

Gender Differences in the Use of Drugs

A look at gender differences in college students and their non-college peers

Monitoring the Future's 2003 study on Drug Abuse captures a representative sample of college students in the United States, as well as their non-college peers.

The age bracket includes individuals aged 19-22, an age range most typical for college attendance. The drugs under comparison are taken recreationally, and are not under a doctor's orders.

- Annually, college men are less likely than their non-college counterparts to use inhalants, LSD, cocaine, ecstasy, meth/amphetamines, sedatives, tranquilizers, and the class of "Date Rape Drugs."

- ...On the other hand, women do not have as large a disparity in annual hard drug use between those women who attend college and those who do not.

- Daily marijuana use is higher among college males than college females.



- Both male and female college students have higher rates of binge drinking than their counterparts not in college (33% to 27% for females and 47% to 43% for males.)**
- College rates for smoking cigarettes daily is approximately the **same between genders**; In the non-college segment, **31% of men were daily smokers versus 27% of women.**
- The smoking rates for college men were only slightly higher than those for college women (**7.9% vs. 7.4%**) with **no consistent difference** among college students in their smoking rates over the past several years.

Monitoring The Future

The survey used a weighted sample of 1270 total college students and 880 total non-college peers of the same age bracket.

Students who dropped out of high school **are not** included in the non-college sample.

The college student sample includes those students who are enrolled full time at 2-year and 4-year Universities.

"Binge Drinking"

Consuming **5 or more beverages in one time frame.**

One Standard Drink=

- 10-12 oz. of Beer**
- 5 oz. of Wine or 1 Wine Cooler**
- 1 Shot or 1 Mixed Drink**

- Overall, the non-college segment is more drug-experienced than the college student segment. This pattern is a continuation of the high school scenario in which **those without college plans are more likely to use drugs.**

