

Dade Youth Set the Pace for National Decline in Youthful Drug Use

The results of the most recent public and parochial school survey reveal that local youth have achieved the goal of the community's 10-year prevention plan **two-years early**. The most significant declines have occurred between 2001 and 2003. Recent statewide and national surveys reveal similar progress elsewhere while confirming Miami-Dade youth's leadership in rejecting use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. At the same time, a shrinking number of students are involved with increasingly dangerous patterns of poly-substance abuse often including prescription medicines. Those who use one drug today are more likely to use a variety of substances than in the past.

Faced with rising marijuana use by youth between 1991 and 1995, The Miami Coalition For A Safe And Drug-Free Community developed the [Priority One](#) prevention plan with the goal to cut student drug abuse by 50 percent of 1995 levels. The local survey of 2,240 students in grades 7 to 12 tracks the percent reporting current use of various substance in the 30-days prior to taking the survey. While alcohol, cigarette, and inhalant use increased between 1995 and 1997, rates of use for most all substance have declined since that time. The table below shows the percent of 7th to 12th graders in Miami-Dade public and parochial school who reported use of various substances between 1995 and 2003. The last two columns are the goals of the [Priority One](#) prevention plan for 2003 and 2005.

%Currently Using	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	P1Goal 2003	P1Goal 2005
Alcohol	33.6	36	30.6	25.6	21.9	20.2	16.8
Cigarette	15.8	16.5	12.3	9.7	7.3	9.5	7.9
Marijuana	13.4	11.8	10.4	9.4	6.7	8.04	6.7
Inhalants	3	4.1	4.6	4.5	2.8	1.8	1.5
LSD	3.8	2.9	3.4	1.7	0.6	2.3	1.9
Rohypnol		4.5	3.3	2	1.2	2.8	2.25
Cocaine	2.1	1.8	2	1.8	1.4	1.3	1.05
Heroin	1.1	1.5	1	1.1	0.6	0.7	0.6
MDMA				2.8	1.2	2.4	2.1
Tranquilizers				1.5	1.5	1.3	1.1
Amphetamine type				1.9	1.1	1.65	1.4
Oxycodone et al				1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8
DxM				1	0.9	0.9	0.7

Miami- Dade youth reported that drugs were not as “easy to obtain” in 2003 as in 2001. The percent of students responding that “most or all of their friends” use drugs declined for every substance over the same two-year period. The percent of students in 2003 reporting that friends would risk “great or moderate harm” from using various drugs ranged from 44 percent for marijuana to 34 percent for alcohol with rates for cocaine/crack, MDMA, cigarettes, heroin, Rohypnol, and

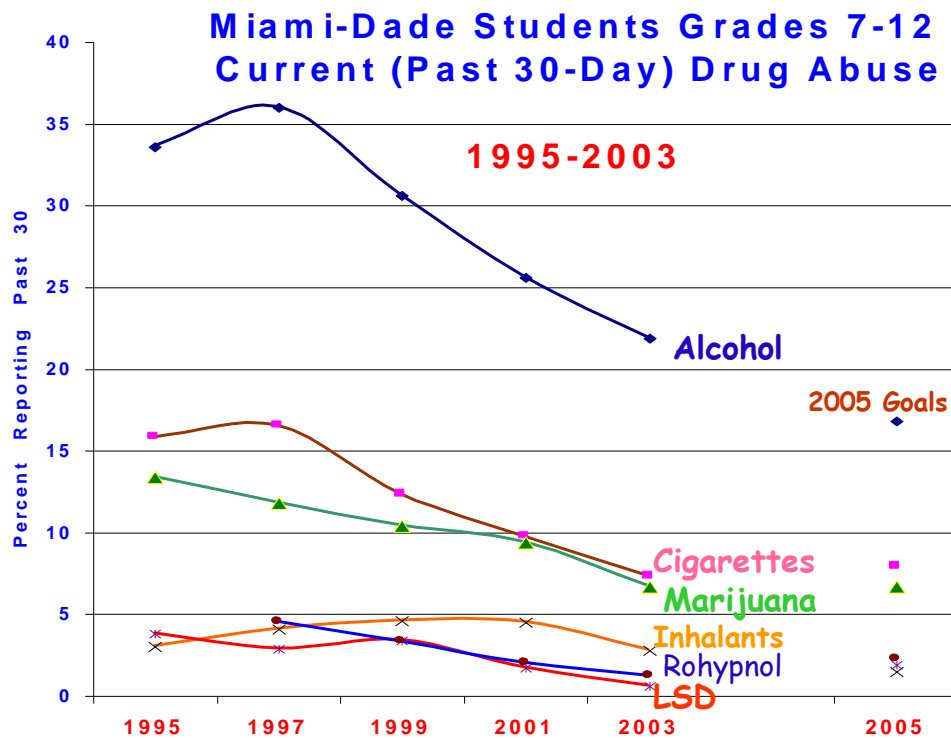
inhalants falling between those two percentages. However, the percent of students reporting they “strongly disapprove” of friends using various drugs remained stable or declined slightly between 2001 and 2003.

The results of The Miami Coalition’s School Survey are verified by the most recently available national and Florida surveys that also track local students.

- The national **Youth Risk Behavior Survey** conducted by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2003 revealed that both lifetime (30.7 percent) and current marijuana use (15.8 percent) reported by Miami-Dade high school students (grades 9-12) were among the lowest rates among the 14 large metropolitan areas tracked by the survey. The national rates were 40.2 percent reporting lifetime use and 22.4 percent for current marijuana use.
- The **Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey** reported in its 2002 results that Miami-Dade students in grades 6-12 reported the **lowest rate** of current marijuana use (6.5 percent) of any of the 60 participating Florida counties as compared to the 12.1 percent rate reported statewide. The same survey exposed declining youthful drug use rates across Florida between 2000 and 2002.
- The National Institute on Drug Abuse’s **Monitoring the Future Survey** revealed that from 2001 to 2003, current marijuana use among national 8th, 10th, and 12th graders declined 11-percent from 16.6 percent to 14.8 percent. While this survey does not provide results for states or local communities, **The Miami Coalition’s School Survey** reported a 29-percent decline in current marijuana use by local students between 2001 and 2003.

Despite, the positive news of declining student drug use, those youth who become involved in drug taking behavior today are at greater risk than in the past of becoming involved in more dangerous patterns of abuse and in taking a greater variety of substances, including prescription drugs. Recent drug-related deaths and medical emergencies reveal abusers today are consuming more combinations of substances than in the past. This phenomenon is fueled by Internet and other illegal sales of prescription medications and the “club drug” pattern of taking various drugs at once or in sequence.

Other findings from the 2003 **Miami Coalition School Survey** included that 76 percent of students said they would be willing to take a simple lab test to show they do not use drugs. Parents were reported to have had a “great or very great” influence by 55 percent of Miami-Dade youth on their decision not to use drugs. Anti-drug television commercials were seen by 57 percent of local youth “at least daily or more than once a day.” These same advertisements were reported to have a “great or very great influence” on 41 percent of students in making them less likely to use drugs.

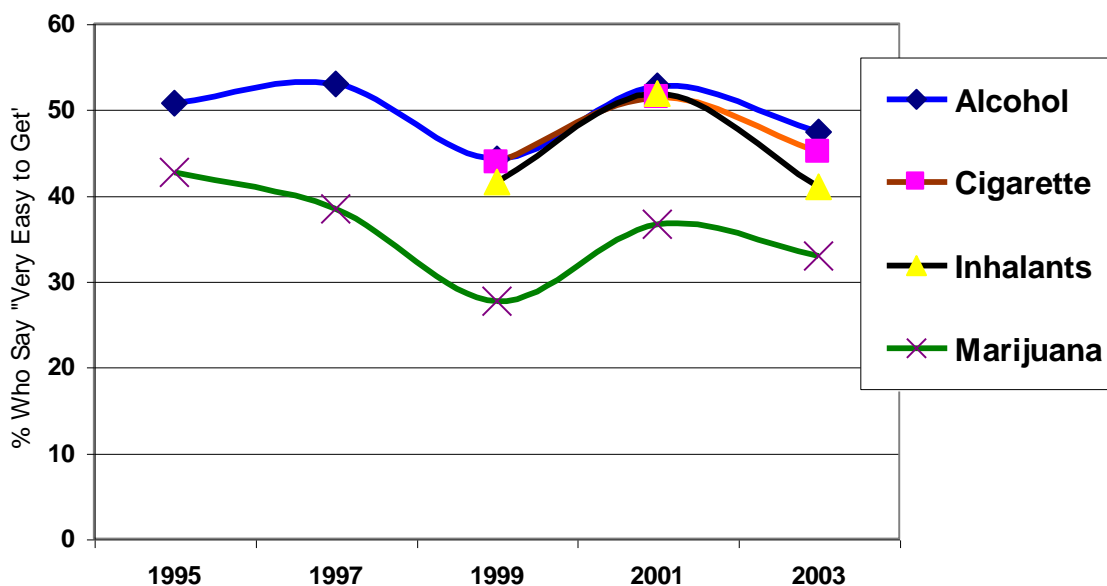


Source: The Miami Coalition School Survey: *Priority One* Prevention Plan 2003

“Current use” is any use in the past 30 days before taking the survey. In addition to tracking the rates of use by students, the community prevention plan known as **Priority One** also measures key risk and protective factors for most drugs including:

- Perceived harmfulness,
- Drug use by friends,
- Social disapproval of friends’ use, and
- Access and Availability of drugs to youth.

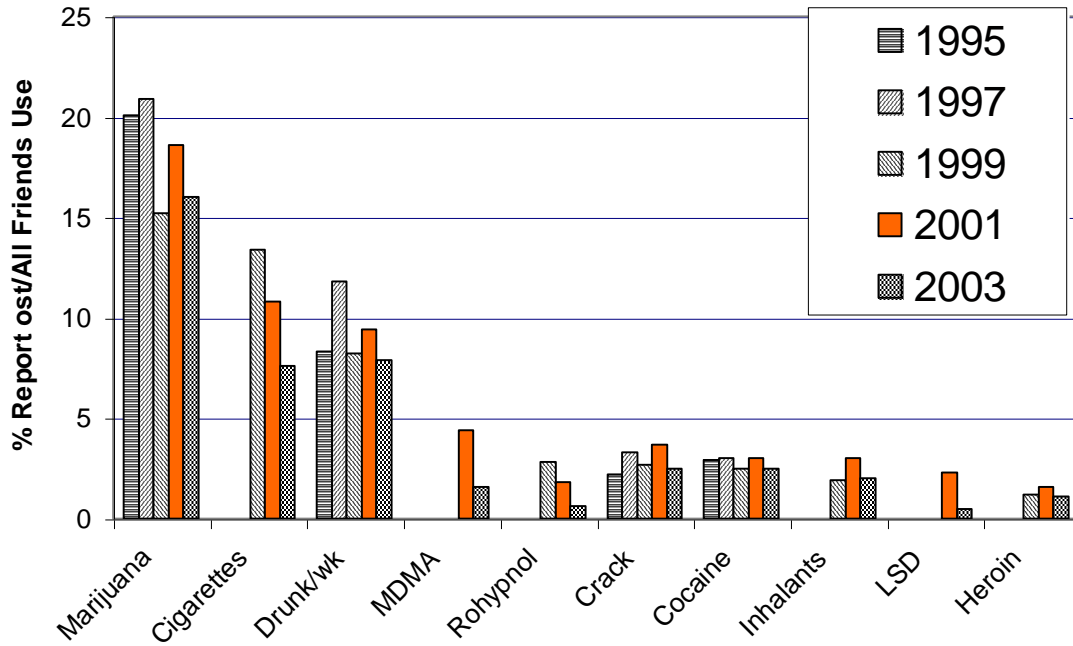
% Reporting Very Easy to Get...



Percent of Students Reporting "Very Easy" to Get Drugs

Very Easy to Get Drugs	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003
Alcohol	50.7	53	44.2	52.7	47.4
Cigarette			43.8	51.4	45
Inhalants			41.5	51.8	41
Marijuana	42.7	38.4	27.7	36.6	32.9
LSD				12.3	7.8
Rohypnol			13	11.7	8.5
Cocaine	22	18	14.8	16.1	13.6
Crack	22	17.1	14.8	15.8	13.4
Heroin			11.7	12.1	9.8

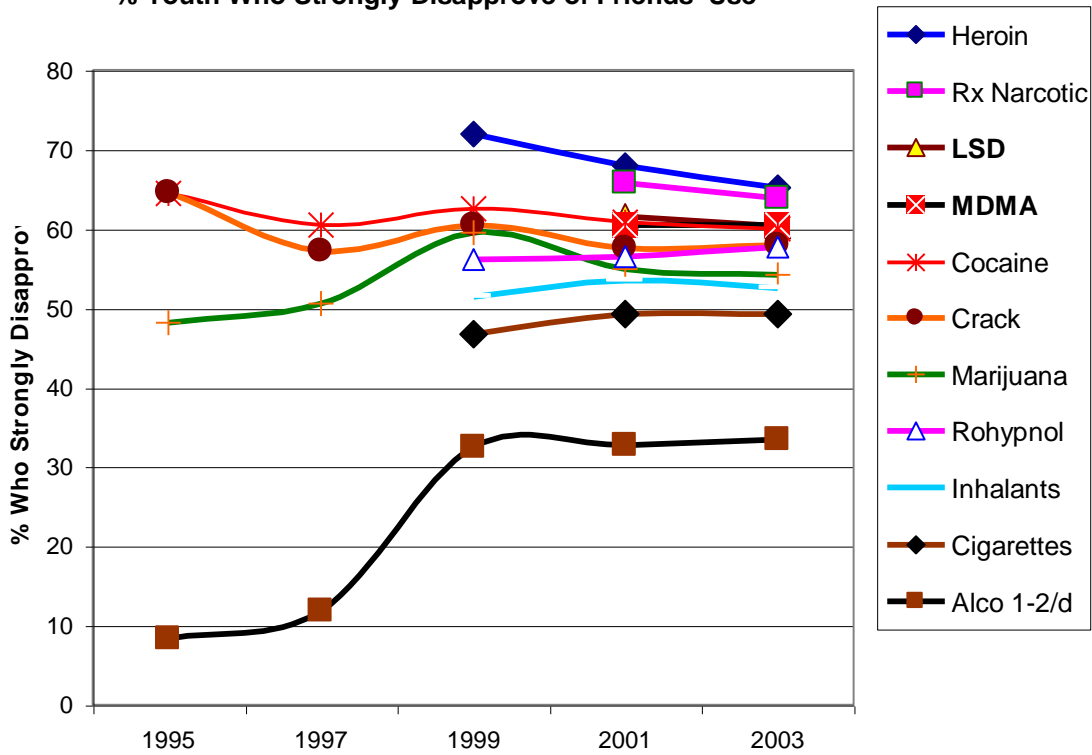
% Reporting Most or All My Friends Use



Percent of Students Reporting "Most or All Friends" Use Drugs

Most or All Friends Use	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003
Marijuana	20.1	20.9	15.2	18.6	16
Cigarettes			13.4	10.8	7.6
Drunk weekly	8.3	11.8	8.2	9.4	7.9
MDMA				4.4	1.6
Rohypnol			2.8	1.8	0.6
Crack	2.2	3.3	2.7	3.7	2.5
Cocaine	2.9	3	2.5	3	2.5
Inhalants			1.9	3	2
LSD				2.3	0.5
Heroin			1.2	1.6	1.1

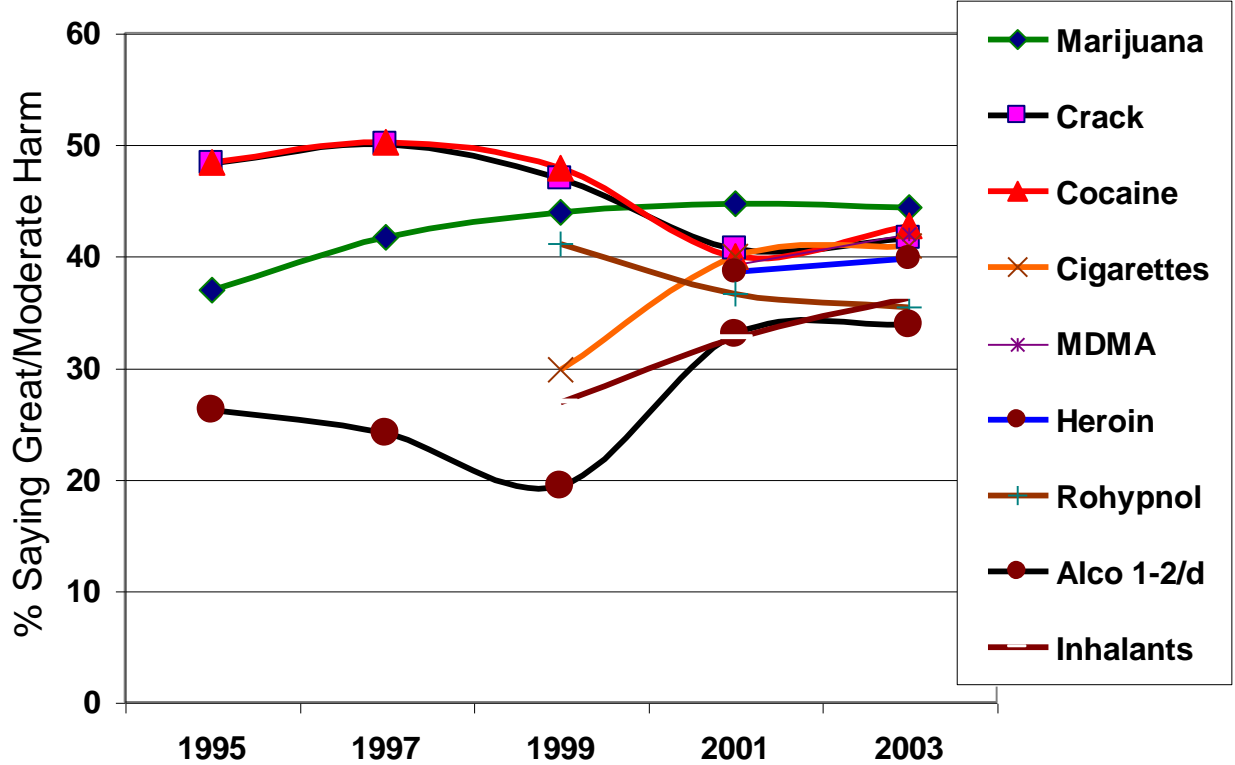
% Youth Who Strongly Disapprove of Friends' Use



Percent of Students "Strongly Disapproving of Friends' Drugs Use"

% Disapproving of Friends' Drug Use	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003
Heroin			71.9	67.9	65.1
Rx Narcotic				65.8	63.8
LSD				61.5	60.3
MDMA				60.4	60.5
Cocaine	64.4	60.4	62.5	60.8	60
Crack	64.5	57.2	60.5	57.5	57.9
Marijuana	48.2	50.6	59.5	54.9	54.2
Rohypnol			56.1	56.5	57.7
Inhalants			51.4	53.4	52.5
Cigarettes			46.7	49.2	49.2
Alcohol	8.3	11.8	32.4	32.7	33.4

% Reporting Great or Moderate Harm from...



Percent of Students Reporting Friends Risk “Great or Moderate Harm” Using Drugs

Perceived Harmfulness	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003
Marijuana	36.9	41.7	43.9	44.7	44.3
Crack	48.3	50	46.9	40.6	41.6
Cocaine	48.4	50.2	47.9	39.9	42.7
Cigarettes			29.8	39.9	40.9
MDMA				39.2	41.9
Heroin				38.6	39.8
Rohypnol				41.1	35.4
Alcohol	26.2	24.1	19.4	33	33.8
Inhalants				26.9	36.2

Other questions on the 2001 School Survey revealed the following as reported by Miami-Dade 7th to 12th grade students.

