

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: 2024 Survey Highlights of Youth Decline of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use

Monitoring The Future (MTF) is an ongoing study of the behaviors, attitudes, and values of Americans from adolescence through adulthood. Each year, more than 25,000 8th, 10th and 12th grade students are surveyed as part of the MTF Main study (12th graders from 1975, and 8th and 10th graders since 1991) and approximately 20,000 adults ages 19 to 65 are surveyed as part of the MTF Panel study. The MTF study conducts annual follow up surveys with a subsample of each graduating class, who complete a follow up every two years from ages 19–30 and every five years from age 35 onward and has been funded under the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a part of the National Institutes of Health.

According to the 2024 MTF, Adolescent drug use continued to drop in 2024, building on and extending the historically large decreases that occurred during the pandemic onset in 2020.

MTF researchers expected adolescent drug use would rebound at least partially after the large declines that took place during the pandemic onset in 2020, which were among the largest ever recorded. Many experts in the field had anticipated that drug use would resurge as the pandemic receded and social distancing restrictions were lifted. Declines have not only lasted but have dropped further.

The number of students who abstained from drug use reached record levels in 2024, with abstinence defined as no past 30-day use of alcohol, marijuana or nicotine cigarettes or e-cigarettes.

The percentage of students who abstained from the use of these drugs in 2024 was 67% in 12th grade (compared to 53% in 2017 when it was first measured), 80% in 10th grade (compared to 69% in 2017) and 90% in eighth grade (compared to 87% in 2017). The increases in abstinence from 2023 to 2024 were statistically significant in the 12th and 10th grades.

Declines in drug use in 2024 were evident across alcohol, marijuana and nicotine vaping, which are the three most common forms of substance use by adolescents:

- For alcohol, significant decreases in 12th and 10th grades continued a long-standing decline that began in the late 1990s. In 2024, 42% of 12th graders reported using alcohol in the past 12 months, a substantial drop from 75% in 1997. Among 10th graders, the percentage fell to 26% from 65% in 1997; among eighth graders, it dropped to 13% from 46% in 1997.
- For marijuana, decreases in use among students are a more recent development. In all three grades, the percentage who used marijuana in the past 12 months hovered within a tight window of just a few percentage points in the 20 years from 2000 to 2020. In 2021, the first year surveyed after the pandemic onset, substantial declines in marijuana use took place in all three grades. In 12th and 10th grades, these declines have since continued, and past 12-month use levels in 2024 were the lowest in the past three decades, at 26% and 16%, respectively. In eighth grade, the percentage in 2024 was 7%, the same for the past four years after dropping from a pre-pandemic level of 11% in 2020.
- For nicotine vaping, the 2024 declines continue a 180-degree turn centered around the pandemic onset. Before the pandemic, use levels surged from 2017 to 2019 and then held steady in 2020 (before the pandemic onset). Large declines took place during the pandemic, and these declines have since continued to the point where the levels for the past 12 months of nicotine vaping are close to where they started in 2017, the first year that questions on nicotine vaping were included on the survey. Specifically, past 12-month use was 21% in 12th grade (compared to 35% in 2020 and 19% in 2017), 15% in 10th grade (compared to 31% in 2020 and 16% in 2017) and 10% in eighth grade (compared to 17% in 2020 and 10% in 2017).

The continued declines in adolescent drug use since the pandemic raises important policy and research questions. Data suggests that a delay in drug use initiation during adolescence could potentially lower substance use trajectories over a lifetime and such a delay may prevent youth from associating with drug-using peer groups that encourage continued use and may forestall biological processes that contribute to the development of addiction.

MTF is one of the nation's most relied upon scientific sources of valid information on trends in use of licit and illicit psychoactive drugs by U.S. adolescents, college students, young adults, and adults up to age 60.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world's research on the health aspects of drug use and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to inform policy, improve practice, and advance addiction science. For more information about NIDA and its programs, visit www.nida.nih.gov.

SAFE is the only alcohol and substance use prevention agency in Glen Cove whose mission is to eliminate alcohol and substance use in Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about alcohol,

tobacco and other drug use in youth and is conducting a prevention awareness campaigns entitled "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE" to educate and update the community regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and its negative consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website at www.safeglencove.org.