

**Key Illinois Risk and Protective Conditions  
Measured in 2006 and 2004  
By the Illinois Youth Survey**

*Introduction*

In addition to measuring prevalence of substance use and related problem behaviors, the Illinois Youth Survey also measures various risk and protective factors in four “domains”: Community, Peer/Individual, Family, and School. Based on research literature and many years of Illinois data, this report will focus on the risk and protective conditions most directly tied to rates of gateway substance use in communities. “Conditions” means community-wide factors for initiation of regular use, rather than those tied to the most extreme cases of youth substance use and abuse. The reason for the focus on risk conditions and gateway substances is that community-wide prevention strategies are most likely to succeed with youth who haven’t yet begun regular use of any gateway substance. Youth with more of a history of frequent or heavy use may need individual intervention, and often treatment, to become drug-free.

Chapters 1-3 will discuss factors in the Community, Peer/Individual, and Family domains. The selection of factors to include was guided by the following three criteria:

- They are known to be powerful contributors to community-wide substance use rates, rather than just signs of some other factor operating.
- They are highly correlated with community level substance use scores in Illinois.
- They can be addressed with prevention strategies and/or programs already shown to have some potential for lowering use rates.

Included factors met all three criteria. There is no chapter for School domain factors because none of those studied met all three of the above criteria.



## *Chapter 1 Community Risk Conditions*

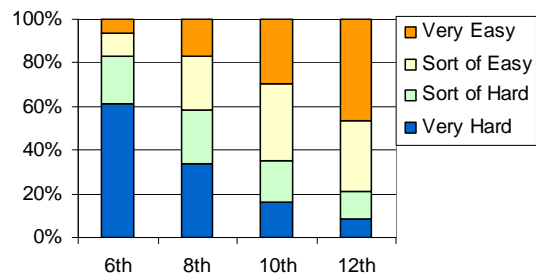
The two community risk conditions that are most connected to community-wide rates of youth gateway substance use in the 2004 and 2006 IYS data are availability of substances to youth and adult norms about youth substance use. The tendency of these two factors to correlate to each other probably relates in part to interplay between these two factors in a community. For example, more adult disapproval of youth use of a substance tends to make that substance harder for youth to get, and limits on selling or giving a substance to youth tend to reflect adult norms and/or strengthen those norms. Depending on the substance and student’s grade level, either (substance) availability, adult norms, or both may be strongly connected to youth use rates.

On the IYS, three questions with similar wording about substance availability were included for alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. The questions asked how easy it would be for the youth to get the substance. The answer choices were *Very Hard*, *Sort of Hard*, *Sort of Easy*, and *Very Easy*. The following six tables, two for each substance, show the percentage of youth at each grade level who indicated each of the four possible choices.

### *Substance Availability: Percent of Students by Grade Level*

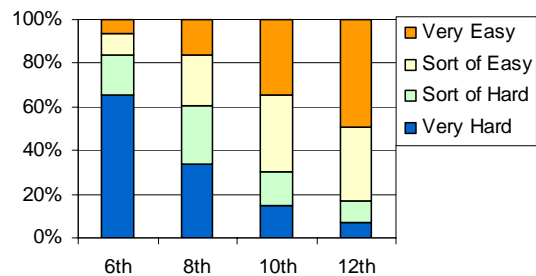
**2006: Alcohol**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Very Easy	6.2	16.9	29.8	46.5
Sort of Easy	11.1	24.6	34.8	32.4
Sort of Hard	21.3	24.7	19.5	12.9
Very Hard	61.5	33.7	15.8	8.2
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



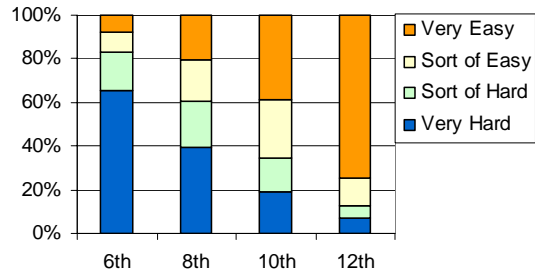
**2004: Alcohol**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Very Easy	6.3	16.4	34.8	49.4
Sort of Easy	10.1	23.2	34.7	33.6
Sort of Hard	18.2	26.2	15.8	10.0
Very Hard	65.4	34.1	14.7	7.0
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



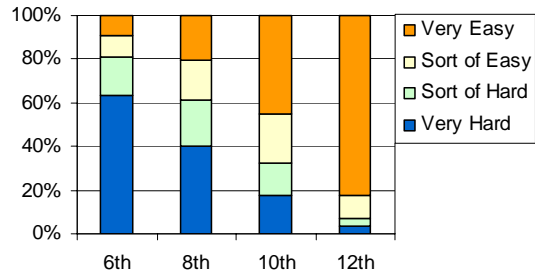
**2006: Cigarettes**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Very Easy	8.0	20.3	38.9	74.4
Sort of Easy	9.0	19.1	26.7	12.8
Sort of Hard	17.7	21.1	15.6	6.0
Very Hard	65.2	39.6	18.8	6.8
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



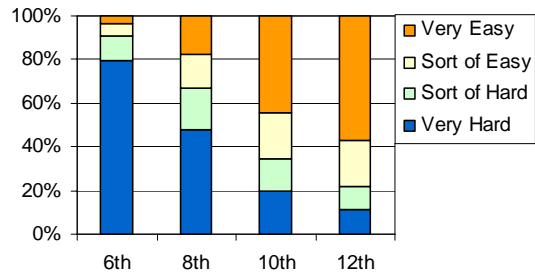
**2004: Cigarettes**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Very Easy	9.0	20.6	45.4	82.4
Sort of Easy	10.0	17.8	22.4	10.3
Sort of Hard	17.4	21.5	14.3	3.5
Very Hard	63.6	40.0	18.0	3.8
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



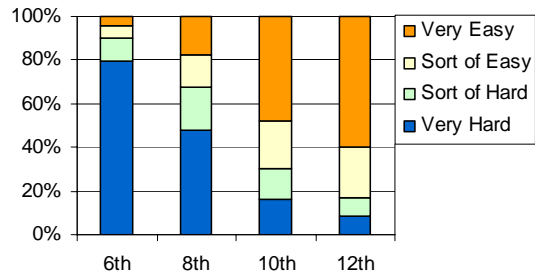
**2006: Marijuana**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Very Easy	3.6	17.3	44.6	57.1
Sort of Easy	5.3	15.8	21.0	21.0
Sort of Hard	11.2	19.0	15.0	10.4
Very Hard	79.9	47.9	19.5	11.5
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



**2004: Marijuana**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Very Easy	4.1	17.9	48.0	59.9
Sort of Easy	5.6	14.5	21.5	22.9
Sort of Hard	10.4	19.8	14.0	8.6
Very Hard	79.9	47.8	16.5	8.6
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



One way to think about this data is to combine the students who said a substance was *sort of hard* or *very hard* to get, resulting in a single percent that said access was hard, rather than easy. So, for example, the percent of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students saying that alcohol was hard (“sort of hard” or “very hard”) to get went from 17.0 in 2004 to 21.1 in 2006. This means that the availability of alcohol to 12<sup>th</sup> graders decreased during those two years. Availability of alcohol to 10<sup>th</sup> graders also decreased, but availability to 6<sup>th</sup>

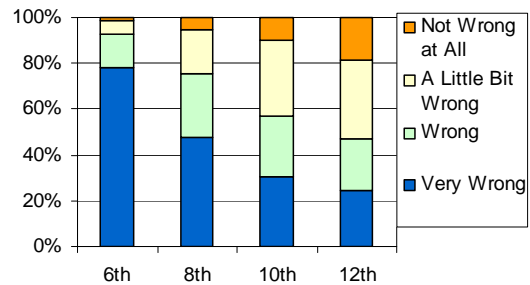
grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth increased. Regarding cigarettes, availability to 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students decreased while 8<sup>th</sup> grade had increased availability. This was also the pattern for availability of marijuana: availability decreased for the 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth and increased for 8<sup>th</sup> youth.

To measure adult norms about youth substance use, the IYS asks, “How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it is for kids your age ... to use marijuana? ... to drink alcohol? ... to smoke cigarettes?” The answer choices are, *Very Wrong*, *Wrong*, *A Little Bit Wrong*, and *Not Wrong at All*. The following six tables, two for each substance, show the percentage of youth at each grade level who indicated each of the four possible choices.

**Adult Norms: Percent of Students by Grade Level**

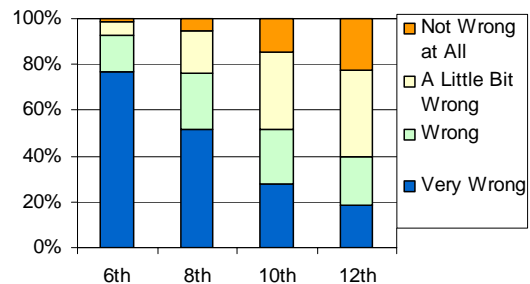
**2006: Alcohol**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.4	5.4	10.1	18.8
A Little Bit Wrong	5.7	19.4	33.1	34.4
Wrong	14.6	27.5	26.5	22.4
Very Wrong	78.2	47.7	30.3	24.4
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



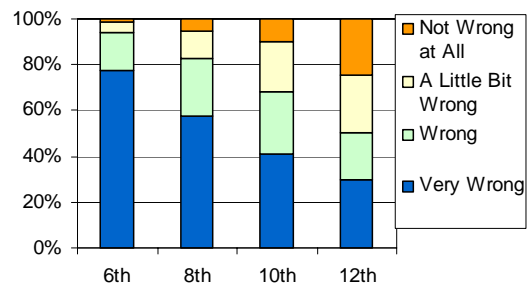
**2004: Alcohol**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.6	5.3	14.3	22.3
A Little Bit Wrong	5.7	18.7	33.9	37.7
Wrong	15.7	24.3	23.9	21.6
Very Wrong	77.0	51.7	27.8	18.4
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



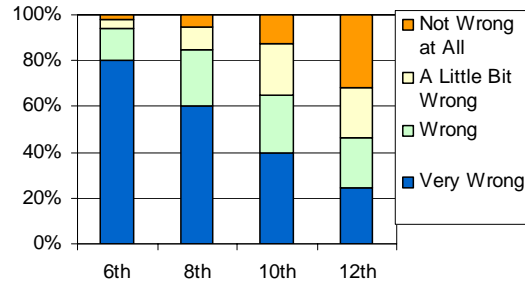
**2006: Cigarettes**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.2	5.4	9.9	24.7
A Little Bit Wrong	4.8	12.0	21.8	24.7
Wrong	16.5	25.1	27.2	20.9
Very Wrong	77.5	57.5	41.1	29.7
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



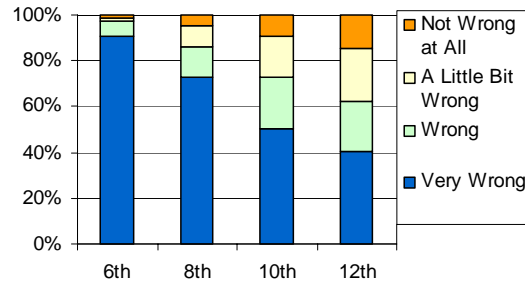
**2004: Cigarettes**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	2.0	5.6	12.7	32.1
A Little Bit Wrong	3.8	9.6	22.1	21.6
Wrong	13.8	24.5	25.4	21.7
Very Wrong	80.5	60.3	39.8	24.6
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



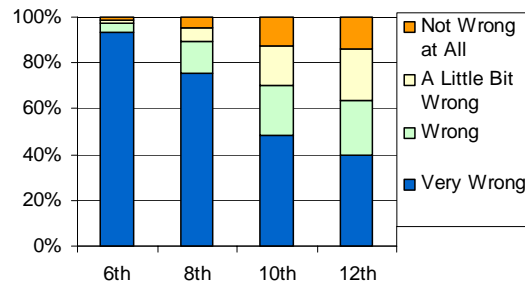
**2006: Marijuana**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.1	4.9	9.2	14.7
A Little Bit Wrong	1.7	9.0	18.1	22.9
Wrong	6.2	13.5	22.5	22.3
Very Wrong	91.0	72.6	50.2	40.1
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



**2004: Marijuana**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.3	4.5	12.5	14.2
A Little Bit Wrong	1.2	6.3	17.0	22.0
Wrong	4.1	13.6	22.4	23.7
Very Wrong	93.4	75.5	48.1	40.0
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



These responses could also be divided into two categories. One way to do that would be again to group the upper two and lower two categories, but an argument could be made for looking at just the “Very Wrong” response in one category and the other three in the other category. The rationale is that any backing away from a perception of strong adult norms against use is a problem.

The percent who perceived adult attitude toward youth alcohol use to be “very wrong” increased in 2006 among 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth but decreased among 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth. The percent who said “very wrong” regarding cigarettes decreased among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, but increased among (10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade) high school students. The percent who saw adult attitudes toward youth marijuana use as “very wrong” was more than for alcohol and cigarettes, but decreased among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth in 2006. The percent responding “very wrong” increased among 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and stayed essentially unchanged among 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth.

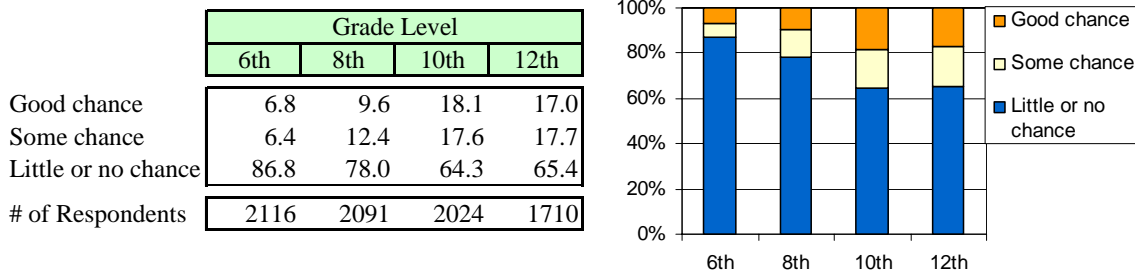
## *Chapter 2* *Peer/Individual Risk Conditions*

The strongest Peer/Individual factor, in terms of influence on community use rates, is the degree to which a student believes that peers approve of use of a substance. This can be measured as “Perceived Peer Attitude” or, for high school students, as “Perceived Peer Use”. Although some of the connection comes from substance-using youth having friends that also use, there is a distinct impact of perceived peer use on use rates. This has been demonstrated in prevention curricula and/or social norms marketing campaigns that have succeeded in lowering use rates by simply correcting falsely inflated perceptions of the extent of peer use. The strongest developmental task of adolescence is defining identity, and perception of widespread use among peers apparently leads many youth to feel compelled to use alcohol or other drugs in order to be “normal.” Although the name of this effect is “peer influence,” it may be more strongly shaped by images in popular media than by actual contact with real peers.

Perception of peer attitude toward use is measured on the IYS by three questions that ask the responding youths the likelihood of them being “seen as cool” if they used the named substance. One question asks about cigarette use, one asks about regular (at least once or twice a month) alcohol use, and the third asks about marijuana use. There are five possible responses, which are regrouped into three responses below: Good chance, Some chance, or Little or no chance. The middle category of “Some chance” could be grouped with either the upper or lower responses. Since even “Some chance” of appearing “cool” may be enough to tempt an adolescent to change their behavior, it is reasonable to take the percent who answered “Little or no chance” as the target to attain, with the goal being to raise that percent.

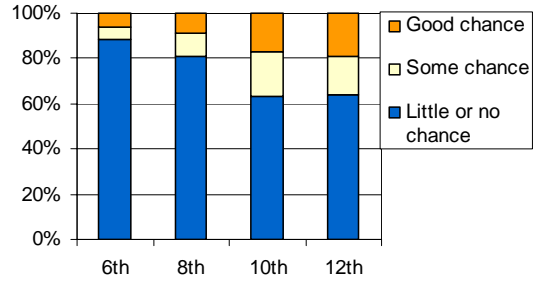
### *Perceived as Cool: Percent of Students by Grade Level*

**2006: Regular Alcohol Use**



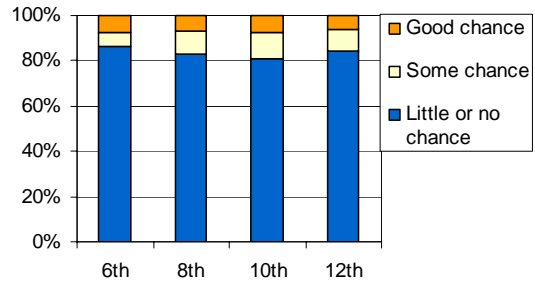
**2004: Regular Alcohol Use**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Good chance	6.3	9.0	17.2	19.0
Some chance	5.5	10.2	19.6	16.8
Little or no chance	88.2	80.7	63.2	64.2
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



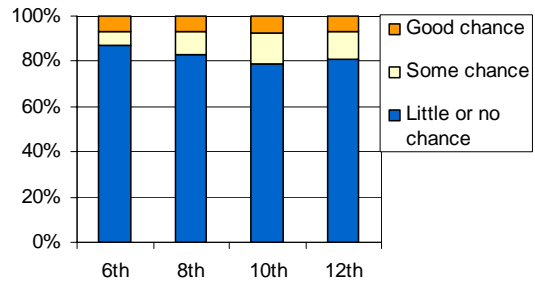
**2006: Cigarette Smoking**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Good chance	7.5	6.9	7.5	5.9
Some chance	6.2	10.4	11.6	10.1
Little or no chance	86.3	82.7	80.9	84.1
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



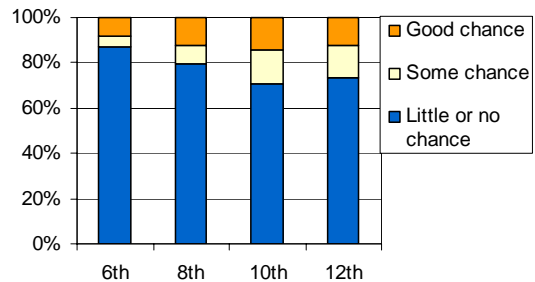
**2004: Cigarette Smoking**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Good chance	6.6	6.8	7.5	6.8
Some chance	6.2	10.5	13.9	11.9
Little or no chance	87.3	82.7	78.6	81.3
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



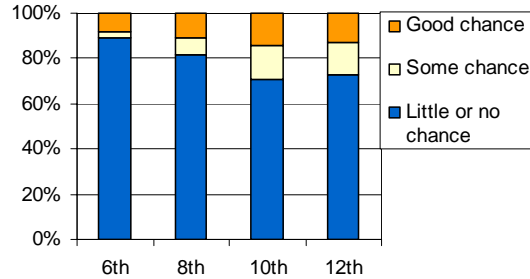
**2006: Marijuana Smoking**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Good chance	8.4	12.0	14.4	12.2
Some chance	4.6	8.7	14.9	14.5
Little or no chance	87.0	79.3	70.7	73.3
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



**2004: Marijuana Smoking**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Good chance	7.9	10.7	13.9	12.9
Some chance	3.2	7.6	15.5	14.5
Little or no chance	88.9	81.7	70.5	72.6
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



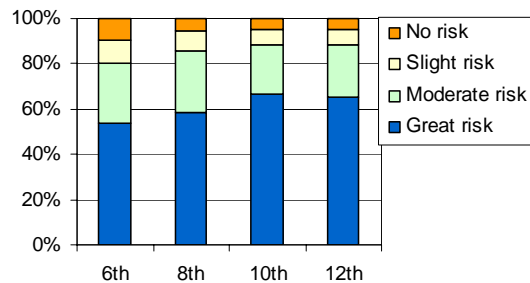
For every substance, in both 2004 and 2006, use of the substance becomes more “cool” as one moves from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and then becomes slightly less cool in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. In the high school grades, alcohol use appears the most cool, followed by marijuana, and cigarettes are the least cool. From 2004 to 2006 use of each substance became less cool in high school. In 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, perception moved toward more cool those two years, except that 8<sup>th</sup> grade perception of cigarette use remained constant.

Another Peer/Individual risk factor measured by the IYS is “Perceived Harm” of use. The questions begin, “How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they ...”. The four such questions ask about smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day, trying marijuana “once or twice,” smoking marijuana regularly, and taking one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage “nearly every day.” The response choices for each question are *No Risk*, *Slight Risk*, *Moderate Risk*, and *Great Risk*. The following tables give the percent of youth at each grade level that chose each response.

***Perceived Harm: Percent of Students by Grade Level***

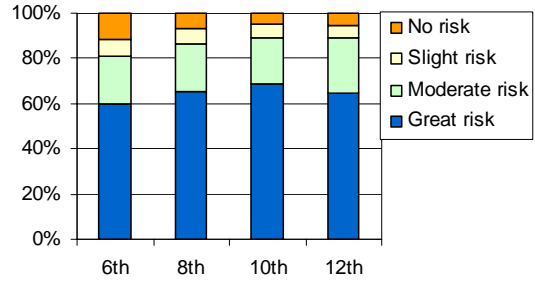
**2006: Cigarettes – 1 or More Packs a Day**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	9.6	5.5	4.5	5.0
Slight risk	10.0	8.6	7.1	6.8
Moderate risk	26.9	27.1	21.5	22.7
Great risk	53.5	58.7	67.0	65.5
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



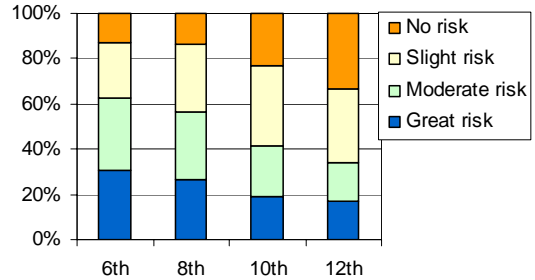
**2004: Cigarettes – 1 or More Packs a Day**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	11.6	6.9	4.5	5.5
Slight risk	7.5	6.7	6.5	5.5
Moderate risk	21.3	21.3	20.6	24.6
Great risk	59.6	65.0	68.4	64.4
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



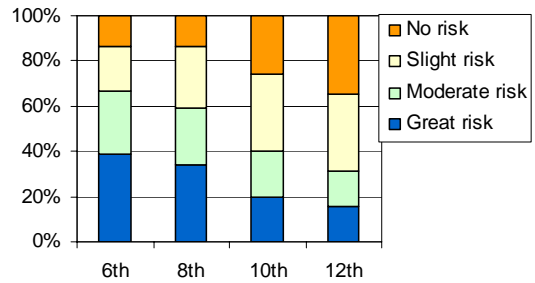
**2006: Marijuana – Try Once or Twice**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	13.2	13.8	23.4	33.1
Slight risk	23.9	30.0	35.1	33.1
Moderate risk	32.2	29.8	22.6	17.0
Great risk	30.6	26.4	18.9	16.8
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



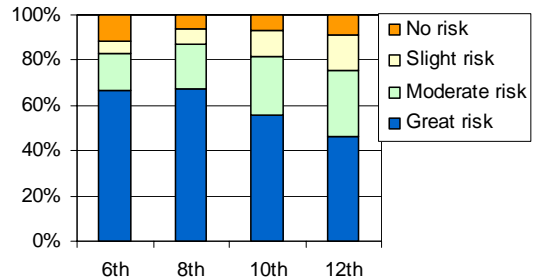
**2004: Marijuana – Try Once or Twice**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	13.7	13.7	26.0	34.9
Slight risk	19.9	26.9	33.8	34.0
Moderate risk	27.9	25.4	20.5	15.4
Great risk	38.5	34.0	19.7	15.6
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



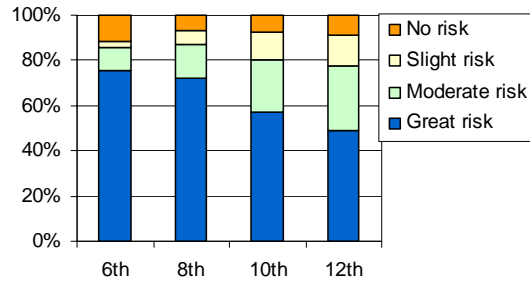
**2006: Marijuana - Regularly**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	11.5	5.9	6.8	8.6
Slight risk	5.8	7.1	11.8	16.1
Moderate risk	16.1	19.4	25.6	29.2
Great risk	66.6	67.6	55.8	46.2
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



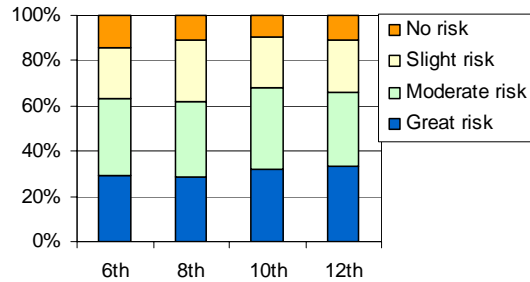
**2004: Marijuana - Regularly**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	11.8	6.8	7.4	9.1
Slight risk	2.8	5.9	12.1	13.3
Moderate risk	10.2	14.9	23.4	28.9
Great risk	75.2	72.4	57.0	48.7
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



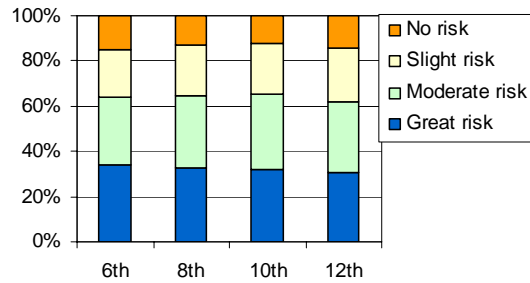
**2006: Alcohol – One or Two Drinks a Day**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	14.0	11.0	9.5	10.8
Slight risk	22.8	26.7	22.4	23.1
Moderate risk	33.8	33.8	36.5	32.9
Great risk	29.5	28.4	31.7	33.2
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



**2004: Alcohol – One or Two Drinks a Day**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
No risk	14.8	12.8	12.3	14.6
Slight risk	21.3	22.6	22.1	23.3
Moderate risk	29.9	31.8	33.4	31.6
Great risk	34.1	32.8	32.3	30.6
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



For ease of observing patterns, the results can be considered as two categories: little risk (no risk or slight risk) and greater risk (moderate or great risk). In each grade level, regular use of cigarettes and of marijuana were perceived as most harmful. In 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade regular use of marijuana was seen as most harmful, but in high school regular use of cigarettes was perceived as most harmful.

Perceived harm of trying marijuana just once or twice started in 6<sup>th</sup> grade as approximately equal to perceived harm of regular alcohol use, but by high school the number of students who saw harm in trying marijuana once or twice was lower than for regular use of cigarettes or alcohol. The grade or grades that perceived the most harm were 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades for cigarettes, 6<sup>th</sup> grade for trying marijuana once or twice, 8<sup>th</sup> grade for regular use of marijuana, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade for daily use of alcohol.

From 2004 to 2006 the perceived risk of using any of the substances decreased for 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Tenth grade perceived risk increased for alcohol and marijuana but decreased for cigarettes. Twelfth grade perceived risk increased for alcohol and for trying marijuana once or twice, and decreased for cigarettes and regular use of marijuana.

This factor seems more straightforward than it is, for a number of reasons. It is much more difficult to change than one may think. Prevention research has consistently shown that just giving youth information about the risks of a substance doesn't necessarily change their perceptions, and a change in perception doesn't necessarily change chance of use. This seems to be a reflection of the relative power of other factors such as youth access to substances and perception of social norms, in comparison to perception of risk. Some of the association between use and perceived risk may be due to users perceiving less risk, rather than low perceived risk leading to use.

### *Chapter 3 Parent/Family Risk and Protective Conditions*

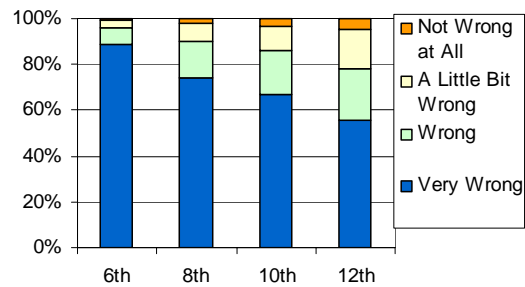
One of the strongest ways parents (or guardians) can lower the probability of their son or daughter starting substance use is to clearly communicate disapproval of youth use of substances. In the IYS, this is measured by three questions that ask, “How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to:”. The three questions ask about drinking alcoholic beverages regularly (“at least once or twice a month”), smoking cigarettes, and smoking marijuana. The four answer choices are *Very Wrong*, *Wrong*, *A Little Bit Wrong*, and *Not Wrong at All*.

The following three tables, one for each substance, show the percentage of youth at each grade level who indicated each of the four possible choices.

#### *Parental Disapproval: Percent of Students by Grade Level*

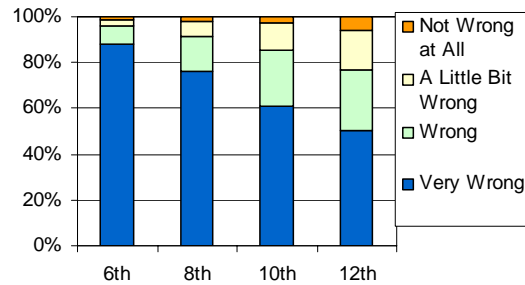
##### 2006: Alcohol

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.0	2.1	3.1	4.6
A Little Bit Wrong	2.9	7.7	10.6	17.4
Wrong	7.3	15.9	19.2	22.6
Very Wrong	88.8	74.3	67.1	55.3
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



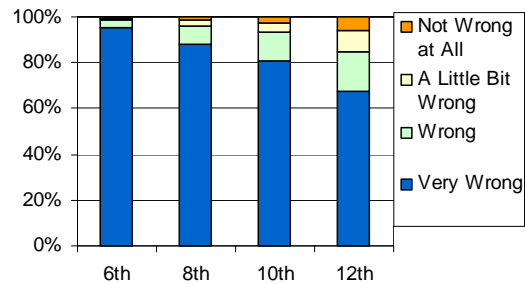
##### 2004: Alcohol

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.2	1.8	2.6	5.8
A Little Bit Wrong	3.1	6.9	11.9	17.1
Wrong	7.5	14.9	24.4	26.7
Very Wrong	88.3	76.4	61.2	50.4
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



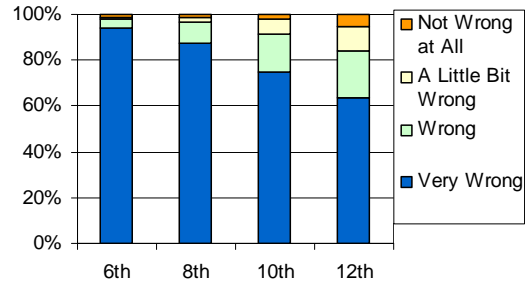
##### 2006: Cigarettes

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	0.5	1.4	2.5	5.7
A Little Bit Wrong	0.9	2.8	4.4	9.7
Wrong	3.5	7.7	12.3	16.9
Very Wrong	95.1	88.1	80.8	67.6
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



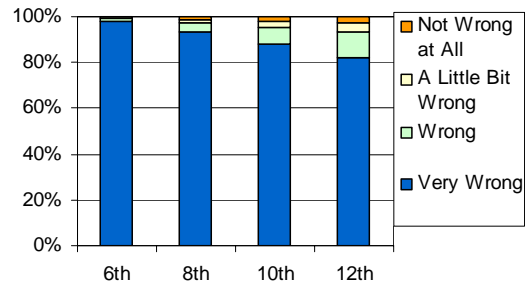
**2004: Cigarettes**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.0	1.4	1.7	5.2
A Little Bit Wrong	0.7	2.2	6.6	10.8
Wrong	4.1	9.1	17.0	20.4
Very Wrong	94.1	87.3	74.7	63.5
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



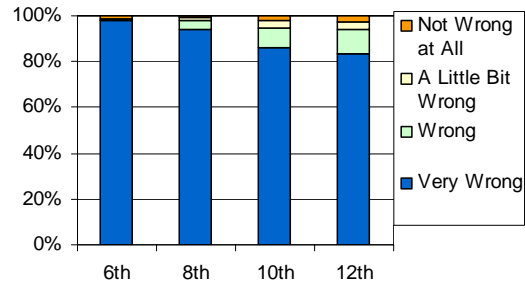
**2006: Marijuana**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	0.3	1.3	2.0	2.4
A Little Bit Wrong	0.5	1.6	2.8	4.3
Wrong	1.4	3.7	6.9	11.3
Very Wrong	97.9	93.3	88.3	82.0
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



**2004: Marijuana**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
Not Wrong at All	1.0	0.9	1.8	2.5
A Little Bit Wrong	0.1	1.0	3.3	3.4
Wrong	1.1	3.7	8.6	10.4
Very Wrong	97.7	94.3	86.4	83.8
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



Comparing the rates for all substances, the following can be observed:

1. (Perceived) parent disapproval of youth use is stronger against tobacco use than against alcohol use. Disapproval is most strong against marijuana.
2. Even for alcohol use by 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth, perceived approval (*A Little Bit Wrong* or *Not Wrong at All*) includes less than 25% of parents. The next highest rate is 15%-16% for 12<sup>th</sup> grade tobacco use. Perceived parental approval quickly falls from there as one goes from 12<sup>th</sup> grade to younger grades and from alcohol to tobacco to marijuana.
3. In 2006, fewer parents of 6<sup>th</sup> grade youth appeared to approve of youth use of any of the three substances than was the case in 2004. The same held true for parents of 10<sup>th</sup> grade youth, but the percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders that said their parents don't mind youth use increased in 2006. For 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, 2006 brought less parental approval of alcohol or cigarettes but more approval of marijuana.

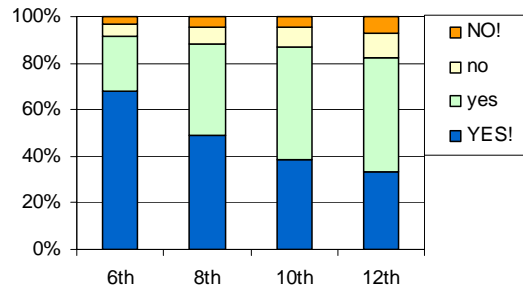
Another way parents can lower the likelihood of youths’ substance use is by monitoring their teenagers’ activities consistently. This seems to be not quite as strong as the parent disapproval factor, but is notable especially at the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level. One of the most likely explanations of this differential strength as a risk factor is that for younger children, so many parents do monitor their children’s whereabouts that there is not enough variability in the population to account for youth substance use. In 12<sup>th</sup> grade, however, many young people are becoming substantially independent, and more parents of older youth either can’t effectively monitor their youth or feel that such effort would be ineffective.

There are a few IYS questions related to parental monitoring of youth, but the one that seems most closely connected is, “When I am not at home, one of my parents knows where I am and who I am with.” The four answer choices are *NO!* (an emphatic no), *no*, *yes*, and *YES!* (emphatic yes). The following table shows the percent of youth who chose each of the four answers, by grade level.

***Parental Monitoring: Percent of Students by Grade Level***

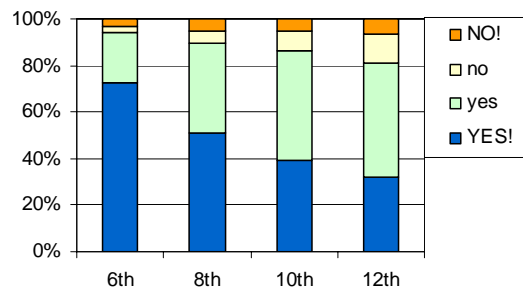
**2006**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
NO!	3.6	4.9	4.4	7.1
no	4.6	6.8	8.8	10.8
yes	23.6	39.5	48.4	48.6
YES!	68.2	48.9	38.5	33.6
# of Respondents	2116	2091	2024	1710



**2004**

	Grade Level			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
NO!	3.0	5.2	5.0	6.6
no	2.8	5.3	8.4	12.1
yes	21.3	38.3	47.2	49.0
YES!	72.8	51.2	39.3	32.3
# of Respondents	2044	1998	1909	1683



The table and chart show that the percentage of youth who believe parents do not effectively monitor their whereabouts grows steadily from 8.2% in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 17.9% in 12<sup>th</sup> grade.