

Connecticut Ranks Among
THE TOP
10 STATES
In the Country for
DRUG
Use Problems

Connecticut also scores high in the percentage of teens who were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property.

The State is in the grips of an opioid crisis, and in 2016, 917 people died from a drug overdose. In the first 6 months of 2017, there were 539 overdose deaths putting the state on a path to exceed 1,000 overdose deaths this year.

Youth tells us that drugs are “everywhere” in every community and easy to purchase. Connecticut youth have higher rates of drug use and start earlier than their peers nationally.

Against the environmental backdrop of substance abuse, addiction, overdose, and wide prevalence of drugs in the community, Hartford’s Latino young people face their own set of challenges! Statistically, they are at a higher risk of substance abuse as compared to their peers in suburban areas and, in most cases, compared to other youth in the city.

While Hartford specific data on youth drug use rates is not collected consistently, statistically significant state-level data shows that Hispanic/Latino high school students have higher substance use rates than their peers for methamphetamine, marijuana, alcohol, MDMA and inhalants (Connecticut –Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015).

Applying state-level use percentages to Hartford’s Hispanic/Latino teenagers (3,000):

- **An estimated 420 high school students may be using prescription drugs without a doctor’s prescription**
- **Another 480 (16%) likely tried alcohol before the age of 13**
- **For 11 and 12 year olds, more than 250 may already be using marijuana.**

In addition, Hispanic parents were identified as significantly more permissive of their children smoking marijuana than African American or Caucasian parents.

21% said they were OK if their teen “smoked marijuana sometimes.”

Partnership for Drug-Free Kids

Teens are likely to use substances at higher rates when they perceive using as normal behavior and when they do not understand the harms associated with using drugs and alcohol.