



Youth Survey Report 2020

Youth Survey

Methods

A five-question survey was developed to solicit youth perceptions about legal and illegal substance accessibility and use in Washoe County. The survey was administered, via paper hard copy, in September 2020 to classes from two different high schools in the Washoe County School District (WCSD). The survey was administered to students prior to their participation in an evidence-based substance abuse prevention curriculum. A total of **133 students completed the youth survey.**

Survey Questions and Recruitment Methods

The survey included five questions related to

- **Accessibility:** How difficult or easy it is for youth under 21 in Washoe County to get specific legal and illegal substances
- **Frequency of Use:** How frequently specific legal and illegal substances are used by youth under 21 in Washoe County
- **Harm:** How harmful specific legal and illegal substances are when used by youth under 21
- **Access Sources:** How difficult or easy it is for you the get legal and illegal substances from specific sources (e.g., family, friends, social media)

Demographic questions were not included as they are not permitted by the WCSD in a survey of this type. The recruitment method used for this survey was convenience sampling. Students surveyed were participating in an evidence-based substance abuse prevention curriculum at two WCSD high schools. Prior to their participation in the curriculum, a hard copy of the survey was administered. The full youth survey is included in Appendix A.

Analyses and Findings

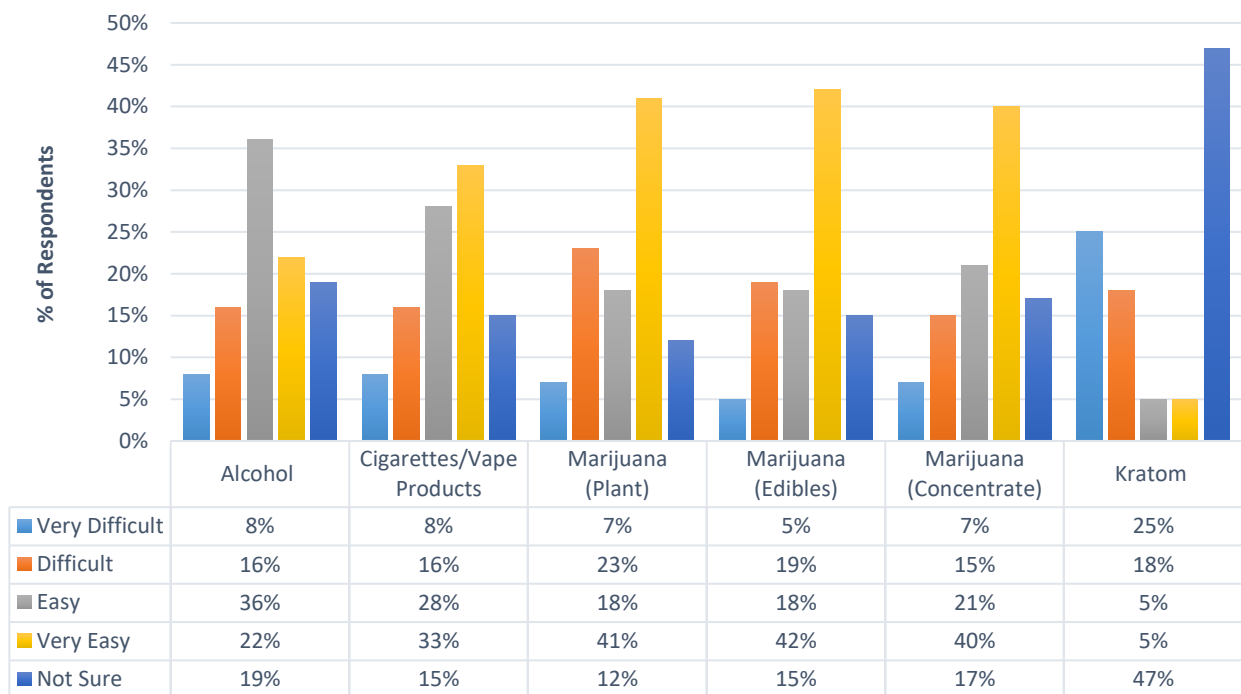
Excel was used to analyze youth survey responses for each question, with frequency distributions provided for each metric. The findings for each survey item are summarized in Figures 1-8 below.

Youth Access to Legal Drugs

Youth were asked how difficult or easy it is for youth under 21 in Washoe County to get specific legal substances. As illustrated in Figure 1, the legal substance most easy for youth under 21 to get is marijuana, with over forty percent indicating it is *Very Easy* to get marijuana in three different forms: plant (41%), edibles (42%), and concentrate (40%). When combining *Very Easy* and *Easy* together, over half of the respondents reported marijuana is accessible in plant form (59%), edible form (60%) and as a concentrate (61%).

The two other substances identified as *Very Easy* or *Easy* to obtain are cigarettes/vape products (61%) and alcohol (58%). Kratom is the substance identified as most difficult to get, with 43% indicating it is *Very Difficult* or *Difficult* to get, and only 10% reporting it is *Very Easy* or *Easy* to get. Furthermore, nearly one half of respondents (47%) were *Not Sure* how difficult or easy it is to get kratom.

Figure 1: Legal Drugs - How Difficult or Easy to for Youth Under 21 in Washoe County to Get... (n=130)



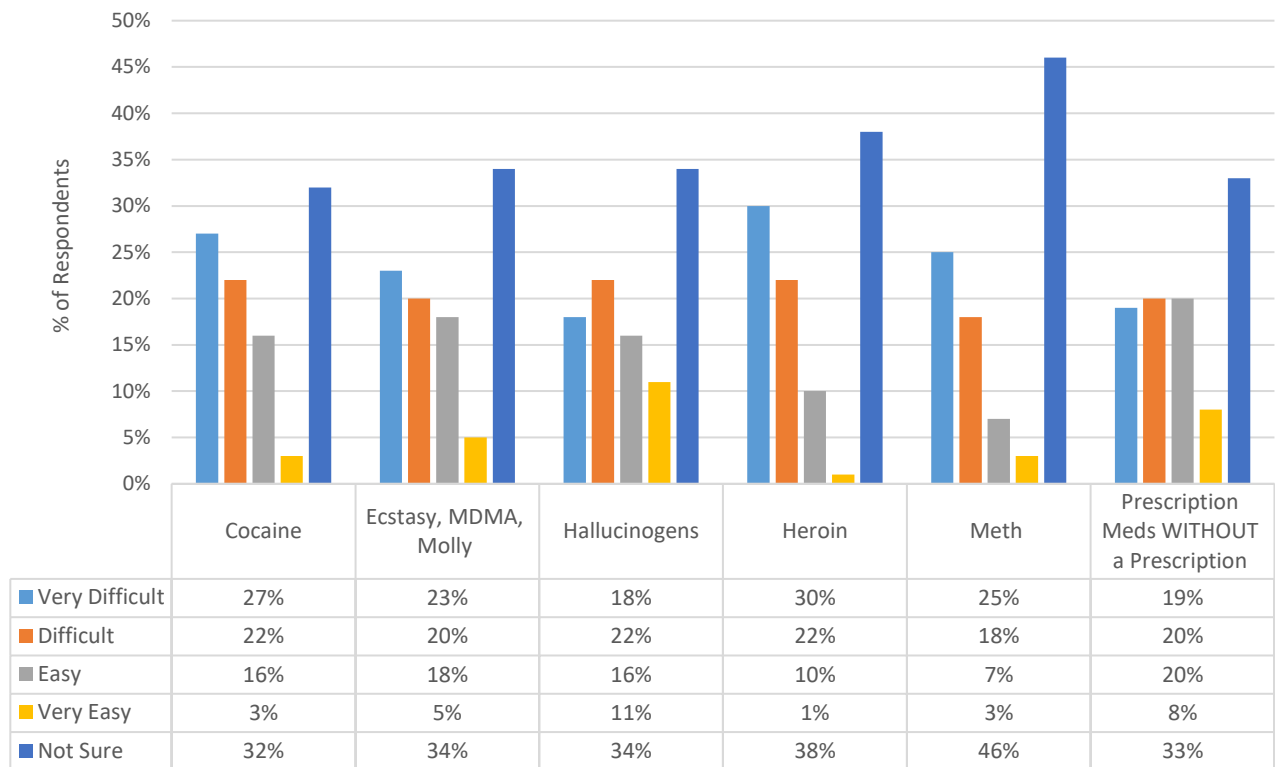
Note: The youth survey instrument defined the three different marijuana forms listed in the following manner: 1) **Plant**: bud, flower, leaf; 2) **Edibles**: gummies, candies cookies; and 3) **Concentrate**: vape cartridge, oil, wax, dabs. **Vape products** were defined as e-cigs, puff bars, and Juuls.

Youth Access to Illegal Drugs

Youth were asked how difficult or easy it is for youth under 21 in Washoe County to get specific illegal substances. Figure 2 illustrates the illegal substances most easy to get (combining *Very Easy* and *Easy* responses): prescription medications without a prescription (28%), hallucinogens (27%), and Ecstasy/MDMA/Molly (23%).

Cocaine and heroin were the substances identified as most difficult to get, with 49% and 52%, respectively, indicating it is *Very Difficult* or *Difficult* to get these. Nearly one half of respondents (46%) were *Not Sure* how difficult or easy it is to get methamphetamine.

Figure 2: Illegal Drugs - How Difficult or Easy to for Youth Under 21 in Washoe County to Get... (n=130)



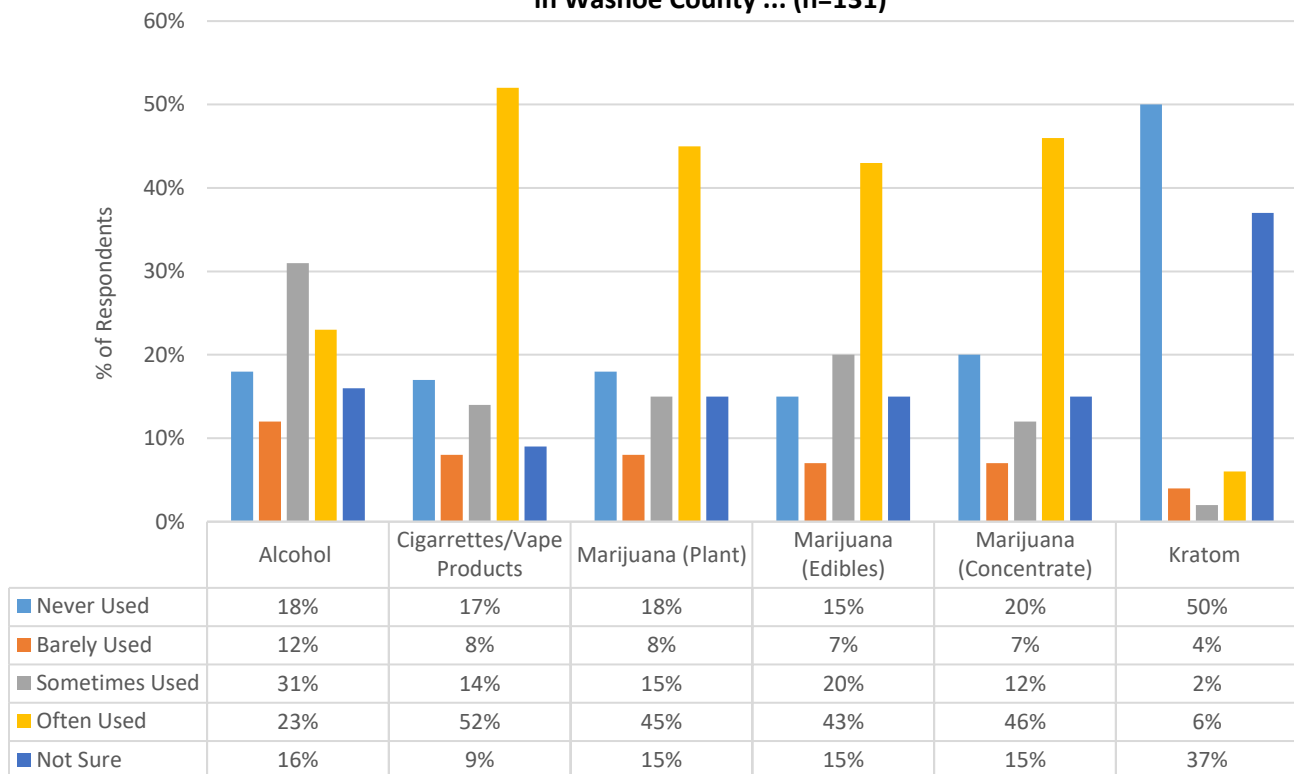
Note: The youth survey instrument provided the following examples for two illegal substances: 1) **Hallucinogens**: psychedelic mushrooms, acid, LSD and 2) **Prescription medications WITHOUT a prescription**: hydrocodone, oxycontin, Xanax, Valium, Adderall, and Ritalin.

Frequency of Use in Youth Under 21: Legal Drugs

Youth were asked to report on how frequently youth under 21 in Washoe County use specific legal substances. Figure 3 illustrates the substances respondents identified as *Often Used (at least 1-2 times per week)* are: cigarettes/vape products (52%), marijuana as concentrate (46%), marijuana in plant form (45%), and marijuana edibles (43%). The substance respondents identified most often as one that is *Sometimes Used (at least 1-2 times per month)* is alcohol (31%).

Kratom was identified as the substance youth under 21 *Never Use (don't know any kids who use it)*, reported by half of respondents (50%).

Figure 3: Legal Drugs - How Frequently Used by Youth Under 21 in Washoe County ... (n=131)



Note: For each of the response choices, the following description was included to better quantify frequency:

- 1) **Never Used:** Don't know any kids who use it
- 2) **Barely Used:** No more than 5 times a year
- 3) **Sometimes Used:** At least 1-2 times per month
- 4) **Often Used:** At least 1-2 times per week
- 5) **I'm not sure:** I don't know enough about it

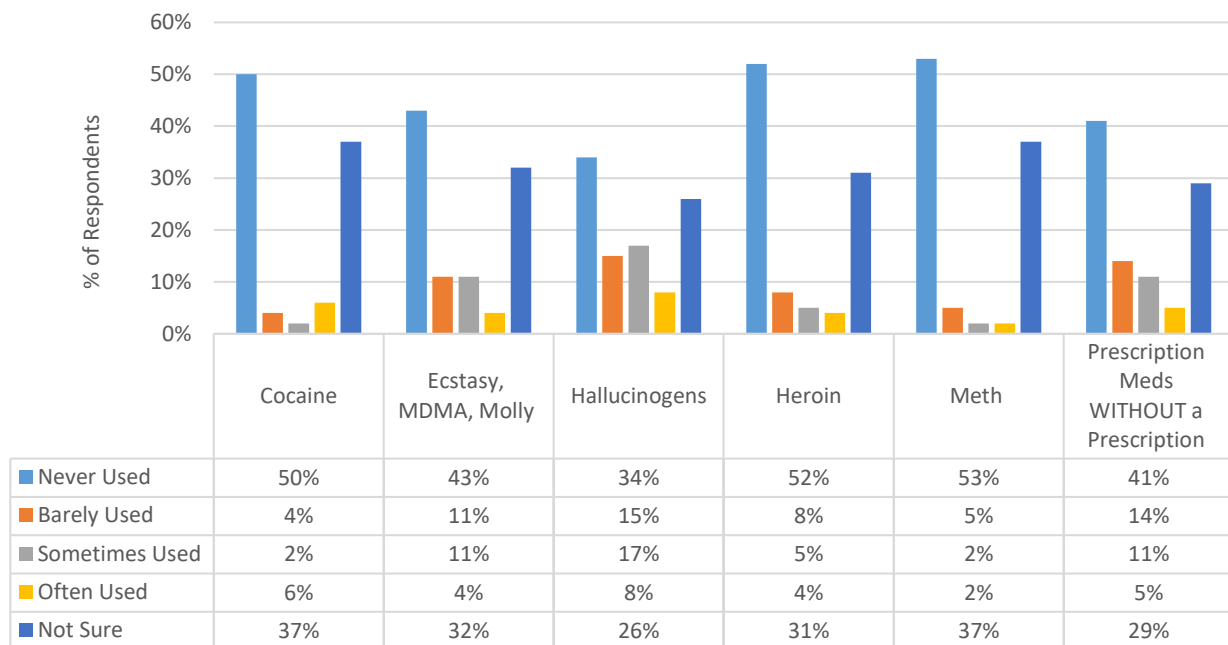
The youth survey instrument defined the three different marijuana forms listed in the following manner: 1) **Plant:** bud, flower, leaf; 2) **Edibles:** gummies, candies cookies; and 3) **Concentrate:** vape cartridge, oil, wax, dabs. **Vape products** were defined as e-cigs, puff bars, and Juuls.

Frequency of Use: Illegal Drugs in Youth Under 21

Youth were asked to report on how frequently youth under 21 in Washoe County use specific illegal substances. As illustrated in Figure 4, for all illegal substances included in this question, less than ten percent of youth surveyed reported they are *Often Used (at least 1-2 times per week)*. The substances respondents identified most often as *Sometimes Used (at least 1-2 times per month)* are hallucinogens (17%).

Three substances were reported by approximately half of respondents as substances youth under 21 *Never Used (don't know any kids who use it)*: meth (53%), heroin (52%), cocaine (50%).

Figure 4: Illegal Drugs - How Frequently Used by Youth Under 21 in Washoe County... (n=131)



Note: For each of the response choices, the following description was included to better quantify frequency:

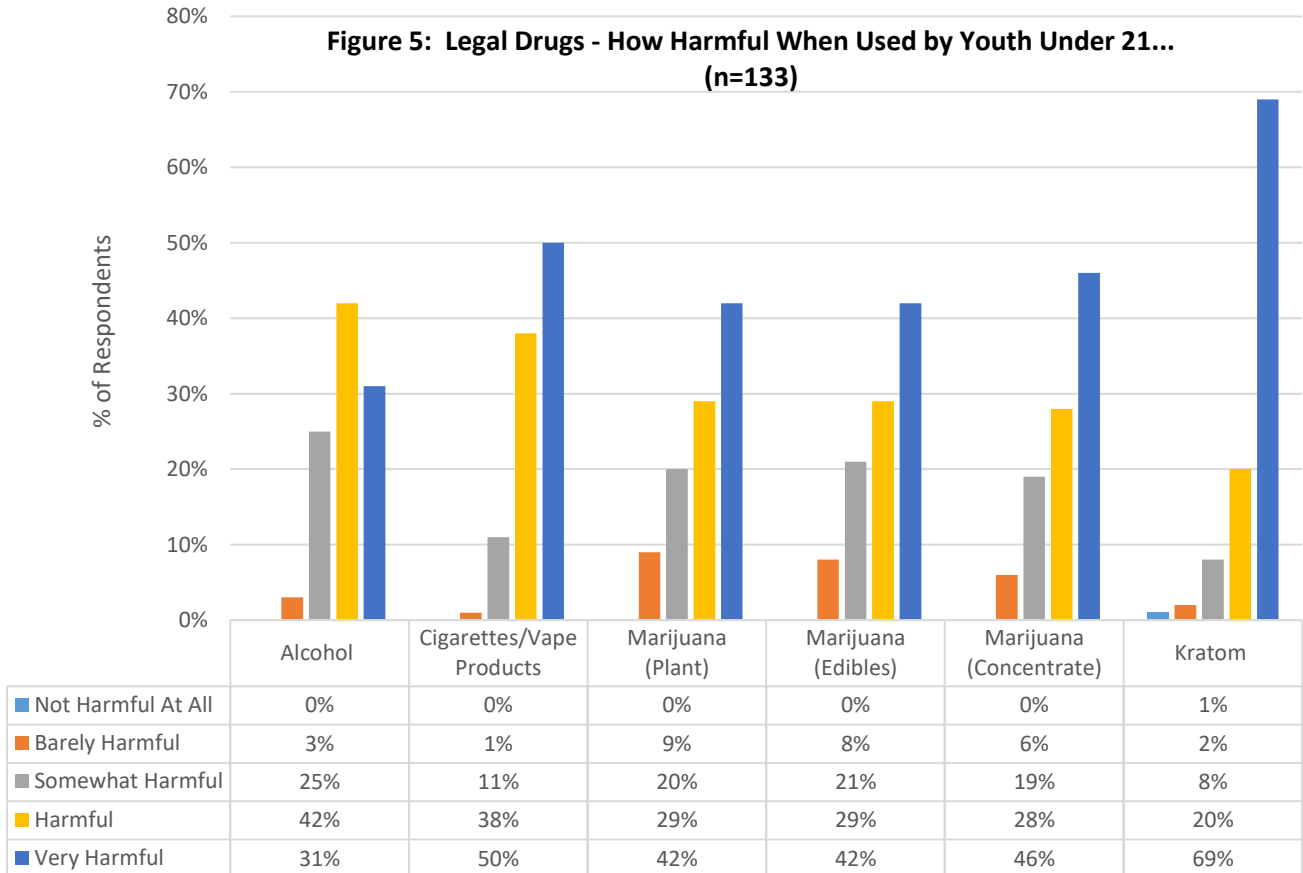
- 1) **Never Used:** Don't know any kids who use it
- 2) **Rarely Used:** No more than 5 times a year
- 3) **Sometimes Used:** At least 1-2 times per month
- 4) **Often Used:** At least 1-2 times per week
- 5) **I'm not sure:** I don't know enough about it

Note: The youth survey instrument provided the following examples for two illegal substances: 1) **Hallucinogens:** psychedelic mushrooms, acid, LSD and 2) **Prescription medications WITHOUT a prescription:** hydrocodone, oxycontin, Xanax, Valium, Adderall, and Ritalin.

How Harmful When Used by Youth Under 21: Legal Substances

Youth surveyed were asked to identify how harmful specific legal substances are when used by youth under 21. Figure 5 summarizes responses, with the substance most often identified as *very harmful* is kratom, identified by over two thirds of respondents (69%). When combining *Harmful* and *Very Harmful*, substances, in frequency order, include: kratom (89%), cigarettes/vape products (88%), marijuana concentrate (74%), alcohol (73%), marijuana in plant form (71%), and marijuana edibles (71%).

The two substances reported by most respondents as *Barely Harmful* are marijuana in plant form (9%) and marijuana edibles (8%).

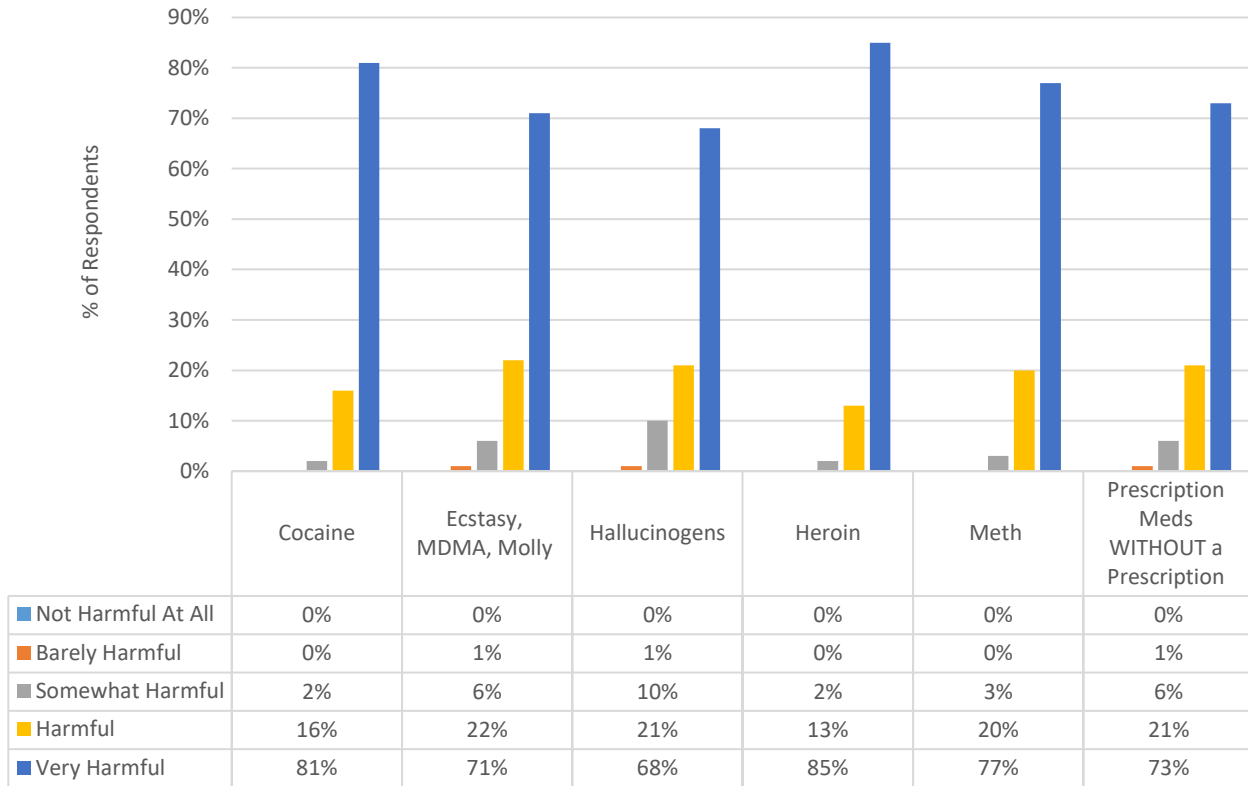


Note: The youth survey instrument defined the three different marijuana forms listed in the following manner: 1) **Plant**: bud, flower, leaf; 2) **Edibles**: gummies, candies cookies; and 3) **Concentrate**: vape cartridge, oil, wax, dabs. **Vape products** were defined as e-cigs, puff bars, and Juuls.

How Harmful When Used by Youth Under 21: Illegal Substances

Youth surveyed were asked to identify how harmful specific illegal substances are when used by youth under 21. As illustrated in Figure 6, the majority of respondents indicated that each of the substances are *Very Harmful*. The two substances identified by the greatest percentage of respondents as *Very Harmful* are heroin (85%) and cocaine (81%). The response *Not Harmful at All* was not selected by any of the respondents for the substances listed.

Figure 6: Illegal Drugs - How Harmful When Used by Youth Under 21... (n=133)



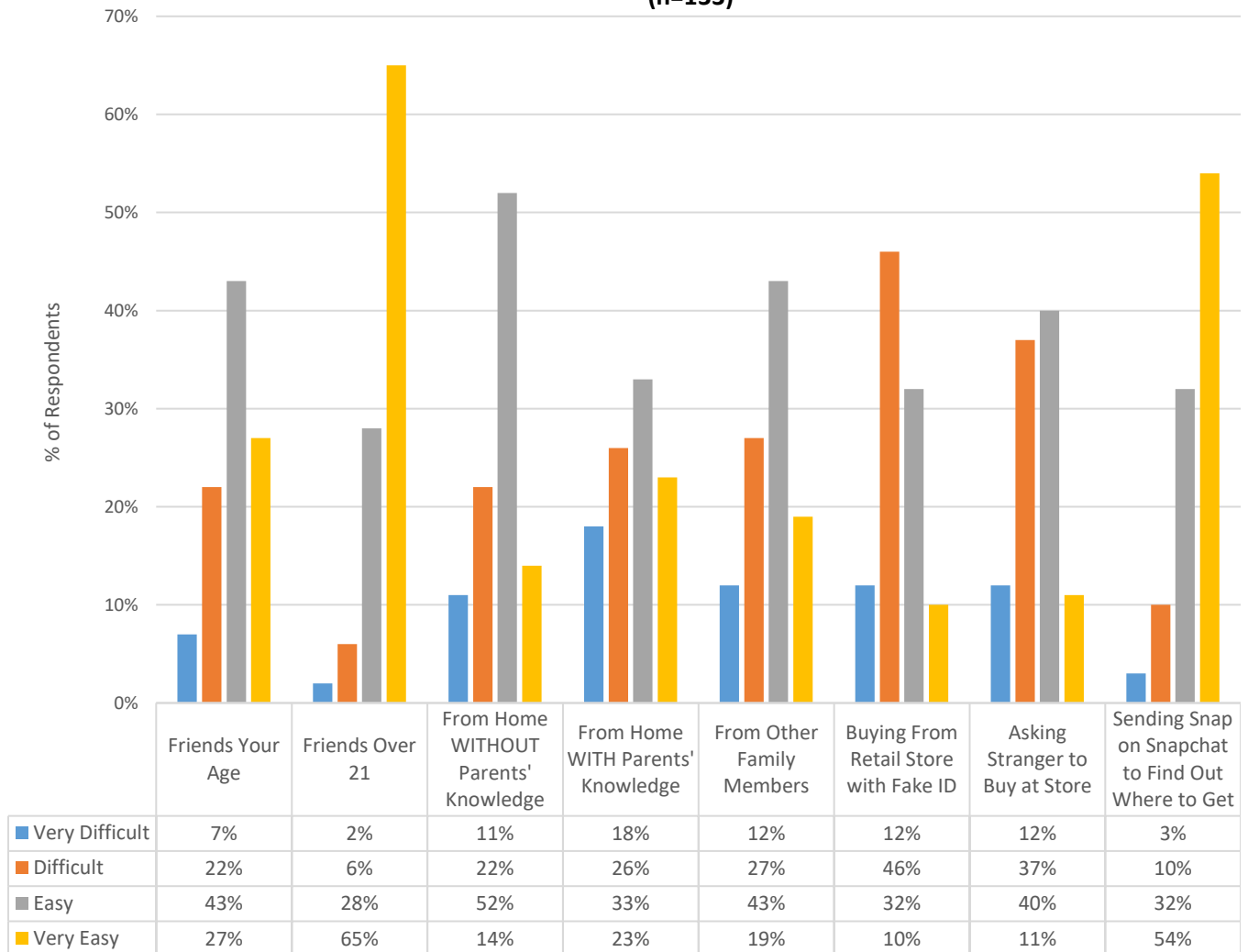
Note: The youth survey instrument provided the following examples for two illegal substances: 1) **Hallucinogens**: psychedelic mushrooms, acid, LSD and 2) **Prescription medications WITHOUT a prescription**: hydrocodone, oxycontin, Xanax, Valium, Adderall, and Ritalin.

How Easy or Difficult to Get Legal Drugs from Various Sources

Youth were asked to identify how difficult or easy it is to get legal drugs (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, marijuana) from specific sources. Figure 7 depicts the frequency of responses, with the two sources most often identified as *Very Easy* including Friends Over 21 (65%) and Sending Snap on Snapchat to Find Out Where to Get (54%).

When combining *Easy* and *Very Easy*, the sources with the greatest percentage of responses are Friends Over 21 (93%), Sending Snap on Snapchat to Find Out Where to Get (86%), and Friends Your Age (70%).

Figure 7: Legal Drugs - How Difficult or Easy to Get from These Sources... (n=133)

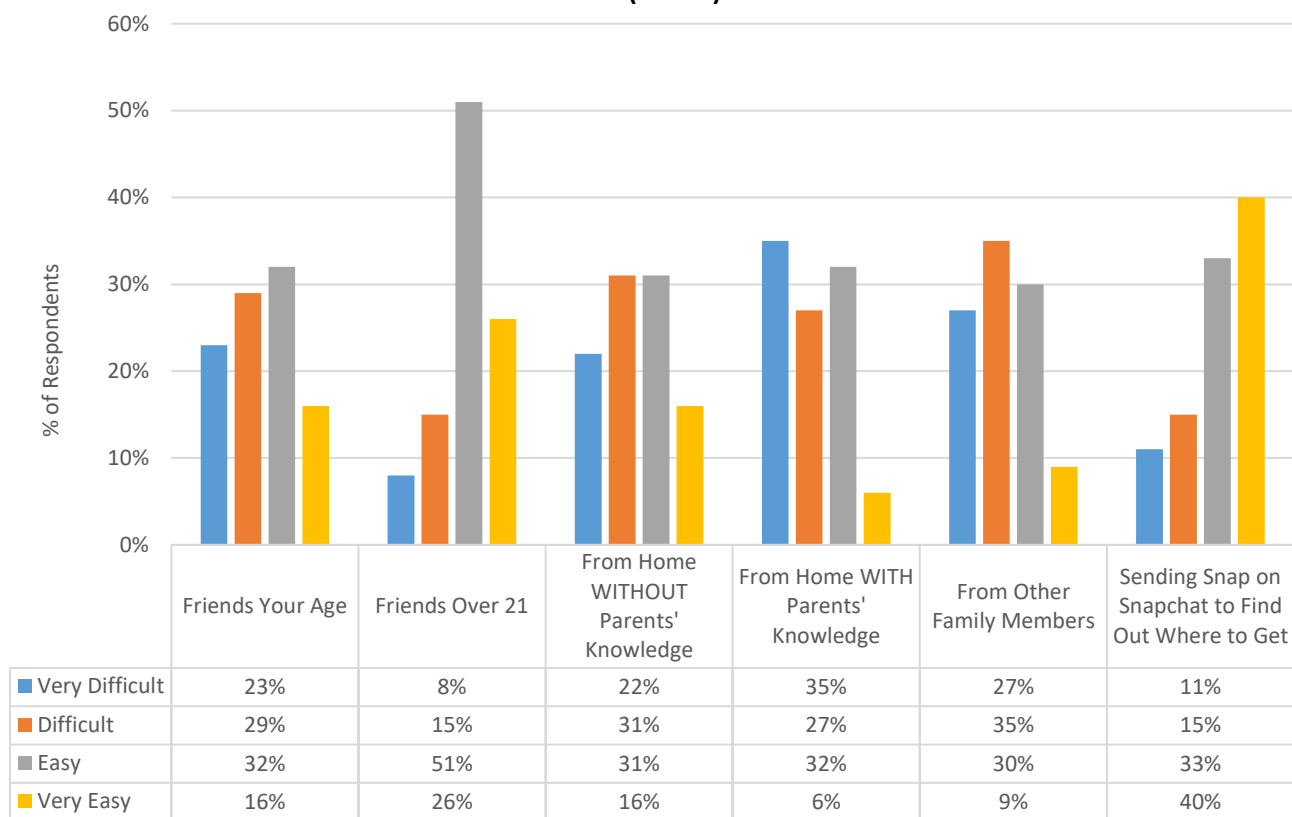


How Easy or Difficult to Get Illegal Drugs from Various Sources

Youth were asked to identify how difficult or easy it is to get illegal drugs (e.g., meth, heroin, pills without prescription) from specific sources. Figure 8 depicts the frequency of responses, with the source most often identified as *Very Easy* being Sending Snap on Snapchat to Find Out Where to Get (40%).

When combining *Easy* and *Very Easy*, the sources with the greatest percentage of responses are Friends Over 21 (77%), Sending Snap on Snapchat to Find Out Where to Get (73%), and Friends Your Age (48%).

**Figure 8: Illegal Drugs - How Difficult or Easy to Get from These Sources...
(n=133)**



APPENDIX A: YOUTH SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS: PUT AN "X" UNDER YOUR RESPONSE FOR EACH SUBSTANCE					
QUESTION 1: In your opinion, how difficult or easy is it for youth under 21 years old in Washoe County to get the following?					
SUBSTANCE	VERY DIFFICULT	DIFFICULT	EASY	VERY EASY	I'M NOT SURE
ALCOHOL					
CIGARETTES/VAPING PRODUCTS (e-cigs, puff bars, Juuls)					
COCAINE					
ECSTASY, MDMA, MOLLY					
HALLUCINOGENS (psychedelic mushrooms, acid, LSD)					
HEROIN					
KRATOM					
MARIJUANA – PLANT (bud, flower, leaf)					
MARIJUANA – EDIBLES (gummies, candies, cookies)					
MARIJUANA – CONCENTRATE (vape cartridge, oil, wax, dabs)					
METHAMPHETAMINE					
PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION <i>WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION</i> (hydrocodone, oxycontin, Xanax, Valium, Adderall, Ritalin)					
QUESTION 2: In your opinion, how frequently are each of the following used by youth under 21 years old in Washoe County?					
SUBSTANCE	NEVER USED:	RARELY USED:	SOMETIMES USED:	OFTEN USED:	I'M NOT SURE:
	Don't know any kids who use it	No more than 5 times a year	At least 1-2 times a month	At least 1-2 times a week	Don't know enough about it
ALCOHOL					
CIGARETTES/VAPING PRODUCTS (e-cigs, puff bars, Juuls)					
COCAINE					
ECSTASY, MDMA, MOLLY					
HALLUCINOGENS (psychedelic mushrooms, acid, LSD)					
HEROIN					
KRATOM					
MARIJUANA – PLANT (bud, flower, leaf)					
MARIJUANA – EDIBLES (gummies, candies, cookies)					
MARIJUANA – CONCENTRATE (vape cartridge, oil, wax, dabs)					
METHAMPHETAMINE					

QUESTION 3: In your opinion, how harmful are each of the following substances when used by youth under 21?

SUBSTANCE	NOT HARMFUL AT ALL	BARELY HARMFUL	SOMEWHAT HARMFUL	HARMFUL	VERY HARMFUL
ALCOHOL					
CIGARETTES/VAPING PRODUCTS (e-cigs, puff bars, Juuls)					
COCAINE					
ECSTASY, MDMA, MOLLY					
HALLUCINOGENS (psychedelic mushrooms, acid, LSD)					
HEROIN					
KRATOM					
MARIJUANA – PLANT (bud, flower, leaf)					
MARIJUANA – EDIBLES (gummies, candies, cookies)					
MARIJUANA – CONCENTRATE (vape cartridge, oil, wax, dabs)					
METHAMPHETAMINE					
PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION <i>WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION</i> (hydrocodone, oxycontin, Xanax, Valium, Adderall, Ritalin)					

QUESTION 4: Please rate how difficult or easy you think it is for youth to get LEGAL DRUGS (i.e., alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, marijuana) from these sources:

SOURCE	VERY DIFFICULT	DIFFICULT	EASY	VERY EASY
FRIENDS YOUR AGE				
FRIENDS OVER 21				
FROM HOME, WITHOUT PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE				
FROM HOME, WITH PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE				
FROM OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS				
BUYING FROM RETAIL STORE WITH FAKE ID				
ASKING A STRANGER TO BUY AT A STORE				
SENDING SNAP ON SNAPCHAT TO FIND OUT WHERE TO GET IT				

QUESTION 5: Please rate how difficult or easy you think it is for youth to get ILLEGAL DRUGS (i.e., meth, heroin, pills without prescription) from these sources:

SOURCE	VERY DIFFICULT	DIFFICULT	EASY	VERY EASY
FRIENDS YOUR AGE				
FRIENDS OVER 21				
FROM HOME, WITHOUT PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE				
FROM HOME, WITH PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE				
FROM OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS				
SENDING SNAP ON SNAPCHAT TO FIND OUT WHERE TO GET IT				