

Youth in this survey reported higher rates of substance use than youth surveyed in schools

People use drugs and alcohol for different reasons: to cope with stress and violence, to escape mental health symptoms, or to blunt pain from trauma and loss

The younger people are when they begin using drugs and alcohol, the more likely it is that they will develop problems with drugs and alcohol later in life

- **1 in 3 youth reported drinking alcohol before the age of 11**
- **1 in 4 had tried marijuana by the same age**
- **9 of 10 or (91%), youth in this survey had tried Marijuana**
- **3 out of 4 or (76%) reported binge drinking in the past month**

Binge drinking (having 5 or more drinks in a couple of hours) is linked to higher injury rates, unprotected sex and other substance use



Want to Talk?

Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service

604 660 9382

BC Toll Free: 1800 663 1441

24 hours 7 days a week

Deaf and hard of hearing callers:

TTY 604 875 0885 (collect calls accepted) or text 604 836 6381

Kids Help phone

1800 668 6868

www.kidshelphone.ca

Here To Help

For more information about substance use, mental health information, and where to find other supports

www.heretohelp.bc.ca

Mind Your Mind

www.mindyourmind.ca

Information on youth and mental health

Other Fact Sheets in this Series:

Sexual Health

Sexual Exploitation

Moving on - Home, School and Work

Physical, Emotional and Mental Health

Substance Use



Youth living in homelessness, living on the streets, living in an abandoned building, a tent or car. Youth who are working in the sex trade who are trading sex for drugs money, clothes, food or shelter. Youth who are using or selling drugs on the streets, or participating in prostitution. Youth who have recently moved from any of these situations into a more stable environment.

A profile of street involved and marginalized youth in BC



The McCreary Centre Society

This information is from:

Against the Odds – A profile of marginalized and street-involved youth in BC

Lots of people have the wrong idea about why some youth are street involved.

This research was done to learn about what life is like for street involved youth. And to give youth a chance to voice their opinions and concerns.

762 youth from nine communities in BC participated in the Against the Odds survey in 2006

Youth included in this survey were those who are:

- Homeless
- Living on the street
- Couch surfing
- Staying in a: tent, car, abandoned building, or squat
- Using or Selling Drugs on the street
- Involved in the Sex Trade
- Or anyone who has recently moved from these conditions to a more stable environment

McCreary Centre Society

www.mcs.bc.ca

When youth drug use was compared to a similar survey in 2000, marijuana use had not changed, but some drug use had decreased

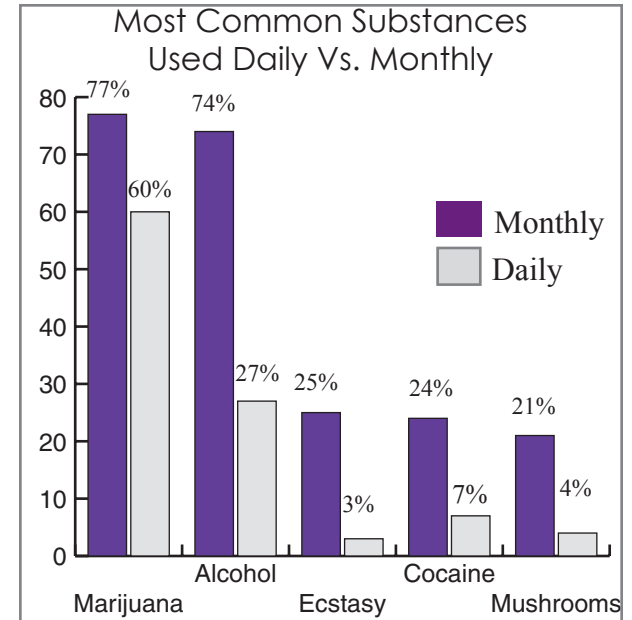
The number of youth injecting drugs went up



Injecting drugs can seriously harm you

- **Drug injection is more likely to cause an overdose than other methods**
- **Injection can also cause collapsed veins which may result in amputation or death**
- **Sharing needles and gear increases your chance of getting diseases that are carried in blood or bodily fluids like Hepatitis C, or HIV/AIDS.**
- **One of four youth (or 25%) said that they had used needles, or other gear (crack pipes, razors, ect.) after someone else had used them.**

If you or your friends are using needles there may be clinics in your community that offer a safe needle exchange to minimize some of the risks



11% of youth said that they were refused drug and alcohol treatment they felt they needed

- Over half of these youth said they were turned away because the program was full

25% of youth in this survey said they had received drug and alcohol treatment

Substance treatment options include:

- Drug and alcohol counselling
- Detox services
- Outpatient treatment (day programs)
- Recovery homes
- Treatment centres