they perceive it to be dangerous or disapproved of by their peers.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, Hispanic teens are less afraid of using drugs than their Caucasian and African-American counterparts.



\*significantly higher than Hispanic teens

Latino youth are also more likely to be surrounded by peers who use drugs.



\*significantly higher than other groups

**Hispanic Parents**

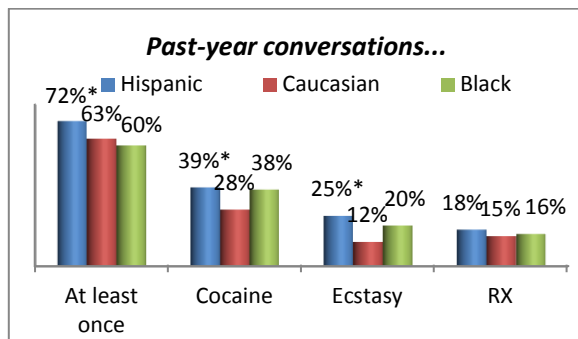
Hispanic teens are less likely to say that their parents monitor their activities, set clear behavior rules or ask them about their day.

% Agree strongly / somewhat	Hispanic	Caucasian	Black
Every day they ask me about my day	72%	82%*	70%
They make or enforce rules about my behavior	66%	73%*	69%
Every day they monitor my activities	48%	56%*	49%

\*significantly higher than Hispanic teens

Research has shown that kids who are not regularly monitored by their parents are four times more likely to use drugs.<sup>2</sup>

Surprisingly, PATS shows that Hispanic teens are *more* likely to say that their parents have spoken to them about the risks of drugs or alcohol use in the past year. Hispanic parents are also more likely to discuss substances like cocaine and Ecstasy, yet no less likely to talk about prescription drugs than other parents. However, the significant increase in drug use among Hispanic teens demonstrates that these conversations are not as effective as they could be.



The PATS Parent survey confirms that Hispanic parents have a difficult time setting rules and expectations for their kids.

% Agree strongly / somewhat	Hispanic	Caucasian	Black
I have a hard time saying "no" to my child when I have doubts about what he wants to do or where he wants to go	27%*	18%	18%
It is hard for me to tell my teen not to do something if her friends' parents allow them to do it	28%*	20%	16%

\*significantly higher than other ethnic groups

And in fact, the new PATS data also show that Latino parents report that they are just as likely as other parents to have conversations with their children about the risks of drugs and alcohol use.

**Implications**

These data show that the higher rate of substance use among Hispanic teens places a heavy burden on the shoulders of their parents.

The recent dismantling of critical pieces of our national prevention infrastructure, including the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, have made this burden on parents even heavier.

Hispanic parents need to play an active role in protecting their children from the health risks posed by drug and alcohol abuse. The Partnership at Drugfree.org's new online resources for parents at [HablaConTusHijos.org](http://HablaConTusHijos.org), developed with major support from MetLife Foundation, offer real guidance – including tools to help parents and caregivers talk with their children about the dangers of substance abuse, set clear rules and expectations, to be aware of and know the signs of drug or alcohol use and take effective action if they believe there is a problem.

For more information, please visit [HablaConTusHijos.org](http://HablaConTusHijos.org) or call the bilingual toll-free helpline for parents at 1-855-DRUGFREE.

**About The Partnership at Drugfree.org**

Ninety percent of addictions start in the teenage years. The Partnership at [Drugfree.org](http://Drugfree.org) is dedicated to solving the problem of teen substance abuse. Together with experts in science, parenting and communications, the nonprofit translates research on teen behavior, addiction and [treatment](#) into useful and effective resources for both individuals and [communities](#). Working toward a vision where all young people will be able to live their lives free of drug and alcohol abuse, The Partnership at Drugfree.org works with parents and other influencers to help them [prevent](#) and [get help](#) for drug and alcohol abuse by teens and young adults. The organization depends on donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and the public sector and is thankful to SAG-AFTRA and the advertising and media industries for their ongoing generosity.

**PATS Methodology**

The 23rd annual Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS) of 3,322 teens in grades 9-12 and 821 parents is nationally projectable with a +/- 3.0 percent margin of error for the teen sample and +/- 3.4 percent for the parent sample. Conducted for The Partnership at Drugfree.org and MetLife Foundation by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Corporate Communications, the 2011 PATS teen survey was administered in private, public and parochial schools, while the parent survey was conducted through in-home interviews by deKadt Marketing and Research, Inc.

**References**

<sup>1</sup> Monitoring the Future, University of Michigan

<sup>2</sup> Metzler, Rusby, Biglan 1999. Community Builders for Success: Monitoring After-school Activities