→ CROSS-CANADA REPORT ON

STUDENT
ALCOHOL
AND
DRUG USE

TECHNICAL REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth are not only more likely than adults to engage in risky alcohol and drug use, but also disproportionately experience greater harms from that use (Adlaf, Begin, and Sawka, 2005). In addition, alcohol and drug use among adolescents has been found to negatively affect their ability to perform academically (Bryant, Schulenberg, O'Malley, Bachman, and Johnston, 2003; Cox, Zhang, Johnson, and Bender, 2007). Early experience with alcohol and drug use and hazardous patterns of drug-using behaviour during adolescence are serious risk factors for developing long-standing problems that continue into adulthood, including dependence and chronic disease.Further, it appears that substance use in adolescence – while the brain is still developing – is associated with an increased risk of mental health disorders (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2007). In order to effectively address youth substance abuse, an understanding of the prevalence and patterns of use along with the risks and harms associated with youth alcohol and drug use is needed. Having findings/results from across Canada provides knowledge exchange opportunities across different regions and can help inform a national picture of student alcohol and drug use – one that can focus policy, research, prevention and treatment efforts across the country.

To develop such a national picture, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) has been working in partnership with the Student Drug Use Surveys (SDUS) Working Group, which is composed of representatives from national and provincial health and addictions organizations that conduct regularly occurring surveys to assess the prevalence of alcohol and drug use among students. It was determined that by re-analyzing existing data, a set of comparable indicators could be derived to form the basis of a first cross-Canada report on student alcohol and drug use. Therefore, representatives from the nine regularly occurring student drug use surveys - the BC Adolescent Health Survey; the Alberta Youth Experience Survey; the Manitoba Student Alcohol and Drug Use Survey; the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey; the Québec Survey on Tobacco, Drug Use and Gambling in High School Students; and the Student Drug Use Survey in the Atlantic Provinces (which collects data in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island,Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador) - agreed to re-analyze data from the 2007–2008 cycle of their surveys and derive estimates to contribute to the present report. To provide national estimates, the Health Canada Controlled Substances and Tobacco Directorate agreed to do the same for data collected on alcohol and other drug use as part of the Youth Smoking Survey (YSS).[1]

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[1]   *Note*: Differences in methodologies employed by the various contributing surveys limits the extent to which interprovincial comparisons can and should be made. Where differences between the provinces exist, it is unclear whether these differences represent real variations in student alcohol and drug use, or differences due to survey methods.

Some key findings from the report are as follows. Among students in grades 7, 9, 10, and 12 (i.e., those approximately 12–18 years old):

➔ Alcohol use is almost twice as prevalent as cannabis use (46–62% of students report alcohol use and 17–32% report cannabis use in the past year, depending on the province);

    ➔ 19–30% report consuming five or more drinks on a single occasion in the past month;

➔ 12–20% of Grade 12 students report driving within an hour of drinking alcohol in the past year;

➔ 26–38% of all students report that in the past year they have been a passenger with someone that had been drinking, and 17–20% report that in the past year they have been a passenger with someone who had had 'too much' to drink;

    ➔ 2–5% report using cannabis daily or almost daily;

➔ 14–21% of students in Grade 12 report driving within an hour of using cannabis, and more than 33% of Grade 12 students report having been a passenger with someone who had used cannabis; and

➔ Among the drugs assessed by the surveys, aside from alcohol and cannabis, ecstasy is the most prevalent drug (4–7% report lifetime use) followed by inhalants (2–4% report lifetime use).

Perhaps the most notable overall finding emerging is the consistency of patterns of alcohol and drug use across provinces as well as at the national level when examining estimates by gender and grade. More males appear to engage in daily/almost daily cannabis use and males appear to more often report driving after drinking. The other consistent finding across all the provinces was the difference in prevalence of alcohol and cannabis use between those in their early years of high school and those in their senior year. Among Grade 7 students, prevalence of alcohol and drug use is relatively low; however, use increases dramatically by Grade 12. For example, in

Grade 7, depending on the province, 3–8% report past-year cannabis use versus 30–53% of their Grade 12 counterparts. These findings emphasize the importance of targeted prevention and should be taken into consideration to appropriately tailor prevention efforts. The findings suggest the need to deter or delay the onset of use for those in their early years of high school, whereas prevention aimed at reducing frequency of use or the occurrence of specific activities, such as driving following use may be more appropriately aimed at those in their final years of high-school.

It is equally important to underline that although 8–28% of Grade 7 students in Canada report drinking alcohol in the past year, this also means that the vast majority of 13 year olds (72–92%) don't drink. Similarly, the majority of students in grades 7, 9, and 10 report never having used cannabis. Sharing these facts widely with appropriate age groups is recommended as making youth aware that the majority of their peers are not using alcohol or other drugs may influence their decisions whether or not to use these substances (Mattern and Neighbors, 2004; Perkins, 2002).

The current report represents the work the SDUS Working Group has completed to date in developing a coordinated approach to surveying student alcohol and drug use in Canada. Further, it represents the first time data from the various provincial student drug use surveys and comparable national data have been brought together in a single report to serve as a baseline for future comparison. Such an ongoing compilation of data will permit a national view of trends in student drug use and permit interprovincial and territorial comparisons over time. In addition, the national data in this report may be examined along with other national data sources such as the Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey (CADUMS) or national treatment data. Such an examination of national data from various sources will permit a more complete and reliable assessment of the prevalence of alcohol and drug use in Canada, which will, in turn, assist policy makers, researchers, and professionals in the health care, prevention and treatment fields in developing more appropriate and effective responses to this important issue.

INTRODUCTION

Youth are not only more likely than adults to engage in risky alcohol and drug use, but also disproportionately experience greater harms from that use (Adlaf et al., 2005). In addition, alcohol and drug use among adolescents has been found to negatively affect their ability to perform academically (Bryant et al., 2003; Cox et al., 2007). Early experience with alcohol and drug use and hazardous patterns of drug-using behaviour during adolescence are serious risk factors for developing long-standing problems that continue into adulthood, including dependence and chronic disease. Further, it appears that substance use in adolescence – while the brain is still developing – is associated with an increased risk of mental health disorders (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2007).

However, to assess the true scope of the problem (and develop appropriate responses) and monitor trends in use, it is important to have reliable estimates of the prevalence of youth alcohol and drug use. Surveys that ask school-aged youth about their drug use are conducted on a regular basis in nine of 10 provinces[2] as well as nationally through the Youth Smoking Survey (YSS), a national school survey of youth smoking and other drug use. These surveys provide an essential source of information regarding prevalence of alcohol and drug use, associated harms, socio-demographic correlates, and identification of high-risk groups within the youth population. Not surprisingly, there is large variability in the methods employed and information collected across jurisdictions. This limits opportunities for inter-regional comparisons and opportunities to assess the prevalence of student drug use in Canada at the national level. To fill this gap, a working group composed of representatives from the provinces with regularly occurring surveys assessing student drug use contributed data to provide a national snapshot of student drug use in Canada. The Cross-Canada Report on Student Drug Use represents the first time prevalence estimates from provincial surveys of student drug use have been presented in a single report. Specifically, this report includes estimates from the following surveys: the BC Adolescent Health Survey; the Alberta Youth Experience Survey; the Manitoba Student Alcohol and Drug Use Survey; the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey; the Québec Survey on Tobacco, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students; and the Student Drug Use Survey in the Atlantic Provinces (which collects data in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador).

Background

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) has the mandate to work with the provinces to facilitate the development and implementation of student drug use surveys in provinces/territories where they are currently not conducted, and to work with an expert group to select core indicators and common questions to be included as a minimum standard in province/territory-specific student surveys. Thus CCSA, in partnership with national and provincial organizations, has been working toward development of core indicators to be included as a recommended minimum standard in province/territory-specific student drug use surveys.

From 2006–2009, the Student Drug Use Surveys (SDUS) Working Group - composed of representatives from nine of the 13 provinces and territories[3] as well as national representation from the Office of Research and Surveillance in the Controlled Substances and Tobacco Directorate at Health Canada - was tasked with developing a set of core indicators of youth alcohol and drug use to be used in existing and future student drug use surveys. In essence, these indicators were survey questions with similar wording and response options that asked about drug use over a comparable time frame (e.g., within the past month, within the past 12 months). A more complete description of the development of these indicators may be found in Clark (2009).

In 2009, the SDUS Working Group agreed upon on a set of 10 questions recommended for inclusion in surveys designed to assess the prevalence and harms associated with alcohol, cannabis and other illicit drug use among a student population (Clark, 2009). The goal of the Working Group was to have existing student surveys gradually integrate these core indicators, and for new surveys to use them as a foundation to build upon. During the interim, the group determined that by re-analyzing existing data, provinces with student drug use surveys could derive a set of comparable indicators to form the basis of a first cross-Canada report on student drug use. For the current report, each province that had an existing student drug use survey (British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario,

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[2]   A regularly occurring, province-wide student survey on drug use is currently not conducted in Saskatchewan, Nunavut, Yukon or the Northwest Territories.

[3]   Including: Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission; Addictions Foundation of Manitoba; Centre for Addiction and Mental Health; Dalhousie University; Department of Health and Community Services, Newfoundland and Labrador; Government of the Northwest Territories; Government of Yukon; Health and Social Services, Prince Edward Island; McCreary Centre Society, Vancouver; Addiction and Mental Health Services, New Brunswick; Newfoundland and Labrador Health and Community Services; Saskatchewan Health; and Health Canada's Office of Research and Surveillance.

Québec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador) agreed to re-analyze its data and derive estimates. To provide national estimates, the Health Canada Controlled Substances and Tobacco Directorate agreed to do the same for data collected on alcohol and other drug use as part of the YSS.

The current report contains the following prevalence estimates:

➔ Alcohol use (lifetime use, past-year use, consumption of five or more drinks on one occasion);

➔ Cannabis use (lifetime, past-year, past-month, daily/almost daily use);

➔ Lifetime use of other illicit drugs (ecstasy, inhalants, cocaine/crack, steroids, heroin, hallucinogens);

➔ Drinking and driving (or being a passenger with someone who had been drinking and driving); and

➔ Driving under the influence of cannabis (or being a passenger with someone who had used cannabis).

Estimates for each of these indicators were provided according to gender and grade.

METHODS

In order for student alcohol and drug use estimates to be consistent across regions, each participating province analyzed a subset of grades for which most participating surveys had data (specifically grades 7, 9, 10, and 12). The Health Canada Controlled Substances and Tobacco Directorate did the same for data collected for the YSS to provide national estimates. Québec, however, does not have Grade 12; therefore, estimates for grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 (all five grades of what is called 'secondary school' in Québec) were provided.

It was also important to include data that were collected during a similar time period. Given that the survey cycles of the provincial student drug use surveys vary, the survey cycle for which all provinces had data were for 2007 or 2008. Thus each member of the group contributed data collected in 2007 or 2008, depending on the cycle of their survey.

In addition to decisions regarding data to contribute, the SDUS Working Group decided on criteria for data suppression. The decision was made to suppress an estimate (i.e., not release the finding) when it was considered unstable (i.e., there was sufficient variability in the data that the estimate was questionable). To determine this, the Working Group decided to follow the Statistics Canada (2011) guidelines and suppress estimates for which the coefficient of variation[4] (CV) was > 0.333, or if the estimate was based on a sample of less than 30 responses endorsing a particular response option. Furthermore, it was decided that estimates for which the CV was between 0.166 and 0.333 should be interpreted with caution and be noted when presented in data tables and graphs. The Working Group decided to include 99% confidence intervals with each point estimate to ensure a conservative approach was taken when presenting estimates.

For each variable examined, provinces contributed estimates for students in grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 by gender[5] and by grade. These estimates are presented in Tables 1–55 and Figures 1–42. Because Québec estimates (see Appendix A) were derived using a different age group of students (i.e., grades 7–11 rather than grades 7, 9, 10 and 12), Québec estimates are included in table footnotes rather than in the tables and figures. When results are presented by grade, Québec data are included in the tables and figures for grades 7, 9, and 10.

In the tables, the numbers in parentheses represent the 99% confidence interval (CI) for the estimate. In the figures, these intervals are represented by error bars. Estimates that are suppressed are indicated as such in the tables and are simply absent in the figures.

Significant differences within a province by gender and grade were determined by assessing whether the 99% confidence intervals were overlapping. For grade, overall significance was assessed by comparing Grade 7 and Grade 12. It is worth noting that this very conservative approach to assessing significance likely resulted in several instances where real differences in gender or grade did not meet the threshold of significance and are thus not indicated as such in this report. However, because this test of significance could be easily and consistently applied across provinces and because of the large number of comparisons being made, the Working Group opted to employ this strategy.

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4 The coefficient of variation is a statistic that represents the relative magnitude of the error associated with the estimate to the estimate itself. It is calculated by dividing the standard error of the estimate by the estimate itself. The result is a ratio of the standard error to the point estimate.

5 Several of the surveys (such as the OSDHUS and the YSS) use the term 'sex' instead of 'gender'.

Indicators selected were those for which the majority of provinces could contribute data. Several indicators included in the report do not include data from all participating provincial surveys because the wording or time frame asked about was different or because the question was simply not asked in a survey. For example, when asking students whether, in the past year, they had been a passenger in a motor vehicle with someone who had been drinking alcohol, estimates from British Columbia are not included because its survey asks whether this had occurred in the past month rather than the past year. In other instances where there are small differences in question wording, the data are included but are presented in separate tables and figures.

Limitations

In order to contextualize the data, we must acknowledge that there are differences in survey design methodologies across the provinces that can affect estimates. For example, some provinces require signed parental consent for participation in the survey, others allow parental notification and student consent, while others use a combination of these strategies. Participation rates are lower when signed parental consent is required (Poulin and Elliot, 2007) not necessarily because parents object to the survey, but more due to the difficulty in receiving consent forms back in time. Unfortunately, youth and their families who are more likely to have problems with alcohol and drug use may be less likely to be included in survey estimates when active parental consent is required due to self-exclusion. Other situations can affect provincial estimates, such as whether all school districts participate, who administers the survey (e.g., teachers, public health nurses, research staff), and how well students trust that their answers will be maintained in confidence. These differences in survey methodology limit the extent to which interprovincial comparisons can and should be made. Where differences between the provinces exist, it is unclear whether these differences represent real variations in student drug use or differences due to survey methods.[6]

To highlight differences in survey methods, the Working Group assembled a table of survey design variables (see Appendix B). The variables in the table include the target population, whether random probability sampling was employed, what groups were excluded from the survey by design (e.g., schools on reserves or on military bases), the stratification procedure employed, the clusters employed, what kinds of weighting and post-stratification adjustments were applied to the data, the type of questionnaire (e.g., anonymous, paper and pencil), who administers the questionnaire and how, when the data were collected, the type of consent required (e.g., parental notification and student consent, active parental consent), response rate, whether missing data are imputed, and total sample size.

RESULTS

ALCOHOL

Lifetime use of alcohol

All provinces with student drug use surveys ask whether the student had ever, in his or her lifetime, consumed alcohol. The estimates for lifetime use of alcohol indicate that between one-half to about three-quarters (51.6–70.0%) of Canadian students in grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 combined report having consumed alcohol at some point during their lifetime (Table 1 and Figure 1). While there are no differences between the percentage of males and females who have consumed alcohol during their lifetime across the provinces (Table 2 and Figure 2), there are differences between grades. Among Grade 7 students, 18.1–34.7% indicate they have used alcohol during their lifetime. In contrast, among Grade 12 students, the proportion increases to 77.3–91.0% (Table 3 and Figure 3).

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[6]   As an attempt to mitigate differences in provincial estimates due to survey design methods, the Working Group opted to report estimates with very conservative 99% confidence intervals rather than 95% confidence intervals as are typically employed when reporting estimates such as these.

TABLE 1 & FIGURE 1

Percentage of students reporting lifetime alcohol use (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 1.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	54.1 (52.8, 55.3)
AB	51.6 (48.2, 55.0)
MB	64.8 (63.1, 66.6)
ON	65.3 (61.7, 68.7)
NB	67.9 (65.8, 70.0)
PEI	64.1 (61.8, 66.4)
NS	69.7 (67.5, 71.9)
NL	70.0 (67.5, 72.5)

Note: Québec estimate is 63.3% (60.7%, 65.8%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.
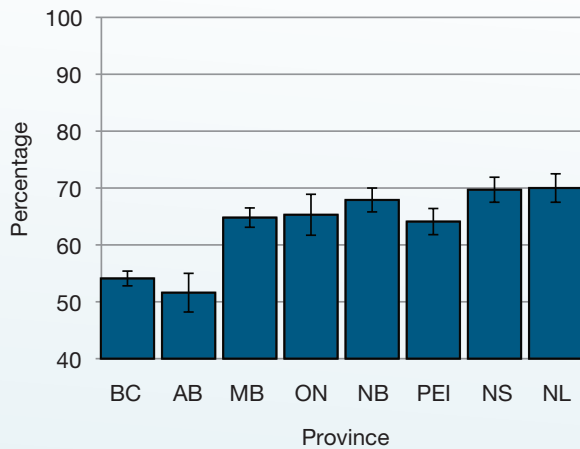
Figure 1.

TABLE 2 & FIGURE 2

Percentage of students reporting lifetime alcohol use, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 2.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
BC	52.9 (51.2, 54.6)	55.1 (53.5, 56.7)
AB	50.5 (45.4, 55.6)	52.7 (48.3, 57.1)
MB	64.3 (61.8, 66.8)	63.5 (61.0, 66.0)
ON	65.9 (61.7, 69.9)	64.6 (59.9, 68.9)
NB	68.8 (65.8, 71.8)	67.2 (64.2, 70.2)
PEI	64.4 (60.9, 67.9)	63.7 (60.3, 67.1)
NS	69.9 (66.7, 73.1)	69.6 (66.3, 72.9)
NL	67.1 (63.9, 70.3)	73.1 (69.8, 76.4)

Note: Québec estimates are 62.4% (59.2%, 65.5%) for males and 64.2% (60.4%, 68.0%) for females in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.
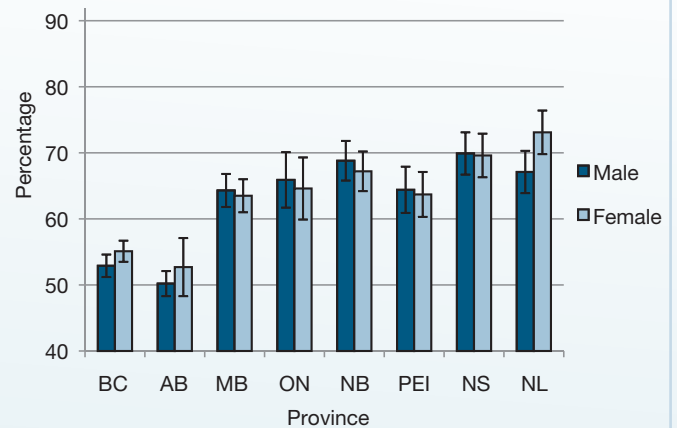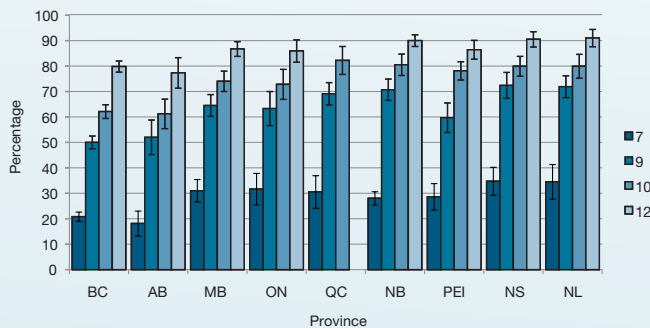
Figure 2.

Percentage of students reporting lifetime alcohol use, by grade

Table 3.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
BC*	20.8 (19.0, 22.8)	50.0 (47.5, 52.5)	62.1 (59.4, 64.7)	79.8 (77.6, 81.8)
AB*	18.1 (13.2, 24.5)	52.0 (45.2, 58.7)	61.2 (55.4, 66.7)	77.3 (71.3, 82.3)
MB*	31.0 (26.6, 35.3)	64.5 (60.2, 68.8)	74.0 (70.0, 78.0)	86.7 (83.8, 89.7)
ON*	31.6 (25.4, 38.5)	63.3 (56.6, 69.6)	72.8 (66.9, 78.0)	85.9 (81.5, 89.4)
QC	30.5 (24.1, 36.8)	69.1 (64.7, 73.5)	82.2 (76.7, 86.9)	N/A
NB*	28.0 (25.4, 34.6)	70.7 (66.5, 74.9)	80.5 (76.3, 83.7)	90.0 (87.7, 92.3)
PEI*	28.6 (23.4, 33.8)	59.7 (53.9, 65.5)	78.1 (74.5, 81.7)	86.4 (82.7, 90.1)
NS*	34.7 (29.2, 40.2)	72.4 (67.3, 77.5)	79.9 (76.0, 83.8)	90.5 (87.5, 93.5)
NL*	34.5 (27.7, 41.3)	71.9 (67.6, 76.2)	79.9 (75.2, 85.6)	91.0 (87.6, 94.4)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
Note: Québec does not have Grade 12; therefore, this estimate is not available.

Figure 3.

Past-year use of alcohol

A smaller proportion of students report using alcohol at least once in the past year (46.3–61.8%) than in their lifetime (Table 4 and Figure 4). Similar to lifetime alcohol use, there were few differences by gender (Table 5 and Figure 5). Also similar to lifetime use, the proportion of students who indicated past-year use in Grade 7 (8.4–28.1%) is significantly smaller than the proportion indicating use in Grade 12, when at least three-quarters had consumed alcohol in the past year (75.1–83.0%) (Table 6 and Figure 6).

Percentage of students reporting past-year alcohol use (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 4.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	50.4 (49.2, 51.6)
AB	48.5 (45.1, 51.8)
MB	54.8 (53.0, 56.6)
ON	61.8 (58.2, 65.2)
NB	50.3 (48.1, 52.5)
PEI	46.3 (45.7, 48.9)
NS	51.7 (49.6, 53.8)
NL	52.0 (49.5, 54.5)
National (YSS)	52.6 (49.1, 56.1)

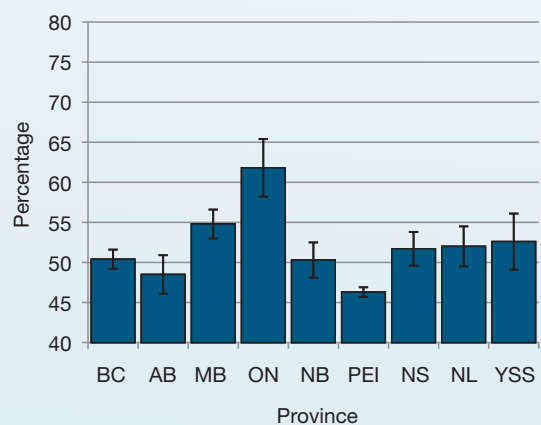*Note*: Québec estimate is 59.7% (57.2%, 62.3%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Figure 4.

TABLE 5 & FIGURE 5

Percentage of students reporting past-year alcohol use, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 5.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
BC*	48.5 (46.8, 50.2)	52.1 (50.5, 53.7)
AB	47.1 (42.0, 52.2)	49.9 (45.5, 54.2)
MB	53.7 (51.1, 56.2)	55.9 (53.3, 58.5)
ON	61.6 (57.4, 65.6)	62.0 (57.4, 66.3)
NB	49.6 (46.4, 52.8)	50.9 (47.6, 54.2)
PEI	47.0 (43.0, 51.0)	45.6 (42.0, 49.2)
NS	51.9 (48.6, 55.2)	51.6 (48.3, 54.9)
NL	49.1 (45.7, 52.5)	55.1 (51.1, 59.1)
National (YSS)	54.1 (50.6, 57.5)	51.1 (47.3, 54.9)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.
Note: Québec estimates are 58.4% (55.1%, 61.7%) for males and 61.1% (57.3%, 64.8%) for females in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.
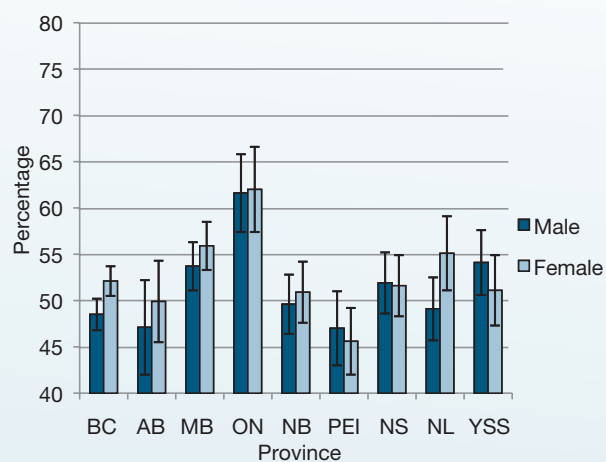
Figure 5.

TABLE 6 & FIGURE 6

*Percentage of students reporting past-year alcohol use, by grade*

Table 6.

Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
BC*	16.4 (14.8, 18.2)	46.3 (43.9, 48.7)	58.4 (55.8, 61.1)	76.9 (74.5, 79.0)
AB*	15.0 (10.4, 21.0)	48.1 (41.3, 54.8)	58.2 (52.4, 63.8)	75.1 (69.1, 80.3)
MB*	18.6 (15.1, 22.3)	53.1 (48.7, 57.5)	64.2 (59.9, 68.5)	82.0 (78.7, 85.3)
ON*	28.1 (22.4, 34.8)	58.9 (52.1, 65.3)	69.6 (63.7, 74.9)	83.0 (78.3, 86.8)
QC	26.8 (21.1, 32.4)	65.4 (60.9, 70.0)	79.4 (74.5, 84.3)	N/A
NB*	9.3 (5.9, 12.7)	47.8 (42.3, 53.3)	63.9 (60.2, 67.6)	78.1 (73.7, 82.5)
PEI*	8.4 (5.1, 11.7)	36.9 (30.1, 43.7)	59.5 (54.1, 64.9)	76.6 (72.0, 81.2)
NS*	12.3 (8.7, 15.9)	49.3 (44.6, 54.0)	63.4 (58.7, 68.1)	80.5 (76.7, 84.3)
NL*	11.0 (6.6, 15.4)	50.8 (46.3, 54.3)	63.8 (57.1, 70.5)	79.9 (75.2, 84.6)
National (YSS)*	13.4 (10.8,16.0)	49.9 (46.7, 53.1)	61.2 (55.7, 66.7)	82.1 (75.4, 88.8)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
Note: Québec does not have Grade 12; therefore, this estimate is not available.

Figure 6.
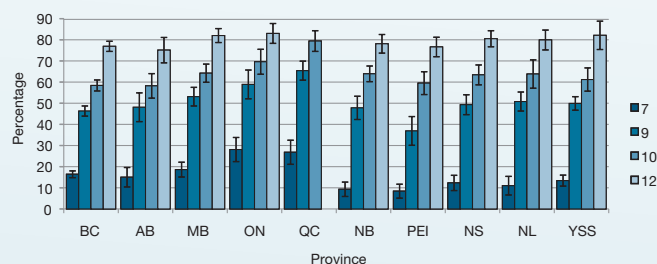
Consumption of five or more drinks on one occasion

Eight of the nine provinces with student drug use surveys ask a question about consuming five or more drinks on a single occasion in the past month[7]. Overall, 19.3–29.7% of students report drinking five or more drinks on a single occasion in the past month (Table 7 and Figure 7). There are no significant gender differences in any of the provinces (Table 8 and Figure 8). Similar to other indicators of alcohol use, the percentage of Grade 7 students reporting consuming five or more drinks on one occasion is low (3.1–4.4%). However, for Grade 12 students it is significantly higher - almost half of these students report drinking more than five drinks on one occasion at least once in the past month (41.1–55.1%) (Table 9 and Figure 9).

TABLE 7 & FIGURE 7

Percentage of students reporting consuming 5+ drinks on one occasion in the past month (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 7.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	23.6 (22.6, 24.7)
AB	19.3 (16.9, 21.9)
MB	26.7 (25.1, 28.3)
ON	26.9 (24.2, 29.8)
NB	25.3 (23.2, 27.4)
PEI	26.1 (23.5, 28.7)
NS	27.7 (25.8, 29.6)
NL	29.7 (27.0, 32.4)

Figure 7.

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7   Québec asks about consuming five or more drinks on a single occasion in the past year.
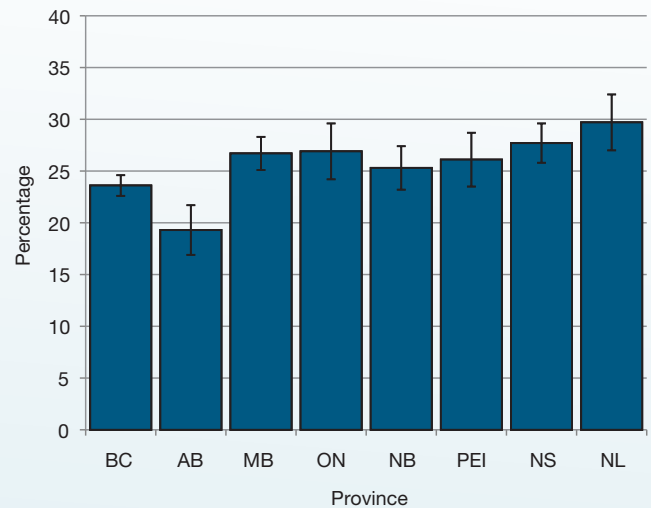
TABLE 8 & FIGURE 8

Percentage of students reporting consuming 5+ drinks on one occasion in the past month, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 8.

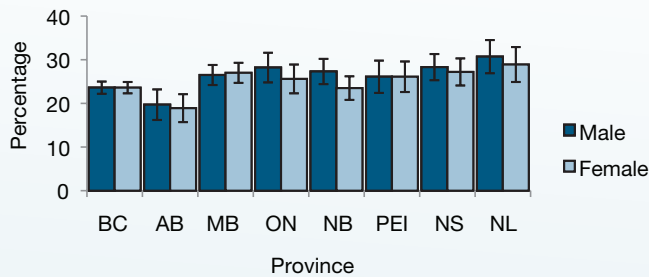| Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
BC	23.6 (22.2, 25.1)	23.6 (22.3, 25.0)
AB	19.7 (16.2, 23.6)	18.9 (15.7, 22.5)
MB	26.5 (24.2, 28.8)	27.0 (24.7, 29.3)
ON	28.2 (24.8, 31.8)	25.6 (22.3, 29.2)
NB	27.3 (24.4, 30.2)	23.5 (20.8, 26.2)
PEI	26.1 (22.4, 29.8)	26.1 (22.6, 29.6)
NS	28.3 (25.3, 31.3)	27.2 (24.1, 30.3)
NL	30.7 (26.9, 34.5)	28.9 (24.9, 32.9)

Figure 8.

TABLE 9 & FIGURE 9

Percentage of students reporting consuming 5+ drinks on one occasion in the past month, by grade

Table 9.

Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
BC*	3.3 (2.6, 4.3)	18.4 (16.8, 20.1)	27.3 (25.1, 29.6)	43.2 (40.3, 46.0)
AB	suppressed	13.9 (10.3, 18.5)	25.6 (20.6, 31.3)	41.1 (35.1, 47.4)
MB*	3.9 (2.1, 5.7)	20.5 (17.0, 24.1)	32.0 (27.8, 36.1)	48.8 (44.5, 53.1)
ON*	4.4 (2.5, 7.4)[a]	18.8 (14.6, 23.7)	29.8 (25.1, 34.9)	48.0 (42.8, 53.2)
NB*	3.4 (1.3, 5.5)	19.4 (14.8, 24.0)	33.8 (30.1, 37.5)	43.9 (38.3, 49.5)
PEI*	3.1 (1.0, 5.2)	16.6 (11.9, 21.3)	33.1 (27.2, 39.0)	49.8 (43.2, 56.4)
NS*	3.6 (2.1, 5.1)	21.1 (17.4, 24.8)	33.8 (29.7, 37.9)	52.0 (47.1, 56.9)
NL*	3.6 (1.8, 5.4)	21.9 (17.4, 26.4)	37.4 (29.6, 45.2)	55.1 (49.8, 60.4)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.

Figure 9.
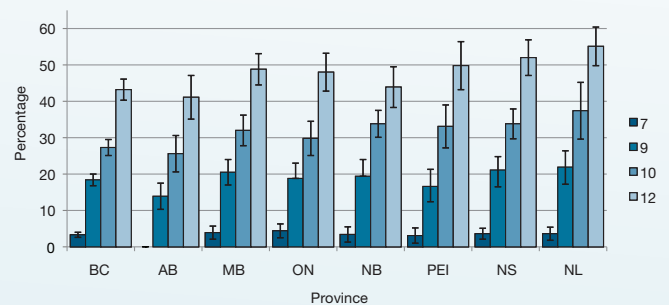
Drinking and driving

Seven of the nine provinces with student drug use surveys ask about driving a motor vehicle within an hour of drinking alcohol[8]. Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario ask students whether they have driven within an hour of consuming two or more drinks in the past year, whereas the Atlantic provinces do not specify a specific amount of alcohol or a time reference. For this reason, the data are presented in separate tables and figures.

Overall, among students in grades 7, 9, 10, and 12, 5.3–7.5% report driving a motor vehicle after drinking in the past year (Table 10 and Figure 10) and 4.8–6.0% report driving after drinking when no time frame is referred to (Table 11 and Figure 11). In four of the eight provinces, a higher prevalence of males report drinking and driving (estimates range from 6.8–10.3%) than females (estimates range from 3.1–5.6%) (Tables 12 and 13 and Figures 12 and 13). It is worth noting, however, that in provinces where this gender difference was not significant, the pattern of results was the same (i.e., a higher prevalence of males report drinking and driving). In terms of grade, estimates of driving after drinking are low among Grade 7 students (0.6–1.7%). This is not surprising given that driver's licences are not issued until the age of 16 (i.e., grades 9 or 10). Those in Grade 7 who report they have driven a motor vehicle in the past year after drinking may be referring to driving an automobile without a licence or to other types of motor vehicles such as all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles or motor boats. Approximately 1 in 10 (11.1%) to 1 in 5 (20.0%) Grade 12 students report they had driven after drinking alcohol (Tables 14 and 15 and Figures 14 and 15).

TABLE 10 & FIGURE 10

Percentage of students reporting driving a motor vehicle in the past year within an hour of drinking two or more drinks (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 10.

Province	% (99% CI)
AB	7.5 (5.7, 9.9)
MB	6.8 (5.9, 7.7)
ON	5.3 (4.3, 6.7)

Note: BC asks about past year, but does not specify within an hour of drinking two or more drinks [6.5 (5.9, 7.1)].

Figure 10.

TABLE 11 & FIGURE 11

Percentage of students reporting driving a motor vehicle within an hour of drinking alcohol (grades 7, 9, 10, 12; no time frame specified)

Table 11.

Province	% (99% CI)
NB	4.8 (3.9, 5.7)
PEI	6.0 (4.7, 7.3)
NS	5.3 (4.3, 6.3)
NL	5.9 (4.6, 7.2)

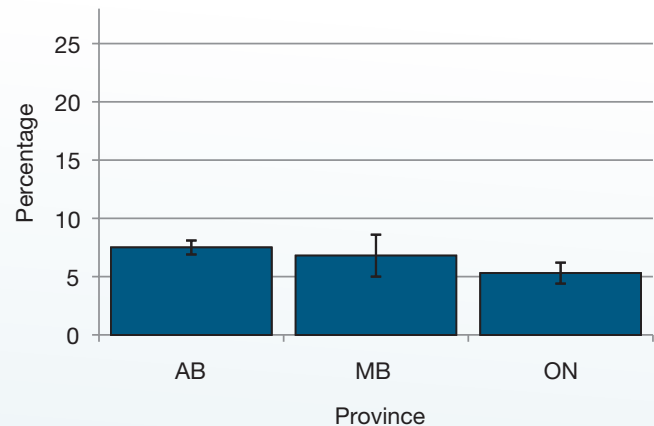**Figure 11.**

Figure 12.

TABLE 12 & FIGURE 21

Percentage of students reporting driving a motor vehicle in the past year within an hour of drinking two or more drinks, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 12.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	Female
AB	10.3 (7.1, 14.7)	4.8 (3.2, 7.2)
MB*	8.2 (6.8, 9.6)	5.4 (4.2, 6.5)
ON	6.3 (4.7, 8.5)	4.3 (3.0, 6.0)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.
Note: BC asks about past year, but does not specify within an hour of drinking two more drinks. Estimates for males and females are 7.5 (6.7, 8.5) and 5.6 (4.8, 6.4), respectively.

TABLE 13 & FIGURE 13

Percentage of students reporting driving a motor vehicle within an hour of drinking alcohol, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12; no time frame specified)

Table 13.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	Female
NB*	6.7 (5.2, 8.2)	3.1 (2.1, 4.1)
PEI	7.2 (5.2, 9.2)	4.9 (3.2, 6.6)
NS*	6.8 (5.0, 8.6)	3.7 (2.7, 4.7)
NL*	7.6 (5.6, 9.6)	4.0 (2.7, 5.3)

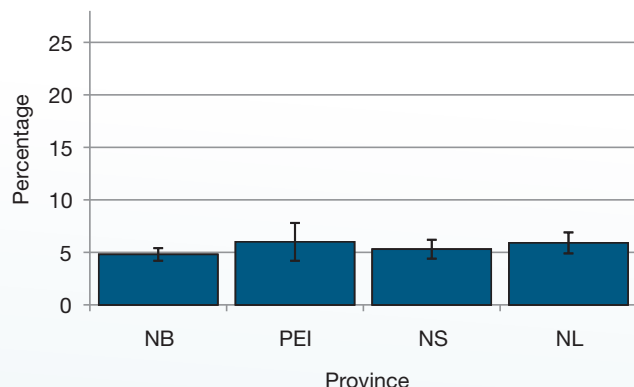** indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.*

Figure 13.
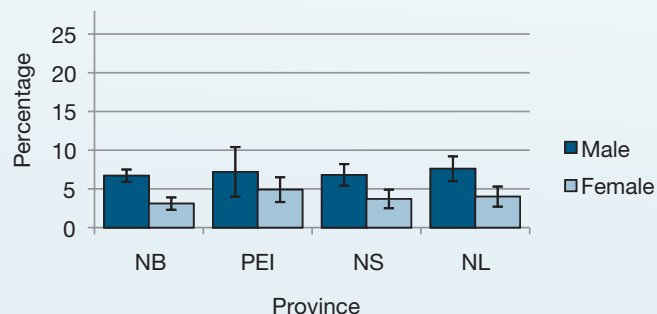
TABLE 14 & FIGURE 14

Percentage of students reporting driving a motor vehicle in the past year within an hour of drinking two or more drinks, by grade

Table 14.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
AB	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	20.0 (14.6, 26.7)
MB	suppressed	suppressed	4.5 (2.7, 6.4)	19.2 (15.8, 22.7)
ON	suppressed	3.7 (2.3, 5.8)[a]	3.5 (1.9, 6.3)[a]	11.5 (8.9, 14.6)

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
Note: BC asks about past year, but does not specify within an hour of drinking two or more drinks. Estimates for grades 7, 9, 10, and 12 are 0.9 (0.6, 1.4), 3.1 (2.4, 3.9), 4.0 (3.2, 4.9), and 17.0 (15.1, 19.0), respectively.

Figure 14.
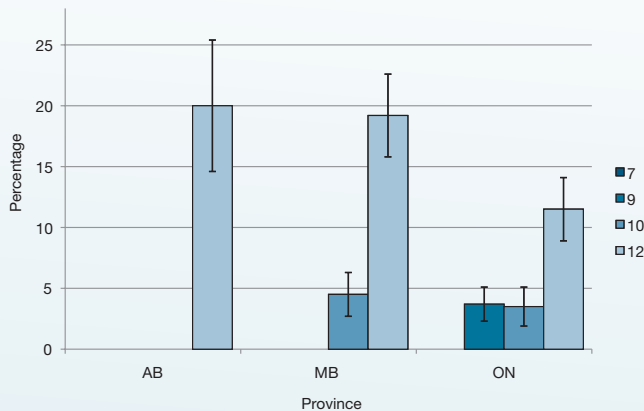
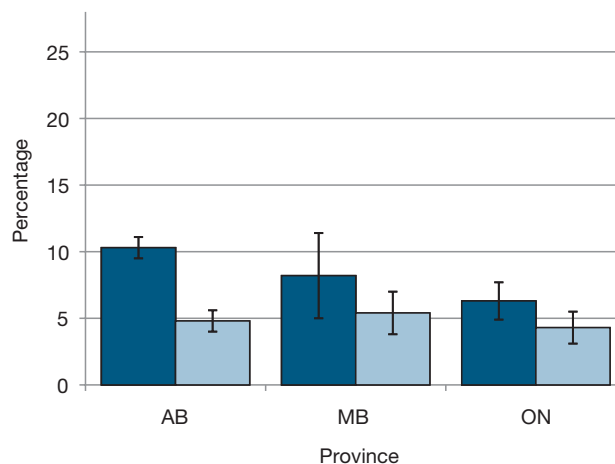## TABLE 15 & FIGURE 15

Percentage of students reporting driving a motor vehicle within an hour of drinking alcohol, by grade (no time frame specified)

Table 15.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
NB*	0.6 (0.2, 1.0)	3.5 (2.1, 4.9)	4.1 (2.5, 5.7)	11.1 (8.2,14.0)
PEI*	1.1 (0.1, 2.1)	2.9 (0.6, 5.2)	4.9 (2.7, 7.1)	15.1 (10.9, 19.3)
NS*	1.7 (0.5, 2.9)	3.1 (1.9, 4.3)	2.9 (1.4, 4.4)	13.8 (10.3, 17.3)
NL*	0.8 (0.1, 1.5)	4.4 (2.5, 6.3)	7.0 (4.4, 9.6)	11.0 (07.0, 15.0)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at $p < .01$.

Figure 15.
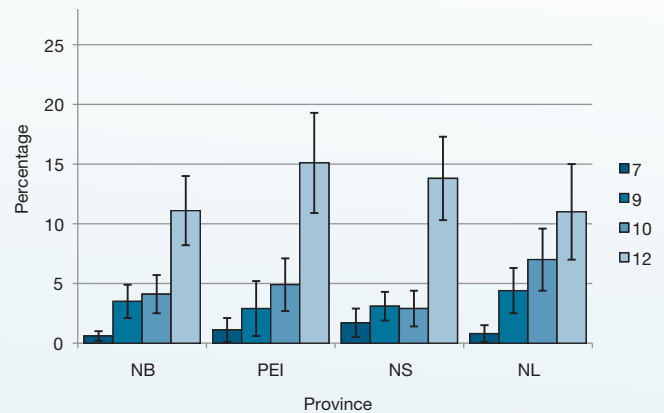
Being a passenger with someone who had been drinking

In addition to asking about driving after drinking, seven of the nine[9] surveys also ask whether students had been a passenger in a motor vehicle in the past year with someone who had consumed alcohol. Small differences in question wording between surveys may have influenced responses. In Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, 25.7–37.5% students report having been a passenger in a car with someone who had 'been drinking' (Table 16 and Figure 16), whereas in the Atlantic provinces, 16.9–19.8% of students report they have been a passenger in a car with someone who had had 'too much to drink' (Table 17 and Figure 17). One province (Manitoba) reported gender differences (Tables 18 and 19 and Figures 18 and 19). Overall, as evident with other alcohol indicators, the proportion of students who report being a passenger with someone who had been drinking increases with grade (Tables 20 and 21 and Figures 20 and 21), with the proportion being greatest among senior high school students.

TABLE 16 & FIGURE 16

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in a motor vehicle during the past year with someone who had been drinking alcohol (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 16.

Province	% (99% CI)
AB	32.0 (29.0, 35.1)
MB	37.5 (35.7, 39.3)
ON	25.7 (22.6, 29.1)

Note: BC asks about past month rather than past year.

Figure 16.

TABLE 17 & FIGURE 17

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in a motor vehicle during the past year with someone who had had 'too much to drink' (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 17.

Province	% (99% CI)
NB	19.8 (18.0, 21.6)
PEI	18.3 (16.1, 20.5)
NS	19.2 (17.3, 21.1)
NL	16.9 (14.8, 19.0)

Figure 17.

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9   Québec and the YSS do not ask about being a passenger with someone who has been drinking.

TABLE 18 & FIGURE 18

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in a motor vehicle during the past year with someone who had been drinking alcohol, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 18.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
AB	28.4 (24.2, 33.0)	35.6 (31.6, 39.7)
MB*	34.9 (32.4, 37.3)	40.2 (37.6, 42.7)
ON	25.2 (21.1, 29.8)	26.3 (22.0, 31.0)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.
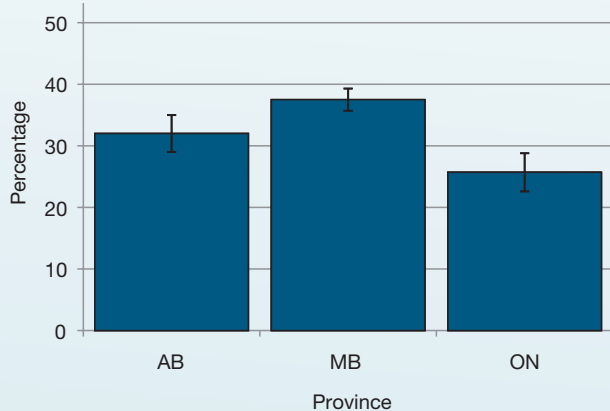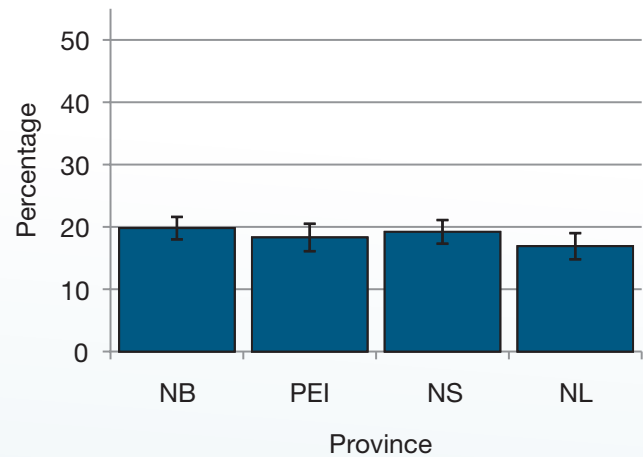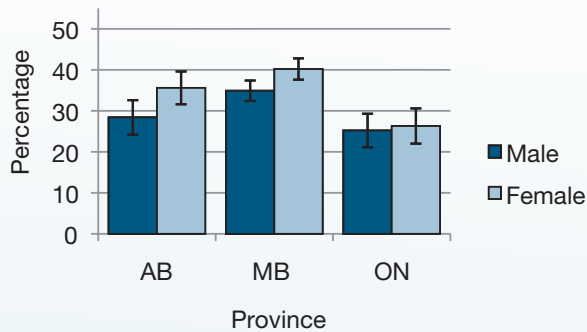*Note*: BC asks about past month rather than past year.

Figure 18.

TABLE 19 & FIGURE 19

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in a motor vehicle during the past year with someone who had 'too much to drink', by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 19.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
NB	18.2 (16.0, 20.4)	21.2 (18.8, 23.6)
PEI	17.5 (14.0, 20.5)	19.1 (16.3, 21.9)
NS	16.9 (14.4, 19.4)	21.4 (18.5, 24.3)
NL	14.8 (12.3, 17.3)	19.0 (16.0, 22.0)

Figure 19.

TABLE 20 & FIGURE 20

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in a motor vehicle in the past year with someone who had consumed alcohol, by grade

Table 20.

Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
AB*	21.0 (15.7, 27.4)	30.6 (25.0, 36.7)	36.0 (30.7, 41.7)	41.3 (35.3, 47.7)
MB*	25.3 (21.3, 29.2)	37.2 (32.9, 41.5)	37.9 (33.6, 42.3)	47.0 (42.7, 51.3)
ON*	14.0 (9.9, 19.5)	22.0 (17.4, 27.4)	24.9 (20.1, 30.4)	37.4 (30.0, 45.4)

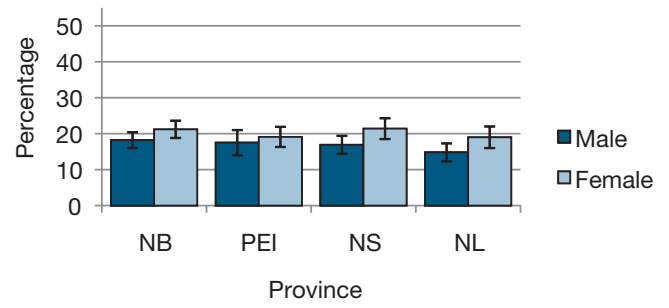* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
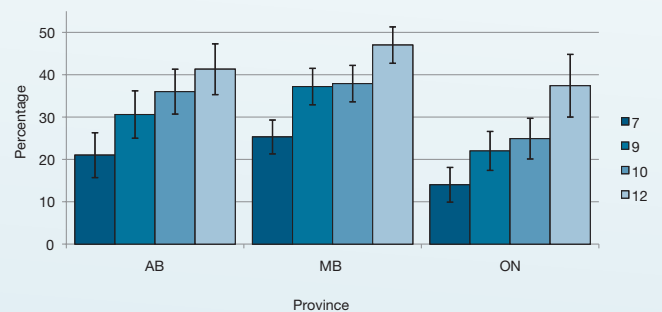
Figure 20.

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in a motor vehicle during the past year with someone who had 'too much to drink', by grade

Table 21.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
NB*	9.8 (7.8, 11.8)	21.4 (18.9, 23.9)	23.3 (19.2, 27.4)	24.0 (19.0, 29.0)
PEI*	11.8 (7.7, 15.9)	19.2 (15.1, 23.3)	20.3 (15.4, 25.2)	21.0 (16.4, 25.6)
NS*	12.4 (9.4, 15.4)	19.9 (15.8, 24.0)	22.2 (18.3, 26.1)	22.0 (17.6, 26.4)
NL*	9.2 (6.2, 12.2)	18.4 (14.4, 22.4)	18.3 (14.8, 21.8)	21.1 (15.4, 26.8)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p <.01.

Figure 21.
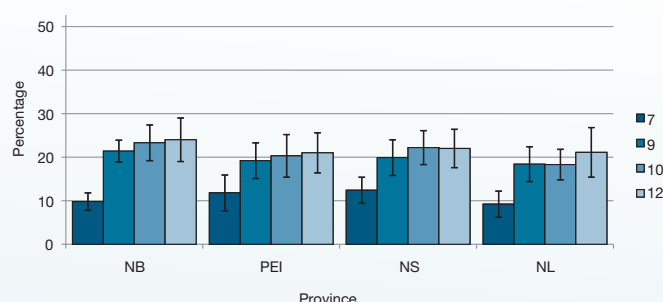
CANNABIS

All student drug use surveys also ask about cannabis use. There is some variation in the terminology employed: 'marijuana', 'grass', 'pot', 'hash', 'bud', and 'weed' are terms that are variously used to refer to cannabis. The current report provides estimates of lifetime, past-year, past-month and daily/almost daily use.

Lifetime use of cannabis

Between 20.9–36.8% of Canadian students report they have used cannabis in their lifetime (Table 22 and Figure 22)[10].

Though males report a higher prevalence of lifetime cannabis use in seven of the eight surveys, none of these results reached statistical significance (Table 23 and Figure 23). However, there is a pattern seen across provinces according to grade. Estimates of use for those in Grade 7 are relatively low (ranging from 3.1–6.5%); however, use among those in Grade 12 dramatically increases to almost one-half of students (39.8–62.6%) (Table 24 and Figure 24).

Percentage of students reporting lifetime cannabis use (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 22.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	29.6 (28.4, 30.8)
AB	20.9 (18.3, 23.7)
MB	28.0 (26.3, 29.6)
ON	31.0 (28.2, 34.0)
NB	30.7 (28.0, 33.4)
PEI	24.9 (21.9, 27.9)
NS	36.8 (34.1, 39.5)
NL	34.2 (31.6, 36.8)

Figure 22.

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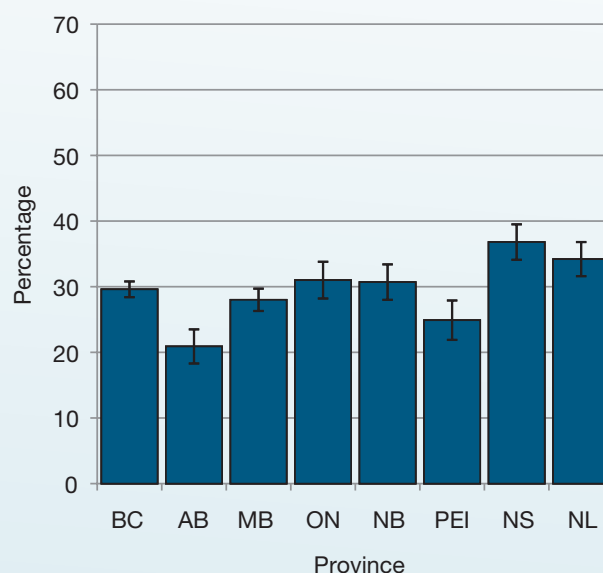
10   Québec and the YSS do not ask about lifetime cannabis use.

TABLE 23 & FIGURE 23

Percentage of students reporting lifetime cannabis use, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 23.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
BC	30.1 (28.5, 31.8)	29.1 (27.7, 30.6)
AB	21.7 (17.9, 26.1)	20.0 (16.8, 23.6)
MB	27.0 (24.8, 29.3)	29.0 (26.6, 31.3)
ON	32.3 (28.6, 36.4)	29.5 (26.2, 33.1)
NB	33.2 (29.9, 36.8)	28.3 (25.0, 31.6)
PEI	27.4 (23.5, 31.3)	22.7 (19.3, 26.1)
NS	39.4 (35.7, 43.1)	34.3 (30.6, 38.0)
NL	35.2 (31.3, 39.1)	33.4 (29.7, 37.1)

Figure 23.
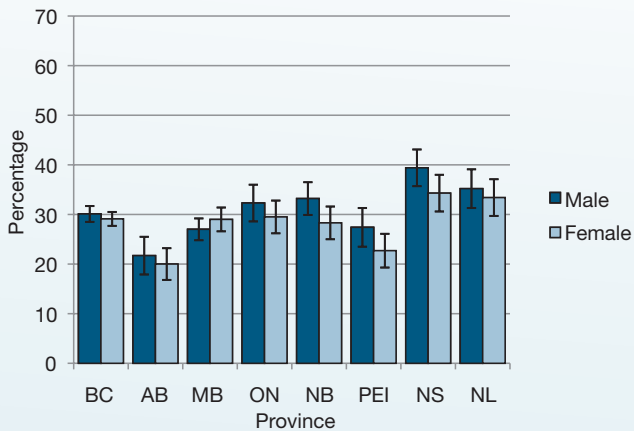
TABLE 24 & FIGURE 24

Percentage of students reporting lifetime cannabis use, by grade

Table 24.

Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
BC*	6.5 (5.4, 7.9)	25.3 (23.1, 27.6)	34.6 (32.0, 37.2)	49.4 (46.5, 52.4)
AB	suppressed	16.7 (12.2, 22.5)	26.7 (21.7, 32.4)	39.8 (33.9, 46.0)
MB*	6.1 (3.9, 8.3)	26.6 (22.7, 30.6)	33.8 (29.5, 38.0)	44.5 (40.1, 48.8)
ON*	4.7 (2.7, 8.2)[a]	24.4 (19.2, 30.5)	35.4 (30.4, 40.8)	52.3 (47.2, 57.4)
NB*	4.9 (2.1, 7.7)	26.7 (20.1, 33.3)	38.7 (34.0, 43.4)	51.7 (45.7, 57.7)
PEI*	3.1 (0.9, 5.3)	18.1 (11.7, 24.5)	31.3 (24.8, 37.8)	45.4 (38.7, 52.1)
NS*	6.0 (3.3, 8.7)	35.7 (29.6, 41.8)	42.2 (36.1, 48.3)	62.6 (56.8, 68.4)
NL*	4.2 (2.4, 6.0)	31.3 (27.6, 35.0)	42.8 (36.3, 48.3)	56.9 (50.0, 63.8)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p <.01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.

Figure 24.
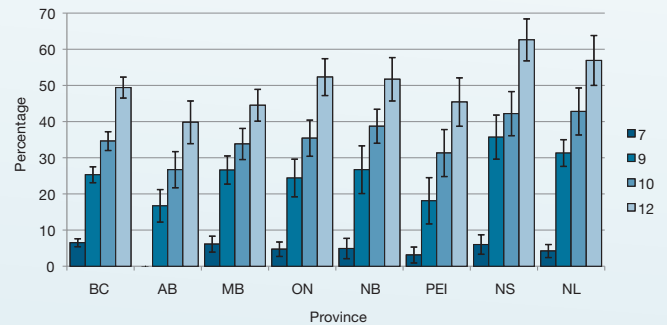
Past-year use of cannabis

The estimates for past-year use of cannabis are 16.7–32.4% (Table 25 and Figure 25). Past-year use does not differ systematically across the provinces according to gender in seven of eight surveys (Table 26 and Figure 26). However, past-year use is significantly greater in Grade 12 than Grade 7; approximately 1 in 20 (2.5–5.6%) Grade 7 students report past-year use and one-third to one-half of Grade 12 students report past-year use (30.3–53.1%) (Table 27 and Figure 27).

TABLE 25 & FIGURE 25

Percentage of students reporting past-year cannabis use (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 25.

Province	% (99% CI)
AB	16.7 (14.4, 19.3)
MB	22.0 (20.5, 23.5)
ON	26.6 (23.8, 29.6)
NB	27.1 (24.6, 29.6)
PEI	21.3 (18.6, 24.0)
NS	32.4 (29.9, 34.9)
NL	29.5 (26.8, 32.2)
YSS	26.9 (24.5, 29.2)

Note: (1) BC does not ask about past-year cannabis use; (2) In Québec, the estimate is 27.2% (24.5%, 29.8%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Figure 25.
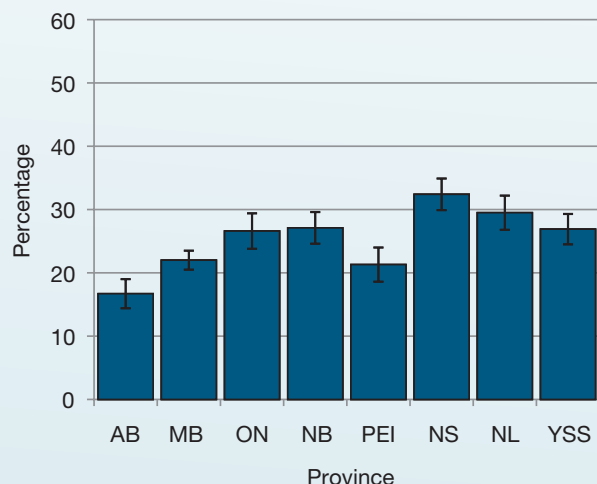
TABLE 26 & FIGURE 26

Percentage of students reporting past-year cannabis use, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 26.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	Female
AB	17.2 (13.8, 21.2)	16.3 (13.3, 19.8)
MB	21.9 (19.8, 24.0)	22.1 (19.9, 24.2)
ON	28.1 (24.5, 32.1)	24.9 (21.7, 28.4)
NB	28.9 (25.9, 31.9)	25.3 (22.0, 28.6)
PEI	24.2 (20.5, 27.9)	18.7 (15.5, 21.9)
NS	35.8 (32.3, 39.3)	29.3 (25.9, 32.7)
NL	30.4 (26.7, 34.1)	28.8 (24.9, 32.8)
YSS*	30.0 (27.7, 32.3)	23.5 (20.8, 26.3)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.
Note: (1) BC does not ask about past-year use; (2) In Québec, the estimates are 28.4% (25.3%, 31.4%) for males and 25.9% (22.5%, 29.4%) for females in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Figure 26.
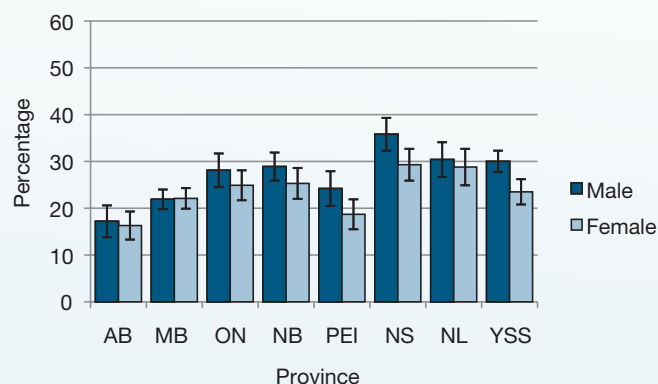
TABLE 27 & FIGURE 27

Percentage of students reporting past-year cannabis use, by grade

Table 27.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
AB	suppressed	14.0 (9.9, 19.5)	23.0 (18.3, 28.5)	30.3 (25.0, 36.2)
MB*	4.2 (2.3, 6.0)	18.9 (15.4, 22.4)	27.6 (23.6, 31.6)	32.6 (28.6, 36.7)
ON*	3.6 (1.9, 6.8)[a]	21.0 (16.0, 27.0)	30.9 (26.3, 35.9)	44.7 (39.5, 50.0)
QC	7.6 (4.4, 12.0)[a]	28.9 (21.9, 35.9)	38.2 (32.5, 43.8)	N/A
NB*	4.3 (1.5, 7.1)	23.8 (17.8, 29.8)	34.7 (30.6, 38.8)	44.5 (38.5, 50.5)
PEI*	2.5 (0.7, 4.3)	16.6 (10.7, 22.5)	28.0 (21.7, 34.3)	36.5 (30.7, 42.3)
NS*	5.6 (3.0, 8.2)	31.4 (26.6, 36.2)	38.9 (32.9, 44.9)	53.1 (47.6, 58.6)
NL*	3.8 (2.1, 5.5)	28.9 (25.6, 32.2)	36.5 (30.6, 42.4)	47.2 (38.8, 55.6)
YSS*	4.6 (2.9, 6.2)	25.0 (22.6, 27.4)	32.1 (29.2, 35.1)	44.4 (37.4, 51.4)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
Note: (1) BC does not ask about past-year use; (2) Québec does not have Grade 12; therefore, this estimate is not available.

Figure 27.

Past-month use of cannabis

Estimates of past-month use of cannabis are less than lifetime and past-year use, ranging from 9.2–17.1% (see Table 28 and Figure 28).[11] Two of eight surveys indicate a greater percentage of males consuming cannabis in the past month. However, even though estimates for males were higher than that observed among females, these differences did not reach statistical significance in the other six surveys (see Table 29 and Figure 29). Similar to other estimates, cannabis use in the past month was lowest among students in Grade 7 (1.3–3.4%), then increased sharply among those in grades 9–12. Among those in Grade 12, the percentage of students reporting they have used cannabis in the past month ranged from 14.9–26.8% (Table 30 and Figure 30).
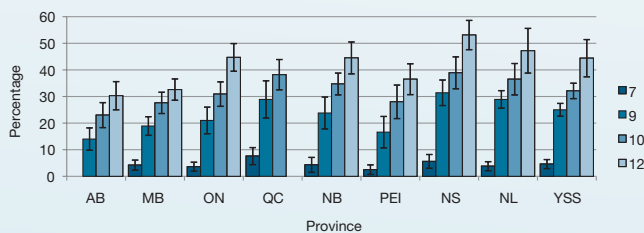
TABLE 28 & FIGURE 28

Percentage of students reporting past-month cannabis use (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 28.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	17.1 (16.1, 18.1)
AB	9.3 (7.6, 11.3)
MB	13.4 (12.2, 14.7)
ON	16.8 (14.4, 19.4)
NB	11.3 (9.6, 13.0)
PEI	9.2 (7.4, 11.0)
NS	13.7 (12.2, 15.2)
NL	12.2 (10.3, 14.1)

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11   Québec and the YSS do not ask about past-month cannabis use.

Figure 28.

TABLE 30 & FIGURE 30

Percentage of students reporting past-month cannabis use, by grade

Table 30.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
BC*	3.4 (2.6, 4.3)	15.8 (14.1, 17.7)	20.8 (18.8, 23.0)	26.8 (24.4, 29.4)
AB	suppressed	6.5 (4.2, 10.0)[a]	14.1 (10.3, 19.1)	17.1 (13.0, 22.2)
MB	suppressed	12.7 (9.8, 15.7)	15.6 (12.4, 18.9)	20.5 (17.0, 24.0)
ON	suppressed	14.2 (10.1, 19.8)	21.4 (16.1, 27.9)	26.7 (21.3, 32.9)
NB*	1.8 (0.6, 3.0)	8.7 (5.2, 12.2)	16.5 (12.3, 20.7)	17.9 (13.9, 21.9)
PEI*	1.3 (0.1, 2.5)	7.9 (4.4, 11.4)	11.9 (7.6, 16.2)	14.9 (10.9, 18.9)
NS*	2.1 (0.8, 3.0)	15.7 (12.5, 18.9)	15.3 (11.9, 18.7)	21.4 (17.8, 25.0)
NL*	2.2 (0.5, 3.9)	12.5 (7.8, 17.2)	15.9 (12.1, 19.7)	17.5 (13.2, 20.7)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.

Figure 30.

TABLE 29 & FIGURE 29

Percentage of students reporting past-month cannabis use, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 29.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	Female
BC*	18.7 (17.4, 20.0)	15.7 (14.5, 17.0)
AB	10.0 (7.6, 13.1)	8.6 (6.4, 11.4)
MB	14.0 (12.2, 15.7)	12.9 (11.2, 14.7)
ON	18.8 (15.2, 22.9)	14.7 (11.8, 18.2)
NB	12.0 (9.8, 14.2)	10.6 (8.5, 12.7)
PEI*	11.6 (9.0, 14.2)	7.0 (5.0, 9.0)
NS	15.1 (12.9, 17.3)	12.4 (10.2, 14.6)
NL	12.2 (10.0, 14.4)	12.3 (9.4, 15.2)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.

Figure 29.
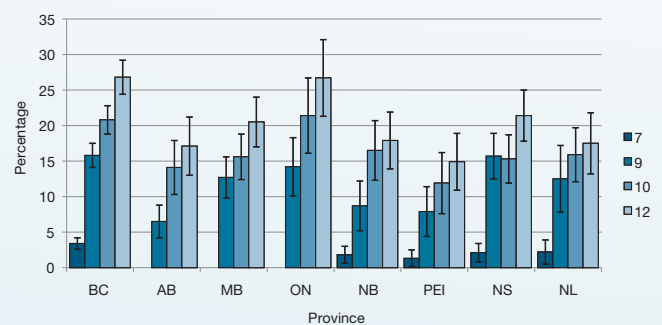
Daily or almost daily use of cannabis

Eight of the nine provinces with student drug use surveys ask about daily or almost daily use of cannabis in the past month. Overall, 2.2–5.3% of students report smoking cannabis every day or almost every day in the past 30 days (Table 31 and Figure 31). In four of the eight provinces, the prevalence of daily or almost daily cannabis use was significantly greater among males than females (Table 32 and Figure 32). When examined by grade, the same pattern as noted in all previous indicators emerges. In Grade 7, very few students report daily use - so few that most estimates for Grade 7 students are suppressed. In Grade 12, however, 3.3–10.0% of students report using cannabis daily or almost every day (Table 33 and Figure 33).

TABLE 31 & FIGURE 31

Percentage of students reporting daily or almost daily cannabis use (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 31.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	3.6 (3.2, 4.0)
MB	4.3 (3.6, 5.1)
ON	2.6 (1.8, 3.7)
NB	4.0 (3.1, 4.9)
PEI	2.2 (1.3, 3.1)
NS	5.3 (4.1, 6.5)
NL	4.6 (3.6, 5.6)

Note: (1) Alberta does not ask about daily/almost daily use; (2) In Québec, estimate is for daily use only; it is 2.6% (2.0%, 3.4%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Figure 31.
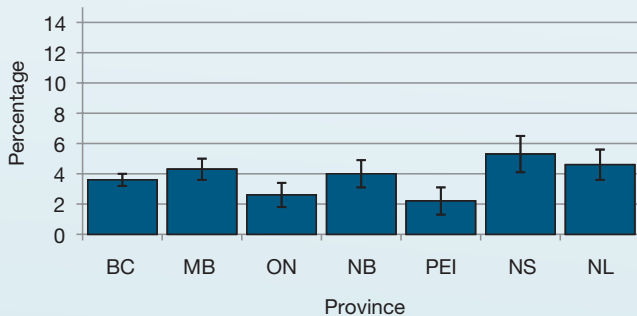
TABLE 32 & FIGURE 32

Percentage of students reporting daily or almost daily cannabis use, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 32.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
BC*	4.9 (4.2, 5.6)	2.4 (1.9, 2.9)
MB	5.0 (3.9, 6.2)	3.6 (2.6, 4.6)
ON	4.5 (3.0, 6.7)[a]	suppressed
NB*	5.7 (4.2, 7.2)	2.3 (1.4, 3.2)
PEI	3.2 (1.9, 5.1)	1.3 (0.5, 2.5)
NS*	7.6 (5.7, 9.5)	3.0 (2.0, 4.0)
NL*	6.6 (4.8, 8.4)	2.4 (1.4, 3.4)

* indicates significant gender difference at p < .01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
Note: In Québec, estimates are for daily use only; they are 3.6% (2.6%, 4.8%) for males and 1.7% (1.0%, 2.6%) for females in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.
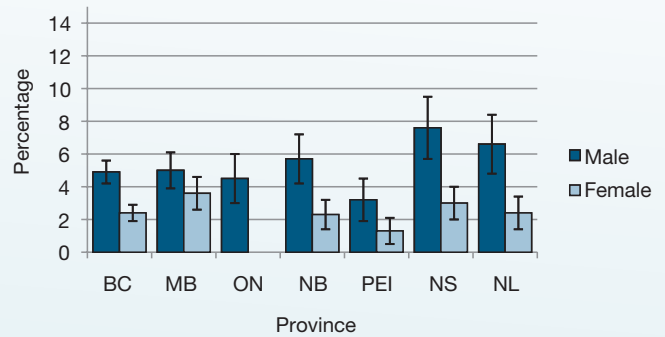
Figure 32.

TABLE 33 & FIGURE 33

*Percentage of students reporting daily or almost daily cannabis use, by grade*

Table 33.

Province	Grade			
	7	9	10	12
BC*	0.6 (0.3, 1.0)[a]	3.1 (2.5, 4.0)	4.5 (3.7, 5.5)	5.7 (4.7, 7.0)
MB	suppressed	3.6 (1.9, 5.2)	6.1 (4.0, 8.2)	7.0 (4.8, 9.2)
ON	suppressed	2.0 (0.9, 4.5)[a]	2.3 (1.1, 4.7)[a]	5.1 (3.0, 8.6)[a]
QC[b]	suppressed	suppressed	3.5 (2.0, 5.7)[a]	N/A
NB	suppressed	3.6 (2.1, 5.7)	4.7 (2.6, 6.8)	6.8 (4.0, 9.6)
PEI	suppressed	2.1 (0.6, 3.6)	2.9 (0.9, 4.9)	3.3 (1.1, 5.5)
NS	suppressed	3.3 (1.5, 5.1)	7.1 (4.6, 9.6)	10.0 (6.6, 13.4)
NL*	1.3 (0.1, 2.5)	4.7 (2.6, 6.8)	4.3 (2.3, 6.6)	8.6 (5.8, 11.4)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
[b] In Québec, estimates are for daily use only.

Figure 33.
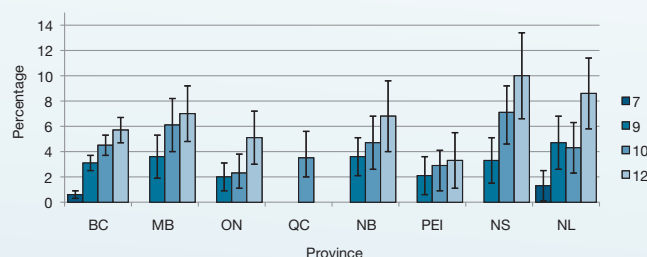
Driving after cannabis use

Another indicator that is collected across the provinces is one assessing driving after cannabis use; however, there is variation across the provinces as to how this question is asked. Although most provinces asked students if they have ever driven within an hour of using cannabis, British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario asked about driving under the influence of cannabis in the past 12 months.[12]

Between 5.3–7.0% of students report ever having driven after consuming cannabis (Table 34 and Figure 34) and between 3.3–6.5% report doing so within the past year (Table 35 and Figure 35). A significantly greater percentage of males report driving within an hour of using cannabis in four of the eight surveys asking this question (Tables 36 and 37 and Figures 36 and 37). In addition, it appears as though the numbers of students reporting they have driven under the influence of cannabis is almost entirely accounted for by Grade 12 students. Among Grade 7 students, all provincial estimates are so small that all but one provincial estimate was suppressed. However, among Grade 12 students, 13.6–21.0% report having driven a motor vehicle under the influence of cannabis in their lifetime (Table 38 and Figure 38) and 10.6–16.2% in the past 12 months (Table 39 and Figure 39).

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[12] Québec and the YSS do not ask driving after cannabis use.

TABLE 34 & FIGURE 34

Percentage of students reporting driving at least once in their lifetime within an hour of using cannabis (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 34.

Province	% (99% CI)
MB	5.5 (4.7, 6.4)
NB	6.6 (5.5, 7.7)
PEI	5.3 (3.9, 6.7)
NS	7.0 (5.9, 8.1)
NL	6.1 (5.0, 7.4)

Figure 34.

TABLE 35 & FIGURE 35

Percentage of students reporting driving at least once in the last 12 months within an hour of using cannabis (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 35.

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	5.8 (5.3, 6.4)
AB	3.3 (2.4, 4.5)
ON	6.5 (5.4, 7.8)

Figure 35.
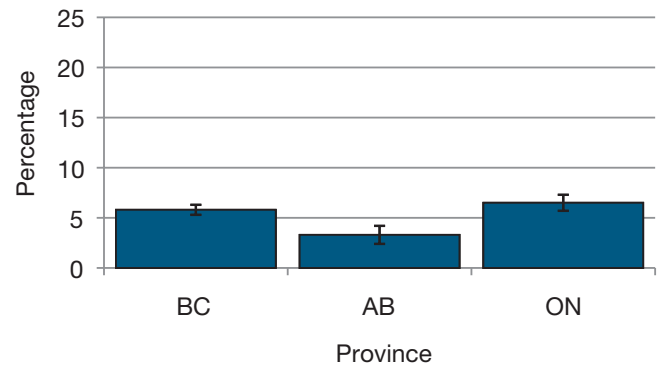
TABLE 36 & FIGURE 36

Percentage of students reporting driving at least once in their lifetime within an hour of using cannabis, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 36.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
MB	6.6 (5.3, 7.8)	4.4 (3.4, 5.5)
NB*	9.0 (7.2, 10.8)	4.4 (3.2, 5.6)
PEI*	7.6 (5.3, 9.9)	3.1 (1.8, 4.4)
NS*	9.0 (7.1, 10.9)	4.9 (3.5, 6.3)
NL	7.6 (5.7, 9.5)	4.6 (3.2, 6.4)

* indicates significant gender differences at $p < .01$.

Figure 36.

TABLE 37 & FIGURE 37

Percentage of students reporting driving at least once in the last 12 months within an hour of using cannabis, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 37.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
BC*	7.1 (6.3, 8.0)	4.6 (4.0, 5.4)
AB	4.1 (2.7, 6.2)	2.5 (1.6, 3.8)
ON	8.0 (6.4, 9.9)	4.9 (3.5, 6.9)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.

Figure 37.

TABLE 38 & FIGURE 38

Percentage of students reporting driving at least once in their lifetime within an hour of using cannabis, by grade

Table 38.

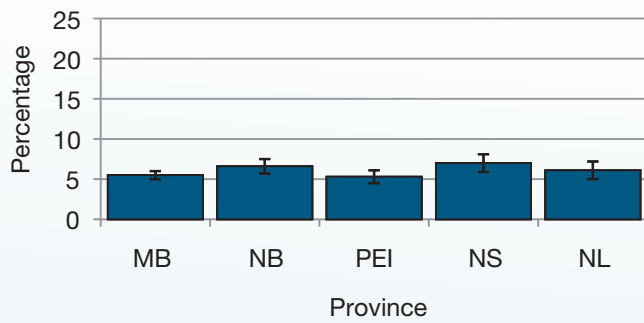| Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
MB	suppressed	3.3 (1.7, 4.9)	3.9 (2.2, 5.7)	13.6 (10.7, 16.6)
NB	suppressed	3.1 (1.4, 4.8)	4.9 (3.2, 6.6)	18.0 (14.2, 21.8)
PEI	suppressed	1.9 (0.3, 3.5)	4.8 (2.0, 7.6)	13.7 (8.9, 18.2)
NS	suppressed	2.2 (1.0, 3.4)	4.5 (2.8, 6.2)	21.0 (17.0, 25.0)
NL	suppressed	3.9 (2.3, 4.5)	5.0 (3.0, 7.0)	15.0 (10.6, 19.4)

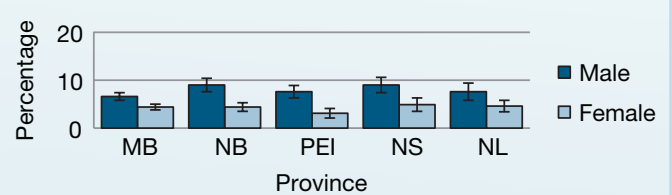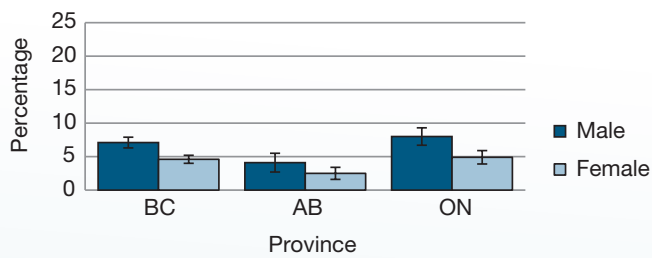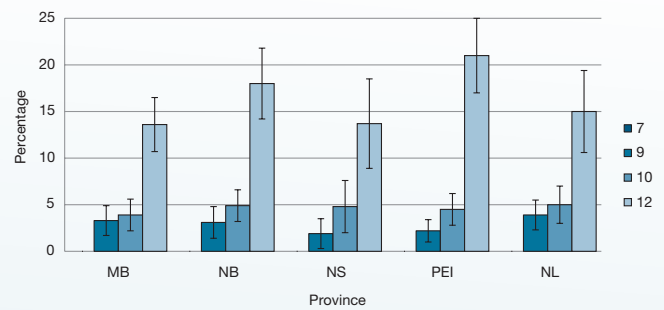**Figure 38.**

Percentage of students reporting driving at least once in the past 12 months within an hour of using cannabis, by grade

Table 39.

Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
BC*	0.4 (0.2, 0.9)[a]	3.0 (2.3, 3.8)	3.9 (3.2, 4.8)	14.9 (13.3, 16.6)
AB	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	10.6 (7.3, 15.2)
ON	suppressed	3.3 (2.0, 5.6)	3.1 (1.8, 5.2)	16.2 (13.2, 19.6)

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.

Figure 39.
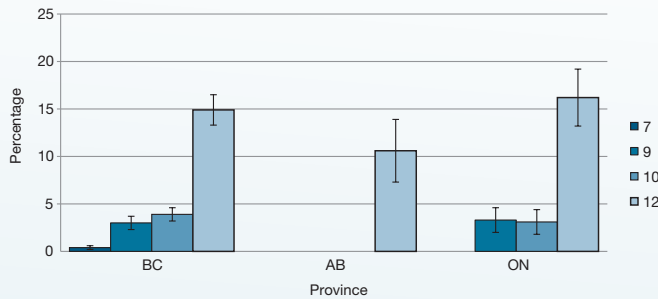
Being a passenger in a motor vehicle in the past 12 months with someone who used cannabis

In addition to asking about driving under the influence of cannabis, six of the nine provinces ask students whether they have been a passenger in a motor vehicle in the past 12 months with someone who used cannabis. Alberta, British Columbia and Québec do not ask this question. Ontario does not ask explicitly about cannabis, but instead asks about any drug (other than alcohol). Estimates range from 17.7–26.2% of students who report having been a passenger in a motor vehicle with someone who has used cannabis (Table 40 and Figure 40).

Overall estimates of being a passenger in a motor vehicle in the past year with someone who used cannabis appear to be primarily accounted for by those in Grade 12. More than one-third of students in Grade 12 report being a passenger with someone who has used cannabis (33.2–48.8%). There were no significant differences between the genders.

TABLE 40 & FIGURE 40

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in the past year with someone who has used cannabis (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 40.

Province	% (99% CI)
MB	21.7 (20.2, 23.2)
NB	22.0 (20.0, 24.0)
PEI	17.7 (15.4, 20.0)
NS	26.2 (23.9, 28.5)
NL	22.2 (19.8, 24.6)

Note: (1) BC, Alberta and Québec do not ask this question; (2) Ontario asks about any drug other than alcohol [18.5% (16.3%, 21.0%)].

Figure 40.
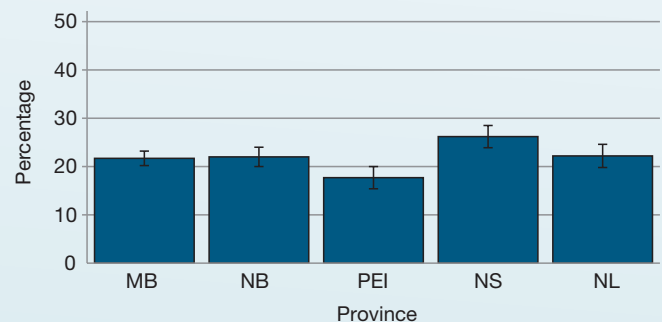
TABLE 41 & FIGURE 41

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger in the past year with someone who has used cannabis, by gender (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)

Table 41.

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Male	**Female**
MB*	19.4 (17.4, 21.5)	24.0 (21.8, 26.3)
NB	22.1 (19.2, 25.0)	21.8 (19.4, 24.2)
PEI	18.4 (15.4, 21.4)	17.1 (14.3, 19.9)
NS	25.9 (22.9, 28.9)	26.6 (23.3, 29.9)
NL	21.9 (18.8, 25.0)	22.6 (19.3, 25.9)

* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.
Note: (1) BC, Alberta and Québec do not ask this question; (2) Ontario asks about any drug other than alcohol, 17.2% (13.9%, 21.2%) for males and 19.8% (16.5%, 23.7%) for females.

Figure 41.
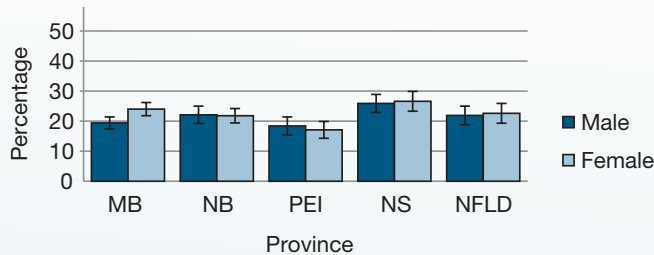
TABLE 42 & FIGURE 42

Percentage of students reporting being a passenger with someone who has used cannabis, by grade

Table 42.

Province	Grade			
	7	**9**	**10**	**12**
MB*	5.4 (3.4, 7.5)	17.9 (14.5, 21.3)	24.1 (20.3, 27.9)	35.8 (31.6, 40.0)
NB*	3.6 (1.2, 4.8)	16.3 (12.9, 19.7)	26.3 (22.1, 30.5)	41.3 (35.9, 46.7)
PEI*	3.1 (0.9, 5.3)	10.4 (6.3, 14.5)	22.9 (18.0, 27.8)	33.2 (27.4, 39.0)
NS*	5.1 (2.6, 7.6)	21.1 (16.7, 25.5)	29.7 (25.5, 33.9)	48.8 (42.5, 55.1)
NL*	3.2 (1.6, 4.8)	17.3 (14.2, 20.4)	24.9 (18.9, 30.9)	43.0 (36.6, 49.4)

* indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 12 at p < .01.
Note: (1) BC and Alberta do not ask this question; (2) Ontario asks about any drug other than alcohol, 2.8% (1.3%, 5.9%) for Grade 7 students, 13.9% (9.7%, 19.6%) for Grade 9 students, 17.9% (13.8%, 22.9%) for Grade 10 students, and 34.0% (27.8%, 40.8%) for Grade 12 students.

Figure 42.
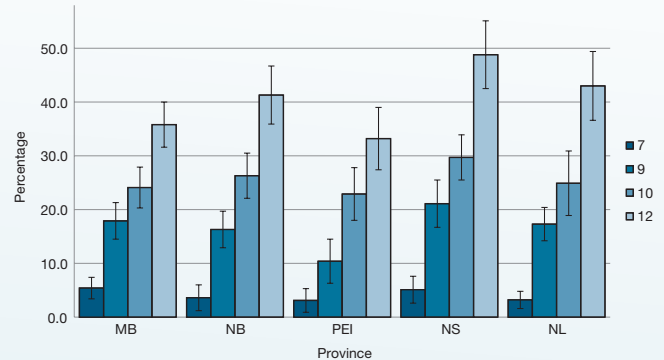
OTHER DRUG USE

The reported prevalence of drugs (other than alcohol and cannabis) such as cocaine or heroin among students is relatively rare. That said, provinces routinely measure use of these substances. British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario estimates are for lifetime use. Atlantic provinces, Québec and the YSS ask about use in the past 12 months. Therefore, the two sets of prevalence estimates are presented separately in different tables. In addition to the different time frames used in the survey questions, there is also considerable variation in the terminology used in referring to these drugs as noted where appropriate in the tables below.

All the surveys ask about ecstasy. Estimates for ecstasy use range from 3.4–7.2% reporting past-12-month use and 4.4–7.1% reporting lifetime use (Tables 43 and 44). Following ecstasy, inhalants are second overall in reported use with estimates ranging from 2.6–4.4% for past-year use and 2.2–3.8% for lifetime use. However, not all surveys ask about use of inhalants; some ask about 'solvents' or 'glue'. These differences in terminology result in different prevalence estimates (Tables 45 and 46). Estimates for steroid use range from 1.4–1.7% for past-12-month use and 1.2–1.4% for lifetime use (Tables 47 and 48). Estimates for lifetime heroin use in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario range from 0.8–1.3% (Table 49). Atlantic Canada does not ask students about heroin use. The YSS asks about past-12-month use of heroin [1.3% (1.0, 1.6)].

Table 43. *Percentage of students reporting lifetime use of ecstasy (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	7.1 (6.4, 7.7)
AB	5.7 (4.5, 7.2)
MB	4.5 (3.6, 5.4)
ON	4.4 (3.5, 5.5)

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.

Table 44. *Percentage of students reporting use of ecstasy in the last 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
NB	5.2 (4.0, 6.3)
PEI	3.4 (2.3, 4.5)
NS	6.9 (5.5, 8.3)
NL	7.2 (5.8, 8.4)
YSS	5.8 (4.8, 6.8)

Note: In Québec, the estimate is 5.7% (4.7%, 6.7%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Table 45. *Percentage of students reporting lifetime use of inhalants (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)		
	Inhalants	Glue	Solvents
BC	3.8 (3.4, 4.3)	–	–
AB	–	3.3 (2.3, 4.7)	5.3 (4.0, 7.0)
MB	2.2 (1.6, 2.9)	–	–
ON	–	4.8 (3.4, 6.7)	8.7 (6.6, 11.4)

Note: Alberta and Ontario ask about glue and solvents separately.

Table 46. *Percentage of students reporting use of inhalants in the past 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)	
	Inhalants	Solvents
NB	2.6 (1.5, 4.1)	–
PEI	3.6 (2.5, 4.7)	–
NS	4.4 (3.4, 5.4)	–
NL	4.4 (3.4, 5.4)	–
YSS	–	2.2 (1.9, 2.5)

Note: (1) The YSS only asks about solvents; (2) Québec asks about glue or solvents; the estimate is 0.8% (0.5%, 1.3%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Table 47. *Percentage of students reporting lifetime use of steroids (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	1.4 (1.1, 1.7)
MB	1.2 (0.7, 1.7)
ON	1.3 (0.7, 2.4)[a]

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
Note: Alberta doesn't ask about steroids.

Table 48. *Percentage of students reporting use of steroids in the last 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
NB	1.6 (1.1, 2.1)
PEI	1.6 (1.0, 2.2)
NS	1.7 (1.1, 2.3)
NL	1.5 (0.9, 2.1)
YSS	1.4 (1.0, 1.7)

Note: Québec doesn't ask about steroids.

Table 49. *Percentage of students reporting lifetime use of heroin (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
BC	1.3 (1.0, 1.6)
AB	0.8 (0.4, 1.4)[a]
MB	0.8 (0.4, 1.2)
ON	1.1 (0.7, 1.7)[a]

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
Note: Québec asks about heroin use in the past 12 months.
The Atlantic provinces do not ask about heroin use.

Student drug use surveys also ask about use of cocaine/crack, amphetamines/methamphetamines and hallucinogens; however, there is considerable variability in the terminology employed. For cocaine/crack, six of the nine surveys ask about use of cocaine or crack whereas three surveys ask about each separately (Tables 50 and 51).

Table 50. *Percentage of students reporting lifetime use of cocaine/crack (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)		
	Cocaine	Crack	Cocaine or Crack
BC	–	–	4.4 (3.9, 4.9)
AB	3.3 (2.4, 4.5)	1.5 (1.0, 2.4)	–
MB	3.9 (3.0, 4.7)	2.1 (1.5, 2.8)	–
ON	4.2 (3.3, 5.2)	1.3 (0.8, 2.0)[a]	–

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.

Table 51. *Percentage of students reporting use of cocaine/crack in the past 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
	Cocaine or Crack
NB	2.9 (2.1, 3.7)
PEI	3.4 (2.4, 4.4)
NS	4.3 (3.2, 5.4)
NL	5.3 (4.0, 6.6)
YSS	3.2 (2.5, 4.0)

Note: In Québec, the estimate is 3.4% (2.7%, 4.2%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Different terms are also used when asking about use of various forms of amphetamines. Four of the surveys ask about amphetamine/methamphetamine and crystal methamphetamine separately, whereas the Atlantic provinces ask about the use of either drug. The YSS asks about amphetamine and includes methamphetamine in the description (e.g., speed, ice, meth) (Tables 52 and 53).

Table 52. *Percentage of students reporting lifetime use of amphetamine/methamphetamine (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)		
	Amphetamine/Methamphetamine	Crystal Methamphetamine	Amphetamine/ Methamphetamine or Crystal Methamphetamine
BC	2.2 (1.9, 2.6)	1.5 (1.2, 1.8)	–
AB	1.5 (0.9, 2.5)[a]	1.5 (0.9, 2.5)	–
MB	2.8 (2.0, 3.5)	0.9 (0.5, 1.3)	–
ON	1.9 (1.3, 2.6)	0.9 (0.6, 1.5)	–

[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.

Table 53. *Percentage of students reporting use of amphetamine/methamphetamine in the past 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)		
	Amphetamine/Methamphetamine	Crystal Methamphetamine	Amphetamine/Methamphetamine or Crystal Methamphetamine
NB	–	–	2.1 (1.6, 2.6)
PEI	–	–	1.2 (0.7, 1.7)
NS	–	–	1.6 (1.0, 2.2)
NL	–	–	2.4 (1.7, 3.1)
YSS	2.8 (2.2, 3.3)	–	-

Note: Québec asks about amphetamine only; the estimate is 7.3% (6.0%, 8.5%) for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Question wording regarding use of the various hallucinogen drugs (e.g., LSD, mescaline, salvia, PCP) is so varied that the data cannot be presented in a table in a meaningful way.

➔ British Columbia and Manitoba ask about:

   ➔ Hallucinogens (LSD, acid, mescaline, salvia, PCP); lifetime use estimates are 5.0% (4.5%, 5.5%) for British Columbia and 5.4% (4.4%, 6.4%) for Manitoba; and

   ➔ Psilocybin (i.e., 'magic mushrooms'); lifetime use estimates are 7.9% (7.2%, 8.6%) for British Columbia and 7.5% (6.3%, 8.6%) for Manitoba.

➔ Alberta asks about lifetime use of hallucinogens, including psilocybin [5.6% (4.4%, 7.1%)], but asks separately about LSD [3.2% (2.1%, 4.8%)] and PCP [1.7% (1.1%, 2.6%)].

➔ Ontario asks about lifetime use of LSD [2.0% (1.4%, 2.9%)] and PCP [1.1% (0.7%, 1.8%)], but groups mescaline with psilocybin [6.8% (5.5%, 8.5%)].

➔ Atlantic Canada also groups psilocybin with mescaline. However, these provinces do not ask about hallucinogens in general and instead ask about LSD separately in a category of its own (Tables 54 and 55).

➔ The YSS asks about hallucinogens (LSD, PCP, acid, magic mushrooms, mescaline); 6.5% (5.6%, 7.4%) report use in the last 12 months.

➔ In Québec, the question on hallucinogens includes not only LSD, PCP, mushrooms, etc., but also includes ecstasy. For this reason the results are not presented here.

Table 54. *Percentage of students reporting using psilocybin or mescaline in the past 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
	Psilocybin or Mescaline
NB	5.5 (4.3, 6.7)
PEI	4.9 (3.6, 6.2)
NS	7.7 (6.3, 9.1)
NL	4.2 (3.3, 5.1)

Table 55. *Percentage of students reporting using LSD in the past 12 months (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Province	% (99% CI)
	LSD
NB	4.3 (3.1, 5.5)
PEI	2.5 (1.7, 3.3)
NS	3.7 (2.8, 4.6)
NL	4.2 (3.1, 5.3)

DISCUSSION

Reliable estimates of student drug use are important in order to enable policy makers, researchers, and prevention and treatment professionals concerned with alcohol and drug use among youth to identify national patterns of student drug use. The data presented in this report, compiled from the various regularly occurring surveys of student drug use, provide a much needed national perspective on student drug use in Canada.

Overall alcohol use (both lifetime and past-year use) is almost twice as prevalent as cannabis use (Table 56). The potential for harm is evident from the following risky behaviours. Depending on the province, 1 in 20 to almost 3 in 10 students in grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 report consuming five or more drinks on one occasion in the past month. In addition, almost 1 in 20 students report driving within an hour of drinking - slightly more than that observed by Beirness and Beasley (2011) among 16–18 year olds. Further, more than one quarter of students report having been a passenger with someone in the past year that had been drinking and more than 1 in 10 students report being a passenger in the past year with someone who had had 'too much' to drink.

Though fewer students report use of cannabis than alcohol, more than 1 in 5 students report having used cannabis in his or her lifetime and more than 1 in 7 report using in the past month. Daily or almost daily use ranges from 1 in 40 to 1 in 20 depending on the provincial estimate. More than 1 in 20 report driving within an hour of use and more than 1 in 6 report being a passenger with someone who had used cannabis.

Perhaps the most notable overall finding emerging from the tables and figures is the consistency of patterns of drug use across provinces as well as at the national level when examining drug use estimates by gender and grade (Table 56). Consistent across provinces, there does not appear to be gender differences in alcohol use (lifetime use, past-year use, or consumption of five or more drinks of one occasion). Similarly, there were also few survey results that indicated significant gender differences in lifetime and past-year cannabis use. However, when assessing more frequent cannabis use (past-month and daily/almost daily use), more than half of the surveys indicated a significantly greater percentage of males than females. Similarly, a significantly greater proportion of males report they had driven after drinking in five of the eight surveys that asked this question. The finding that males are more likely to drive after drinking has also been observed among non-student drivers (Beirness and Beasley, 2011).

The other consistent finding across all the provinces was the difference in prevalence of alcohol and cannabis use between Grade 7 students and Grade 12 students. Among Grade 7 students, prevalence of alcohol use is low, with the highest estimate indicating 3 in 10 students reporting lifetime alcohol use. However, alcohol use increases dramatically by Grade 12, with the highest estimate indicating 9 in 10 students reporting lifetime alcohol use. This finding underscores the critical importance of preventing alcohol and drug use between Grade 7 and Grade 12, and suggests different prevention goals may be more appropriately targeted at those in junior high or their early high school years versus those in their final year of high school. For example, among Grade 7 students, less than 1 in 10 has used cannabis. By Grade 12 this figure increases to approximately 5 in 10, with as many as 1 in 10 reporting daily/almost daily use. The findings are similar among students reporting consuming five or more drinks on one occasion. The number of Grade 7 students reporting consuming five or more drinks on one occasion is less than 1 in 10. However, for those in Grade 12 the proportion is significantly higher, with almost half of Grade 12 students reporting drinking five or more drinks at least once in the past month. These findings emphasize the importance of targeted prevention and should be taken into consideration in order to appropriately tailor prevention efforts. The findings suggest prevention aimed at deterring or delaying the onset of use may be most appropriately directed at those in their early years of high school, whereas prevention aimed at reducing frequency of use or the occurrence of specific activities (such as driving following use) may be more appropriately aimed at those in their final years of high school.

Though the majority of this report is focused on the percentage of students using alcohol and other drugs, it is equally important to underline that although 8–28% of Grade 7 students in Canada report drinking alcohol in the past year, this also means that the vast majority of 13 year olds (72–92%) don't drink. Knowing this may delay the onset of use due to perceived social norms. Similarly, the majority of students in grades 7, 9 and 10 report never having used cannabis. Sharing these facts widely with appropriate age groups is recommended as making youth aware that the majority of their peers are not using alcohol or other drugs may influence their decisions whether or not to use these substances (Mattern and Neighbors, 2004; Perkins, 2002).

Table 56. *Summary table of student drug use estimates contributed by provinces with existing student drug use surveys and the Youth Smoking Survey (grades 7, 9, 10, 12)*

Indicator	Time frame of estimate	# surveys contributing estimates**	Range of prevalence estimates %		# surveys indicating significant gender differences	# surveys indicating a significant difference between grades 7 to 12
			Low	High		
ALCOHOL						
use	lifetime	8	51.6	70.0	0 of 8	8 of 8[a]
use	past year	9	46.3	61.8	1 of 9 (greater percentage of males)	9 of 9[a]
consuming five or more drinks on one occasion	past month	8	19.3	29.7	0 of 8	7 of 7[a] *Note*: In one survey significance could not be assessed because the Grade 7 estimate was suppressed.
driving within an hour of drinking	past year	3	5.3	7.5	1 of 3 (greater percentage of males)	0 of 0 *Note*: In three surveys significance could not be assessed because the Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.
	no time frame specified	4	4.8	6.0	3 of 4 (greater percentage of males)	4 of 4
being a passenger with someone who had:						
'been drinking'	past year	3	25.7	37.5	1 of 3 (greater percentage of females)	3 of 3
'too much to drink'	past year	4	16.9	19.8	0 of 4	4 of 4
CANNABIS						
use	lifetime	8	20.9	36.8	0 of 8	7 of 7 *Note*: In one survey significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.
use	past year	8	16.7	32.4	1 of 8 (greater percentage of males)	7 of 7[a] *Note*: In one survey significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.

Indicator	Time frame of estimate	# surveys contributing estimates**	Range of prevalence estimates %		# surveys indicating significant gender differences	# surveys indicating a significant difference between grades 7 to 12
			Low	High		
use	past month	8	9.2	17.1	2 of 8 (greater percentage of males)	5 of 5 *Note*: In three surveys significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.
daily/almost daily use	past month	7	2.2	5.3	4 of 7 (greater percentage of males)b	2 of 2c *Note*: In five surveys significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.
driving within an hour of use	lifetime	5	5.3	7.0	3 of 5 (greater percentage of males)	0 of 0 *Note*: In five surveys significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.
	past year	3	3.3	6.5	1 of 3 (greater percentage of males)	1 of 1 *Note*: In two surveys significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.
being a passenger with someone who has used	past year	5	17.7	26.2	1 of 5 (greater percentage of females)	5 of 5
OTHER DRUGS						
ecstasy	lifetime	4	4.4	7.1		
	past year	5	3.4	7.2		
inhalants	lifetime	2	2.2	3.8		
	past year	4	2.6	4.4		
steroids	lifetime	3	1.2	1.4		
	past year	5	1.4	1.7		
heroin	lifetime	4	0.8	1.3		

** Out of a total of nine surveys that contributed estimates for grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 (i.e., excluding Québec).
a a significant increase from Grade 7 to Grade 12 was also observed in Québec.
b a significant difference in gender was also observed in Québec.
c in Québec, significance could not be assessed because Grade 7 estimates were suppressed.

CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the limited number of national drug use prevalence estimates available from the YSS, before the current report, those interested in the prevalence of alcohol and drug use and related harms among students at the national level were required to generalize from one of the various provincial student drug use surveys. The data presented in this report provide the first snapshot of student drug use in Canada at the national level.

In addition to providing provincial and national level estimates, this report also highlights the challenges of bringing together estimates of drug use from different surveys. Differences in survey methods employed (e.g., excluded groups, response rates, informed consent procedures) as well as differences in question wording (e.g., differing terminology employed, different time frames assessed) made assembling the data in a meaningful way a challenging endeavour. Thus the current report highlights the successes the SDUS Working Group has achieved to date in developing a coordinated approach to student drug use survey research in Canada.

The intention is that the student drug use estimates included in this report will continue to be assembled on a regular basis and that the current report will serve as a baseline with which future reports may be compared. Such an ongoing compilation will permit a national view of trends in student drug use. It will also permit individual provinces or jurisdictions to determine whether local trends are in line with or deviate from those observed nationally and/or in other provinces, with the caveat that differences in survey design may account for some of the variability. It is hoped that more comparable indicators will be included in future reports. Perhaps most importantly, the national data in this report may be examined along with other national data sources such as the Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey (CADUMS) or national treatment data. Such an examination of national data from various sources will permit a more complete and reliable assessment of alcohol and drug use and abuse in Canada, which will, in turn, assist policy makers, researchers, and professionals in the health care, prevention and treatment fields in developing more appropriate and effective responses to student alcohol and drug use in Canada.

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APPENDIX A: ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE AMONG QUÉBEC STUDENTS

Table 57. *Indicators of drug use among Québec students (grades 7–11) inclusive from the Québec Survey on Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students.*

Indicator	Time frame of estimate	% (99% CI)							
			By Gender		By Grade				
		Overall	Male	Female	7	8	9	10	11
ALCOHOL									
use^	lifetime	63.3 (60.7, 65.8)	62.4 (59.2, 65.5)	64.2 (60.4, 68.0)	30.5 (24.1, 36.8)	51.5 (44.8, 58.2)	69.1 (64.7, 73.5)	82.2 (76.7, 86.9)	88.3 (83.7, 91.9)
use^	past year	59.7 (57.2, 62.3)	58.4 (55.1, 61.7)	61.1 (57.3, 64.8)	26.8 (21.1, 32.4)	46.8 (40.2, 53.5)	65.4 (60.9, 70.0)	79.4 (74.5, 84.3)	85.6 (80.3, 90.0)
CANNABIS									
use^	past year	27.2 (24.5, 29.8)	28.4 (25.3, 31.4)	25.9 (22.5, 29.4)	7.6 (4.4, 12.0)[a]	18.5 (14.2, 23.5)	28.9 (21.9, 35.9)	38.2 (32.5, 43.8)	46.6 (39.7, 53.4)
daily use*	past month	2.6 (2.0, 3.4)	3.6 (2.6, 4.8)	1.7 (1.0, 2.6)[a]	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	3.5 (2.0, 5.7)[a]	5.1 (3.2, 7.7)[a]
ECSTASY									
use	past year	5.7 (4.7, 6.7)							
GLUE OR SOLVENTS									
use	past year	0.8 (0.5, 1.3)[a]							
COCAINE/CRACK [b]									
use	past year	3.4 (2.7, 4.2)							
AMPHETAMINES[c]									
use	past year	7.3 (6.0, 8.5)							

^ indicates a significant difference between Grade 7 and Grade 11 at p < .01.
* indicates significant gender differences at p < .01.
[a] denotes CV is between .16 and .33.
[b] other terms included in description include 'coke', 'snow', 'crack', 'freebase', 'powder'.
[c] other terms included in description include 'speed' and 'uppers'.
Note: Québec does not ask about drinking and driving, whether the student has been a passenger with a driver who has been drinking, lifetime or past-month cannabis use, driving after cannabis use, whether the student has been a passenger with a driver who has used cannabis, steroid use, or methamphetamine use.

APPENDIX B: DESIGN VARIABLES FOR THE PROVINCIAL STUDENT DRUG USE SURVEYS

	BC	AB	MB	ON	QC	NB	PEI	NS	NL	National
Name of survey	British Columbia Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS)	The Alberta Youth Experience Survey (TAYES)	Alcohol and Other Drugs: Students in Manitoba	Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS)	Québec Survey on Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students	Student Drug Use Survey in the Atlantic Provinces (SDUSAP)	Student Drug Use Survey in the Atlantic Provinces (SDUSAP)	Student Drug Use Survey in the Atlantic Provinces (SDUSAP)	Student Drug Use Survey in the Atlantic Provinces (SDUSAP)	Youth Smoking Survey (YSS)
Date of data collection	Feb. 2008 to June 2008	Jan. 2008 to May 2008	Fall 2007	Nov. 2006 to June 2007	Nov. 2008 to Dec. 2008	April 2007	April 2007	April 2007	April 2007	Dec. 2008 to June 2009
Target popula-tion	Grades 7–12 in public schools	Grades 7–12 in public, separate and charter schools	Grades 7–12 in public and private schools	Grades 7–12 in public schools	Grades 7–11 (Secondary 1–5)	Grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 in public schools	Grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 in public schools	Grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 in public schools	Grades 7, 9, 10 and 12 in public schools	Grades 6–12 in public, private and Catholic schools (drug questions asked of grades 7–12 only)
Random probability sample	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Weighting and post-stratifi-cation adjust-ment	Weighted to actual enrolment, adjusted for differential probability of response (i.e., for higher sampling in small remote school districts)	Weighted to reflect varying probabilities of each respondent to participate in the survey accounting for non-responses (response probability); post-stratification for sex	Weighted to enrolment per grade	Weighted to account for differential probability of selection and non-response; post-stratification weighted for sex-by-grade enrolment numbers	By grade level, weighting accounts for differential probability of selection of the school and the class, as is the non-response of the schools, classes and other students; post-stratification relative to the target population size	Weighted for the probability of response	Weighted for probability of response	Weighted for probability of response	Weighted for probability of response	A first weight (W1) was created to account for the school selection within health region and school strata, and a second weight (W2) was calculated to adjust for student non-response; the weights were calibrated to the provincial gender and grade distribution

	BC	AB	MB	ON	QC	NB	PEI	NS	NL	National
Excluded groups (by design)	Private schools	Special education classes	Special education classes	Private schools	First Nation schools	Private schools	Private schools	Private schools	Private schools	Those living in institutions, on First Nations reserves, or on Canadian Forces bases
	Special education classes	First Nation schools	Alternative education programs outside of regular schools	Special education classes	Schools where 30% or more of students are disabled or have learning or adaptation disabilities	Alternative learning centres		Special education classes	Alternative learning centres	Schools in Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut
	Alternate education programs outside of regular schools	Canadian Forces bases	ESL classes	ESL classes	Schools in very remote towns and regions			Alternate education programs		
	ESL classes	Correctional or health institutions	First Nation schools	First Nation schools	Schools in the Nord-du-Québec administrative region			ESL classes		
				Canadian Forces bases	Schools with fewer than 25 students per grade level					
				Institutions	Vocational training centers					
				Remote Northern regions	Out of provincial education system schools (i.e., federal or from other provinces)					
					Note: Students excluded from the target population represent 3% of the total population					

	BC	AB	MB	ON	QC	NB	PEI	NS	NL	National
Strata	Fifteen health service delivery areas; grade level	Five regional strata based on public school division boundaries	Grade level; school type	Four regions; Two school types	Grade level; language (English or French); school type (private or public); census metropolitan area (when size is appropriate)	Health zone; grade level	Grade level	Nine district health authorities; two school types	Four health regions; grade level	Stratum 1 (health region); stratum 2 (school type: elementary and high school)
Clusters	Classes	Schools; classes	Classes	Schools; classes	Classes	Schools; classes	Schools; classes	District health authority; schools; classes	Schools; classes	Schools; classes
Type of question-naire	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper	Anonymous, scannable pencil-paper; one envelope for all sealed by interviewer	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing	Anonymous; pencil-paper; self-sealing envelope
Admini-stration features	Administered during regular class hours by public health nurses and nursing students	Administered during regular class hours by a research assistant	Administered during regular class hours by teachers and school staff *Note*: Staff were provided a script and were encouraged to not circulate in the classroom (unless a student required assistance)	Administered during regular class hours by non-school profess-ionals in classrooms	Administered during regular class hours by profess-ional inter-viewers in classrooms	Administered during regular class hours by teachers and addiction social workers	Administered during regular class hours by teachers *Note*: Teachers were trained by a student drug study coordinator	Administered during regular class hours by research assistants hired by principal researcher	Administered during regular class hours by school staff	Administered during regular class hours by teachers *Note*: To protect confiden-tiality, teachers were asked not to circulate among the students

	BC	AB	MB	ON	QC	NB	PEI	NS	NL	National
Consent procedure	Varied by school district, either: Active parental consent (with over sample to correct for lower response rates) or parental notification and student consent; Some school districts chose signed parental consent for grade 7, student consent for older grades	Signed parental consent for students under 18	A letter was sent to all parents explaining the school survey; if they did not want their child to participate they were asked to complete a form	Active parental consent for students under 18; student consent	Parental consent if required by school (very few cases), otherwise passive parental consent; student consent	Active parental consent for Grade 7; passive consent for grades 9, 10 and 12 (no parental consent required)	Active parental consent for Grade 7; passive consent for grades 9, 10, and 12 (no parental consent required)	Active parental consent for Grade 7; passive consent for grades 9, 10, and 12 (no parental consent required)	Active parental consent was given as an optional choice for principals for Grade 7 students; otherwise, parent and student information letters.	Schools with elementary grades (e.g., Grade 6) and in some cases high schools (based on school or board request) obtained signed parental permission for students to participate in the survey (i.e., active parental permission); for schools that contained only secondary grades (e.g., 9–12 in ON, 8–12 in BC, Secondary 1–5 in QC), active information-passive permission procedures were used
Student response rate (% of eligible students)	53% of enrolled students for parental consent districts; 83% for parental notification districts Overall: 66% of enrolled students	38% of enrolled students	55 of 65 schools (85%)	68% of enrolled students	176 of 197 classes (91.2%) 93.5% of students responded in classes visited by the interviewers Overall: 85.2%	94.4% of enrolled students	80.6% of enrolled students	79.2% of enrolled students	82% of enrolled students	School board: 84%; school: 59%; student: 73%

	BC	AB	MB	ON	QC	NB	PEI	NS	NL	National
Missing data imputed?	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Final total sample size	29,315 students in 1,760 classes in 500+ schools	3,469 students in 20 school districts in 29 schools	4,992 students in 55 schools	6,323 students in 385 classes in 119 schools	4 736 students in 176 classes in 144 schools	6,237 students	7,653 students	4,486 students in 249 classes in 51 schools	3,848 students in 244 class-rooms in 102 schools	51,922 students in 329 schools
Link	www.mcs.bc.ca/ahs_reports	www.albertahealthservices.ca/Researchers/if-res-tayes-2008-highlights.pdf	www.afm.mb.ca/Research/docu-ments/2007 Manitoba School Student Survey-Nov08.pdf	N/A	www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/sante/tabac_alcool_an.htm	www.gnb.ca/0378/pdf/SDUS%20Tech%20report%20-%20English-April-26-2008.pdf	www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/doh_sds_tech.pdf	www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publica-tions/atl_tech_report_2007_web_cover.pdf	www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/public ations/atl_tech_report_2007_web_cover.pdf	www.yss.uwaterloo.ca/results/yss06_national_smoking_profile.pdf