



*Youth and Adults Working Together
for a Safe and Healthy Community*

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Survey Results Show Positive Trends Among Saratoga Youth

SARATOGA SPRINGS – Results from the biannual Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, administered last fall to 6th - 12th graders in the Saratoga Springs City School District, show significant downward trends in teenage substance use. There was also improvement among the risk and protective factors that influence teen behavior. Risk factors are circumstances that increase the likelihood of drug and alcohol use. Protective factors buffer young people from their exposure to risk.

Several areas showed room for improvement. Fewer than 50% of Saratoga kids use substances regularly in grades 9-11. But more than half of 12th graders drink regularly, and their scores for alcohol, binge drinking, and marijuana use are well above the national average.

Highlights

- ◆ Scores for nearly all substances by 6th and 7th graders are nearly as low as they can go.
- ◆ 8th grade scores for substance use and antisocial behaviors were several points in the wrong direction, although well below the 8-state norm.
- ◆ Middle school kids are quite accurate in their perceptions about their peers' substance use. But these perceptions change drastically in high school, which in turn affects the rate of use.
- ◆ By 12th grade, scores for alcohol, binge drinking, and marijuana use are 10, 15, and 17 points above the national average, respectively.
- ◆ Kids perceive opportunities for positive involvement in school, at home, and in their community, but school is the main place where kids report being rewarded for positive involvement. Scores that show bonding to school is very strong.
- ◆ For the first time, some scores for risk factors identified as priority areas have gone in the wrong direction: Community Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use and Family Management.
- ◆ The gap between parents' perceptions and kids' reports of substance use is very low at the middle school, but grows to 25 points at the high school level.
- ◆ Parents have gotten more realistic about whether their kids drink, but there is a striking discrepancy in parents' perceptions about the way kids drink and kids' reports about their behavior. 15% of 9th graders and up to 40% of 12th graders report binge drinking (5+ drinks in a row) at least once in the past 30 days.

The Partnership is comprised of youth, parents and individuals representing key sectors and organizations concerned about substance use among young people in the Saratoga Springs City School District. Partnership staff administers this survey as one part of a comprehensive, bi-annual assessment of community data that helps shape future planning of prevention services. For more information, visit www.saratogapartnership.org.