

The NHSDA Report

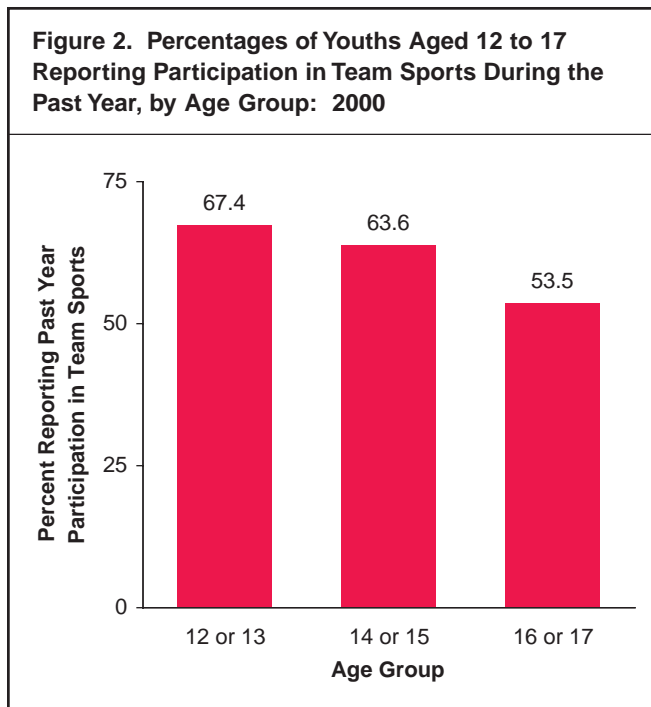
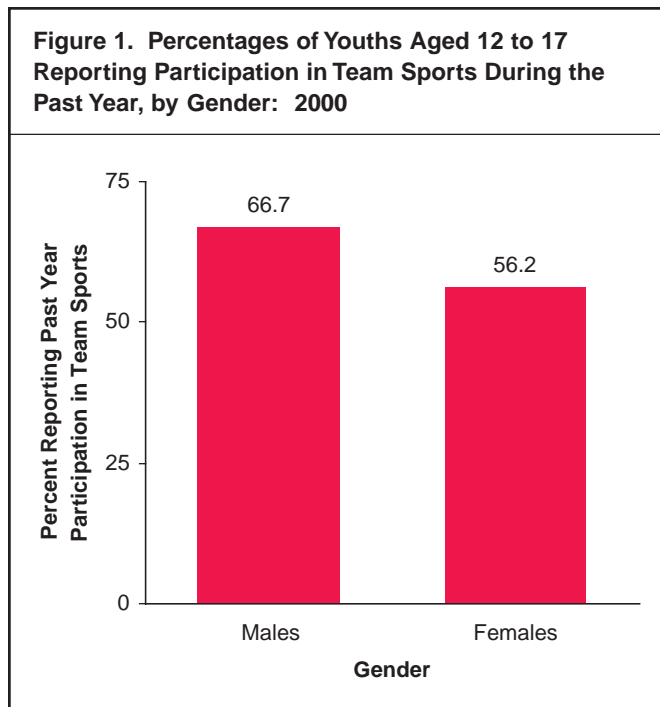
February 8, 2002

Team Sports Participation and Substance Use Among Youths

In Brief

- In 2000, approximately 61 percent of youths aged 12 to 17, or more than 14 million, participated in team sports during the past year
- Rates of past month use of tobacco, alcohol, or illicit drugs were generally lower among team sports participants than nonparticipants; however, the rate of past month smokeless tobacco use was higher among team sports participants than nonparticipants
- Team sports participants were more likely than nonparticipants to disapprove of peers' use of cigarettes, alcohol, or marijuana

The 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) asked youths aged 12 to 17 whether they participated during the 12 months before the survey interview in team sports, such as football, basketball, swimming, or gymnastics. Respondents were also queried about use of tobacco, alcohol, or any illicit drug during the past month. "Any illicit drug" refers to the use of marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), inhalants, hallucinogens (including PCP and LSD), heroin, or any prescription-type psychotherapeutic used nonmedically during the past month. Moreover, youths were asked to report how they felt about someone their own age smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day, having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day, or trying marijuana/hashish once or twice. The three response categories were (a) strongly disapprove, (b) somewhat disapprove, and (c) neither approve nor disapprove. For this report, the first two categories are combined and referred to as "disapprove."



Sports Participation Among Youths

The 2000 NHSDA estimated that more than 14 million youths (56 percent) aged 12 to 17 participated in team sports during the past year. Males (67 percent) were more likely to participate than females (56 percent) (Figure 1), as were American Indians/Alaska Natives (69 percent) and whites (63 percent) compared with blacks (61 percent), Hispanics (56 percent), and Asians (54 percent). The proportion of youths who participated in team sports during the past year decreased with increasing age, from 67 percent of youths aged 12 or 13 to 54 percent of youths aged 16 or 17 (Figure 2).

Substance Use Among Youths Who Participated in Sports

Prior research has linked sports participation among youths to a

decreased risk of substance use.¹ Results from the 2000 NHSDA corroborated this finding. For instance, 6 percent of youths who participated in team sports during the past year reported past month marijuana use compared with 10 percent of youths who did not participate (Figure 3). The rate of past month alcohol use was also lower among youths who participated in team sports during the past year (16 percent) than among youths who did not (18 percent), as were rates of binge alcohol use (10 vs. 12 percent) and heavy alcohol use (2 vs. 3 percent).² Similarly, rates of past month cigarette or cigar use were lower among youths who participated in team sports during the past year than among youths who did not (Table 1). However, the rate of past month smokeless tobacco use was higher among youths who participated in team sports than it was among youths who did not.

Disapproval of Peer Substance Use

Youths who participated in teams sports during the past year were more likely than youths who did not participate to disapprove of someone their own age smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day, having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day, or trying marijuana/hashish once or twice (Figure 4). Past research suggests that unfavorable attitudes about substance use are linked with lower rates of use among youths.³

End Notes

1. Pate, R.R., Trost, S.G., Levin, S., & Dowda, M. (2000). Sports participation and health-related behaviors among U.S. youth. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 154, 904-911.
2. "Binge" alcohol use is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion on at least 1 day in the past 30 days. By "occasion" is meant at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other. "Heavy" alcohol use is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion on each of 5 or more days in

Figure 3. Percentages of Youths Aged 12 to 17 Reporting Past Month Illicit Drug Use, by Participation in Team Sports During the Past Year: 2000

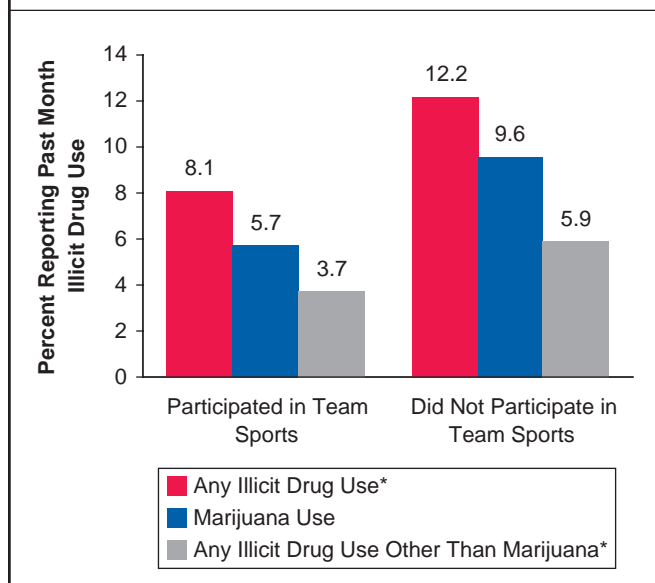
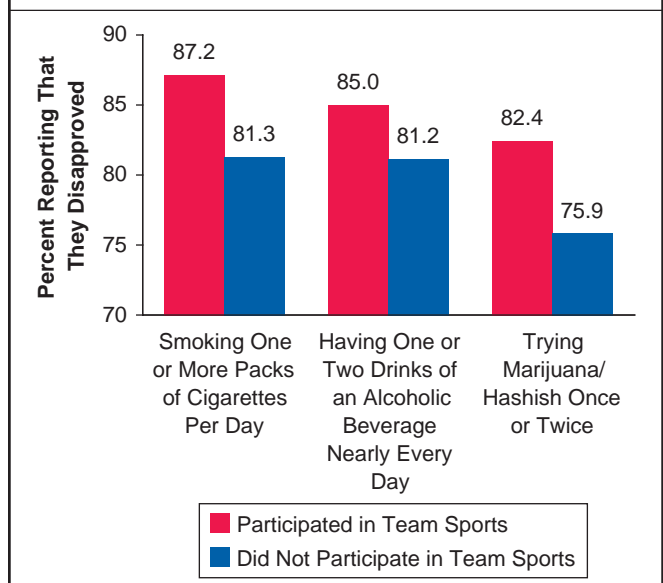


Figure 4. Percentages of Youths Aged 12 to 17 Reporting That They Disapproved of Someone Their Own Age Using Substances, by Participation in Team Sports During the Past Year: 2000



the past 30 days; all heavy alcohol users are also binge alcohol users.

- Hawkins, J.D., Catalano, R.F., & Miller, J.Y. (1992). Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescence and early adulthood: Implications for substance abuse prevention. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 64-105.

Figure and Table Notes

*Any illicit drug indicates use at least once of marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens (including LSD and PCP), inhalants, or any prescription-type psychotherapeutic used nonmedically. Any illicit drug other than marijuana indicates use at least once of any of these listed drugs, regardless of marijuana/hashish use; marijuana/hashish users who also have used any of the other drugs listed are included.

**Binge alcohol use is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion on at least 1 day in the past 30 days. By "occasion" is meant at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other.

***Heavy alcohol use is defined as drinking 5 or more drinks on the same occasion on each of 5 or more days in the past 30 days; all heavy alcohol users are also binge alcohol users.

Source (all figs/table): SAMHSA 2000 NHSDA.

Table 1. Percentages of Youths Aged 12 to 17 Reporting Past Month Use of Tobacco or Alcohol, by Participation in Team Sports During the Past Year: 2000

Past Month	Participation in Team Sports During the Past Year	
	Yes	No
Any Tobacco Use	12.9	19.8
Cigarettes	10.5	18.1
Smokeless Tobacco	2.3	1.7
Cigars	4.1	5.2
Pipes	0.7	0.8
Any Alcohol Use	15.5	17.8
"Binge" Alcohol Use**	9.5	11.8
Heavy Alcohol Use***	2.3	3.1

The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The 2000 data are based on information obtained from nearly 72,000 persons aged 12 or older, including more than 25,000 youths aged 12 to 17. The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their place of residence.

The NHSDA Report is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies (OAS), SAMHSA, and by RTI in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Information and data for this issue are based on the following publication and statistics:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2001). *Summary of findings from the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse* (NHSDA Series: H-13, DHHS Publication No. SMA 01-3549). Rockville, MD: Author.

Also available on-line: www.DrugAbuseStatistics.samhsa.gov.

Additional tables available upon request.