



Multiracial Asian American and Pacific Islander Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs Fact Sheet

Background

According to the 2000 Census, there are 7 million people in the United States who identify as more than one race. Of this population, 1.8 million are of partial Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent. Half of this population is under the age of 18 (compared to a quarter of the total U.S. population) and faces unique AAPI issues and problems regarding substance abuse.

Alcohol Use

- Multiracial Asian American adolescents are twice as likely as mono-racial Asian American adolescents to drink. They are three times as likely to get drunk on a regular basis (Udry, 2003).
- During the last year, almost 50% of all multiracial Vietnamese-American adolescents (grades 7-12) got drunk, compared to only 12.9% of mono-racial Vietnamese-Americans (Price, 2002).
- Only 83% of total male multiracial youth (AAPI and non-AAPI) say their parents would strongly disapprove of them drinking one or more alcoholic beverages per day, a lower rate than any other racial group (NSDUH, 2003).
- Among total multiracial men (AAPI and non-AAPI), lifetime DUI rates (22.5%) and twelve month DUI arrest rates (5%) are higher than rates for men of any other racial group (Caetano, 2005).

Tobacco Use

- Multiracial Asian American adolescents are 2.25 times more likely to smoke than adolescents who are mono-racial (Udry, 2003).
- Specifically, multiracial Japanese, Chinese, and Vietnamese-American adolescents are significantly more likely to have smoked cigarettes in the past year than those who are mono-racial (Price, 2002).

Illicit Drug Use

The total multiracial population (AAPI and non-AAPI) uses illicit substances at very high rates:

- Sixty percent (60%) have used an illicit substance in their life. This is the second highest of any racial group, just below the 61% for American Indians / Alaskan Natives (NSDUH, 2003).
- The multiracial population has the highest rate of lifetime use of any racial group for marijuana (55%), cocaine (21.7%), crack cocaine (6.7%), heroin (3.6%), LSD (14.1%), PCP (4%), ecstasy (8%), and several other less frequently used drugs (NSDUH, 2003).

Multiracial AAPI adolescents, grades 7-12, are significantly more likely to take drugs than those of mono-racial descent:

- Among multiracial Chinese-Americans, 36.5% have used marijuana, compared to 11.3% of mono-racial Chinese-Americans (Price, 2002).
- Among multiracial Filipino-Americans, 9.9% have used cocaine, compared to 3.7% of those who are mono-racial (Price, 2002).

Other Drug-Related Behavior for the Total Multiracial Populations (AAPI and non-AAPI)

- Young multiracial men who have sex with men (MSM) are significantly more likely than white or Latino MSM to have HIV (Koblin, 2000; Celentano, 2005).
- Multiracial youth are more likely than other youth to take part in deliberate self-harm and to have suicidal thoughts (Samaritans, 2003).
- Among female multiracial youth, 36% got in ten or more fights with their parents in the past year, the highest rate of any racial group (NSDUH, 2003)

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