

Texas School Survey Of Drug And Alcohol Use Plano ISD – Elementary Executive Summary

Introduction

The Texas School Survey is an annual collection of self-reported tobacco, alcohol, inhalant, and substance use data from among elementary and/or secondary students in individual districts throughout the state of Texas. The survey, conducted by the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) in conjunction with the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA), is also administered every other year to a representative sample of Texas students in grades 4 through 6 and grades 7 through 12.

Data from the statewide sampling, administered in the Spring of 2004 are incorporated into an over-time database maintained by TCADA to track trends in substance use so that policymakers at the state level have up-to-date information upon which to base decisions and plot prevention strategies. These data also serve as an overall standard of comparison for use by those at the district level to interpret, and act upon, local survey findings in a similar way.

The executive summary begins with a section containing a general demographic overview of those who took the survey in the participating district. This is followed by sections dealing with the various substances covered by the survey---tobacco, alcohol, inhalants, and marijuana. The summary concludes with a section that explores selected characteristics associated with substance use in the district and a final one dealing with where students come by what they know about drugs and alcohol and to whom they might turn if they thought they were having a problem.

For context, each section dealing with substance use will begin with a brief, over-time glimpse of the statewide trends in the 1990's with regard to that substance. This is followed by a subsection containing items that are generally recognized as contributing to the environment in which substance use is most likely to occur---such as availability, peer use, and parental attitudes. Finally, the use data are then detailed.

As for the actual, self-reported use of each substance, it is important to note the frequency of such use. Is it experimental, a once-in-a-lifetime thing? Or is it a more casual use, a once-in-a-while behavior? Further, use data are used to differentiate between those who smoke cigarettes from those who use a smokeless tobacco product, those who drink beer from those who drink wine coolers, and those who sniff correction fluid from those who sniff glue.

Two final points should be noted about the data. First, due to the differences in rounding procedures, there may be slight discrepancies between the percentages referred to in the tables and those reflected in the executive summary and in the corresponding figures. **Second, some data in this report are marked with an asterisk. Data so marked are estimated to be statistically significant at the .01 level from the comparable data for the state as a whole. This means that in only one of a hundred samples would a difference this large have occurred when there was no difference between the district and state data. Differences in very small districts will seldom be statistically significant due to the small number of cases. Differences that are not**

marked may be important, but should be treated with more caution than those that are statistically significant.

The percentages referred to in the executive summary that follows were taken from the tables found in "Part I: District Survey Results." Figures referenced throughout this report are included in "Part III: Executive Summary."

Demographic Overview

In the Spring of 2004, The Texas School Survey was administered to students in grades 4 through 6 in the Plano Independent School District (PISD). Texas School Survey protocols, formulated to ensure that the data used in this analysis has an acceptable probability of error, called for the district to administer the survey to a predetermined, class-specific sampling of elementary students. The accuracy of the data requires that school staff administering the survey followed the protocols.

A total of 2554 students completed the questionnaire. Of that number, 13 surveys were excluded from analysis because students did not indicate their grade or age, or because they were identified as exaggerators (i.e., claimed to have used a non-existent drug or reported overly excessive drug use). The final number of surveys included in the overall district analysis was 2541, consisting of:

- Thirty three percent who are 4th graders, 34 percent who are 5th graders, and 33 percent who are 6th graders;
- A nearly even split of male (51 percent) and female (49 percent) students;
- An ethnic breakdown that is 58 percent white, 9 percent African-American, 10 percent Mexican-American, 14 percent Asian-American, 1 percent Native American, and 8 percent other;
- Seventy five percent who say they live in a two-parent home, and 78 percent who report they have lived in the district for three or more years; and
- Seventy four percent who say their parent(s) are college graduates, and 16 percent who indicate they qualify for free/reduced lunches at school.

Tobacco

General tobacco use includes both cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products.

Statewide Overview. In 1990, a fifth of Texas elementary students reported having experimented with a tobacco product at least once during their lifetimes, while 13 percent said they had used such a product during the past school year. These percentages inched downward over the next eight years and then dropped dramatically in the 2000 (13 percent in their lifetimes and 7 percent in the past year) and 2002 (9 percent in their lifetimes and 5 percent in the past year) assessments. According to the 2004 statewide assessment, this downward trend continues as 8 percent of elementary students reported lifetime tobacco use and 4 percent said they had done so in the past year. These overall numbers reflect decreases in the use of both cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products, although it appears the more significant movement is in regard to cigarette use.

District Overview. Overall, the general use of tobacco products among Plano ISD elementary students in 2004 was significantly lower than that reported by their counterparts statewide. These lower rates, which were statistically significant, are prevalent at each grade level.

Environment. Six* percent of district elementary students said some or most of their close friends smoke cigarettes (16 percent statewide), while 9* percent reported they had been offered cigarettes (16 percent statewide). Two* percent of PISD elementary students reported some or most of their close friends use snuff or chewing tobacco (5 percent statewide), and 3* percent said they had been offered a smokeless tobacco product (6 percent statewide).

The influence of drug education programs may be reflected in students' attitudes toward the use of specific substances. Eighty one* percent of district elementary students believe tobacco use is "very dangerous" (76 percent statewide) (Fig. 6).

Use. In the Plano ISD, 3* percent of elementary students reported general tobacco use at least once during their lifetimes (8 percent statewide) (Fig. 1). Lifetime use of tobacco products was reported by 2* percent of PISD 4th graders (5 percent statewide) and 2* percent of district 5th graders (7 percent statewide). Five* percent of Plano 6th grade students said they had used cigarettes, snuff, or chewing tobacco at least once during their lifetimes (13 percent statewide) (Figs. 3a and 3b).

Use of a tobacco product during the past school year was reported by 1* percent of Plano ISD elementary students (4 percent statewide) (Fig. 2). Past-year use of cigarettes, snuff, or chewing tobacco was reported by 1* percent of district 4th graders (2 percent statewide) and 1* percent of Plano 5th graders (4 percent statewide). Two* percent of PISD 6th grade students said they had used a tobacco product during the past school year (7 percent statewide) (Figs. 4a and 4b).

Two* percent of Plano ISD elementary students reported smoking cigarettes at least once during their lifetimes (7 percent statewide), and 1* percent said they had smoked cigarettes during the past school year (4 percent statewide). Lifetime use of smokeless tobacco products was reported by 1 percent of Plano ISD elementary students (2 percent statewide), while none said they had used snuff or chewing tobacco during the past school year (1 percent statewide).

Alcohol

Alcohol is the most widely used substance among elementary students statewide and in the Plano ISD.

Statewide Overview. In 1990, 40 percent of Texas elementary students said they had experimented with an alcohol product at some point in their lives and just over a quarter (28 percent) reported having consumed alcohol during the past school year. Over the next two years, lifetime prevalence dropped dramatically to 33 percent of elementary students statewide, while past-year use showed a similar decline to 21 percent. This downward trend with regard to alcohol use has continued through the next three statewide assessments, stalling in 2002 at 25 percent who said they had consumed alcohol at least once in their lifetimes and 16 percent who reported consuming alcohol during the previous year. These numbers remained flat through the most recent survey in 2004.

District Overview. Overall, Plano ISD elementary students were drinking alcohol in 2004 at rates lower than those reported by their counterparts statewide, including significant differences with regard to close friends who drink alcohol, having been offered alcohol, experimental and past-year alcohol use, and the consuming of two or more drinks at one sitting of beer and wine coolers. These lower rates of alcohol use were particularly prevalent among those PISD students in grade 6.

Environment. Sixteen* percent of Plano elementary students said some or most of their close friends drink beer, wine coolers, wine, or liquor (26 percent statewide), and 19* percent reported they had been offered alcohol (26 percent statewide).

PISD elementary students who said they drink alcohol were asked where they obtain these beverages. Ten percent of district elementary students said they get alcohol from home (12 percent statewide), 1* percent reported obtaining alcohol from friends (4 percent statewide), and 5* percent said they get alcohol from "somewhere else" (10 percent statewide).

Parental attitudes can be a major factor in whether or not a student uses alcohol or drugs. When asked how their parents feel about kids their age drinking beer, 86* percent of PISD elementary students said their parents "don't like it" (81 percent statewide). Twelve percent of district elementary students said they "don't know" how their parents feel about kids their age drinking beer (15 percent statewide), and 1 percent said their parents "don't care" (2 percent statewide) (Fig. 7).

Seventy one percent of Plano elementary students believe alcohol use is "very dangerous" (70 percent statewide) (Fig. 6).

Use. Nineteen* percent of PISD elementary students reported using alcohol at least once during their lifetimes (26 percent statewide) (Fig. 1). Lifetime alcohol use was reported by 15 percent of Plano 4th grade students (18 percent statewide) and 18* percent of district 5th grade students (23 percent statewide). Twenty four* percent of PISD 6th graders said they had consumed alcohol at least once during their lifetimes (35 percent statewide) (Figs. 3a and 3b).

Alcohol use during the past school year was reported by 11* percent of Plano ISD elementary students (16 percent statewide) (Fig. 2). Past-year alcohol use was reported by 9 percent of PISD 4th graders (12 percent statewide) and 11 percent of district 5th graders (14 percent statewide). Thirteen* percent of PISD 6th grade students said they had consumed alcohol during the past school year (22 percent statewide) (Figs. 4a and 4b).

Three percent of Plano elementary students said they "had two or more drinks" of liquor in a row at least once in the past year (5 percent statewide), while 3* percent said they "had two or more drinks" of wine cooler in a row at least once during the past year (10 percent statewide). Six* percent of PISD elementary students said they "had two or more drinks" of beer in a row at least once during the past year (13 percent statewide), and 10 percent said they "had two or more drinks" of wine in a row (11 percent statewide).

Marijuana

Statewide Overview. In 1990, 2 percent of Texas elementary students reported they had experimented with marijuana at least once, and 2 percent indicated they had smoked marijuana during the past school year. These percentages stayed flat through 1994, crept upward in 1996, stayed flat through 1998, and dipped slightly in 2000. In the 2002 statewide assessment, experimental use crept back upward slightly to 3 percent and most recent use stayed flat at 2 percent among elementary students statewide. These percentages of students reporting lifetime and past-year marijuana use have held steady through the most recent statewide assessment in 2004.

District Overview. Overall, marijuana use among Plano ISD elementary students in 2004 was lower than that reported by their counterparts statewide, including statistically significant differences with regard to close friends who smoke marijuana, having been offered marijuana, and experimental and past-year marijuana uses. These lower rates of marijuana use were particularly prevalent among those PISD students in grades 5 (none reported use) and 6.

Environment. Two* percent of PISD elementary students said some or most of their close friends use marijuana (8 percent statewide), and 3* percent reported they had been offered marijuana (7 percent statewide).

When asked about parental attitudes toward marijuana use, 88 percent of PISD elementary students said their parents "don't like it" when kids their age smoke marijuana (85 percent statewide), while 11 percent said that they "don't know" how their parents feel (13 percent statewide), and none reported their parents "don't care" if kids their age smoke marijuana (1 percent statewide) (Fig. 7).

When questioned about the danger associated with marijuana use, 82* percent of Plano elementary students believe that using marijuana is "very dangerous" (78 percent statewide) (Fig. 6).

Use. One* percent of Plano ISD elementary students reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetimes (2 percent statewide) (Fig. 1). Lifetime marijuana use was reported by 1 percent of PISD 4th graders (1 percent statewide) and none of the district 5th graders (1 percent statewide). One* percent of PISD 6th grade students said they had used marijuana at least once during their lifetimes (5 percent statewide) (Figs. 3a and 3b).

Less than 1* percent of PISD elementary students reported using marijuana during the past school year (2 percent statewide) (Fig. 2). Past-year marijuana use was reported by none of district 4th grade students (1 percent statewide). One* percent of PISD 6th graders said they had used marijuana during the past school year (4 percent statewide) (Figs. 4a and 4b).

Inhalants

In general, inhalants are common, licit substances (paints and thinners, correction fluid, glue, and gasoline) which, when sniffed, huffed, or inhaled produce an intoxicating effect. Lifetime and past-year inhalant use percentages have been adjusted to reflect reported use of both specific inhalants and inhalant use generally. This adjustment was made because some students responded positive to specific use without responding positive to generic use, while some students responded positive to generic use but not to specific inhalants.

Statewide Overview. Inhalant use among Texas elementary students peaked in 1992, as 16 percent indicated they had experimented with some form of inhalant at least once during their lifetimes and 11 percent said they had used an inhalant during the past school year. Within two years, however, lifetime use slipped to 10 percent of elementary students statewide and past-year use fell to 6 percent. These percentages remained relatively flat through 1996. In 1998, however, both experimental and past school year prevalence rates inched back upward---to 12 percent and 9 percent, respectively. Two years later, this trend was again reversed as both experimental (11 percent) and past year (8 percent) uses dropped off slightly, then sank further in 2002 to 9 percent lifetime and 6 percent in the past year. Yet, another reverse has been detected in the 2004 statewide assessment, as lifetime inhalant use has risen to 11 percent and past-year inhalant use has inched up to 8 percent.

District Overview. Overall, inhalant use among Plano ISD elementary students in 2004 was similar to that reported by their peers statewide.

Environment. Eleven percent of Plano students said some or most of their close friends use inhalants (11 percent statewide), and 8 percent said they had been offered inhalants (7 percent statewide). Fifty six* percent of PISD elementary students believe inhalant use is "very dangerous" (63 percent statewide) (Fig. 6).

Use. Ten percent of PISD elementary students reported using inhalants at least once during their lifetimes (10 percent statewide) (Fig. 1). Lifetime inhalant use was reported by 12 percent of Plano 4th graders (10 percent statewide) and 7 percent of district 5th graders (9 percent statewide). Eleven percent of PISD 6th grade students said they had used inhalants at least once during their lifetimes (13 percent statewide) (Figs. 3a and 3b).

Eight percent of Plano elementary students said they had used inhalants during the past school year (8 percent statewide) (Fig. 2). Past-year inhalant use was reported by 8 percent of PISD 4th grade students (7 percent statewide) and 6 percent of district 5th grade students (6 percent statewide). Nine percent of PISD 6th graders said they had used inhalants during the past school year (9 percent statewide) (Figs. 4a and 4b).

Six percent of Plano elementary students reported using two or more inhalant substances at least once during their lifetimes (5 percent statewide). Four percent of district elementary students reported inhaling whiteout/correction fluid (4 percent statewide), 4 percent indicated they had inhaled glue (3 percent statewide), 3 percent reported inhaling spray paint (3 percent statewide), 3 percent said they had inhaled gasoline (3 percent statewide), 3 percent indicated they had inhaled paint thinner (2 percent statewide), and 4 percent said they had used substances in the "other inhalants" category (5 percent statewide) at least once during their lifetimes (Figs. 5a and 5b).

Characteristics Associated With Drug Use

In the statewide survey, female elementary students were less likely to have used tobacco, alcohol, inhalants, or marijuana than were male elementary students. In the Plano ISD, male elementary students were somewhat more likely to have consumed alcohol than were district female elementary students. There were no significant differences by gender among PISD elementary students with regard to the use of tobacco products, alcohol, or marijuana.

Drug and Alcohol Information

The influence of drug education programs may be reflected in students' attitudes toward the use of the specific substances reported above.

Ninety three percent of Plano ISD elementary students said they had gotten information about drugs and alcohol from a school source since classes began in the Fall (90 percent statewide). Seventy five* percent of PISD elementary students said their teacher was a source for information about drugs and alcohol (65 percent statewide), while 47* percent said a visitor to class was a source for this information (57 percent statewide), and 67* percent reported getting information about drugs and alcohol from a school assembly program (60 percent statewide).