

TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA AND OTHER DRUGS

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Very few Peel students smoke on a daily basis. While 29% reported they had ever smoked a cigarette (even just a few puffs), only 5% of all Peel students reported they smoked every day.
- Those who smoke started early. Almost 70% of all students who reported they had ever smoked had started by Grade 9 or earlier.
- Two in every three (68%) students reported they had tried an alcoholic drink at some point in their lives. Of these, 70% had tried it before they entered Grade 9.
- Peel students who drank were also highly likely to have had at least one experience with binge drinking (five or more drinks on one occasion). Two in every five (40%) students who had ever tried alcohol reported this behaviour. Six per cent of students reported they went binge drinking at least once a week or more often.
- In the 12 months before the survey, one in four (24%) of all Peel students reported they had either been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking alcohol or been unsure if the driver had ingested alcohol.
- Marijuana use was prevalent among Peel youth. One in four (26%) students reported they had tried marijuana in their lifetime and 38% of these students first tried it before they started high school.
- A small proportion of students reported they had used illegal drugs such as ecstasy/MDMA (4%), cocaine (3%) and crack (2%) in their lifetime.

INTRODUCTION

A drug is defined as any substance, other than food, that is taken to change the way the body and/or mind functions. This includes alcohol, tobacco, medications and illicit drugs. Research has shown that most adolescents have experimented with some form of drug. The most commonly-used substances among adolescents in Ontario are alcohol, cannabis (marijuana, hash, hash oil) and tobacco. In 2003, over half of Ontario's students in grades 7 to 12 reported they had drunk alcohol, almost 30% reported they had used marijuana and approximately 19% reported they had used tobacco in the past year.³⁷

Substance use is responsible for a significant proportion of illness and premature death in Canada.³⁸ Heavy alcohol use has been linked to high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, liver disease, cancer and premature death.^{39,40} Tobacco is responsible for about five million deaths each year making it the second major cause of death in the world.⁴¹

Although the majority of the morbidity and mortality associated with substance use occurs during adulthood, experimentation with and use of these substances begins during adolescence or earlier.³⁸ For example, most people who smoke started smoking before 19 years of age.⁴¹ The average age at which Ontario students smoke their first cigarette is currently 13 years.³⁷

In addition to illness and death, the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is associated with problems such as strained relationships, family problems, physical and psychological dependence, and difficulties at school and work. Substance use has also been linked to social problems such as increased prevalence of domestic violence, crime and traffic crashes.³⁸ Adolescents are especially vulnerable to the risks of alcohol use and driving. In 2000, 40% of teenage drivers who were killed in Canada had been drinking.⁴² One in seven licensed drivers in grades 10 to 12 reported they had driven within an hour of consuming two or more drinks. More than one-quarter (29%) of Ontario students in grades 7 to 12 reported they had ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking.³⁷

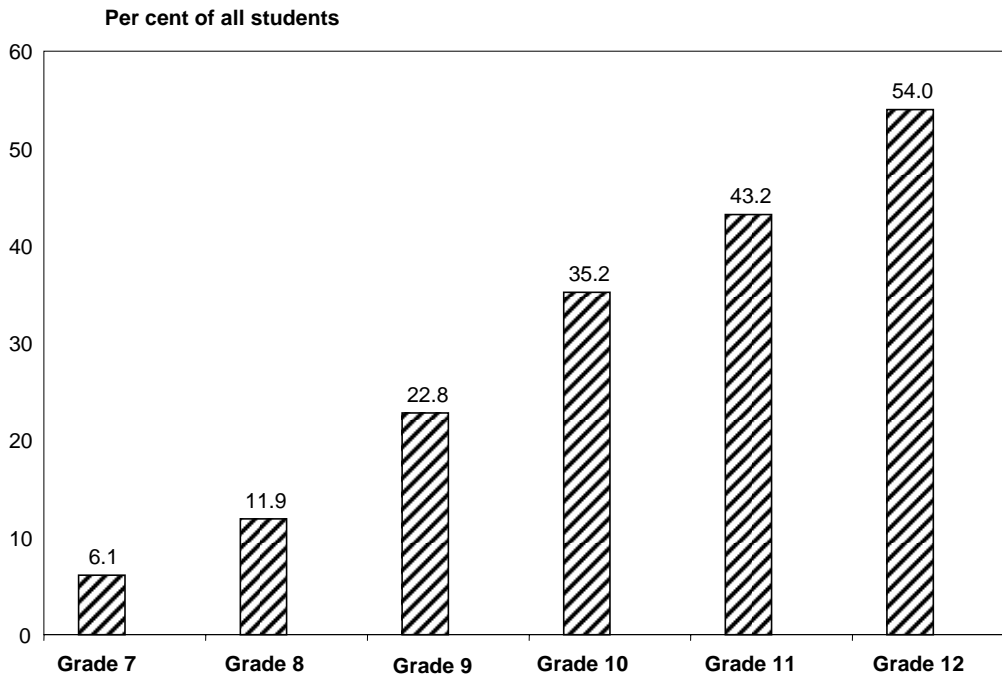
TOBACCO USE

Smoking Status

Twenty-nine per cent of students in Peel reported they had ever smoked a cigarette (even just a few puffs). The difference between females (30%) and males (28%) who had ever smoked a cigarette was not significant.

The proportion of students who reported they had ever smoked a cigarette increased by grade from Grade 7 (6%) to Grade 12 (54%) (see *Figure 3.1.1*).

Figure 3.1.1: Proportion of Students Who Reported Ever Smoking Cigarettes by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Frequency of Smoking

Five per cent of all students in Peel reported they smoked daily. This finding is lower than Ontario where 14% of all students in grades 7 to 12 smoked every day.³⁷

Eighteen per cent of all students in Peel reported they do not smoke now which means they either experimented with smoking at one point in their lives or are former smokers (see Table 3.1.1). Daily smoking was similar among females and males (5%).

Table 3.1.1: Frequency of Cigarette Smoking, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students		
	Total	Male	Female
Every day (daily)	5.0	5.0	5.0
At least once a week, but not every day	2.0	1.9	2.2
Less than once a week	4.2	3.3	4.9
I do not smoke now	17.6	17.1	18.0
Never smoked at all	71.2	72.8	69.9

Daily smoking increased by grade from less than 1% in Grade 7 to 14% in Grade 12 (see Table 3.1.2). The proportion of students who reported they do not smoke now (either experimented with smoking at one point in their lives or are former smokers) also increased by grade from 4% in Grade 7 to 31% in Grade 12.

Table 3.1.2: Frequency of Cigarette Smoking by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

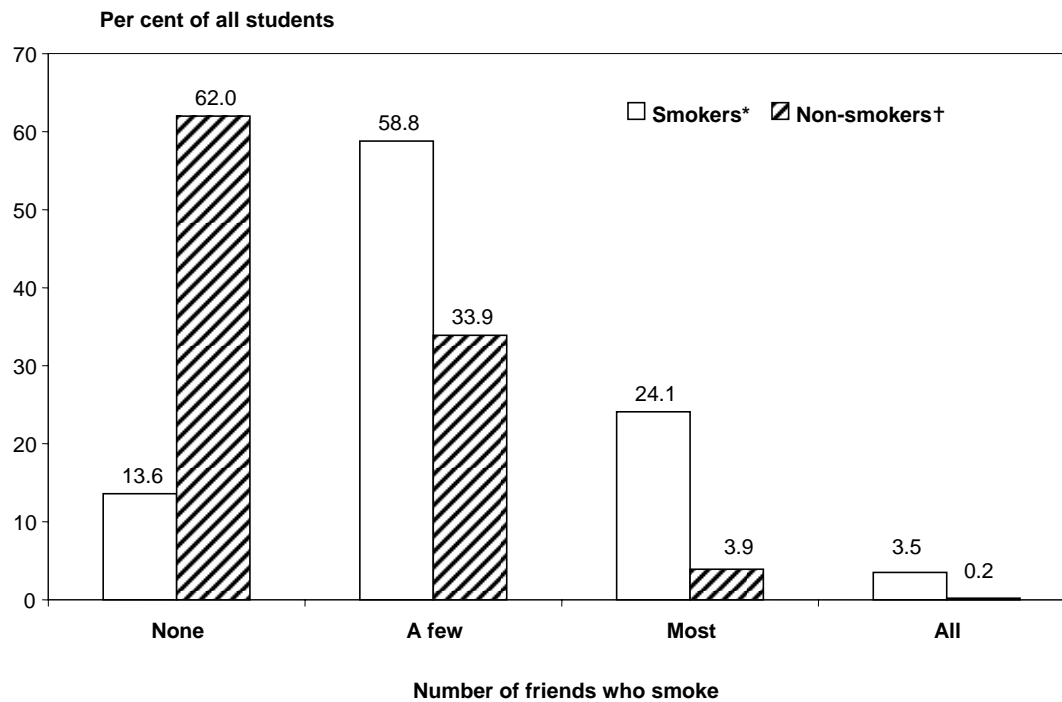
	Per cent of all students					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Every day (daily)	0.4	0.5	2.7	5.1	7.1	14.0
At least once a week, but not every day	NR	0.7	1.7	2.9	3.1	3.1
Less than once a week	1.7	1.8	4.2	5.1	6.4	5.8
I do not smoke now	3.6	8.6	13.8	21.9	26.4	30.9
Never smoked at all	93.9	88.3	77.6	65.0	57.0	46.1

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Friends who Smoke by Smoking Status

Students who had ever smoked a cigarette were significantly more likely than students who had never smoked to report that most or all of their friends currently smoke (28% and 4% respectively) (see *Figure 3.1.2*). There were no significant differences between males and females.

Figure 3.1.2: Proportion of Students by Number of Close Friends Who Smoke and Smoking Status, Region of Peel, 2004



*Smoker defined as person who ever smoked.

†Non-smoker defined as person who never smoked.

Grade 12 students (35%) who had ever smoked were most likely to report that most or all of their friends smoked cigarettes compared to students in other grades (see Table 3.1.3).

Table 3.1.3: Proportion of Students Who Ever Smoked by Number of Close Friends Who Smoke by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever smoked					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
None	25.9	17.9	16.1	13.6	11.6	12.1
Most or all	18.7	20.2	22.0	23.2	28.5	34.9

Number of Cigarettes Smoked

The following analysis is based on those students who reported they currently smoke. A current smoker is defined as someone who either smokes daily or at least once a week.

More than half (52%) of students reported they smoked two or less cigarettes on the days they usually smoked (see Table 3.1.4). About 3% of Peel students reported they smoked more than 20 cigarettes on the days they usually smoked, which is equivalent to more than a pack of cigarettes. There was no significant difference between males and females in the number of cigarettes smoked.

Table 3.1.4: Number of Cigarettes Smoked per Day, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who are current smokers		
	Total	Male	Female
Less than 1	29.3	28.5	29.9
1 or 2	23.0	21.8	23.7
3 to 5	22.4	23.0	21.8
6 to 10	13.2	12.6	13.6
11 to 15	6.5	5.2	7.4
16 to 20	2.3	3.7	1.5
More than 20	3.4	5.2	2.1

Grade 12 students (33%) who currently smoked were most likely to report they smoked six or more cigarettes a day (see Table 3.1.5).

Table 3.1.5: Number of Cigarettes Smoked per Day by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who are current smokers					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Less than 1	NR	52.9	40.7	37.5	27.9	16.5
1 or 2	NR	17.6	20.4	24.4	25.4	20.3
3 to 5	NR	NR	22.1	14.4	24.9	29.7
6 to 10	NR	NR	8.0	13.1	11.2	18.4
11 to 15	NR	NR	5.3	4.4	6.1	8.6
16 to 20	NR	NR	NR	4.4	2.5	1.9
More than 20	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	4.5

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Smoking Initiation

Seventy per cent of all students who reported they had ever smoked started by Grade 9 or earlier (see Table 3.1.6). There were no significant differences between males and females at the grade when they first started to smoke.

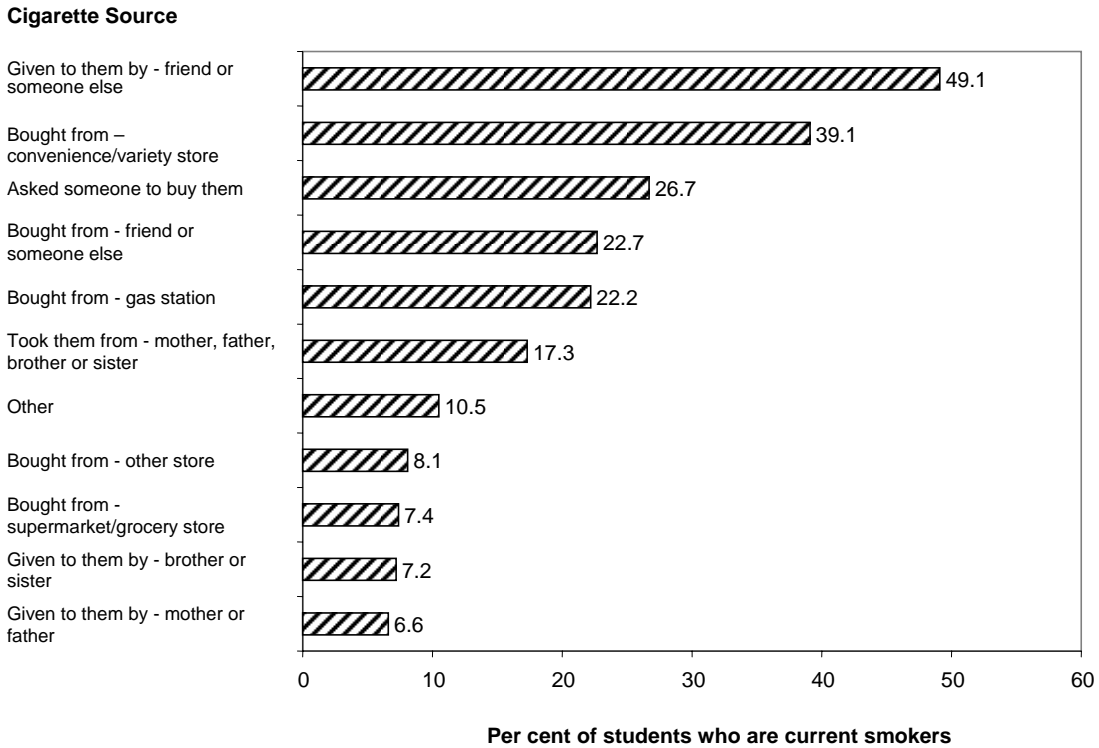
Table 3.1.6: Grade at Which Students Had Their “First Smoke”, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who are current smokers		
	Total	Male	Female
Grade 6 or earlier	11.5	11.1	11.7
Grade 7	15.7	13.6	17.2
Grade 8	20.3	21.4	19.7
Grade 9	22.0	23.2	21.0
Grade 10	17.9	19.5	16.9
Grade 11	8.8	8.4	9.1
Grade 12	3.8	2.8	4.4

Source of Cigarettes

Most students who currently smoked reported they were usually given cigarettes by their friends or someone else (49%) or they bought them from convenience/variety stores (39%). Twenty-seven per cent had asked someone to buy cigarettes for them (see Figure 3.1.3).

Figure 3.1.3: Proportion of Current Smokers by Source of Cigarettes, Region of Peel, 2004



Note: Per cents do not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

Males (44%) were significantly more likely than females (36%) to have bought their cigarettes from a convenience/variety or other type of store (see *Table 3.1.7*). Females were significantly more likely to have been given cigarettes by a friend or someone else.

Table 3.1.7: Proportion of Students by Source of Cigarettes by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who are current smokers	
	Male	Female
Given to them by - friend or someone else	41.7	54.1
Bought from - convenience/variety store	44.2	35.5
Asked someone to buy them	26.1	27.3
Bought from - friend or someone else	24.2	21.5
Bought from - gas station	26.7	19.1
Took them from - mother, father, brother or sister	13.5	20.0
Other	11.6	9.7
Bought from - other store	12.0	5.7
Bought from - supermarket/grocery	11.3	4.8
Given to them by - brother or sister	4.6	9.0
Given to them by - mother or father	6.1	6.9

Note: Per cents do not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

Students in Grade 12 (61%) were most likely to have bought cigarettes from a convenience/variety store (see Table 3.1.8). Students in other grades were more likely to have had a friend or someone else give them cigarettes. Grade 7 students (31%) were most likely to have taken cigarettes from a parent or sibling.

Table 3.1.8:
Proportion of Students by Source of Cigarettes by Grade,
Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who are current smokers					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Given to them by - friend or someone else	35.7	48.6	46.1	53.8	51.0	47.7
Bought from - convenience/variety store	NR	NR	17.4	28.0	40.4	60.9
Asked someone to buy them	NR	NR	24.3	29.4	31.3	26.3
Bought from - friend or someone else	17.9	17.1	31.6	28.6	18.7	19.5
Bought them from – gas Station	NR	NR	6.1	13.8	21.2	39.5
Took them from - mother, father, brother or sister	31.0	28.6	29.6	14.4	12.6	14.3
Other	21.4	17.1	13.2	7.5	12.1	7.9
Bought from - other store	NR	NR	4.4	6.3	7.6	12.4
Bought from - supermarket/grocery	NR	NR	NR	3.1	5.6	15.0
Given to them by - brother or sister	NR	NR	8.8	10.0	3.0	8.6
Given to them by - mother or father	NR	NR	7.0	7.5	7.6	6.0

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Note: Per cents do not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

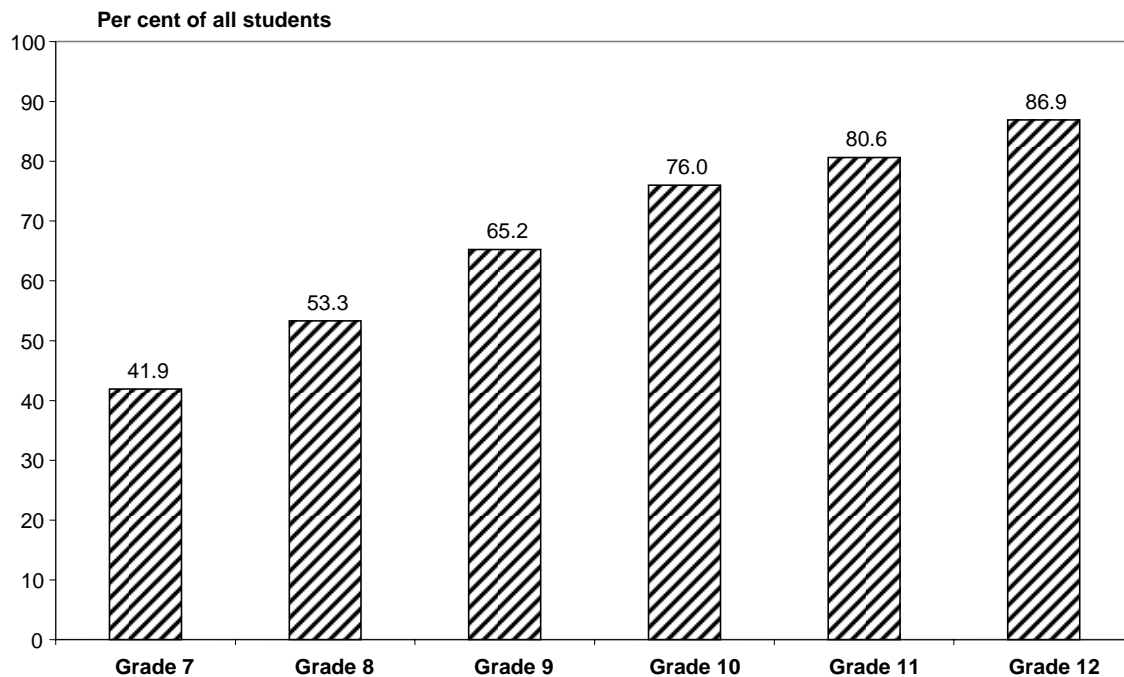
ALCOHOL USE

Prevalence of Alcohol Use

Just over two-thirds (68%) of students reported they had ever tried an alcoholic drink (*data not shown*). This is similar to Ontario, where 69% of all students in grades 7 to 12 reported they had tried alcohol at some point in their lives.³⁷

There was no significant difference between the proportion of males (67%) and females (68%) who had ever tried an alcoholic drink; however, the proportion of students who reported they had ever tried an alcoholic drink increased by grade from 42% of Grade 7 students to 87% of Grade 12 students (*see Figure 3.2.1*). In Ontario in 2003, males (68%) were more likely than females (64%) to have drunk alcohol in the past year.³⁷

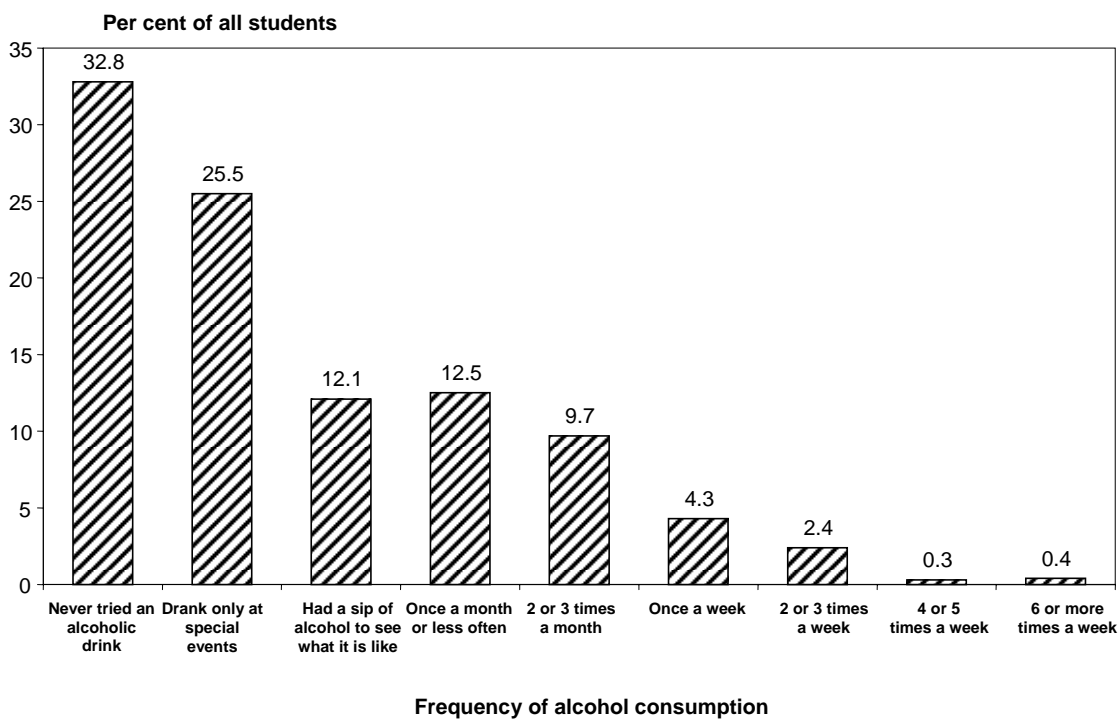
Figure 3.2.1: Proportion of Students Who Have Ever Consumed Alcohol by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Frequency of Alcohol Use

Twenty-six per cent of all students reported they drank only at special occasions, 12% have had a sip of alcohol to see what it was like, 13% reported they drank once a month or less often, 10% drank two or three times a month and 7% drank once a week or more often (see Figure 3.2.2). The proportion of students who drank at least once a week was higher in Ontario (18%)³⁷ than in Peel.

Figure 3.2.2: Proportion of Students by Frequency of Alcohol Consumption, Region of Peel, 2004



* Special events such as weddings or New Year's Eve.

A significantly higher proportion of males (9%) than females (6%) reported they drank at least once per week. In contrast, a significantly higher proportion of females (14%) than males (11%) drank once a month or less often (see *Table 3.2.1*).

Table 3.2.1: Proportion of Students by Frequency of Alcohol Consumption and Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students	
	Male	Female
Never tried an alcoholic drink	32.9	32.7
Drank only at special events (for example, New Years or weddings)	25.3	25.7
Had a sip of alcohol to see what it is like	11.9	12.2
Once a month or less often	10.6	14.0
2 or 3 times a month	10.2	9.3
Once a week	5.0	3.7
2 or 3 times a week	3.1	1.8
4 or 5 times a week	0.4	0.2
6 or more times a week	0.6	0.2

Fifty-nine per cent of Grade 7 students had never tried an alcoholic drink while only 13% of Grade 12 students reported the same thing (see *Table 3.2.2*). Fifteen per cent of Grade 12 students drank once a week or more.

Table 3.2.2: Proportion of Students by Frequency of Alcohol Consumption and Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Never tried an alcoholic drink	58.9	47.2	35.4	24.2	19.5	13.3
Drank only at special events (for example, New Year's or weddings)	20.6	24.6	28.6	28.1	23.8	26.9
Had a sip of alcohol to see what it is like	15.5	17.4	13.3	10.7	8.8	7.0
Once a month or less often	2.7	5.1	10.4	16.5	18.9	20.7
2 or 3 times a month	1.5	2.9	8.3	12.0	15.9	17.2
Once a week	0.4	1.6	2.5	4.9	7.3	8.9
Two or more times a week	NR	1.2	1.5	3.5	5.8	6.1

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Initiation of Drinking

This section reports on the drinking attitudes and behaviours of only those students who had ever tried an alcoholic drink.

The most common reason why students reported they had their first drink was curiosity (41%). Seven per cent reported their friends had encouraged them to take their first drink, 18% did not know why they had tried alcohol and 41% stated other reasons (*data not shown*).

There was no significant difference in the proportion of males or females who reported encouragement from their friends as the reason they had their first drink (*see Table 3.2.3*). The proportion of students who reported encouragement from their friends as a reason for having their first drink increased by grade from 1% in Grade 7 to 11% in Grade 12.

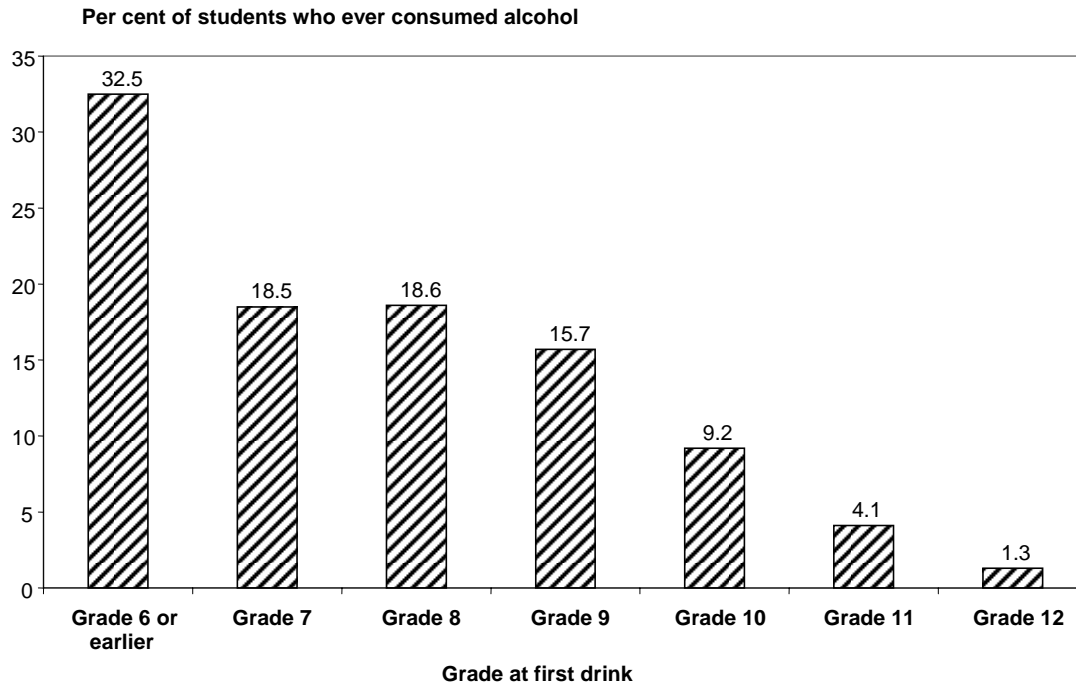
Table 3.2.3: Proportion of Students by Reason for First Drink by Sex and Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who have ever tried alcohol							
	Male	Female	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Curious	40.5	42.1	40.6	37.4	38.1	43.2	42.6	44.1
Friends encouraged it	7.3	6.6	1.4	3.6	4.8	7.5	9.4	10.5
Don't know	17.8	17.7	14.9	15.5	18.7	16.9	18.8	19.3
Other reason	40.4	41.4	43.7	49.8	43.7	40.5	38.2	35.1

Note: Per cents do not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

Seventy per cent of students who had ever tried an alcoholic drink reported they first drank alcohol prior to entering Grade 9. One in three (33%) students who had ever tried an alcoholic drink first drank it in Grade 6 or earlier (see *Figure 3.2.3*).

Figure 3.2.3: Proportion of Students by Grade When They Consumed Their First Drink Region of Peel, 2004



Overall, males (36%) were significantly more likely than females (29%) to report they first drank alcohol in Grade 6 or earlier (see *Table 3.2.4*).

Table 3.2.4: Proportion of Students by Grade When They Consumed Their First Drink by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who have ever consumed alcohol	
	Male	Female
Grade 6 or earlier	36.4	29.4
Grade 7	18.3	18.6
Grade 8	18.9	18.4
Grade 9	13.6	17.5
Grade 10	8.0	10.1
Grade 11	3.5	4.6
Grade 12	1.3	1.3

Binge Drinking

This section reports on the drinking attitudes and behaviours of students who had ever tried an alcoholic drink.

Binge drinking is defined in this survey and others as having had five or more drinks on a single occasion. Forty per cent of Peel students who had ever tried alcohol reported binge drinking at least once. Six per cent of students reported binge drinking about once a week or more often (*data not shown*). In Ontario in 2003, 10% of student drinkers reported they went binge drinking four or more times per month.³⁷

A significantly higher proportion of males (8%) than females (5%) in Peel reported they went binge drinking about once a week or more often (see *Table 3.2.5*).

Table 3.2.5: Frequency of Binge Drinking by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol	
	Male	Female
Never	60.2	60.6
Tried once to see what it was like	4.4	5.2
Less than once a month	15.9	18.9
About once a month	11.3	10.8
About once a week	7.4	4.3
Daily or almost daily	0.8	0.2

Grade 12 students (12%) reported the highest proportion of binge drinking at least once a week or more compared to students in other grades (see *Table 3.2.6*).

Table 3.2.6: Frequency of Binge Drinking by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Never	87.0	81.3	70.8	57.9	47.1	42.0
Tried once to see what it was like	3.4	5.2	4.9	5.0	5.4	4.6
Less than once a month	6.8	8.0	14.7	18.7	21.9	25.3
About once a month	2.3	3.0	7.0	13.6	16.1	16.0
Once a week or more	NR	2.5	2.6	4.8	9.4	12.2

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Control Over Drinking

In the 12 months prior to the survey, 11% of Peel students who had ever tried alcohol found they had not been able to stop drinking once they had started (see *Table 3.2.7*). Two per cent reported they had been unable to stop drinking once they had started about once a week or more often.

Table 3.2.7: Proportion of Students Unable to Control Their Drinking by Frequency Of Occurrence in the Last 12 Months, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol
Never	89.0
Less than once a month	5.8
About once a month	3.1
About once a week	1.6
Daily or almost daily	0.6

A higher proportion of males (3%) were more likely than females (2%) to report that during the past 12 months, they had not been able to stop drinking once they had started about once a week or more often (see *Table 3.2.8*). Grade 12 students (4%) reported the highest proportion of this behaviour.

Table 3.2.8: Proportion of Students Unable to Control Drinking by Frequency Of Occurrence in the Last 12 Months by Sex and Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol							
	Male	Female	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Never	90.6	87.7	95.5	94.9	91.3	89.9	85.8	82.7
Less than once a month	4.0	7.2	1.9	3.5	4.2	6.0	7.0	8.8
About once a month	2.4	3.6	1.5	NR	2.7	3.2	4.6	4.1
About once a week or more often	3.0	1.5	1.1	1.0	1.7	0.9	2.6	4.4

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Unable to Remember Previous Night Because of Drinking

Nineteen per cent of students who had ever tried alcohol reported they had been unable to remember what happened the night before because they had been drinking at least once in the 12 months before the survey (see Table 3.2.9). Males (8%) were more likely than females (5%) to report this situation occurred about once a month or more often.

Table 3.2.9: Proportion of Students by the Number of Times in the Last 12 Months They Were Unable to Remember Previous Night Due to Drinking, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol		
	Total	Male	Female
Never	80.8	81.5	80.3
Less than once a month	12.9	11.0	14.5
About once a month	4.9	5.8	4.2
Daily or almost daily	1.3	1.7	1.1

Almost one in ten (9%) students in Grades 11 and 12 reported they had been unable to remember what happened the night before about once a month or more often because they had been drinking (see Table 3.2.10).

Table 3.2.10: Proportion of Students by the Number of Times in the Last 12 Months They Were Unable to Remember Previous Night Due to Drinking by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Never	95.0	91.6	83.8	79.4	73.9	73.6
Less than once a month	3.3	5.9	10.5	14.6	17.3	17.6
About once a month or more often*	1.8	2.6	5.7	6.0	8.8	8.8

* Includes daily or almost daily.

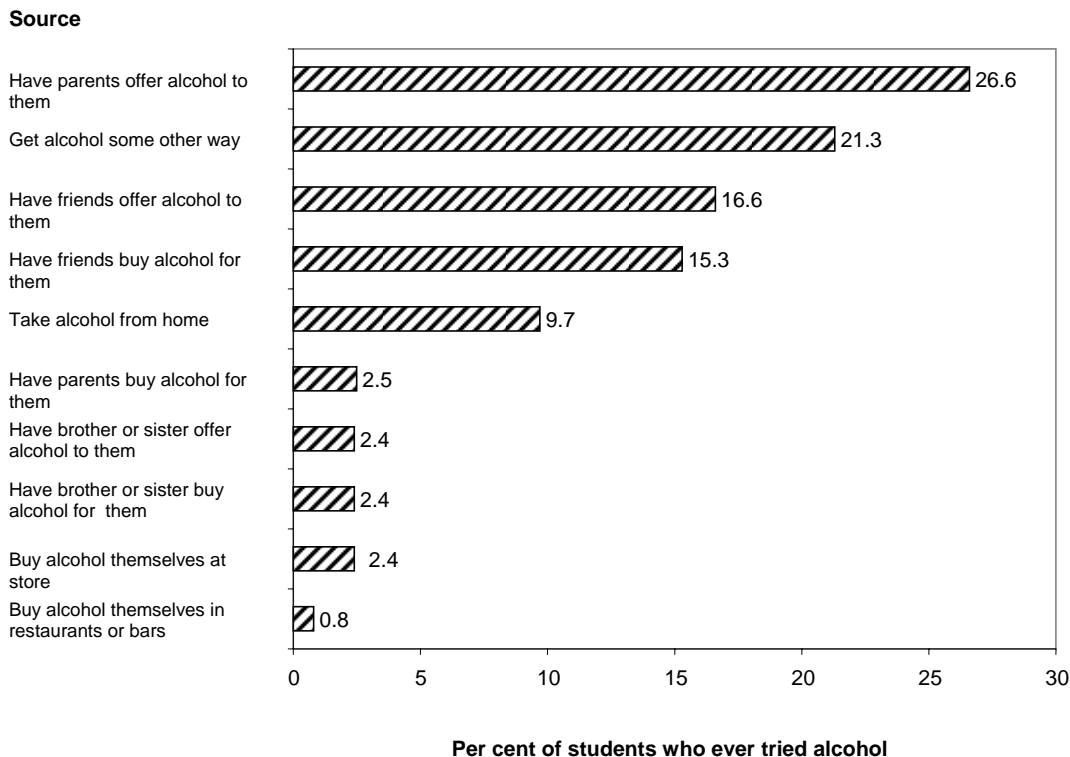
Counselling for Alcohol Problems

Less than 1% of students who had ever tried alcohol talked to a school counsellor, school nurse or teacher because they had a problem as a result of their use of alcohol. There were no significant differences between sex or grade (*data not shown*).

Source of Alcohol

Just over one-quarter (27%) of students usually obtained alcohol from a parent who offered it to them, whereas almost one-third (32%) obtained it through friends who bought it or offered it to them (*see Figure 3.2.4*). Alcohol offered by a parent could have been misinterpreted for this question because alcohol could have been offered only for a special occasion.

Figure 3.2.4: Proportion of Students by Source of Alcohol, Region of Peel, 2004



A higher proportion of females (19%) than males (14%) reported they usually got alcohol through friends who offered it to them. Females (11%) also reported they would be more likely than males (8%) to usually have taken alcohol from home. In contrast, males (24%) were more likely than females (19%) to have obtained alcohol some other way (see Table 3.2.11).

Table 3.2.11: Proportion of Students by Source of Alcohol and Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol	
	Male	Female
Have parents offer alcohol to them	27.2	26.2
Have friends who offer alcohol to them	14.0	18.8
Have friends buy alcohol for them	15.7	15.0
Take alcohol from home	8.2	11.1
Have parents buy alcohol for them	2.6	2.4
Have brother or sister offer alcohol to them	2.4	2.4
Have brother or sister buy alcohol for them	2.3	2.4
Buy alcohol themselves at store	3.2	1.7
Buy alcohol themselves in restaurants or bars	0.7	0.8
Get alcohol some other way	23.7	19.1

Grade 7 students (51%) were most likely to have had their parents offer them alcohol; this behaviour declined as the students got older (see Table 3.2.12). Grade 12 students most often had friends purchase alcohol for them and were least likely to have had their parents offer it to them.

Table 3.2.12: Proportion of Students by Source of Alcohol and Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who ever consumed alcohol					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Have parents offer alcohol to them	51.0	38.0	31.6	25.4	19.1	14.2
Have friends who offer alcohol to them	4.6	6.4	15.2	20.9	22.6	18.7
Have friends buy alcohol for them	NR	2.0	4.8	12.7	25.2	30.6
Take alcohol from home	7.5	12.1	11.8	12.7	7.7	7.1
Have parents buy alcohol for them	1.7	2.0	1.3	1.5	3.0	4.7
Have brother or sister offer alcohol to them	NR	2.0	4.0	3.9	1.5	1.5
Have brother or sister buy alcohol for them	NR	NR	1.0	2.1	4.6	3.3
Buy alcohol themselves at store	NR	NR	NR	NR	2.6	7.2
Buy alcohol themselves in restaurants or bars	NR	NR	NR	NR	1.0	2.0
Get alcohol some other way	33.3	36.4	29.3	19.8	12.7	10.8

NR= Not releasable due to small numbers.

Access to Alcohol

All students were asked how easy it would be to obtain alcohol regardless of whether or not they had ever tried an alcoholic drink.

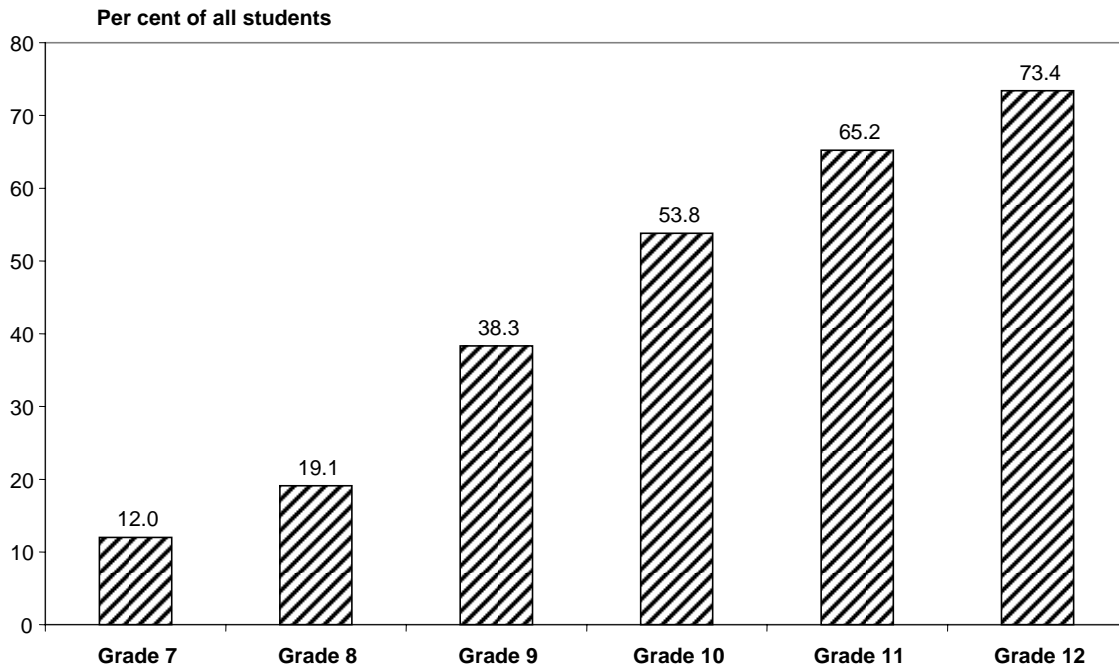
Forty-four per cent of all students reported it would either be easy or very easy for them to obtain alcohol if they really wanted some. Only 16% indicated it would be difficult, very difficult or impossible to get alcohol (see *Table 3.2.13*).

Table 3.2.13: Proportion of Students by Perceived Ease of Accessing Alcohol, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students		
	Total	Male	Female
Don't drink alcohol	29.5	29.6	29.3
Impossible	4.4	4.6	4.3
Very difficult	4.6	5.2	4.0
Difficult	6.6	6.9	6.4
Easy	24.9	23.1	26.4
Very easy	19.1	20.5	18.0
Don't know	10.9	10.0	11.6

Three in every four (73%) Grade 12 students reported it would be easy or very easy to get alcohol while only one in every nine (12%) Grade 7 students reported the same easy access to alcohol (see *Figure 3.2.5*).

Figure 3.2.5: Proportion of Students Who Reported it Was Easy or Very Easy to Get Alcohol if Student Wanted Some by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

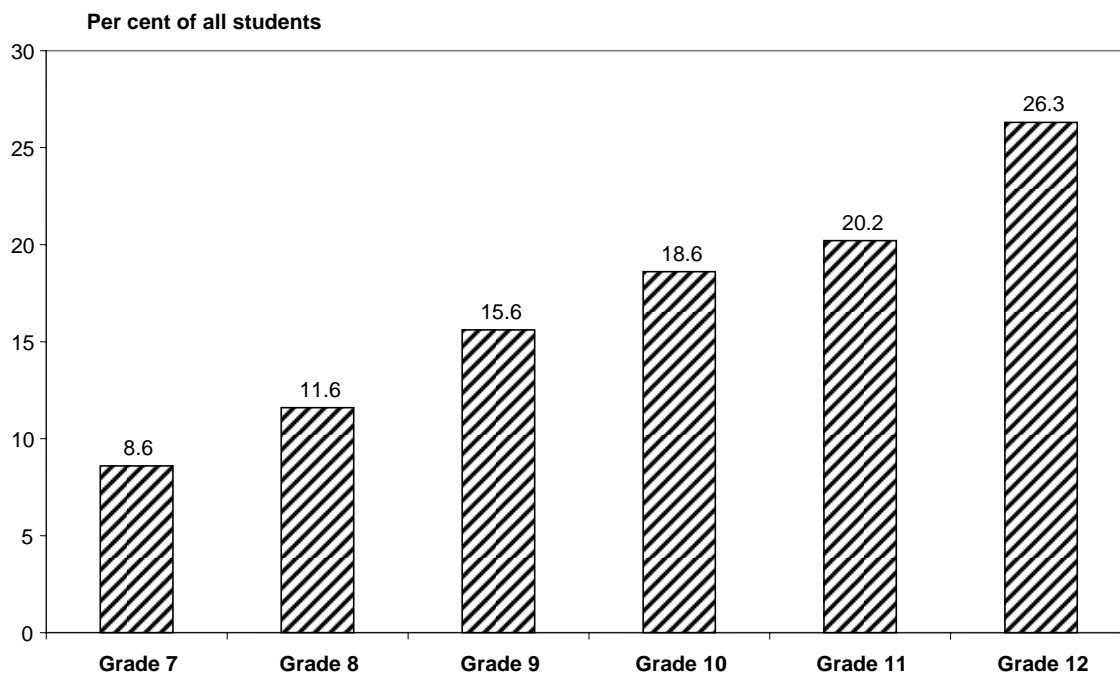


Passenger with a Drinking Driver

In the 12 months before the survey, 17% of Peel students reported they had been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking alcohol while a further 7% were not sure. In Ontario in 2003, more than one-quarter (29%) of students in grades 7 to 12 reported they had ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking.³⁷

Females (18%) were significantly more likely than males (16%) in Peel to have been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking alcohol. The proportion of students who reported they had been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking alcohol increased by grade from 9% in Grade 7 to 26% in Grade 12 (see *Figure 3.2.6*).

Figure 3.2.6: Proportion of Students Who Reported They Were a Passenger With Someone Who Had Been Drinking, Region of Peel, 2004



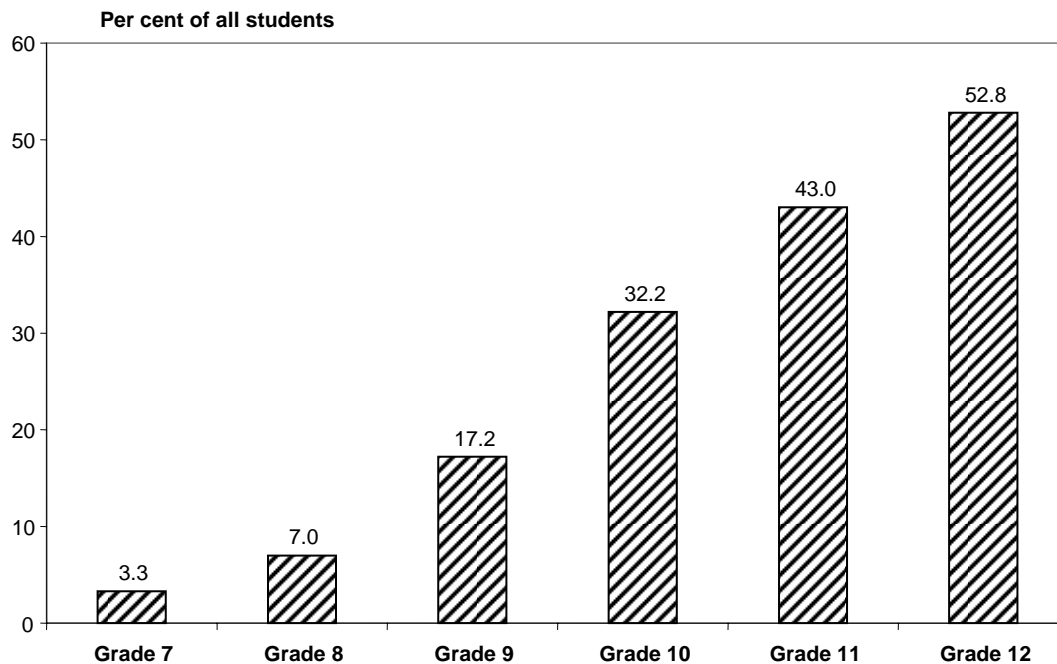
MARIJUANA USE

Prevalence of Marijuana Use

One in four (26%) of all students surveyed reported they had tried marijuana in their lifetime. Two per cent of students reported they did not know what marijuana was. Males (27%) were significantly more likely than females (25%) to have tried marijuana. This proportion was lower than in Ontario where one in three (34%) students reported they had used the drug at least once in their lifetime.³⁷ There was no significant difference in Peel and Ontario between males and females who had tried marijuana.³⁷

Students who had tried marijuana increased by grade from 3% in Grade 7 to 53% in Grade 12 (see *Figure 3.3.1*).

Figure 3.3.1: Proportion of Students Who Have Ever Tried Marijuana by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Frequency of Marijuana Use

Fifteen per cent of all students used marijuana once a month or less often (see *Table 3.3.1*). Those students who may have tried it once and never again are included in this proportion. Six per cent of all students used marijuana at least once a week.

Table 3.3.1: Frequency of Marijuana Use, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students
Once a month or less often	15.3
2 or 3 times a month	3.1
Once a week	1.5
2 or 3 times a week	1.6
4 or 5 times a week	0.9
6 or more times a week	2.2
Never tried marijuana	73.8
Don't know what marijuana is	1.7

Males (7%) were more likely than females (5%) to have used marijuana once a week or more (see *Table 3.3.2*).

Table 3.3.2: Frequency of Marijuana Use by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students	
	Male	Female
Once a month or less often	14.9	15.6
2 or 3 times a month	3.3	2.9
Once a week or more	7.4	5.2
Never tried marijuana	72.7	74.7
Don't know what marijuana is	1.7	1.6

Marijuana use at least once a week increased by grade from less than 1% in Grade 7 to 14% in Grade 12 (see *Figure 3.3.2*). More details on marijuana use by grade can be found in *Table 3.3.3*.

Figure 3.3.2: Proportion of Students Who Use Marijuana at Least Once per Week by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

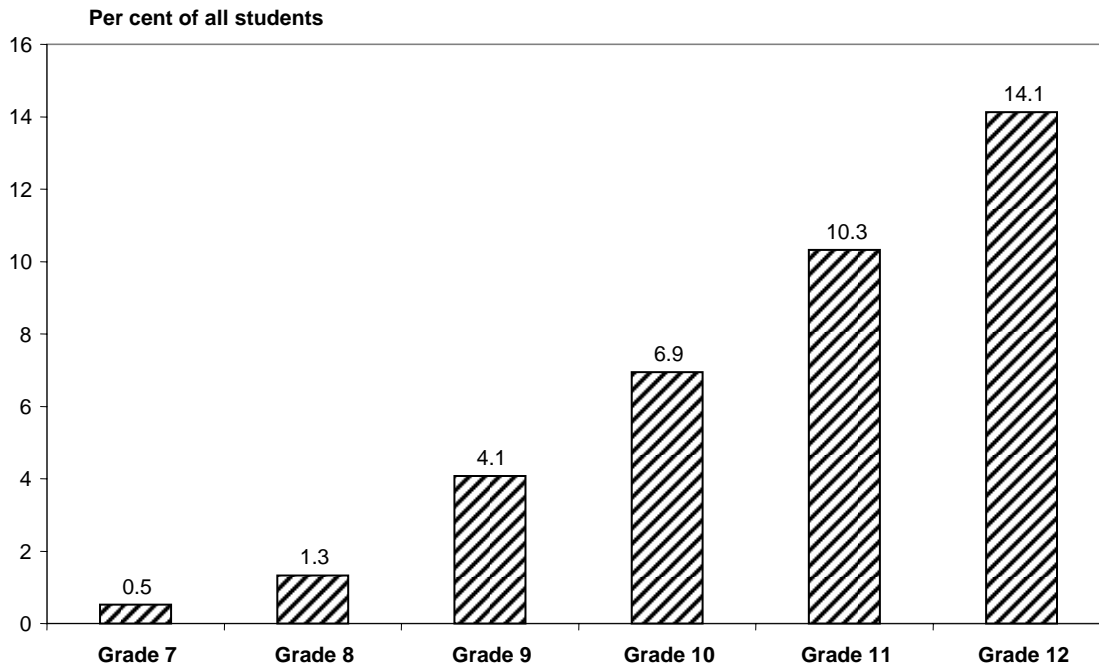


Table 3.3.3: Frequency of Marijuana Use by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Once a month or less often	1.7	4.0	9.1	18.6	26.7	32.2
2 or 3 times a month	0.5	0.7	2.9	5.0	4.4	4.6
Once a week or more often	0.5	1.3	4.1	6.9	10.3	14.1
Never tried marijuana	92.8	91.5	82.8	68.6	57.8	48.7
Don't know what marijuana is	4.5	2.5	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.4

Marijuana Use Among Friends

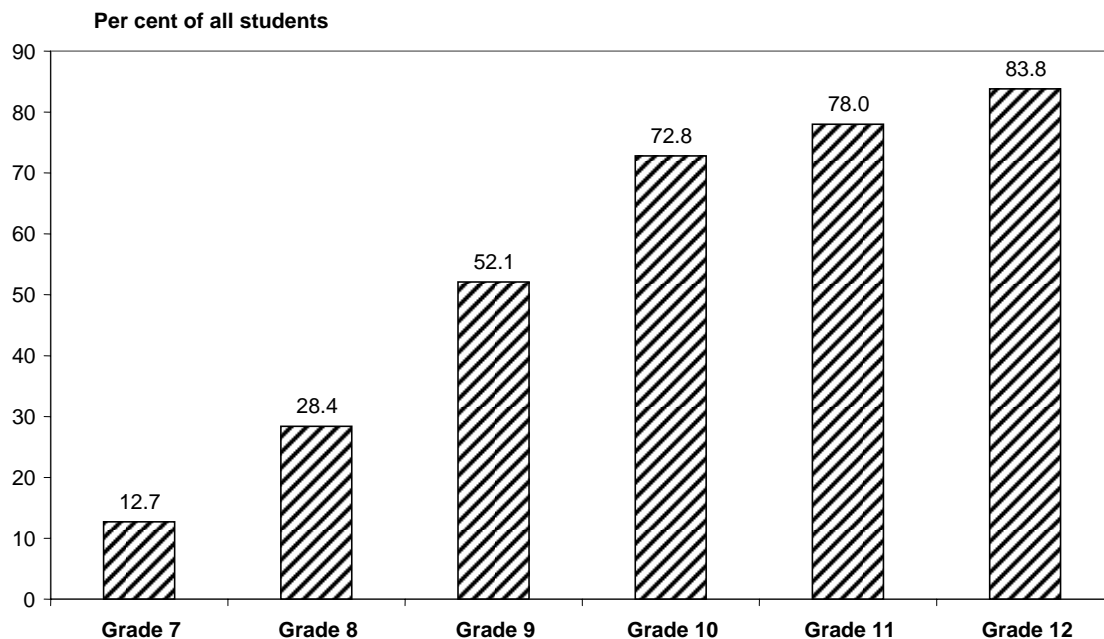
More than half (55%) of all students reported a few or more of their close friends had tried marijuana (see Table 3.3.4). There was no difference between males (54%) and females (56%) who reported a few or more of their friends had tried marijuana (data not shown).

Table 3.3.4: Proportion of Students by Number of Close Friends Who Have Tried Marijuana, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students
None	38.3
A few	24.0
Most	21.8
All	9.1
Don't know how many	6.7

The proportion of students who reported a few or more of their friends had tried marijuana increased by grade from 13% in Grade 7 to 84% in Grade 12 (see Figure 3.3.3).

Figure 3.3.3: Proportion of Students Who Reported They Have A Few or More Close Friends Who Have Tried Marijuana by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Access to Marijuana

Students were asked how easy it would be to obtain marijuana if they wanted some, regardless if they had tried marijuana in their lifetime.

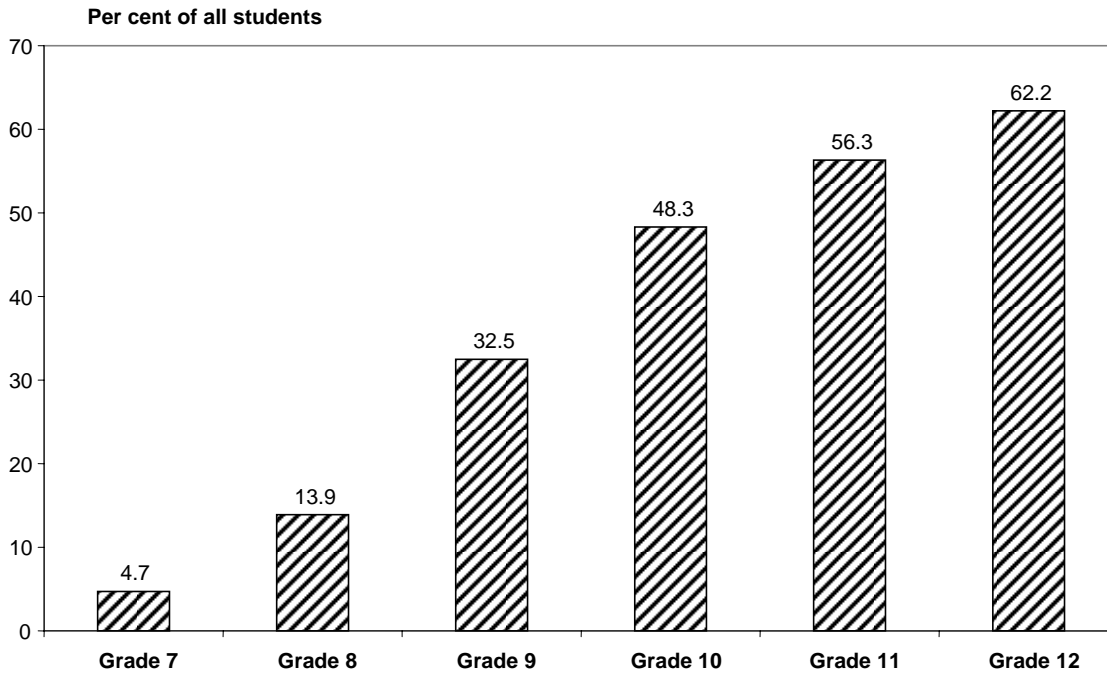
More than one-third (37%) of all students reported they thought it would be easy or very easy for them to get marijuana if they wanted some (see *Table 3.3.5*). Males (38%) were more likely than females (36%) to have reported it would be easy or very easy to get marijuana (*data not shown*).

Table 3.3.5: Proportion of Students by Perceived Ease of Accessing Marijuana, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students
Don't use marijuana	45.5
Impossible	4.4
Very difficult	1.8
Difficult	4.0
Easy	17.4
Very easy	19.4
Don't know	7.5

The proportion of students who felt it would be easy or very easy to get marijuana increased by grade from 5% in Grade 7 to 62% in Grade 12 (see *Figure 3.3.4*).

Figure 3.3.4: Proportion of Students Who Reported It Was Easy or Very Easy to Access Marijuana by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Grade When Students First Tried Marijuana

This section reports on only those students who indicated they had ever tried marijuana.

More than one-third (38%) of students who had ever tried marijuana reported they had first tried the drug before they started high school (see *Table 3.3.6*). Males (42%) were significantly more likely than females (35%) to report they had first tried marijuana before they started Grade 9.

Table 3.3.6: Grade When Student First Tried Marijuana, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students who had ever tried marijuana		
	Total	Male	Female
Grade 6 or earlier	5.3	6.4	4.3
Grade 7	13.3	14.4	12.2
Grade 8	19.7	21.1	18.5
Grade 9	30.9	29.0	32.8
Grade 10	18.6	19.0	18.2
Grade 11	9.0	7.1	10.7
Grade 12	3.2	2.9	3.4

OTHER DRUG USE

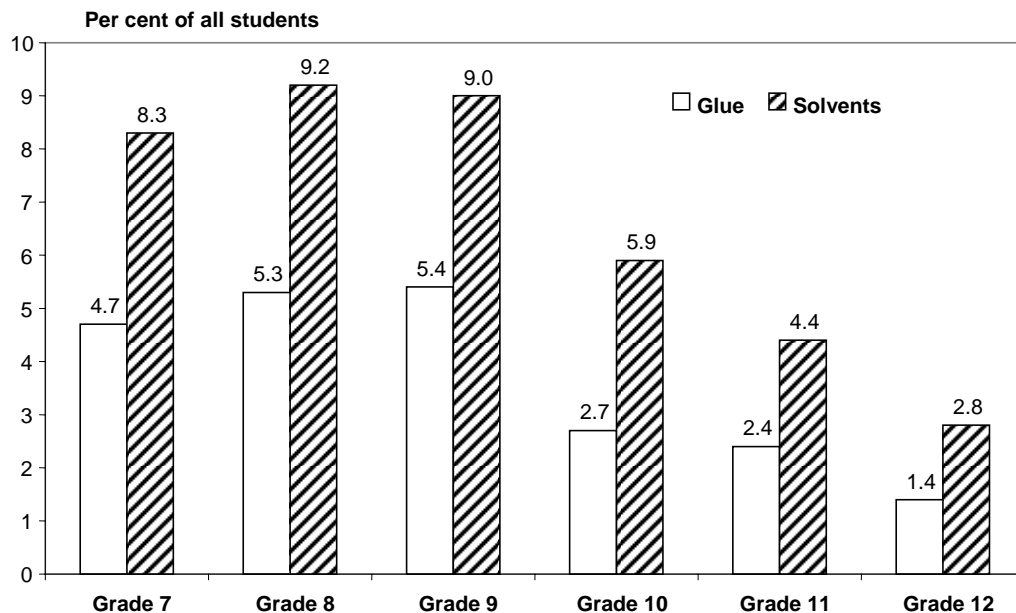
The prevalence of the use of other illicit drugs remains low but the risks of serious long-term health consequences, a criminal record and drug overdose remain concerns for users of these substances. Illicit drug use contains inherent risks because the drugs are unregulated and the youth who are using them often do not know exactly which drug they are taking or what effect they will experience from use.

Sniffing Glue and Solvents

Seven per cent of students reported they had ever sniffed solvents in order to get high and 4% reported they had sniffed glue in order to get high. A significantly higher proportion of females (8%) reported they had sniffed solvents than males (5%). A similar proportion of males (3%) and females (4%) reported they had ever sniffed glue to get high.

Younger students were most likely to have sniffed glue or solvents to get high with this behaviour peaking in grades 8 and 9 (see *Figure 3.4.1*).

Figure 3.4.1: Proportion of Students Who Have Ever Sniffed Glue or Solvents to Get High by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Nine per cent of students reported they knew of a few or more of their close friends had sniffed glue or solvents to get high (see *Table 3.4.1*).

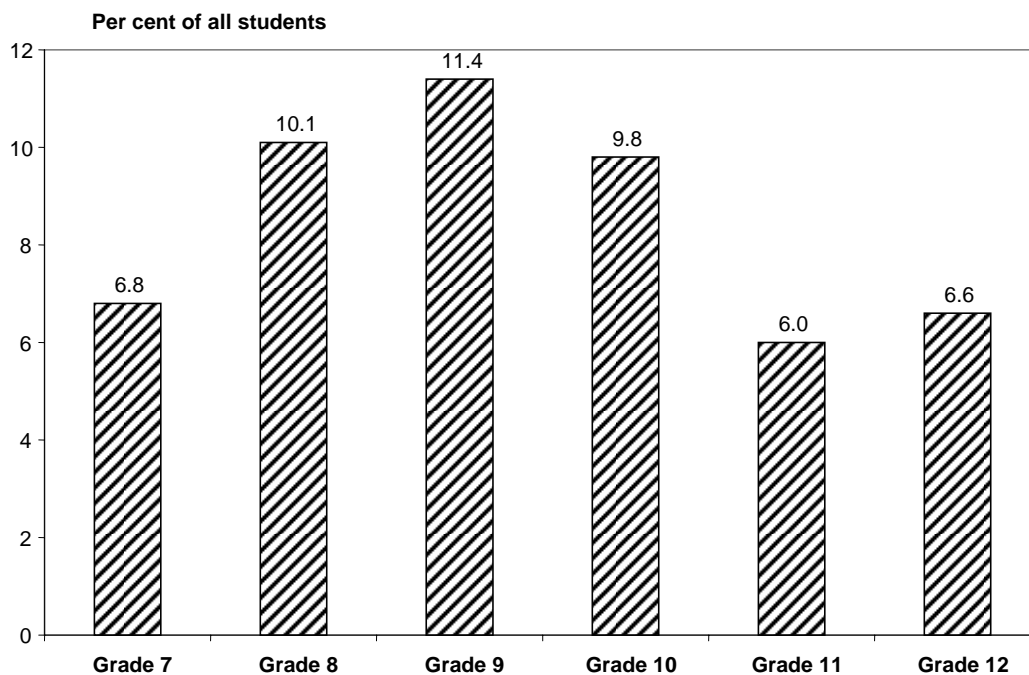
Table 3.4.1: Proportion of Students Who Reported They Have a Number of Close Friends Who Have Sniffed Glue or Solvents, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students
None	77.5
A few	7.1
Most	0.9
All	0.5
Don't know	14.0

There was no difference between males (8%) and females (9%) who reported a few or more of their friends had sniffed glue or solvents.

The proportion of students who reported a few or more of their friends had sniffed glue or solvents to get high was highest among Grade 9 students (11%) (see *Figure 3.4.2*).

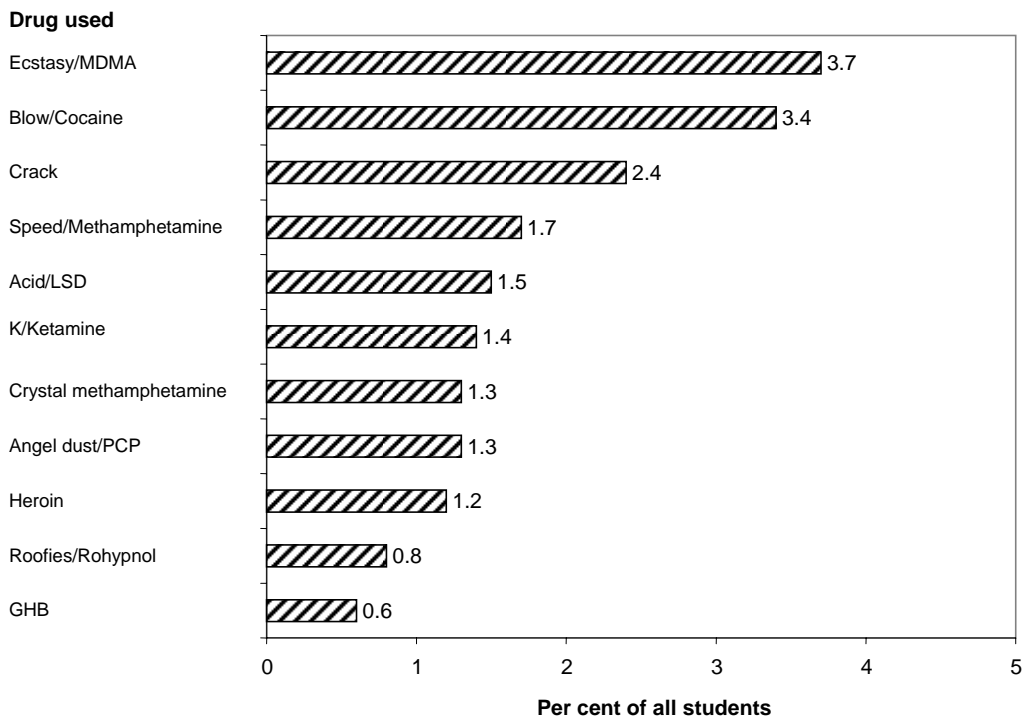
Figure 3.4.2: Proportion of Students Who Reported They Have a Number of Close Friends Who Have Sniffed Glue or Solvents by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



Lifetime Use of Other Drugs

Students were asked what other drugs they had used in their lifetime. The top three other drugs ever used by students in their lifetime were ecstasy/MDMA (4%), cocaine (3%) and crack (2%) (see *Figure 3.4.3*). In general, the proportion of students who had used other drugs at least once in their lifetime was lower in Peel than in Ontario.³⁷

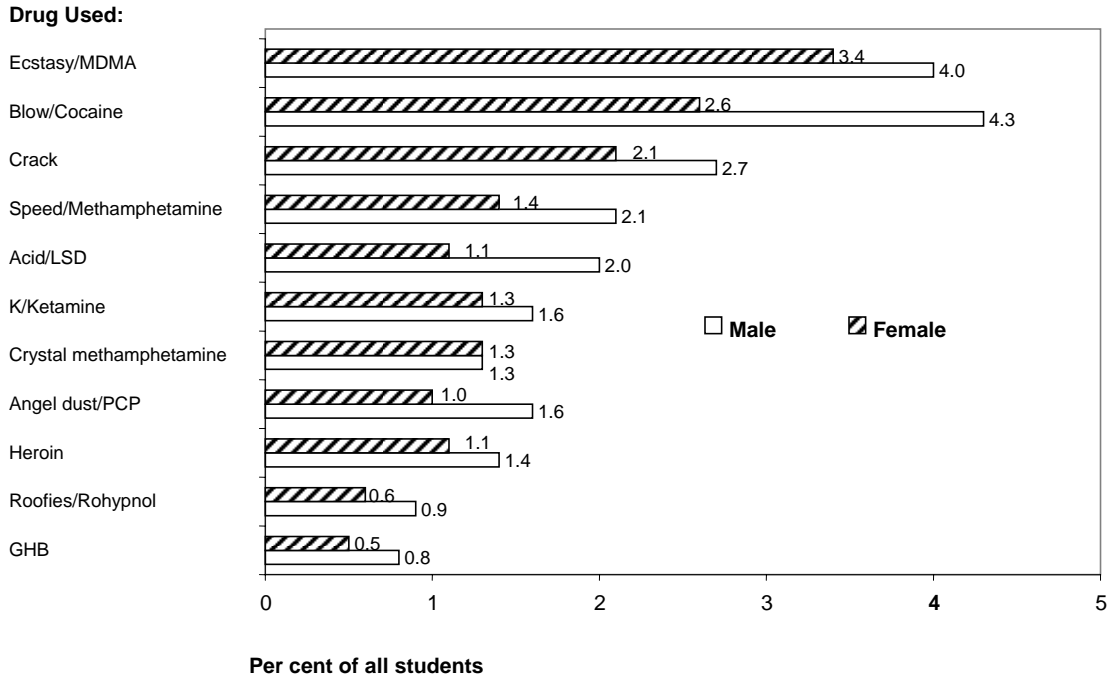
Figure 3.4.3: Lifetime Use of Illicit Drugs, Region of Peel, 2004



Although not shown, one in five students did not know what the drugs GHB, K/ketamine or roofies/Rohypnol were (*data not shown*).

Males were significantly more likely than females to have used cocaine (4% and 3% respectively), acid/LSD (2% and 1% respectively), speed/methamphetamine (2% and 1% respectively) and angel dust/PCP (2% and 1% respectively) (see Figure 3.4.4).

Figure 3.4.4: Lifetime Use of Illicit Drugs by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004



The use of blow/cocaine and ecstasy/MDMA generally increased by grade (see *Table 3.4.2*).

Table 3.4.2: Lifetime Use of Other Drugs by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students					
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
GHB	0.4	0.5	1.3	NR	0.5	0.9
Roofies/Rohypnol	0.5	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.9
Heroin	1.0	1.0	2.1	1.4	0.8	1.0
Angel dust/PCP	1.0	0.8	1.8	1.0	1.2	2.0
Crystal methamphetamine	0.7	1.1	1.8	0.7	1.2	2.1
K/Ketamine	0.4	0.6	1.6	0.8	1.6	3.5
Acid/LSD	0.5	1.3	2.4	1.5	1.2	1.9
Speed/Methamphetamine	0.7	1.5	2.3	0.8	1.8	3.2
Crack	1.5	2.3	3.0	2.7	2.4	2.4
Blow/Cocaine	1.0	1.8	2.8	2.8	4.4	7.4
Ecstasy/MDMA	0.7	1.4	2.8	3.6	4.5	9.2

NR = Not releasable due to small numbers.

Almost one-third (32%) of all students reported a few or more of their close friends had tried other types of drugs such as ecstasy/MDMA, acid/LSD, angel dust/PCP, speed or heroin (see *Table 3.4.3*). Females (35%) were significantly more likely than males (29%) to have indicated a few or more close friends had tried other drugs.

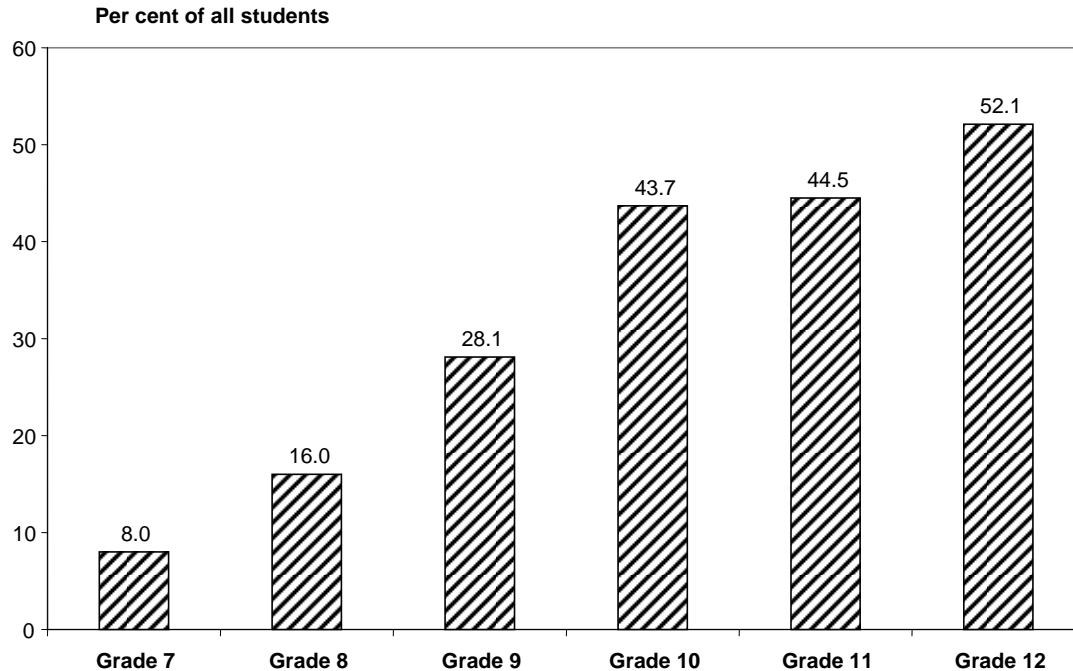
Table 3.4.3: Proportion of Students Who Reported They Have a Number of Close Friends Who Have Tried Other Drugs*, Total and by Sex, Region of Peel, 2004

	Per cent of all students		
	Total	Male	Female
None	56.3	59.5	53.7
A few	26.9	24.4	28.9
Most	4.4	3.8	5.0
All	0.8	1.0	0.7
Don't know	11.5	11.2	11.8

*Other drugs include ecstasy/MDMA, acid/LSD, crack/cocaine, angel dust/PCP, speed, heroin, etc.

The proportion of students who reported a few or more of their friends had tried one or more of these other drugs increased by grade from 8% in Grade 7 to 52% in Grade 12 (see Figure 3.4.5).

Figure 3.4.5: Proportion of Students Who Reported They Have a Few or More Close Friends Who Have Tried Other Drugs* by Grade, Region of Peel, 2004



*Other drugs include ecstasy/MDMA, acid/LSD, crack/cocaine, angel dust/PCP, speed, heroin, etc.

Steroids, Body Builders and Performance-Building Drugs

Two per cent of all students reported they had used steroids and other performance-building drugs to increase performance in some sport or activity or to change their physical appearance (*data not shown*). Males (3%) were significantly more likely than females (1%) to have reported use of such drugs.

Injection Drug Use

One per cent of students had used a drug by injection or needle (*data not shown*). There was no difference between males and females who had used a drug by injection or needle.

SUMMARY

Tobacco Use

Twenty-nine per cent of students in Peel reported they had ever smoked a cigarette (even just a few puffs). The proportion of students who reported they had ever smoked a cigarette increased by grade from 6% in Grade 7 to 54% in Grade 12.

Five per cent of all students reported they smoked every day. More than half (52%) of students reported smoking two or less cigarettes on the days they usually smoked.

Seventy per cent of all students who reported they had ever smoked started by Grade 9 or earlier. Most students who currently smoked reported they were usually given cigarettes by their friends or someone else (49%) or they bought them from convenience/variety stores (39%). Twenty-seven per cent had asked someone to buy cigarettes for them.

Alcohol Use

Two-thirds (68%) of students reported they had ever tried an alcoholic drink. The proportion of students who reported they had ever tried an alcoholic drink increased by grade from 42% of Grade 7 students to 87% of Grade 12 students.

Seven per cent of students reported they drank once a week or more often. Males (9%) were significantly more likely than females (6%) to report they drank at least once a week. Fifteen per cent of Grade 12 students drank once a week or more.

Seventy per cent of students who had ever tried an alcoholic drink reported they first drank alcohol prior to entering Grade 9. One in three (33%) students who had ever tried an alcoholic drink first drank it in Grade 6 or earlier. Males (36%) were significantly more likely than females (29%) to report they first drank alcohol in Grade 6 or earlier.

Forty per cent of students who had ever tried alcohol reported binge drinking at least once. Overall, 6% of students reported they went binge drinking about once a week or more often. Males (8%) were more likely than females (5%) to report binge drinking once a week or more often.

Just over one-quarter (27%) of students who had ever tried alcohol usually got alcohol because a parent offered it to them, whereas almost one-third (32%) obtained it through friends, who either bought or offered it to them.

In the 12 months before the survey, 17% of students reported they had been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking alcohol. The proportion of students who reported they had been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking alcohol increased by grade from 9% in Grade 7 to 26% in Grade 12.

Marijuana Use

One in four (26%) of all students in Peel reported they had tried marijuana in their lifetime. More than one-third (38%) of students who had ever tried marijuana first tried it before they started Grade 9.

Fifteen per cent of all students used marijuana once a month or less often. Students who may have tried it once but never again are included in this proportion.

Six per cent of all students used marijuana at least once a week. The proportion of students who used marijuana at least once a week was highest among Grade 12 students (14%).

More than half (55%) of all students reported a few or more of their close friends had tried marijuana. By Grade 12, 84% of students reported a few or more of their close friends had tried marijuana.

The proportion of students who reported marijuana was easy or very easy to get increased by grade from 5% in Grade 7 to 62% in Grade 12.

Other Drugs

Females (8%) were significantly more likely than males (5%) to have sniffed solvents in order to get high.

The top three illicit drugs ever used by students in their lifetime were ecstasy/MDMA (4%), cocaine (3%) and crack (2%).

Almost one-third (32%) of all students reported that a few or more of their close friends had tried other types of drugs such as ecstasy/MDMA, acid/LSD, angel dust/PCP, speed or heroin.

Males were significantly more likely than females to have used cocaine (4% and 3% respectively), acid/LSD (2% and 1% respectively), speed/methamphetamine (2% and 1% respectively) and angel dust/PCP (2% and 1% respectively).