

November 2021

## Trends from the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey 2021 Report

Results from the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) were recently released. The survey was administered to more than 8,000 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students across the state during February and March of 2021. The data offer an insight into substance use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The major findings indicate that overall, Florida students have continued long-term reductions in the use of alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs. Table 1 compares substance use between 2010 and 2021 and shows sustained reductions across both time points. The FYSAS report also notes that past month use of any illicit drug other than marijuana dropped from 9.3% in 2010 to 4.5% in 2021.

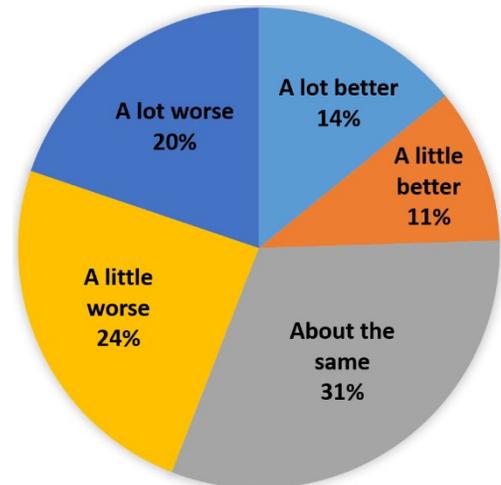
Considering the overall reductions in alcohol and drug use, concern is still warranted for problematic alcohol use and vaping. Binge drinking (consumption of five or more drinks in a row) rates remain high and among high school students, 12.3% reported blacking out after drinking. Vaping also remains a concern. Past month rates of vaping were 11.2% for nicotine and 6.7% for marijuana. However, these rates represent a decrease of 1.3% and 1.6%, respectively, from 2019.

Finally, the 2021 survey inquired about students' emotional health during the pandemic (Figure 1). Responses were mixed and indicate that 44% described their emotional health as being a little or a lot worse, compared to a quarter of students who report their emotional health being a little or a lot better, and 31% of students who reported no change.

Table 1: Lifetime Substance use	2010	2021
Alcohol	51.5%	33.6%
Binge drinking*	14.1%	6.7%
Cigarette	25.9%	7.9%
Marijuana	23.8%	18.1%
Inhalants	10.0%	6.6%
Club drugs	3.7%	1.0%
Powder/crack cocaine	2.9%	1.0%
Methamphetamine	1.3%	0.5%
Heroin	1%	0%
Rx depressants	5.8%	2.8%
Rx pain relievers	7.4%	2.9%
Rx amphetamines	4%	3%

Note: \*past two weeks

Figure 1: How has your emotional health (level of stress, anxiety, and depression) changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?



Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey; <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/prevention/fysas/>

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