

# AOD Use in Teens

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## Abstract

Alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco are substances most commonly used by adolescents (CDC). Nationwide by 12th grade, two-thirds of students have tried alcohol. Half of 9th through 12th grade students have used marijuana, and forty percent of 9th through 12th grade students have tried cigarettes. In Wisconsin, one in five teens report using electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or vaping in the past 30 days (Wisconsin Youth Risk Survey). Vaping nicotine has doubled from 2017 to 2019 across all ages. The top three reasons 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reported they vape include “experimenting” and “because it tastes good”, “to have a good time with my friends”, and “to relax or relieve tension” (National Institute on Drug Abuse). A small-scale study was conducted at one metropolitan high school to evaluate alcohol and drug use among high school youth. The goal was to identify what substances students were using, why they used drug/alcohol and its effect on school attendance and academic success. Students suspected of being under the influence were assessed by the school nurse to determine if they were stable condition and able to attend school. In coordination with the school administrator, per the Behavior Education Plan, students found to be under the influence were referred to the school psychologist for Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT). In addition, students completed the CRAFFT (Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Friends, Trouble) health screening tool and the Global Appraisal of Individual Needs-Short Screen (GAIN-SS) to assess the student’s context, frequency of use and other risk factors associated with alcohol and other drugs (AOD) use. Education regarding marijuana, nicotine and vaping was provided to students, parents and school staff.

## Objectives

1. Identify what substances high school students are using
2. Why did they used drugs or alcohol
3. Affect of AOD on attendance and academic success

## Methods

High School youth were interviewed using the CRAFFT (Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Family/Friends, Trouble) and GAIN-SS (Global Appraisal of Individual Needs – Short Screen) Screening Tools.

## Best Practice and Safety Procedures for Students Who are believed to be Under the Influence of Intoxicants

Anytime a student is believed to be under the influence of alcohol, nicotine, marijuana or other drug, notify an administrator (Dean of Students, Principal).

Maintain visual contact with the student at all times.

Students believed to be under the influence should be assessed by the school nurse to determine immediate health and safety needs.

If the student is incapacitated, call 911 and parent.

- Difficulty standing without assistance
- Difficulty walking, staggering, falling
- Inability to understand and coherently respond to questions
- Dilation of eyes, flushed complexion
- Presence of vomiting, urination on clothing
- Unconsciousness
- Difficulty Breathing

If there are other health and safety concerns the nurse and administrator should consult about whether parents should be contacted for transport home for health and safety reasons.

Administrator will conduct an investigation and determine consequences

Students found under the influence of a substance are referred to the school psychologist for Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)



## Results

Nine students, 2 female, 7 male were interviewed using the CRAFFT and the GAINS-SS. All students had been assessed for being under the influence of AOD.

### CRAFFT Results N=9

**In the past 12 months: 7 of 9 Drank Alcohol, 9 of 9 Smoked Marijuana**

1. Rode in **CAR** with someone (including self) who was “high” or using AOD? **5 of 9**
2. Used alcohol or drugs to **RELAX**? **7 of 9**
3. Used alcohol or drugs while **ALONE**? **6 of 9**
4. Do you ever **FORGET** while using alcohol or drugs? **5 of 9**
5. Do **FAMILY/FRIENDS** tell you that you should cut down on use? **5 of 9**
6. Have you gotten in **TROUBLE** for using alcohol or drugs? **7 of 9**

### GAINS-SS

Use alcohol or drugs weekly or more often in the past 1-3 months: **7 of 9**

Had difficulty paying attention in school, work or home: **7 of 9**

Were anxious, nervous, tense, scared, panicked, or like something bad was going to happen: **7 of 9**

**GPA:** 1.45 on 4.0 scale (0-2.67)

**Attendance:** 69% (26-93%)



### What are Teens Using?

Marijuana (Dab pen, blunt, vape, edibles)

Nicotine (vape, Black and Mild)

Cocaine (snort)

Adderall

CBD (gummy bears, worms)

Ecstasy

Oxycodone

Vodka

## Conclusions

1. GPA and attendance are affected by AOD use
2. Seven in 9 students feel anxious or nervous and used alcohol or drugs to relax
3. Seven in 9 state they have difficulty paying attention in school, work, or home

## Education

1. Parent & Staff newsletter article on vaping
2. 1:1 education with students re: effects of AOD
3. Referral to AOD coordinators to determine interest in decreasing AOD use and seeking therapy.

## References

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