



Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods  
at Case Western Reserve University

# 2019 Cuyahoga County Youth Risk Behavior Survey: Other Drug Use

## Introduction

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The Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods (PRCHN) at Case Western Reserve University has administered the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in school districts throughout Cuyahoga County since 2000. The YRBS is a cross-sectional tool developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to track adolescent risk behavior over time. In fall of 2019, the PRCHN conducted the YRBS among 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in Cuyahoga County high schools. A more detailed description of the methodology is available at our website, [www.prchn.org/YRBSDataCollectionAnalysis.aspx](http://www.prchn.org/YRBSDataCollectionAnalysis.aspx).

This brief report presents results from the 2019 Cuyahoga County High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, with a particular focus on Other Drug Use. In this brief report, we present:

- [Overall Prevalence](#)
- [Demographic Prevalence](#)
- [Trend Report](#)

Data for similar behaviors can be found at our website, [www.prchn.org/yrbs\\_home.aspx](http://www.prchn.org/yrbs_home.aspx).

## Other Drug Use

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Illegal drug use can lead to unhealthy behaviors and negative consequences. Drug abuse may contribute to depression and suicide, unintended pregnancy, school failure, violent behavior, delinquency, and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.<sup>i</sup>

Nationally, 2.7% of high school students in 2019 reported prescription opioid misuse, which had significantly declined from 3.4% in 2014<sup>ii</sup>. Other illicit drug use has also decreased among high school students including heroin, methamphetamines, cocaine, and synthetic drugs.<sup>iii</sup>

## Overall Prevalence

The following table summarizes illegal and prescription drug use among the 15,350 high school students who completed the 2019 Cuyahoga County YRBS. Prevalence estimates and 95% confidence intervals were computed for all dichotomous variables. The 2019 Ohio Youth Risk Behavior Survey prevalence for shared variables is also shown. A statistically significant difference exists between groups if the 95% confidence intervals do not overlap.

Risk Behavior	Cuyahoga County % (95% Confidence Interval)	Ohio % (95% Confidence Interval)
<b>Ever used prescription pain medicine without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor prescribed</b> (Including all or some of the following: codeine, Vicodin, OxyContin, Hydrocodone, or Percocet; one or more times during their life.)	13.7 (12.9 - 14.5)	12.2 (9.6 - 15.5)
<b>Ever used synthetic drugs</b> (Including all or some of the following: "designer drugs" such as synthetic marijuana, K2, Spice, fake weed, King Kong, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, Moon Rocks, herbal incense, or bath salts; one or more times during their life.)	5.4 (4.9 - 5.9)	n/a
<b>Ever used an illicit drug</b> (Including all or some of the following: any form of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, ketamine, speed, LSD, or ecstasy; one or more times during their life.)	4.4 (4.0 - 4.9)	n/a
<b>Offered, sold, or given illegal drugs on school property</b> (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey.)	13.3 (12.5 - 14.2)	14.7 (11.2 - 19.0)

## Demographic Prevalence

The tables below allow for further comparisons of other drug use between demographic groups. Data are presented by gender, race/ethnicity, grade level, and sexual identity. In following tables, LGB stands for lesbian, gay, or bisexual. A statistically significant difference exists between groups if the 95% confidence intervals do not overlap.

Ever used prescription pain medicine without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor prescribed			
Category	%	CI	
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	15.0	13.9	16.3
Male	12.2	11.2	13.3
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
White	10.1	9.0	11.2
Black	17.7	16.4	19.1
Hispanic	19.6	17.7	21.6
Other/Multiple	13.2	11.2	15.6
<b>Grade</b>			
9th	14.3	12.7	16.1
10th	12.6	11.2	14.1
11th	13.0	10.9	15.4
12th	14.5	12.8	16.3
<b>Sexual Identity</b>			
Heterosexual	12.2	11.3	13.1
LGB	21.6	19.4	24.1
Not sure	16.3	13.1	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>14.5</b>

Ever used synthetic drugs			
Category	%	CI	
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	5.4	4.6	6.3
Male	5.2	4.6	5.9
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
White	4.5	3.8	5.3
Black	5.8	5.2	6.6
Hispanic	9.4	7.8	11.4
Other/Multiple	6.9	5.3	8.9
<b>Grade</b>			
9th	5.5	4.5	6.6
10th	4.5	3.8	5.4
11th	5.0	4.0	6.1
12th	6.1	5.0	7.5
<b>Sexual Identity</b>			
Heterosexual	4.7	4.2	5.2
LGB	8.7	7.2	10.6
Not sure	8.0	5.8	10.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>5.9</b>

Ever used an illicit drug		
Category	%	CI
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	3.7	3.1 - 4.4
Male	5.0	4.4 - 5.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	4.6	3.9 - 5.4
Black	3.6	3.0 - 4.2
Hispanic	7.2	5.7 - 9.2
Other/Multiple	6.8	5.2 - 8.8
<b>Grade</b>		
9th	3.7	2.8 - 5.0
10th	2.9	2.2 - 3.8
11th	4.3	3.5 - 5.3
12th	6.5	5.3 - 7.8
<b>Sexual Identity</b>		
Heterosexual	3.6	3.2 - 4.1
LGB	8.3	6.7 - 10.4
Not sure	6.8	3.9 - 11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.0 - 4.9</b>

Offered, sold, or given illegal drugs on school property		
Category	%	CI
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	12.8	11.7 - 14.0
Male	13.8	12.5 - 15.1
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	12.5	11.4 - 13.7
Black	14.2	12.9 - 15.6
Hispanic	15.3	13.5 - 17.4
Other/Multiple	13.5	11.4 - 15.9
<b>Grade</b>		
9th	11.6	10.4 - 12.9
10th	14.3	12.8 - 15.9
11th	13.7	12.0 - 15.7
12th	13.5	11.6 - 15.6
<b>Sexual Identity</b>		
Heterosexual	12.6	11.7 - 13.5
LGB	17.7	15.5 - 20.2
Not sure	14.1	10.1 - 19.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>12.5 - 14.2</b>

## Cuyahoga County Trend Data

The following table presents the prevalence of other drug use among Cuyahoga County high school students in 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019. The prevalence for each year is given (when available), with 95% confidence intervals below.

Cuyahoga County, 2011	Cuyahoga County, 2013	Cuyahoga County, 2015	Cuyahoga County, 2017	Cuyahoga County, 2019
<b>Current unauthorized prescription drug use</b> (Including all or some of the following: OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax without a doctor's prescription; one or more times during the 30 days before the survey.)				
n/a	8.8 (8.1 - 9.5)	8.3 (7.3 - 9.3)	n/a	n/a
<b>*Ever used prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription</b> (Including all or some of the following: OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, Lortabs, Xanax, Valium, Ambien, Phenobarbital, or Ritalin without a doctor's prescription; one or more times during their life.)				
n/a	13.4 (12.4 - 14.4)	14.0 (12.9 - 15.1)	n/a	n/a
<b>**Ever used prescription pain medication without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor prescribed</b> (Including all or some of the following: codeine, Vicodin, OxyContin, Hydrocodone, or Percocet; one or more times during their life.)				
n/a	8.5 (7.8 - 9.3)	n/a	13.6 (12.7 - 14.6)	13.7 (12.9 - 14.5)
<b>Ever used synthetic drugs</b> (Including all or some of the following: "designer drugs" such as synthetic marijuana, K2, Spice, fake weed, King Kong, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, Moon Rocks, herbal incense, or bath salts; one or more times during their life.)				
n/a	n/a	7.0 (6.2 - 7.8)	7.3 (6.6 - 8.1)	5.4 (4.9 - 5.9)
<b>Ever used an illicit drug</b> (Including all or some of the following: any form of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, ketamine, speed, LSD, or ecstasy; one or more times during their life.)				
5.8 (5.2 - 6.4)	6.8 (6.1 - 7.5)	5.6 (4.9 - 6.3)	6.9 (6.2 - 7.7)	4.4 (4.0 - 4.9)
<b>Offered, sold, or given illegal drugs on school property</b> (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey.)				
26.2 (25.1 - 27.3)	16.9 (16.0 - 17.8)	n/a	17.6 (16.7 - 18.5)	13.3 (12.5 - 14.2)

\*In 2011 and 2013, "ever used prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription" was calculated using separate items.

\*\*"Ever used prescription pain medication without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor prescribed" was calculated as an individual item in 2011 and using separate items in 2013.

## Contact Information

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<sup>i</sup> Wu, W., Khan, A. 2005. Adolescent Illicit Drug Use: Understanding and Addressing the Problem. *Medscape Public Health & Prevention*. 3(2).

<sup>ii</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2019). DrugFacts: Monitoring the Future Survey: High School and Youth Trends. Available at: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/monitoring-future-survey-high-school-youth-trends>. Access on April 6, 2020.

<sup>iii</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2019). DrugFacts: Monitoring the Future Survey: High School and Youth Trends. Available at: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/monitoring-future-survey-high-school-youth-trends>. Access on April 6, 2020.