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**THE PARTNERSHIP ATTITUDE
TRACKING STUDY, 2012**

Sponsored by MetLife Foundation

Hispanic Teens and Hispanic Parents

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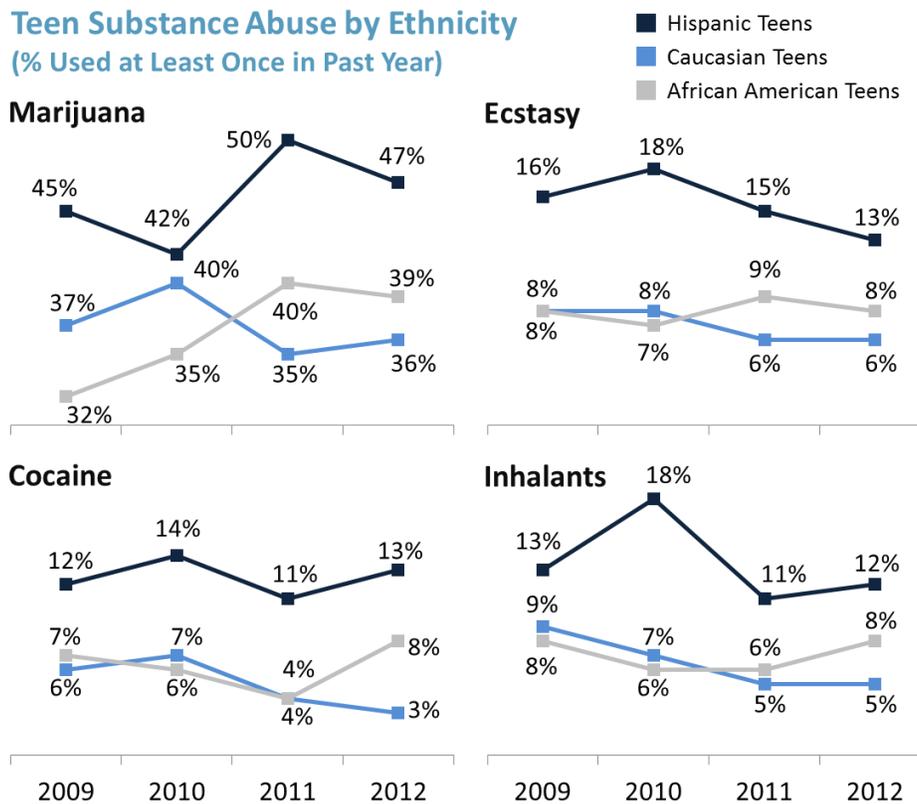
Introduction

Recently, the 2012 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS) uncovered concerning trends reported by parents and teens regarding the increased misuse and abuse of prescription drugs, the normative behavior of teen marijuana use and the misconceptions parents have about substance abuse. PATS had also documented differences in substance abuse rates for Hispanic teens compared to other teens – a consistent trend that is captured in the most recent data being released today.

This trend may be related to the fact that Hispanic teens are more likely to encounter substance abuse on a frequent basis, which can distort accurate perceptions of normative behaviors. Furthermore, Hispanic parents are reporting challenges in helping their teens abstain from substance abuse. These insights point to a need in providing accurate information and culturally bilingual resources to help combat this critical health problem among Hispanic families.

Hispanic Teens

Hispanic teens are more likely to engage in substance abuse than other teens. Our research documented this trend in the past and the figure below shows this relationship since 2009, exposing a need to address this dangerous behavior.



According to the new PATS research data, Hispanic teens are more likely to engage in substance abuse when compared to teens from other ethnic groups and are more likely to have abused the following substances within the past year:

- More than half of Hispanic teens (54 percent) reported having used an illicit drug, versus 45 percent for African-American teens and 43 percent for Caucasian teens.
- Almost half of Hispanic teens (47 percent) used marijuana, compared to 39 percent for African-American teens and 36 percent for Caucasian teens.
- One in eight (13 percent) Hispanic teens used Ecstasy, compared to 6 percent for Caucasian teens and 8 percent for African-American teens.
- Another one in eight (13 percent) Hispanic teens reported cocaine use, compared to 8 percent for African-American teens and 3 percent for Caucasian teens.

Lastly, Hispanic teens are more likely to use inhalants within the past year compared to Caucasian teens (12 percent and 5 percent, respectively) and are more likely to consume alcohol within the past year compared to African-American teens (62 percent and 50 percent, respectively).

According to our research, Hispanic teens are more likely than Caucasian and African-American teens to see drugs as part of their environment: to have friends who use drugs and to feel they have easy access to Ecstasy, crack/cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. Hispanic teens are more likely to be offered drugs, even within their own schools, and a notable proportion is exposed to substance abuse within their own communities:

- More than six in ten (62 percent) Hispanic teens have been offered drugs in their lifetime, compared to 53 percent for Caucasian teens and 46 percent for African-American teens.
- More than four in ten (42 percent) Hispanic teens have been offered drugs at their own school, compared to 30 percent for Caucasian teens and 28 percent for African-American teens.
- One in four (24 percent) Hispanic teens has seen frequent drug use in their communities, compared to 15 percent for Caucasian teens and 24 percent for African-American teens.

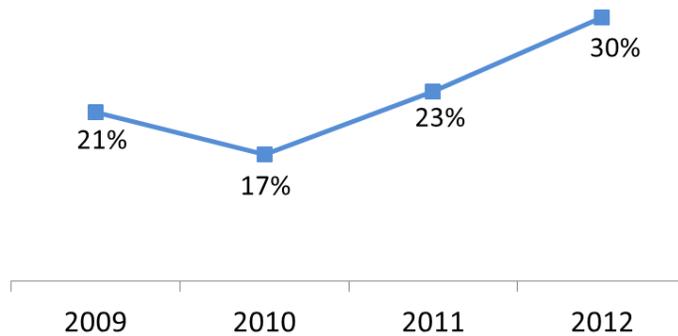
These trends can convey substance abuse as a normative behavior. As seen from the chart below, Hispanic teens are more likely to approve of their peers’ using substances – a well-documented indicator of actual substance abuse.

Approval of Peer Substance Abuse (% Strongly Approve/Approve)	African American		
	Hispanic Teens (n=1185) (A)	Teens (n=689) (B)	Caucasian Teens (n=1377) (C)
Using marijuana	35% B	26%	31%
Getting drunk	34% B	24%	37% B
Using drugs or drinking	31% B	24%	31%
Using the drug Ecstasy	18% BC	10%	10%
Using prescription drugs to get high	18% BC	11%	10%
Using Spice (K2/Synthetic Marijuana)	17% BC	8%	11%
Using prescription pain relievers to get high	16% BC	9%	10%
Taking OTC cough medicine to get high	13% BC	7%	8%
Using cocaine	13% BC	7%	5%
Sniffing or huffing things to get high	13% BC	7%	6%
Using heroin	12% BC	7%	4%

A-C indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Within the past two years, prescription drug misuse and abuse has been increasing at a dramatic rate for Hispanic teens, as they are now 76 percent more likely to have misused or abused a prescription drug in their lifetime compared to 2010 (17 percent in 2010 to 30 percent in 2012).

Hispanic Teen Rx Drug Misuse or Abuse (% Used at Least Once in Lifetime)



Hispanic teens are also more likely to have abused the following substances:

- One in four (26 percent) Hispanic teens abused or misused a prescription drug within the past year, compared to 15 percent for both Caucasian and African-American teens.
- One in seven Hispanic teens (16 percent) have engaged in the risky behavior of mixing alcohol with misusing or abusing prescription drugs without a prescription, compared to 11 percent for Caucasian teens and 6 percent for African-American teens.
- And one in ten (10 percent) Hispanic teens abused over-the-counter (OTC) cough medicine within the past year, compared to 5 percent for both Caucasian and African-American teens.

These behaviors can lead to serious consequences as Hispanic teens report having trouble in school or with law enforcement:

- Almost one in ten (7 percent) Hispanic teens reports being in trouble in school because of their drug use, compared to 3 percent for Caucasian teens and 5 percent for African-American teens.
- The same amount (7 percent) indicates having frequent trouble with law enforcement, compared to 2 percent for Caucasian teens and 3 percent for African-American teens.

Surprisingly, the differences for perceptions of risk, another well-documented indicator for substance abuse, are less salient. Caucasian teens are more likely to perceive risk in using cocaine/crack, methamphetamine, Ecstasy, inhalants and OTC cough medicine, while there are no significant differences for regularly using marijuana, synthetic marijuana, binge drinking or trying Ritalin or Adderall (please see chart below).

Perceptions of Risk	African American		
	Hispanic Teens (n=1185) (A)	American Teens (n=689) (B)	Caucasian Teens (n=1377) (C)
% Great Risk			
Using Cocaine/ Crack Regularly	80%	76%	91% AB
Using Methamphetamine Regularly	80% B	73%	91% AB
Using Ecstasy Regularly	72%	67%	81% AB
Binge Drinking (5+ on one occasion)	60%	65%	58%
Trying Ritalin/Adderall	49%	55%	52%
Using Synthetic Marijuana Regularly	44%	48%	48%
Using Marijuana Regularly	43%	50%	49%
Trying Rx Pain Relievers	40%	47%	47% A
% Agree Strongly/Somewhat			
Snuffing or inhaling things to get high can kill you	82%	84%	90% AB
Taking OTC cough medicine to get high is risky	72%	76%	84% AB

A-C indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Some of the reasons that Hispanic teens give for using marijuana show cause for concern. Hispanic teens are most likely to report using marijuana to have fun or relax, similar to other teens. However, Hispanic teens are more likely than Caucasian teens to use marijuana as a way to cope with stress or escape from problems related to school or home (as seen from the chart below). This suggests that Hispanic teens may benefit from interventions promoting appropriate coping mechanisms.

Reasons for Most Recent Marijuana Use	African American		
	Hispanic Teens (n=635) (A)	Teens (n=312) (B)	Caucasian Teens (n=565) (C)
To help me relax	62%	58%	53%
To have fun	55%	56%	68% AB
Because being high feels good	55%	53%	57%
To help me forget my troubles	50% C	51% C	33%
To deal with pressures and stress of school	44% C	38%	33%
To help deal with problems at home	41% C	38%	31%
My friends are using	40%	32%	36%
It's a habit, I can't stop	20% C	20% C	11%

A-C indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Hispanic Parents

Teen substance abuse is only one of many challenges Hispanic parents face when it comes to protecting their children, and this can make it more difficult for Hispanic parents to navigate the complexities of substance abuse.

Fortunately, most Hispanic parents (85 percent) understand that teens who start using drugs and alcohol at a younger age are more susceptible to substance abuse problems as they get older, compared to 74 percent of Caucasian parents and 73 percent of African-American parents. Also, along with African-American parents (93 percent), a majority of Hispanic parents (94 percent) are more likely to report they have taken action once they learned about drug or alcohol use at home, when compared to 86 percent of Caucasian parents.

Hispanic parents also recognize that they have the main responsibility for educating their teens about the risks of these substances, and they are more likely to recognize the important role that educators and doctors play in educating their teens about the risks of substance abuse compared to Caucasian parents (as shown by the figure below).

Hispanic Parent Attitudes (% Agree strongly/somewhat)	Hispanic Parents (n=197) (A)	African American Parents (n=199) (B)	Caucasian Parents (n=386) (C)
Doctors play an important role in educating kids about the risks of drug use	75% C	67%	59%
Schools should have the main responsibility for educating kids about the risks of drug use	65% C	59% C	47%
Parents should have the main responsibility for educating kids about the risks of drug use	91%	91%	95% B

A-C indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

However, Hispanic parents tend to be more permissive toward their teen’s substance abuse and have potentially dangerous misconceptions regarding the relative safety of prescription drug abuse:

- One in five (21 percent) Hispanic parents thinks “it’s okay if my teen smokes marijuana sometimes,” versus 6 percent for Caucasian parents and 11 percent for African-American parents.
- More than one in four (28 percent) Hispanic parents believe using prescription drugs to get high is much safer than using street drugs, versus 9 percent for Caucasian parents and 20 percent for African-American parents.

According to the PATS teen data, parental permissiveness is associated with teen substance abuse, as teens who believe their parents are more lenient toward the use of marijuana or prescription drugs are the ones who are more likely to abuse marijuana or prescription drugs.

Hispanic teens fortunately do not perceive this permissiveness more so than their peers, as 13 percent of Hispanic teens say their parents are okay with them smoking marijuana, compared to 14 percent for Caucasian teens and 13 percent for African-American teens.

Compared to Caucasian parents, Hispanic parents also acknowledge having more difficulty in protecting their teens from substance abuse:

- More than one in four (28 percent) Hispanic parents have difficulty enforcing rules against substance abuse, compared to 16 percent for Caucasian parents and 29 percent for African-American parents.
- And more than one-third (35 percent) of Hispanic parents feel there is little they can do to help their teens abstain from substance use, compared to 21 percent for Caucasian parents and 32 percent for African-American parents.

Additionally, Hispanic parents have the tendency to exhibit behaviors themselves that are correlated with their teen's substance abuse:

- One in six (17 percent) Hispanic parents indicates that they sometimes use marijuana in front of their children, compared to 9 percent of parents overall.
- One-third (32 percent) of Hispanic parents take larger doses of prescription medicine than originally prescribed, compared to 21 percent of parents overall.
- And another one-third (32 percent) of Hispanic parents take prescription medicines not prescribed to them, compared to 28 percent of parents overall.

Parent-Teen Interactions

Compared to Caucasian teens, Hispanic teens are more likely to say their parents praise them for good behavior, but are less likely to say their parents enforce rules or punishments:

- Two-thirds (66 percent) of Hispanic teens say their parents praise them nearly every day for their good behavior, compared to 61 percent for both Caucasian and African-American teens.
- More than one-third (34 percent) of Hispanic teens say their parents do not enforce rules, compared to 24 percent for Caucasian teens and 30 percent for African-American teens.
- More than one in five (21 percent) Hispanic teens say they have never been punished by their parents, compared to 14 percent for Caucasian teens and 23 percent for African-American teens.

Interestingly, Hispanic parents are more likely to discuss the risks of substance abuse with their teens. Given the disparity in use and the fact that Hispanic teens are more likely to say their parents told them they were concerned with their drinking or drug use, it seems likely that this trend is tapping into discussions focused on intervention as opposed to earlier prevention efforts.

Parent-Teen Communications – as Reported by Teens	Hispanic Teens	African American	Caucasian Teens
	(n=1185) (A)	Teens (n=689) (B)	(n=1377) (C)
Had Discussion with Parents			
At least once in past year	70% BC	62%	62%
Parents told you they were concerned by...			
Your drinking	13% BC	6%	8%
Your drug use	11% BC	6%	6%

A-C indicates a significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Implications

As with most parents, Hispanic parents believe other children are engaged in drug use, but not their own. The reality is that their children are more likely to engage in drug use than other children.

These data show that there's a strong need for accurate information and resources to help Hispanic communities. The Partnership at Drugfree.org has the resources that meet the needs for Hispanic parents and communities alike.

Online resources such as HabaConTusHijos.org offer 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.

Hispanic parents and caregivers can also call the Parents Toll-Free Helpline (855-DRUGFREE), a resource The Partnership at Drugfree.org makes available for free to all parents concerned about their child's substance abuse.