



Fact Sheet: Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Illicit Drug Use

- In 2003, on average, Asian Americans had the lowest rate of current drug use, 3.8%, in comparison to 8.3% for whites, 8.0% for Hispanics, 8.7% for African Americans, and 12.1% for American Indian/Alaskan Natives. However, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders had a high drug use rate of 11.1% (SAMHSA, 2003).
- The current illicit drug use rate amongst Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders is 9.1%, higher than other ethnic/racial groups, whereas Japanese and Chinese have the lowest rates out of all ethnic/racial groups, at 2.3% and 2.5% respectively (SAMHSA, 2005).
- From 1999 to 2000, past month marijuana use in AAPI youth (12-17 years old) fell from 5.8% to 2.5%. Within the Asian ethnic groups, Filipino youth have the highest rate of past month use, 5%, and Japanese have the lowest, 1.4%. Overall, Vietnamese youth have the highest current marijuana use, 2.8% almost equivalent to that of whites, 2.9% (*Prevention Alert*. Vol. 5, No. 7, May 2001).
- Although AAPIs have consistently lower use rates than other racial groups, persons of mixed race have the second highest rates, 12.0%, which obscure correct readings for Hispanics and Asians (SAMHSA, 2005).
- AAPI substance abuse treatment admissions were more likely than all other admission to go into treatment for either marijuana or methamphetamine/amphetamine (The DASIS Report, 2005).
- Out of all racial groups, AAPI adolescents are most likely to enter treatment through referrals (The DASIS Report, 1999).
- AAPI stimulant admissions are nearly four times higher than for total admissions (The DASIS Report, 2002).
- Respect for authority, family loyalty, and focus on schooling and education are factors that limit the risk of substance abuse within the AAPI community (*Prevention Alert*. Vol.5, No.7, May 2001).

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