

Prevention WINS

2010 Community Parent Survey Highlights of the Results

Introduction

Prevention Works in Seattle (WINS), a community coalition to prevent underage drinking and youth substance use in northeast Seattle, conducted a survey among parents of children in grades K-12 in May 2010. A similar survey was conducted in 2008.

Below are highlights from the survey results. A complete summary of the results follows.

Highlights

Parents say that teenage alcohol and marijuana use is not acceptable.

- Most parents report that it is not acceptable for teenagers, including those ages 18-20, to smoke marijuana.
- Negative attitudes about marijuana use are stronger than negative attitudes about underage drinking with 80% saying that it is not acceptable for 18-20 year-olds to use marijuana while 68% express similar sentiments about alcohol use.
- However, 94% of parents say that it is not okay for 15-17 year-olds to drink alcohol and 95% say it's not okay for 15-17 year-olds to smoke marijuana.

Most parents either monitor the alcohol in their home or do not keep alcohol in their home.

- Almost 55% of parents whose oldest child is a high school student report that they monitor their alcohol supply.

Most parents do not think it is acceptable for parents to offer their teenage children alcohol in their home.

- The percentage of parents who say that it is not acceptable increases with the age of their oldest child.
 - 48% of elementary school parents reported "No Never";
 - 52% of middle school parents reported "No Never";
 - 54% of high school parents reported "No Never".

The majority of parents of high school students have specific rules about their children not using alcohol and marijuana, yet less than half have specific consequences associated with these rules.

- High school parents are more likely than middle school parents to report specific consequences for these rules

Most middle and high school parents have talked to their children about not using marijuana and about not using alcohol.

- Most middle school parents talk to their children about not using alcohol, but less frequently than high school parents.

Social Norms

This year's survey contained questions about perceived community norms regarding youth alcohol and marijuana use. Research indicates that community norms that are favorable to drug use can have a significant impact on whether or not youth use alcohol or drugs. Since little local data has been collected about norms in northeast Seattle, the coalition included these questions to better understand our community and how norms may be affecting youth drug and alcohol use.

- Most parents report that other northeast Seattle parents do not think youth alcohol and marijuana use is acceptable and that they communicate this stance with their children.
- While 54% of parents report that they contact other parents to confirm what their child has told them about spending time with their friends outside of school hours, only 18% report that most other parents do with rates declining as children get older.
- About a quarter of parents think that other parents check to see if their teenage children are under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they return home after socializing with friends while 45% of parents say that they check their teen (down from 51% in 2008).

Eckstein Community Survey Data Analysis 6-24-10

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

- 311 total surveys completed, 303 reporting 1+ children between ages 5-18, 220 reporting a child between 11-18 years old
- 35.2 percent less than 45 years old, 64.8 percent 45 years or older
- Almost 75 percent Female (n=229); 25 percent Male (n=77). In contrast in the 2008 survey 31 percent of the sample was Male respondents.
- Almost 91 percent White/Caucasian
- Almost 87 percent from one of three target zip codes 98105, 98115, 98125 (n=263)
- In the 2010 survey 45 percent have one or more Elementary School youth; almost 58 percent have one or more Middle School youth; almost 33 percent have one or more High School youth. In the 2008 survey 47 percent had one or more Elementary School youth; almost 53 percent had one or more Middle School youth; almost 40 percent had one or more High School youth
- Grade Level of Oldest Youth (*greater skew towards MS and ES parents*)
 - 2010: 23.5 percent Elementary School (n=71) vs. 2008: 22 percent
 - 42.7 percent Middle School (n=129) vs. 2008: 37.5 percent
 - 32.8 percent High School (n=102) vs. 2008: 40.5 percent

ATTITUDES ABOUT UNDERAGE ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA USE

- In general the survey respondents continue to have unfavorable attitudes about youth substance use. They overwhelmingly disagree that alcohol and marijuana use is OK for Middle and High School youth, that small levels of use is NOT harmful, and that youth substance use is acceptable in the community. In addition, high percentages (*about 60-70 percent*) agree that teen alcohol and marijuana use are “serious” problems in the community.
- These attitudes are slightly stronger with regards to marijuana use. As an example, 80.5 percent “disagree” that “it is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana” while 67.9 percent express similar sentiment regarding alcohol use.
- These attitudes are fairly similar between the 2008 and 2010 surveys. There is a slight increase the percentage reporting they “disagree” with the statement “It is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol” from 62.7 to 67.9 percent, and additionally an increase in levels of agreement (*from 61 to 69 percent*) with the statement that “In my community alcohol use by teenagers is a serious problem.” (see **TABLE 1**)
- There are some differences in opinions between Male and Female respondents. In general, the Female respondents have less permissive attitudes about youth substance use and report more potential harm with small levels of substance use.
- There are also some distinctions by Grade of Oldest Child. We find that as the grade level increases, the support for these statements decreases. As an example the average level of agreement for the statement “It is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol” declines from 2.32 to 2.12 to 1.97 when looking at ES, MS, and HS parents. Interestingly we also see that parents of MS youth are the most likely agree that “marijuana use is a serious problem.” (see **TABLE 2**)

TABLE 1: Comparison of Attitude Measures (2008 and 2010)

	2008		2010	
	Average	% “disagree”	Average	% “disagree”
It is OK for teenagers to drink at parties if they don’t get drunk.	1.51	93.0	n/a	n/a
Teenagers should be able to drink as long as they don’t drive afterwards	1.50	92.2	n/a	n/a
An adult’s use of alcohol has no influence on a teenagers use of alcohol	1.64	91.7	n/a	n/a
It is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol	2.19	62.7	2.12	67.9
It is OK for 15-17 year olds to drink alcohol	1.45	90.1	1.39	93.7
In my community, drinking among teenagers is acceptable	1.72	88.1	1.80	82.1
In my community, alcohol use by teenagers is a serious problem	2.65	38.9	2.81	31.1
There is little harm for youth to drink alcohol once in a while	n/a	n/a	1.71	83.0
It is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana	n/a	n/a	1.74	80.5
It is OK for 15-17 year olds to smoke marijuana	n/a	n/a	1.32	95.4
In my community, smoking marijuana among teenagers is acceptable	n/a	n/a	1.83	81.1
In my community, marijuana use by teenagers is a serious problem	n/a	n/a	2.74	38.7
There is little harm for youth to smoke marijuana once in a while	n/a	n/a	1.60	85.8

SCALE: 1-strongly disagree TO 4-strongly agree
“disagree” – combined responses for strongly disagree and disagree

TABLE 2: Subgroup Analysis – Key Attitude Measures (2010)

<i>By Gender</i>	MALE	FEMALE	
It is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol	2.41	2.03	
It is OK for 15-17 year olds to drink alcohol	1.53	1.34	
There is little harm for youth to drink alcohol once in a while	1.94	1.64	
In my community, drinking among teenagers is acceptable	1.98	1.73	
It is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana	2.10	1.63	
It is OK for 15-17 year olds to smoke marijuana	1.43	1.28	
There is little harm for youth to smoke marijuana once in a while	1.87	1.51	
<i>By Grade of Oldest Youth</i>	ES	MS	HS
It is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol	2.32	2.12	1.97
It is OK for 15-17 year olds to drink alcohol	1.53	1.37	1.31
It is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana	1.89	1.77	1.59
In my community, marijuana use by teenagers is a serious problem	2.62	2.85	2.70

SCALE: 1-strongly disagree TO 4-strongly agree

ATTITUDES ABOUT ENFORCEMENT (see TABLE 3)

- About 38 percent of the respondents answered “don’t know” to questions regarding whether “police and law enforcement personnel in our community enforce laws against underage drinking (or youth marijuana use).” Of those who answered the question, about 63 percent agreed with the statements. This is a slight decline from 2008, though in the previous survey respondents were not given “don’t know” as a response choice.
- A high percentage of the respondents (*over 90 percent*) agree that police should break up parties and gatherings in the community.
- About 62-64 percent of respondents agree that the “courts should give strong consequences when teenagers are caught drinking (or smoking marijuana).” About 81-85 percent agreed that there are “legal consequences for adults” who provide substances.

- There is little change in these attitudes about enforcement between the 2008 and 2010 surveys.
- There are some slight differences in attitudes between Male and Female respondents. In particular, Females are more likely to agree that “police should break up teen parties” and that “courts should give strong consequences.”

TABLE 3: Comparison of Enforcement Items (2008 and 2010)

	2008		2010	
	Average	% “agree”	Average	% “agree”
The police and law enforcement personnel in our community enforce laws against underage drinking**	2.70	68.9	2.67	63.9
The police and law enforcement personnel in our community enforce laws against youth marijuana use**	n/a	n/a	2.67	63.4
The police should break-up teen parties at homes when youth are drinking alcohol or using other drugs	3.25	84.5	3.46	94.0
The police should break up teen parties that occur in outdoor locations such as parks when youth are drinking alcohol	3.58	96.3	n/a	n/a
The courts should give strong consequences when teenagers are caught drinking.	2.81	63.8	2.82	64.2
The courts should give strong consequences when teenagers are caught smoking marijuana.	n/a	n/a	2.83	62.6
If youth are caught using alcohol or other drugs, then their parents/guardians should be fined by the police	2.25	33.5	2.30	34.5
I believe there are legal consequences in this community for adults who give alcohol to youth or allow youth to drink on their property	2.93	76.7	3.02	81.9
I believe there are legal consequences in this community for adults who give marijuana to youth or allow youth to use marijuana on their property	n/a	n/a	3.11	85.0

SCALE: 1-strongly disagree TO 4-strongly agree

“agree” – combined responses for strongly agree and agree

** respondents could answer “don’t know” on these questions in the 2010 survey

PARENTAL MONITORING AND SUPERVISION

- Over 52 percent of respondents report it is not OK for parents to offer teenage children alcohol in their home. This percentage has slightly increased from 47.4 percent in 2008.
- Over 43 percent report monitoring the alcohol supply in their home, a slight increase from the 39 percent in 2008. There are some important differences between parents of youth in different grade levels. As expected those parents whose oldest youth is a High School student are the most likely to report monitoring the supply. As a contrast only about ¼ of parents of ES youth reporting monitoring. (see TABLES 4-5)
- About 80-85 percent report having specific rules about alcohol and marijuana use. Yet less than half reporting having specific consequences for any rule violations. Of note is that the percent who have specific consequences for rules about alcohol use did increase from 41 to 48.6 percent between 2008 and 2010.
- We find that Females are more likely to report having specific rules and consequences about alcohol and marijuana use. We also find that while both MS and HS parents have specific rules, the HS parents are more likely to have associated consequences with those rules. (see TABLE 5)

TABLE 4: Comparison of Parental Supervision Items (2008 and 2010)

	2008	2010
<i>Do you feel it is OK for parents to offer their teenage children alcohol in their</i>		

<i>home?</i>		
No, Never	47.4%	52.2%
Yes, but only on special occasions	45.5%	43.2%
Yes, on any occasion	7.1%	4.7%
<i>Do you monitor the supply of alcohol in your home to make sure none is missing?</i>		
Yes	39.1%	43.5%
No	49.6%	43.5%
I do not keep alcohol in our home	11.3%	13.0%
<i>Does your family have specific rules about children not using alcohol? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	82.5%	84.5%
<i>Does your family have specific consequences for children who break rules about alcohol use? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	41.0%	48.6%
<i>Does your family have specific rules about children not using marijuana? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	n/a	80.1%
<i>Does your family have specific consequences for children who break rules about marijuana use? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	n/a	47.9%

TABLE 5: Subgroup Analysis – Parental Supervision Items (2008 and 2010)

	MALE	FEMALE	ES	MS	HS
<i>Do you feel it is OK for parents to offer their teenage children alcohol in their home?</i>					
No, Never	47.0%	53.8%	48.3%	52.5%	53.7%
Yes, but only on special occasions	47.0%	41.9%	46.7%	43.2%	41.1%
Yes, on any occasion	6.1%	4.3%	5.0%	4.2%	5.3%
<i>Do you monitor the supply of alcohol in your home to make sure none is missing?</i>					
Yes	37.9%	45.2%	27.1%	41.9%	54.7%
No	48.5%	42.3%	55.9%	44.4%	35.8%
I do not keep alcohol in our home	13.6%	12.5%	16.9%	13.7%	9.5%
<i>Does your family have specific rules about children not using alcohol? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	70.5%	88.2%	n/a	82.0%	86.0%
<i>Does your family have specific consequences for children who break rules about alcohol use? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	31.8%	52.9%	n/a	40.2%	58.5%
<i>Does your family have specific rules about children not using marijuana? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	65.2%	84.1%	n/a	77.9%	81.9%
<i>Does your family have specific consequences for children who break rules about marijuana use? (PARENTS of youth 11-18 only) -- % YES</i>	33.3%	51.8%	n/a	40.7%	56.4%

- Nearly all of the parents report some communication with their children about alcohol use in the past year, and almost half have talked six or more times. There is a slight increase in levels of communication between the 2008 and 2010 surveys. About 84 percent have communicated a “non-permissive” message regarding alcohol use, roughly equivalent to the 2008 survey.
- About 90 percent report some communication with their children about marijuana use in the past year. Almost 32 percent have talked six or more times in the past year. Over 94 percent have communicated a “non-permissive” message regarding marijuana use. (see TABLE 6)

- We find that Females report greater levels of communication on these issues than Males. Also, not surprisingly, HS parents reported higher levels of communication than MS parents. (see TABLE 7)
- About 36 percent of parents report that they “ask if alcohol and/or drugs will be present” most of the time or always. As expected this is more common behavior among parents with HS youth.
- We see that other supervision behaviors such as contacting parents and asking about parental supervision are also quite prevalent among the respondents. There is a slight drop in the likelihood of “checking to see if your teen is under the influence,” over time, though that might reflect some of the shift towards a higher percentage of MS vs. HS parents in the sample. (see TABLE 8)

TABLE 6: Comparison of Parental Communication Items (2008 and 2010)

	2008	2010
<i># Times Talked with Children about Alcohol Use in last year</i>		
Never	6.6%	1.8%
1-2	19.0%	12.8%
3-5	28.9%	35.8%
6+	45.7%	49.5%
<i>Which Best Describes Typical Discussion with Youth About alcohol use</i>		
It is NOT OK and they will receive consequences	24.7%	34.6%
I told him/her it is OK to have a few drinks on a special occasion	4.7%	8.1%
I told them about the risk and that they should not drink	59.7%	49.3%
Even though they are less than 21, they should decide for themselves	3.3%	2.8%
I have given them permission to drink at home with parental supervision	5.3%	2.8%
Other	2.3%	2.4%
<i># Times Talked with Children about Marijuana Use in last year</i>		
Never	n/a	10.1%
1-2	n/a	32.6%
3-5	n/a	25.7%
6+	n/a	31.7%
<i>Which Best Describes Typical Discussion with Youth About marijuana use</i>		
It is NOT OK and they will receive consequences	n/a	40.2%
I told him/her it is OK for him/her to smoke marijuana once in a while	n/a	2.1%
I told them about the risk of marijuana and that they should not use it	n/a	53.6%
I have told my child it OK to smoke at home with parental supervision	n/a	1.0%
Other	n/a	3.1%

TABLE 7: Subgroup Analysis – Parental Communication Items (2010)

	MALE	FEMALE	MS	HS
<i># Times Talked with Children about Alcohol Use in last year</i>				
0-2	26.1%	11.8%	22.0%	6.4%
3-5	37.0%	35.9%	41.6%	27.7%
6+	36.1%	52.3%	35.4%	66.0%
<i># Times Talked with Children about Marijuana Use in last year</i>				
0-2	54.3%	40.0%	52.2%	33.0%
3-5	21.7%	27.1%	29.2%	21.3%
6+	23.9%	33.0%	18.6%	45.7%

TABLE 8: Comparison of Parental Monitoring Items (2008 and 2010)

	2008		2010	
	Average	% “most of time or always”	Average	% “most of time or always”
<i>Think about your oldest child between the ages of 9 and 18. When he/she goes out in the evening o weekend or spends time with friends during non-school hours, how often do you:</i>				
Ask if alcohol or drugs will be present where he/she is going	n/a	n/a	2.06	36.2
Ask if a parent or adult will be present to supervise, if he/she is going to another child’s house	3.58	89.3	3.57	91.7
Contact other parents to confirm what your child has told you	2.71	56.9	2.61	53.8
Check to see if your teen is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (smell breath, check eyes, talk).	2.51	51.5	2.35	45.5

SCALE: 1-never, 2-once in a while, 3-most of the time, 4-always

PERCEPTIONS OF MOST PARENTS

- About 60 percent of respondents disagree that “MOST parents believe it is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink.” Over 87 percent disagree that “MOST parents believe it is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana.” There is little evidence to suggest that parents believe that there is a norm supporting youth alcohol and marijuana use in the community.
- Almost 53 percent report that “MOST parents know where their teens are and who they are with when not home.” As comparison, in the 2008 survey almost everyone self-reported that they knew where their teen where when not at home.
- Only 33 percent of respondents report that “MOST parents monitor the alcohol supply in their homes.” We found earlier that about ½ of those who keep alcohol in their home monitor the supply. (see TABLE 9)
- We do find that parents of HS youth report less favorable perceptions of most parents in the community. They are less likely to agree that most parents feel that alcohol and marijuana are NOT OK for 18-20 year olds, that most parents know where they kids are, and that most parents monitor their alcohol supply. The MS and HS youth parents have similar assessments around norms about consequences for substance use (see TABLE 10)

TABLE 9: Perceptions of NE Seattle Parents Attitudes and Behaviors (2010)

<i>In your opinion, how much do you agree/disagree with each of these statements about MOST PARENTS in NE Seattle</i>	Average	% “disagree”
Most parents in NE Seattle believe it is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol	2.36	59.7
Most parents in NE Seattle believe it is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana	1.97	87.0
Most parents in NE Seattle believe there is little harm for youth to drink alcohol once in a while	2.38	57.0
Most parents in NE Seattle believe there is little harm for youth to smoke marijuana once in a while	2.04	81.3
	Average	% “agree”
Most parents in NE Seattle know where their teens are and who they are with when not home	2.47	52.8
Most parents in NE Seattle have consequences for children who break rules about alcohol use	2.64	63.1
Most parents in NE Seattle have consequences for children who break rules about marijuana use	2.66	65.0
Most parents in NE Seattle monitor the alcohol supply in their homes to make sure none is missing	2.27	32.6

SCALE: 1-strongly disagree TO 4-strongly agree

“disagree” – combined responses for strongly disagree and disagree

“agree” – combined responses for strongly agree and agree

TABLE 10: Subgroup Analysis – Perceptions of NE Seattle Parents Attitudes and Behaviors – Selected Items (2010)

<i>In your opinion, how much do you agree/disagree with each of these statements about MOST PARENTS in NE Seattle</i>	ES	MS	HS
Most parents in NE Seattle believe it is OK for 18-20 year olds to drink alcohol	2.48	2.45	2.16
Most parents in NE Seattle believe it is OK for 18-20 year olds to smoke marijuana	2.07	2.00	1.86
Most parents in NE Seattle know where their teens are and who they are with when not home	2.59	2.57	2.32
Most parents in NE Seattle have consequences for children who break rules about alcohol use	2.91	2.60	2.54
Most parents in NE Seattle have consequences for children who break rules about marijuana use	2.93	2.62	2.57
Most parents in NE Seattle monitor the alcohol supply in their homes to make sure none is missing	2.33	2.35	2.16

SCALE: 1-strongly disagree TO 4-strongly agree

- About 80 percent report that the “typical” NE Seattle family has talked with their children about alcohol use in the past three months. About 65 percent report that there has been communication about a “non-permissive” message on alcohol use. We do find, though, that Males are less likely to report that others have talked with their youth about alcohol.
- About 73 percent report that the “typical” NE Seattle family has talked with their children about marijuana use in the past three months. As such it does not appear that levels of perception about communication vary greatly from actual levels of communication. (see **TABLE 11**)

TABLE 11: Perceptions of NE Seattle Parental Communication (2010)

<i>Which Best Describes Typical NE Seattle family Discussion with Youth About alcohol use</i>	
Have not talked with child in last three months	19.4%
It is NOT OK and they will receive consequences	28.6%
They told him/her it is OK to have a few drinks on a special occasion	8.3%
They told them about the risk and that they should not drink	36.4%
They told their children even though they are less than 21, they should decide for themselves	2.4%
They told their child it is OK to drink at home with parental supervision	4.4%
Other	0.5%
<i>Which Best Describes Typical NE Seattle family Discussion with Youth About marijuana use</i>	
Have not talked with child in last three months	27.2%
It is NOT OK and they will receive consequences	35.0%
They told him/her it is OK for him/her to smoke marijuana once in a while	1.5%
They told them about the risk of marijuana and that they should not use it	35.9%
They have told their my child it OK to smoke at home with parental supervision	0.5%
Other	0.0%

- The respondents believe that MOST parents engage in different monitoring behaviors at a level less than their own self-reported behaviors. As an example, in **TABLE 8** we found that over 91 percent of parents reported “asking if there would be a parent supervising” most of the time or always. In contrast about 60 percent report that MOST parents do this most of the time or always. Additionally, while almost 54 percent report they “contact other parents to

confirm what they told you,” only 18 percent report that “MOST parents” do this at the comparable level. (see **TABLE 12**)

- Parents of HS youth have somewhat lower assessments of levels of parental monitoring. In particular they are less likely to believe that most parents ask if they will be supervision and contact other parents to confirm what their child has told them. (see **TABLE 13**)

TABLE 12: Perception of NE Seattle Parental Monitoring (2010)

<i>How often do MOST NE Seattle PARENTS do the following when their teen goes out in the evening or on the weekend, or spends time with friends during non-school hours</i>	Average	% “most of time or always”
Ask if alcohol or drugs will be present where he/she is going	2.31	33.2%
Ask if a parent or adult will be present to supervise, if he/she is going to another child’s house	2.64	60.5%
Contact other parents to confirm what their child has told you	2.06	18.4%
Check to see if their teen is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (smell breath, check eyes, talk).	2.23	27.1%

SCALE: 1-never, 2-once in a while, 3-most of the time, 4-always

TABLE 13: Subgroup Analysis – Perception of NE Seattle Parental Monitoring (2010) – Selected Items (2010)

<i>How often do MOST NE Seattle PARENTS do the following when their teen goes out in the evening or on the weekend, or spends time with friends during non-school hours</i>	ES	MS	HS
Ask if a parent or adult will be present to supervise, if he/she is going to another child’s house	2.78	2.71	2.51
Contact other parents to confirm what their child has told you	2.14	2.11	1.99

SCALE: 1-never, 2-once in a while, 3-most of the time, 4-always