



no "kid"ding did you know?

topic: adolescent substance abuse

website resources

[Division of Behavioral Health, Treatment Section Homepage, Adolescent Services](#)

[Boulder County Healthy Youth Alliance](#)

[Boulder County Public Health Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#)

[Boulder County Help](#)

[Parents: The Anti-Drug](#)

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)

The following "No 'Kid'ding" article appeared in the February 2009 issue of Alternative for Youth's (AFY) [Youth Matters newsletter](#).

As Alternatives for Youth continued our strategic planning process in January, our Board of Directors discussed and chose three top priority improvements or programs for our organization to pursue. One of these priorities is founding an adolescent substance abuse treatment program in Longmont, which we wish to help form in collaboration with other non-profits and agencies in Longmont. Substance abuse is a dangerous and problematic issue for many of our adolescents, affecting their successful growth into healthy adults. Did you know:

- According to the 2007 Boulder County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, of surveyed youth:

- 43.2% reported using alcohol in the past month
- 22.3% reported using alcohol
- 8.7% reported using marijuana before the age of 13
- 28.3% reported binge drinking in the past month
- 24.0% reported using marijuana in the past month.

- Middle school students in St. Vrain and Boulder Valley School Districts rank drugs and alcohol as the top second or third concern and that peer pressure and stress are among factors influencing alcohol and drug use.

- The eighteenth annual national study of teen drug abuse by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America reported that today's teens are more likely to abuse prescription and over the counter medications than many illegal drugs and think that abusing medicines to get high is "much safer" than using illegal drugs.

- Another report by the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division Colorado Department of Human Services on prescription drug abuse found that teens who abuse prescription drugs are twice as likely to use alcohol; 5 times as likely to use marijuana; 12 times likelier to use heroin; 15 times likelier to use Ecstasy; and 21 times likelier to use cocaine, compared to teens who do not abuse such drugs.

- The health risk of drug and alcohol use and the potential for addiction for our adolescents are concerns in and of themselves, but there are other negative consequences, including:

- Drug use is particularly harmful to adolescents with addiction to certain substances developing more quickly and easily in adolescents than adults.
- Research also shows that such use may also lead to failure in school and low education, poor health, degraded peer and family relationships, engaging in criminal activity, becoming threatening, violent and menacing, accidental injury and death due to overdose, and psychiatric disorders such as mood and anxiety disorders, conduct disorders, antisocial behavior, psychosis and schizophrenia.
- Families experience fractured relationships and split as a result of the ongoing destructive and damaging behavior of the drug-abusing young person.



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- 60-80% of youth in the juvenile justice system have substance abuse issues.

- Analysis of the 2005 Boulder County Youth Risk Behavior survey data demonstrated an increase likelihood of students engaging in additional risk behaviors if they smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol or use marijuana before age 13.

- Annually the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division serves over 5,000 adolescents in every modality through their licensed treatment programs. There is an estimated 28,990 substance abusers 10-18 years of age in Colorado, leaving approximately 23,586 young people that do not receive services.

- Many parents are unable to afford the few options for adolescent substance abuse treatment offered in Boulder, Lafayette, Denver and surrounding areas.

Note: The above is provided as information and does not indicate an endorsement by Alternatives for Youth of the listed websites.