



CISDUS Brief

July 2007

Substance Use Patterns Among Students, 1998-2006

This brief discusses the patterns, or combinations, of substances used by Cayman Islands students in grades 7 to 12, and trends between 1998 and 2006. The findings are based on data from the Cayman Islands Student Drug Use Survey (CISDUS), which was conducted in 1998, 2000, 2002, and most recently in 2006.

Prevalence of Use, 2006

Among the fifteen substances asked about in the 2006 CISDUS, the most prevalent is alcohol, with about 45% of students reporting drinking in the past year. The second most common is ganja (10%), followed by inhalants (8%), and tobacco (7%). The remaining drugs are used by 3% or less of students (see Figure 1).

Key Highlights

- † Alcohol is the most commonly used substance among students in the Cayman Islands, followed by ganja, inhalants, and tobacco.
- † Almost half (47%) of all students do not use any substance at all.
- † About one-third (30%) of students restrict their substance use to only alcohol.
- † The proportion of students that report *no* substance use at all in 2006 is lower than that found in all previous survey years.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Reporting Past Year Substance Use, Grades 7 to 12, 2006 CISDUS

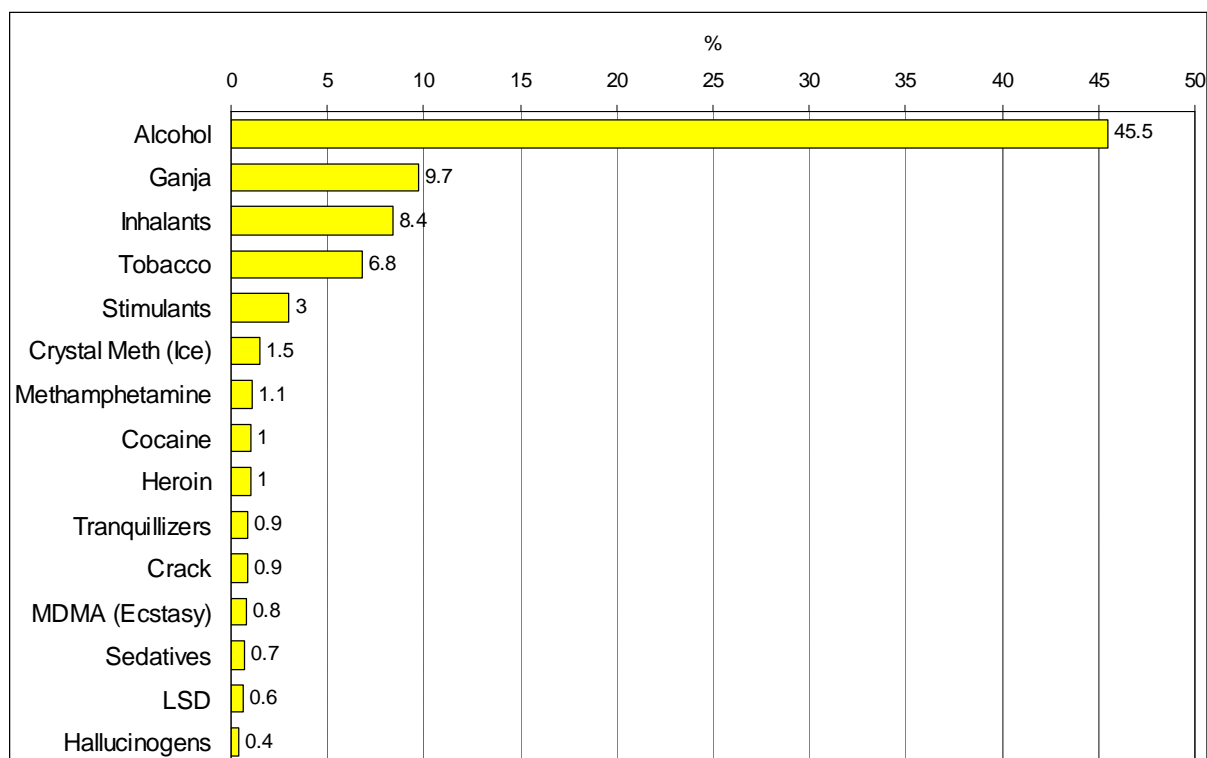
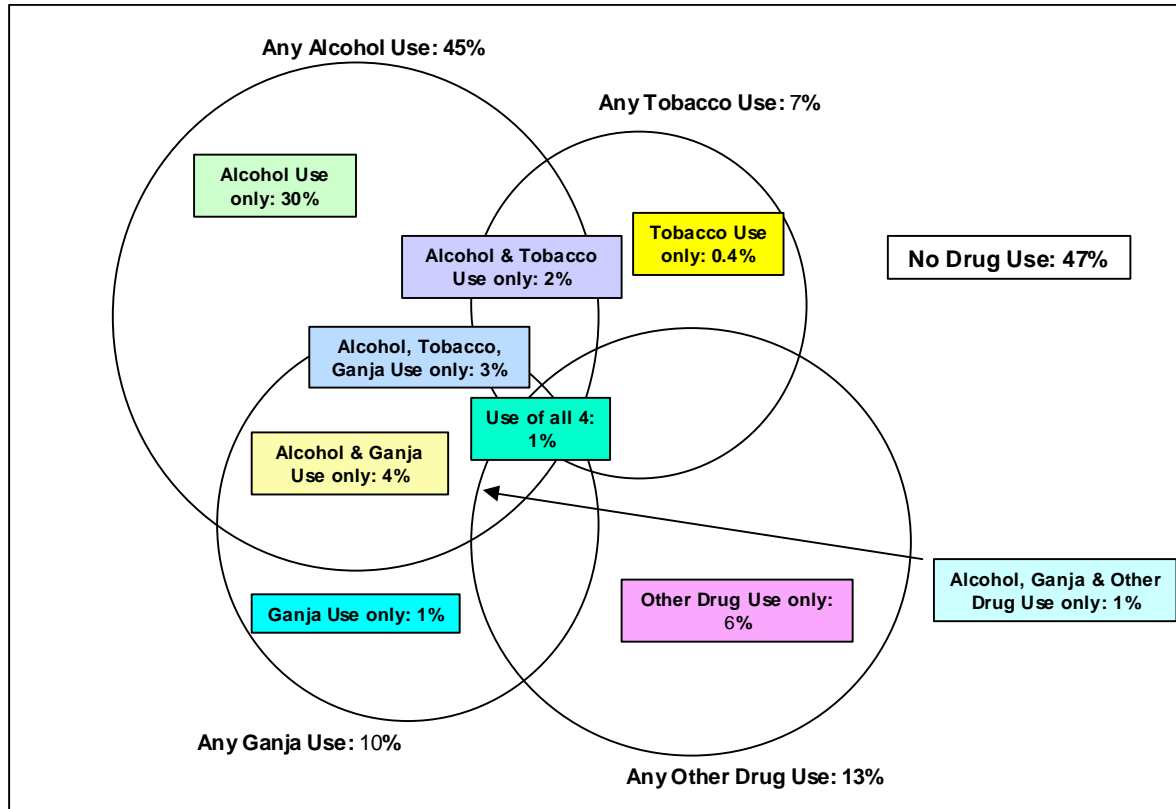


Figure 2. The Overlap of Alcohol, Tobacco, Ganja, and Other Drug Use During the Past Year, 2006 CISDUS (Grades 7 to 12, N=2,480)



Note: "Other Drug Use" refers to use of at least one of 12 drugs: inhalants, sedatives, heroin, methamphetamine, crystal methamphetamine ("Ice"), stimulants, tranquilizers, LSD, other hallucinogens, cocaine, crack, or "ecstasy"

Patterns of Use, 2006

As seen in Figure 2, almost half (47%) of students report using *no* substance at all in 2006. About one-third (30%) of students use only alcohol. Very few students use only tobacco (less than 1%) or only ganja (about 1%). About 6% use another drug exclusively.

Trends in Patterns of Use, 2006

Some changes over time are evident from Table 1. The most dominant change in the patterns is the decline of "no substance use" that occurred between 2002 (54.7%) and 2006 (47.2%). The percentage of students that restrict their use to alcohol only increased in that same period, from 25.0% in 2002 to 30.3% in 2006.

Compared to 1998, the percentage of students in 2006 that reported using only alcohol and tobacco decreased, from 3.1% to 1.7%. Further, there was an increase in the percentage of students that restrict their use to only alcohol and ganja between 1998 (1.6%) and 2006 (3.9%).

Table 1. Substance Use Patterns (%) in the Past Year, 1998-2006 CISDUS

| | 1998 | 2000 | 2002 | 2006 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| (N=) | (1901) | (2107) | (2158) | (2422) |
| No Substance Used in the Past Year | 54.4 | 56.3 | 54.7 | 47.2 |
| Alcohol only | 26.5 | 26.4 | 25.0 | 30.3 |
| Tobacco only | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.4 |
| Alcohol + Tobacco only | 3.1 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.7 |
| Ganja only | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 0.6 |
| Alcohol + Ganja only | 1.6 | 2.4 | 3.0 | 3.9 |
| Tobacco + Ganja only | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Alcohol + Tobacco + Ganja only | 2.3 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 2.5 |
| Inhalants only | 2.1 | 2.6 | 3.3 | 3.1 |
| Alcohol + Inhalants only | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 2.6 |
| Other Illicit Drugs only | 1.9 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 1.7 |
| Alcohol + Other Illicit Drugs only | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| Other Patterns Not Listed | 3.8 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 |
| | (100%) | (100%) | (100%) | (100%) |

Notes: (1) substances are not necessarily used in combination with each other (i.e., on the same occasion);
 (2) "other illicit drug" use refers to use of one or more of the following: sedatives, heroin, methamphetamine, crystal methamphetamine ("Ice"), stimulants, tranquilizers, LSD, other hallucinogens, cocaine, crack, or MDMA ("Ecstasy");
 (3) test for year differences for "no substance used": $\chi^2(3df)=45.5, p<.001$.

Methods

The CISDUS employs a census (i.e., a 100% sample) of students enrolled in grades 7 to 12. All twelve middle and high schools in the Cayman Islands participated in the 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2006 surveys. Of the 2,945 enrolled students, 2,480 completed questionnaires in 2006; 2,187 in 2002; 2,186 in 2000, and 1,946 completed questionnaires in 1998. Student participation rates were 84% in 2006, 88% in 2002, 94% in 2000 and 86.0% in 1998. The demographic composition of the sample did not significantly change between 1998 and 2006.

Because of the survey's complete sample (i.e., a census) there is no sampling error attached to an estimate (although estimates still have error based on non-sampling error, such as misreporting). Thus, no confidence intervals are required. Regarding the survey results, readers should bear in mind the following points:

- Since there is still the element of chance findings, the element of non-sampling errors, we cannot treat all absolute differences in percentages as meaningful and important.
- Small percentages are more unreliable than larger percentages.

Terminology

- **Past Year Substance Use** is defined as use of the given substance at least once during the past 12 months. Alcohol use excludes a sip, but includes drinking at special events. Tobacco use excludes trying one cigarette. Inhalants are glue or other solvents, such as nail polish remover.
- **Significant Difference** refers to a difference between percentages that is not likely due to chance. For example, a difference found at the $p<.01$ level of statistical significance is one that is less than 1% likely to occur by chance alone.

Source

Miller, S.C., Paglia-Boak, A., & Adlaf, E.M. (2007). *Drug Use Among Students in The Cayman Islands: CISDUS Findings 1998 - 2006*. Cayman Islands: National Drug Council.

To obtain the CISDUS questionnaire or other CISDUS Reports, please call (345) 949-9000.