

Topic: Adolescent Drug Use



Table of Contents

The Problem

Alternative Policies

Our Proposed Policy

Action Plan

Panel One

The Problem

Table of Contents

The Problem

Graphics

Current Policy

Disagreements in
Community

Source 1

Source 2

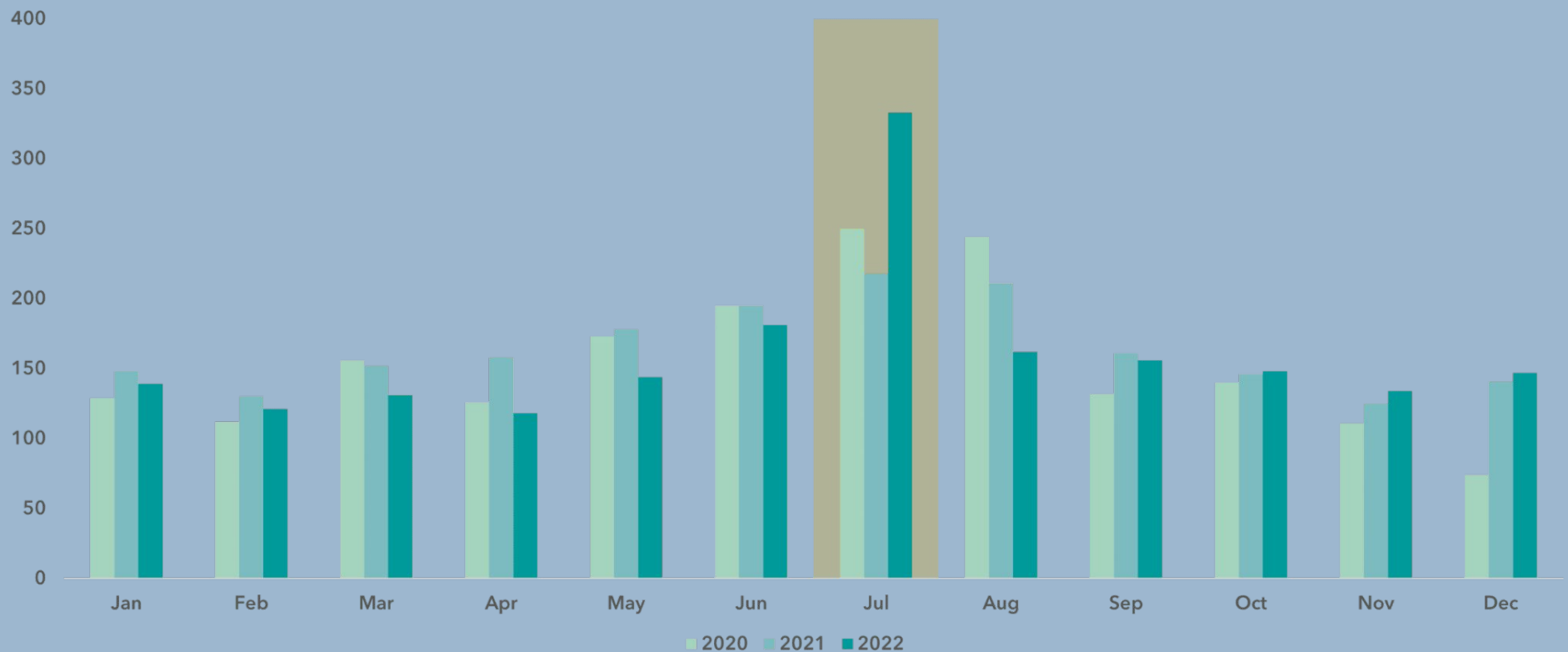
Source 3

The Problem

- Numerous students have been engaging in illegal drug use in not only just the state but also all over the country.
- Children these days have much easier access to obtaining drugs due to faster ways of communication and the increasing influence of Social media
- The use of drugs on adolescents can cause numerous health issues in both the long and short run such as possibly developing a substance disorder
- There are various reasons students turn towards drugs. Some being..
 - ★ Family issues
 - ★ Stress
 - ★ Peer pressure
 - ★ Seeking ways to relax/ have fun

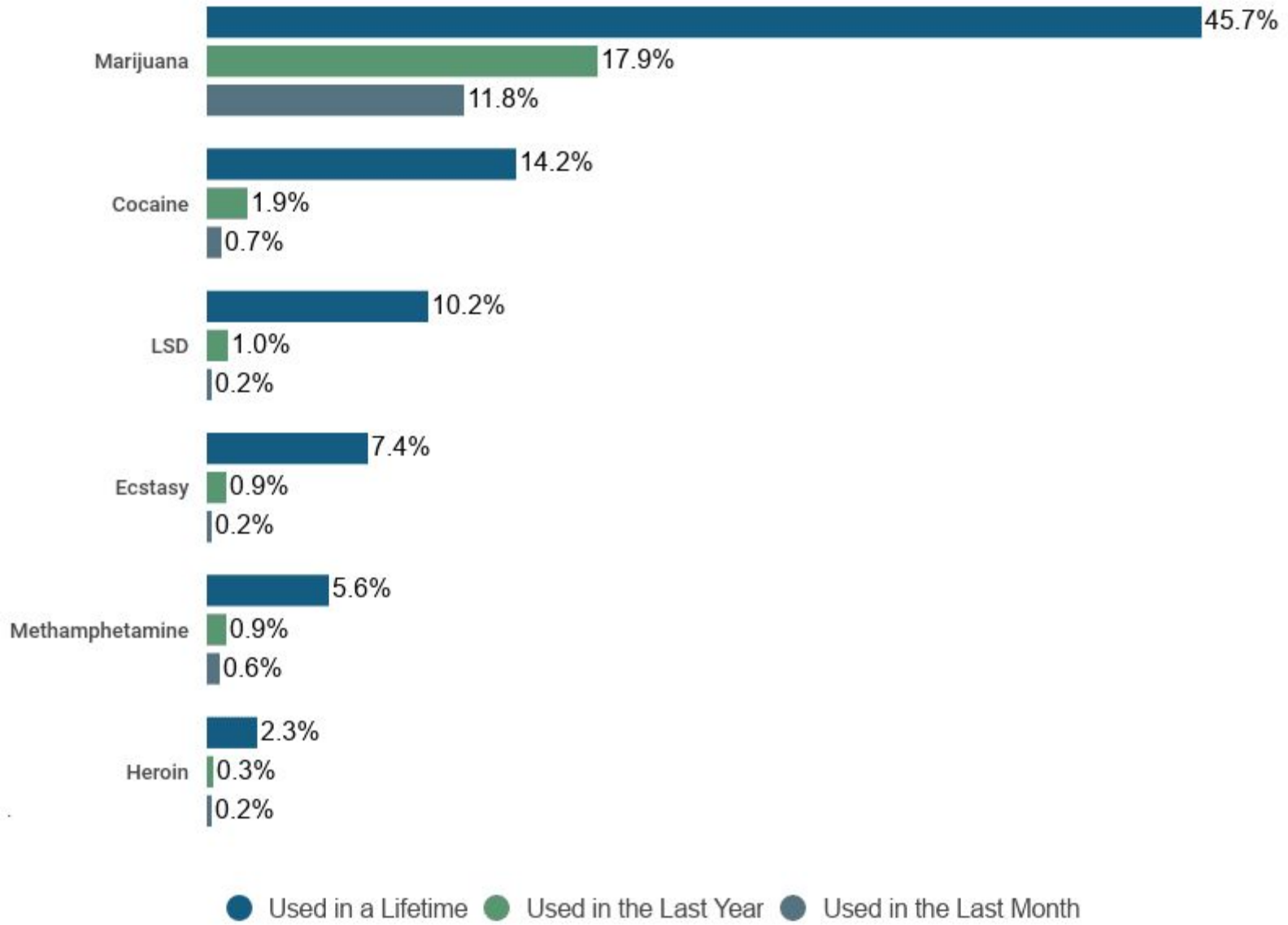
Graphics

From 2020 to 2022, **July** was characterized by **increases** in overdose deaths.²



“Mental Health and Substance Use Data.” *Mental Health and Substance Use Data | Maricopa County, AZ*, www.maricopa.gov/5079/Mental-Health-and-Substance-Use-Data. Accessed 16 Jan. 2025.

Drug Usership Among Americans Aged 12 & Older



National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics, data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2020 National Survey of Drug Use and Health

"Substance Abuse and Addiction Statistics [2023]." *NCDAS*, 2 May 2024, drugabusestatistics.org/.

Current Policy

- Arizona Revised Statute § 13-3405 and § 36-2852
- Drug Diversion Program
- 7.58% of teenagers reported using drugs in the last month
- 12.51% of teenagers report using marijuana in the last year

“Teenage Drug Use Statistics [2023]: Data & Trends on Abuse.” *NCDAS*, 2 May 2024, drugabusestatistics.org/teen-drug-use/ .

Disagreements in Community

School Districts

- Concerned about rising drug use affecting academics and safety
- Disagree on the resources needed for prevention programs

Concern: Anti-drug programs strain tight budgets

Disagreement with families who feel such programs interfere with personal responsibilities

Teachers

- Concerned about how drug use disrupts learning and student futures
 - Disagree on the role of teachers in addressing drug use

Concern: Lack of training and time to manage drug-related issues

Disagreement with parents or others who may feel teachers overstep their educational role

Parents

- Want stricter regulations and awareness programs for drug prevention
- Disagree on how much control schools should have over drug prevention

Concern: Lack of information and difficulty in discussing drugs with children

Disagreement with schools and authorities over their involvement in family matters

Source 1

- In 2017, over 70,000 people died from drug overdoses, including 5,455 youth, while millions of teens reported using substances like alcohol or illicit drugs.
- Factors like peer pressure, family issues, bullying, and access to substances all contribute to the problem, as shown by the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) framework.
- Using a method called Latent Class Analysis (LCA), researchers have grouped teens based on their substance use patterns to better understand the issue.
- This source focuses on teens in Arizona, who have higher rates of substance use, to explore how social and environmental factors influence their behaviors and identify ways to address the problem.

Arthur, M.W., et al. "Patterns and Social Determinants of Substance Use among Arizona Youth: A Latent Class

Analysis Approach." *Children and Youth Services Review*, Pergamon, 18 Jan. 2020,

www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740919311387.

Source 2

- 2024 survey of Arizona youth and how often they use substances. Also surveys their home life or any disciplinary issues.
- Survey is broken down by gender, race, and age.
- Survey tries to find the root cause of substance usage, like issues at home or if the student is involved in gang life.
- At the end, the source gives potential solutions in limiting the usage of substances in communities.
- Many disagreements on where the substance abuse starts.
- Shows a decline of substance usage over the past three years.

View 2024 Ays State Report, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

www.azcjc.gov/Portals/0/Documents/pubs/AYSReports/2024/2024_AYS_State_Report.pdf. Accessed 14 Jan. 2025

Source 3

- The Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Partnerships for Success (PFS) grant, funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is distributed to Arizona's Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF) in partnership with Arizona State University College of Health Solutions.
- The \$1.25 million annual grant supports the Arizona Prevention and Well-being Improvement Collaborative (PWIC), aiming to reduce substance misuse and enhance mental well-being among youth and young adults, particularly in underserved minority groups
- The PWIC brings together 30 organizations focused on substance use prevention and mental health for a five-year, peer-led collaborative.
- The initiative will provide expert education, raise awareness, identify prevention gaps, offer technical assistance and training, and implement quality improvement support, with organizations learning from one another to start or improve evidence-based programs.
- It is the first initiative in Arizona to promote evidence-based prevention through peer learning and quality improvement.

“Partnerships for Success (PFS).” *Partnerships for Success (PFS) | Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family*, goyff.az.gov/content/partnerships-success. Accessed 17 Jan. 2025.

Panel Two

Alternative Policies

Table of Contents

Alternative 1

Alternative 2

Alternative 3

Source 1

Source 2

Source 3

Graphics

Alternative 1:

Mandatory Education on the Effects of Drug Use

- Enforcing mandatory education on drug use is exactly what it sounds like: a required course students would take that teaches them the harm of drug use

Advantages of Alternative 1

Implementing this program in schools would offer several advantages for students and the community. It would effectively raise awareness about the dangers of substance abuse, foster healthy decision-making skills, and build resilience among students. It would also promote peer education and provide valuable resources and support for those who may be struggling with drug-related issues.

This policy would also help normalize conversations about drug use, counteracting the effects of peer pressure, preventing the the “most impressionable age range” (NIH) from being misled.

Gwon, Seok Hyun, and Suyong Jeong. “Concept analysis of impressionability among adolescents and young adults.” *Nursing open* vol. 5,4 601-610. 10 Jul. 2018, doi:10.1002/nop2.170
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6177548/#:~:text=Specific%20age%20ranges%20such%20as,used%20to%20classify%20impressionable%20years.>

Disadvantages of Alternative 1

The biggest issue with this policy is the potential desensitization of the students. Learning this way could result in the message of avoiding drugs being dulled as it becomes more repetitive.

Adding new curriculum to the school would also necessitate siphoning funds from another program into additional training for teachers. The way it is taught can also vary immensely, potentially skewing the message or failing to account for diverse situations.

How Would It Be Implemented?

This policy would be implemented as a unit in a Health Course. It would be presented in the context of overall health and wellness. This policy would push a greater emphasis on drug education throughout the course. Because Health is a mandatory course at O'Connor, this would not be as dramatic a change as other solutions.

Supporters and Opponents

Public health organizations like the CDC and SAMHSA would likely support this policy. These groups often advocate for education on the harm of drugs. Another is Youth Advocacy Groups; they frequently promote drug education as a way to empower youth. Some parents might also advocate for required drug education.

Some of the largest groups that would likely oppose this policy are individuals and organizations that wish for limited government intervention in the education system. Additionally, some mental health advocates might oppose this policy because of its potential to neglect the issues of mental health and emotions as a cause of substance abuse.

Alternative 2:

More Widespread Mental Health Care for Teens

- This alternative policy would be implemented to provide more funding and emphasize making mental health care more widespread and available. A large part of substance abuse is caused by underlying childhood trauma, stress from the education system, bad environments while growing up, and unresolved mental illnesses; this policy would work to provide cheaper and more accessible therapeutic services specifically for teenagers who are already using recreational drugs, for those in at-risk environments, and for those dealing with parental and childhood trauma.

Advantages of Alternative 2

The advantages of this policy include the fact that it would incentivize drug abusers to seek help while lowering the demonization of drug use in general. It would also provide prevention in the form of therapy while helping young adults steer away from the path of recreational substances.

Unfortunately, this path is hard to get out of, as it becomes a cycle of constant abuse that is directly tied to mental health. It leaves people in a sense of hopelessness as the emotional void it creates becomes increasingly more challenging to climb out of. This policy would provide a helping hand to those at their lowest and promote the idea that change is possible.

Disadvantages of Alternative 2

A possible disadvantage of this could be that the resources and funding might not reach all of the people that need it, especially because some accessibility to healthcare is affected by the incomes of the area they are in. Drug addiction problems sprawl all across the country and across economic divides, and because of this, the availability of care might be altered by how much money is available in a taxed community. In a “wealthy” community, care is more likely to be more accessible and more beneficial, a parameter that could be affected as you go into lower tax brackets.

Disadvantages of Alternative 2 Cont'

Additionally, although psychiatrists and therapists may not oppose a policy like this, it would add more difficulty in their field. Mental healthcare professions have seen shortages in employees for a long time, so if a program such as this passed, it would likely increase their patient intake if the supply of workers is not met, creating a backup of patients and long waits before an appointment can be made.

How Would It Be Implemented?

This policy would ultimately hinge on the staff at O'Connor. Student counselors have important roles, but the large student body means that they are relatively faceless to the average student. This policy would give them a more active role in the wellbeing of their students by implementing regular check-ins rather than an annual meeting.

Additionally, it would implement a yearly mental health screening for all students, ensuring intervention as quickly as possible.

Supporters and Opponents

Schools of all types might support this, especially ones with already difficult situations regarding teens and drugs who could see the most benefit. Parents may also find benefit, as more funding into a program like this would make support cheaper which is a major factor as to why many people find it difficult to get help now

Groups likely to oppose this policy may be more conservative areas; taxes would likely need to be raised to pay for something like this. Additionally, there is also the difficulty of groups with a stigma around mental health, who can make one's mental health situation more difficult to identify but also get the help for. Private providers may also oppose such a policy because it threatens their business with a publicly accessible service.

Alternative 3:

Increased Security on Campus

- This policy is much more aggressive than the previous two. The idea behind this policy is forcing students to stop abusing drugs on campus rather than discouraging it like the other two policies suggest. Some components of this policy are the addition of more cameras in hallways, drug detection equipment, and a reporting system.

Advantages of Alternative 3

This policy would physically deter students from using drugs. Clearly visible security measures would discourage many students from using drugs, potentially reducing the overall presence of drugs on campus. This policy would also ensure better detection of drugs on campus, creating a safer space for non-drug-using students.

Disadvantages of Alternative 3

The largest concern regarding this policy is the lack of privacy. Constant monitoring might impede students' rights privacy, as well as potentially stressing students out with a sense of constant scrutiny. It would also take away from the comfortable environment, distracting students from their studies. Finally, it would be incredibly costly for our school to implement.

How Would It Be Implemented?

This policy entails the installation of security cameras in areas with large amounts of people like hallways. Drug detection devices such as vape detectors in bathrooms will also be installed. Most importantly, a school hotline to report drug use would be created. Many students who do not use drugs would have the ability to anonymously report instances of drug use.

Supporters and Opponents

School administration might support this policy because of the risks that drugs on campus pose. Parents worried about the safety of their children would also likely support this. Finally, community members who believe in the zero-tolerance approach to drugs would probably support this.

Many students might see this policy as an invasion of privacy, as well as a distraction. Additionally, the school board itself might oppose this purely because of the high costs. Teachers might also dislike the distraction from education.

Source 1

Preventing and Reducing Youth and Young Adult Substance Misuse: Schools, Students, Families

Abstract:

- One of the most fundamental ideas in reducing teenage drug use is that of education .
- Parents educating themselves on how to deal with and discourage drug use for their children can be immensely beneficial.
- The ED has a variety of sources and recommendations that can be used by parents and schools to educate children on the dangers of drug use.
- Some federal agencies that provide information and resources to aid in drug education include the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- School leaders must create a positive, safe, and educational environment for students to learn about drug use and its effects.

“Preventing and Reducing Youth and Young Adult Substance Misuse: Schools, Students, Families.” U.S. Department of Education,

www.ed.gov/teaching-and-administration/safe-learning-environments/school-safety-and-security/preventing-and-reducing-youth-and-young-adult-substance-misuse-schools-students-families.

Source 2

Mental Health Disorders and Teen Substance Use

Why it's especially tempting — and risky — for kids with emotional or behavioral challenges

Writer: [Caroline Miller](#)

Clinical Expert: [Sarper Taskiran, MD](#)

Abstract:

- Substance abuse has a much more pronounced and immediate impact on the minds of developing teenagers.
- If left untreated, nearly 50% of teenagers with mental health issues will develop substance abuse issues as well.
- Alcohol affects teenagers differently than adults, making them more prone to risky behaviour and increasing the dangers posed by ADHD and suicidal thoughts.
- Drugs and alcohol also have the effect of increasing instances of psychotic episodes in teens with schizophrenia.
- Experts have found that in order to treat substance abuse issues in teenagers, it is often necessary for them to seek treatment for underlying mental disorders as well.

Miller, Caroline. "Mental Health Disorders and Teen Substance Use." Child Mind Institute, 5 June 2024, childmind.org/article/mental-health-disorders-and-substance-use.

Source 3

Is More Necessarily Better? School Security and Perceptions of Safety among Students and Parents in the United States

[Thomas J Mowen](#)¹, [Adrienne Freng](#)²

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PMCID: PMC7205221 NIHMSID: NIHMS1056861 PMID: [32382224](#)

Abstract:

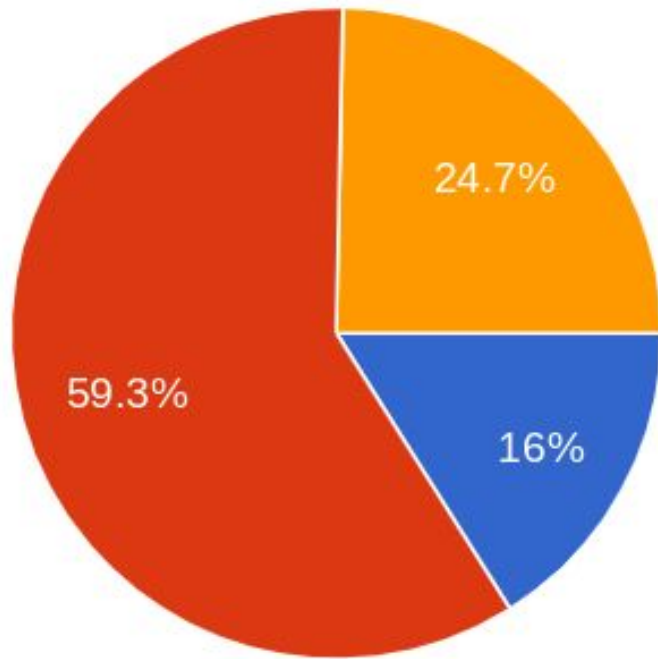
- Research shows that security strategies like guards and metal detectors are consistently ineffective in protecting students and may even be associated with more incidents of school crime and disruption
- The parents perspective is often overlooked when it comes to implementing security measures, this however is the most important perspective to consider.
- The implementation of more punitive disciplinary strategies and security measures tend to be disproportionately located in urban and lower income schools, as well as those with more minority populations.
- Some studies suggest that security officers can increase perceptions of safety, while others find that measures like metal detectors and security cameras have a negative impact.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7205221/>

GRAPHICS

These graphs were made from questions asked on a google form to high schoolers and people in the local area. All graphs include nicotine as drug use

Graph #1

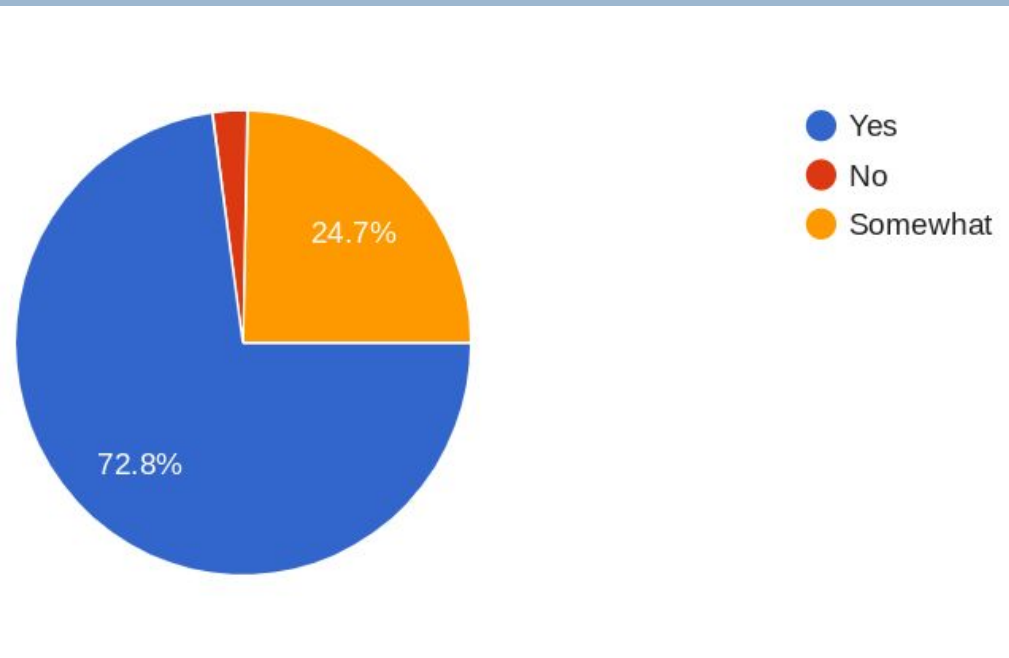


- Very significant (more than 60% of students consistently participate in drug use)
- Moderately significant (about 30-60% of students consistently participate in drug use)
- Minimally significant (less than 30% of students consistently participate in drug use)

In this graph, people taking the survey were asked to consider how significant drug use is in high schools in Arizona, as in, what proportion of students actively participate in drug use. The results seem to be in agreement, that for the most part there is considerable significance in the proportion of students they believe to actively use drugs. (59.3% believe it to be moderately significant, 16% believe it to be very significant, meaning more than 75% of those surveyed believe more than 30% of high school students actively use).

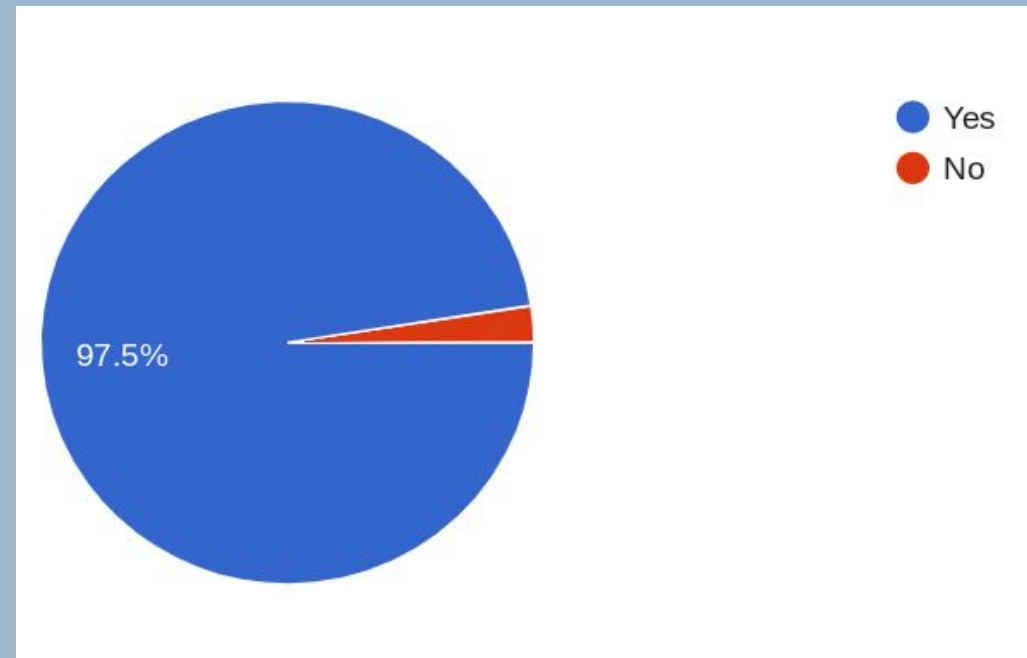
Graphs #2 and #3

Graph #2 Is teen drug use a serious problem?



A significant majority of those surveyed that there is an issue to be considered regarding teen drug use, 72.8% agreeing that the problem is serious and 24.7% concurring that there is somewhat of an issue

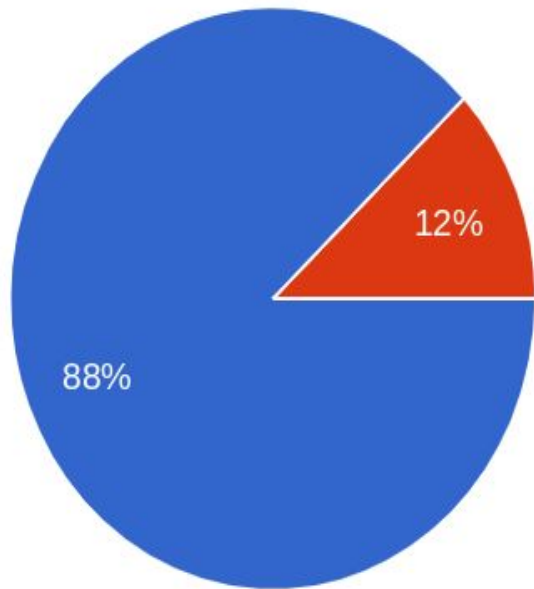
Graph #3 Do you think more should be done to prevent student drug use



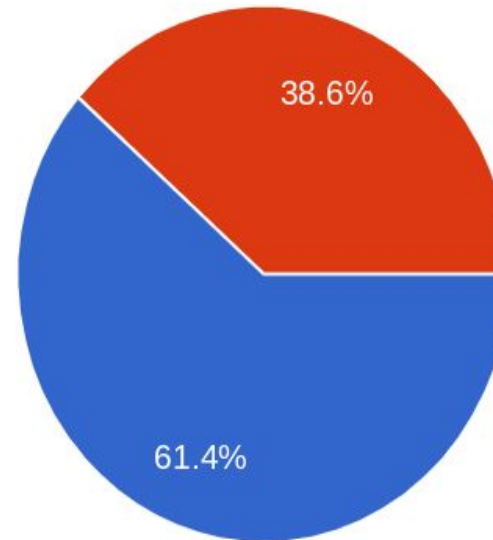
Additionally, those who were surveyed almost unanimously agreed that more should be done to prevent student drug use. 97.5% of those surveyed agreed that more should be done.

Graphs #4 and #5

We then asked those being surveyed about our proposed alternatives, if they believe mental health and rehab would be helpful (left) and if education would be helpful (right)



● Yes
● No



● Yes
● No

Of those surveyed, a majority saw a benefit in both of the proposed policies. However, there is a significant majority (85+%) in those who believed that higher funding to mental health and rehab efforts would be effective to preventing the spread and the further use and abuse of substances. A majority did believe that education could be beneficial, but likely didn't pick it as a yes answer because (as suggested in the free response question) it doesn't target the behavior and the accessibility that teens have to such substances

Panel Three

Our Proposed Policy

Our Proposed Policy

- Increasing funding for mental health services in Arizona high schools and implementing data-driven substance abuse prevention programming
 - Bring awareness to the risks of adolescent drug use
 - Use of surveys like the SAPPI (Substance Abuse Prevention Programming Inventory)
 - Extensive 10–12 week optional drug programs for students with substance abuse challenges and their families
- Expanding existing programs that have seen success such as:
 - Arizona High School Health and Wellness Program
 - Tempe Union High School District
 - Project Towards No Drug Abuse
 - Southern California High Schools

Is it Constitutional?

In the context of the schools, public health and education initiatives are considered within the scope of state and local government authority.

There are several safeguards that could be implemented to ensure future constitutionality which include:

- Maintaining strict data privacy
- Ensuring all programs are voluntary and non-coercive
 - Allowing families to opt-out if necessary
- A regular review of program content and policies to ensure it adheres to the constitution



Agency of Government

Several key community partners and government agencies would need to be involved in any efforts to ensure an effective program across all high schools:

- Arizona Department of Education
 - Oversee and coordinate school-based programs
 - Provide comprehensive training for teachers and staff
- Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
 - State Medicaid agency would be essential for funding and coordination of services
- Governor's Office of Youth, Faith, and Family
 - Provides grants to organizations
 - Encourages training and the distribution of resources to schools and families

Panel Four

Action Plan

Steps we will follow:

- Pool resources from anti-drug activist groups such as ASAP, SALCAz, etc... to campaign on an anti-drug platform and lobby state legislators to pass bill
- Funding will be distributed first to schools with worst drug abuse problem then to schools in top 60th percentile of teen drug abuse rates
- Funding will be gathered through increased luxury taxes on tobacco and marijuana and an increased price of distribution licenses
- School administrators will use funds to hire healthcare professionals and develop drug programs
- To continue receiving funding schools must create an in-depth report about how funding was used and how it has impacted drug use among teens

Supporters

Government agencies willing to support the policy would be the ATF, Arizona Department of Education, GOYFF, ADHS, AHCCCS, HFHY, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, and the Arizona National Guard Counterdrug Task Force.

- These agencies are centered around: public safety, the health and well-being of the public, and reducing-drug related crime.
- We can gain their support by creating an in-depth, multilateral plan to fight drug abuse among teens in schools. This would help us gain their support as they would know how government money will be raised and spent as well as aligning policy with their priorities and agendas

Opponents

Influential government officials or agencies that might oppose our policy would be conservative legislatures, the Arizona Department of Education, and marijuana and tobacco companies

- Many conservatives are skeptical of the efficacy of school-based prevention programs, especially given the failure of high-profile initiatives like D.A.R.E.
- Despite regulations, both industries have historically employed strategies that appeal to younger audiences by marketing flavored products and using social media influence and because they market to kids our policy would be taking away business

Source 1

Abstract:

- The survey was conducted to assess gaps in prevention services and make recommendations for Arizona schools.
- Only 28% of responding schools reported having substance abuse prevention programs available.
- Of schools with programs, 69% had only one prevention program and 31% had two or more.
- Few schools reported having mental health resources available for students.
- Recommendations include expanding evidence-based prevention programs, increasing funding, and equipping schools with tools to determine needs.
- The report emphasizes selecting programs that match student needs and school resources.
- The results indicate a substantial gap between the need for prevention programming and its accessibility in Arizona schools.

Source 2

- **Comprehensive Strategies for Prevention: The Substance Use Prevention Toolkit**, developed by the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith, and Family (GOYFF), outlines four key strategies: increasing public awareness, enhancing community prevention efforts, strengthening parental support, and improving referrals to treatment and recovery services.
 - **Focus on Public Awareness:** The toolkit emphasizes educating the public about critical issues such as counterfeit pills, methamphetamine use, youth marijuana and e-cigarette use, naloxone access, mental health challenges, and the hidden dangers of social media¹³.
 - **Support for Parents and Caregivers:** It provides resources to help parents recognize signs of substance misuse, navigate social media risks, address mental health concerns, and create protective factors for their children.
 - **Community Engagement:** The toolkit encourages local communities to take active roles in prevention efforts through tailored educational materials and collaborative initiatives with coalitions across Arizona.
 - **Improved Access to Treatment:** It highlights the importance of enhancing referral systems for substance use disorder treatment and recovery services, including access to naloxone and behavioral health resources.
- ★ *“Substance Use Prevention Toolkit.” Substance Use Prevention Toolkit | Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith and Family, goyff.az.gov/SUPtoolkit.*

Source 3

Abstract

- The D.A.R.E. program, launched in 1983, aimed to reduce youth drug use, gang involvement, and violence by educating students through law enforcement officers.
- Despite its widespread implementation, research revealed that D.A.R.E. had little to no impact on drug use or attitudes, and in some cases, it was counterproductive.
- The program's approach, which focused on abstinence and was taught by police officers instead of addiction specialists, was seen as ineffective.
- Studies indicated that D.A.R.E. might have inadvertently increased awareness of drugs, leading to risky behavior in students who might not have otherwise encountered them.

Reflection

1. On Drug Use in Schools
2. The Public Policy Process
3. The Project Citizen Experience

1. On Drug Use in Schools

- Substance abuse can lead to increased crime rates, mental health issues, and pressure on healthcare systems.
- Early prevention and education are crucial in addressing substance abuse.
- Agencies and organizations can be key resources to address drug use.
- Teenage drug use has root causes beyond just rebellion and immaturity.
- Impoverishment, societal scars, and mental health contribute to drug use.
- Government neglect has exacerbated the issue.

2. The Public Policy Process

-Researching existing solutions is important before proposing new ones.

-Policies can be opposed due to conflicting beliefs – policymakers have to satisfy diverse opinions.

Compromise is often necessary to develop effective public policy. This can be hard to achieve.

-Citizen input can shape solutions – citizens have a responsibility to stay informed. They can participate in policy-making through surveys, public meetings, and online forums.

-Civil activism is important for raising awareness of issues.

3. The Project Citizen Experience

-The project developed research, information gathering, and critical thinking skills.

-Teamwork enhances project depth and quality. Groups worked together to understand project requirements and create plans. Communication was important for project completion.



THANK YOU!