

Delaware Youth Prescription Misuse

The data below provide a brief snapshot of the prevalence of the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs by Delaware Students in 8th and 11th grade. Using the data from the Delaware School Survey (DSS) two maps were created that show how prescription drug misuse and abuse varies between zipcodes. Prescription drug misuse by age was also captured using the National Survey on Drug Use and Health along with the DSS. The comparison between age groups shows how drug use varies between teenagers and young adults.

Table 1. Past Year Prescription Drug Misuse of 8 th and 11 th Grade students. Data Source: Delaware School Survey, 2016			
<u>8th grade</u>	Past year misuse of Rx Drugs	<u>11th grade</u>	Past year misuse of Rx Drugs
Overall			
State (n=4548)	7%	State (n=4320)	12%
Gender			
Male (n=2164; 49%)	6%	Male (n=2017; 48%)	13%
Female (n=2283; 51%)	8%	Female (n=2194; 52%)	12%
Race/Ethnicity¹			
Hispanic (n=783; 18%)	8%	Hispanic (n=730; 17%)	12%
Black (n=797; 20%)	8%	Black (n=810; 20%)	12%
White (n=2,057, 51%)	6%	White (n=2,096; 52%)	12%
Native American or Alaskan Native ² (n=35; 1%)	6%	Native American or Alaskan Native ² (n=24; 1%)	4%
Mixed (n=837, 21%)	10%	Mixed (n=668; 17%)	15%
Other ³ (n=292, 7%)	8%	Other ³ (n=397; 10%)	11%

¹ For race/ethnicity, if a respondent selected more than one category (even though the question asked for what “best” describes and there was also an option for “mixed”) they were put into the “mixed” category, this decision may have resulted in a higher percentage of respondents that identified as “mixed” than in previous years or if different recoding decisions were made (such as to exclude any respondent that selected more than one category)

² This cell has less than 30 cases; please interpret with extreme caution.

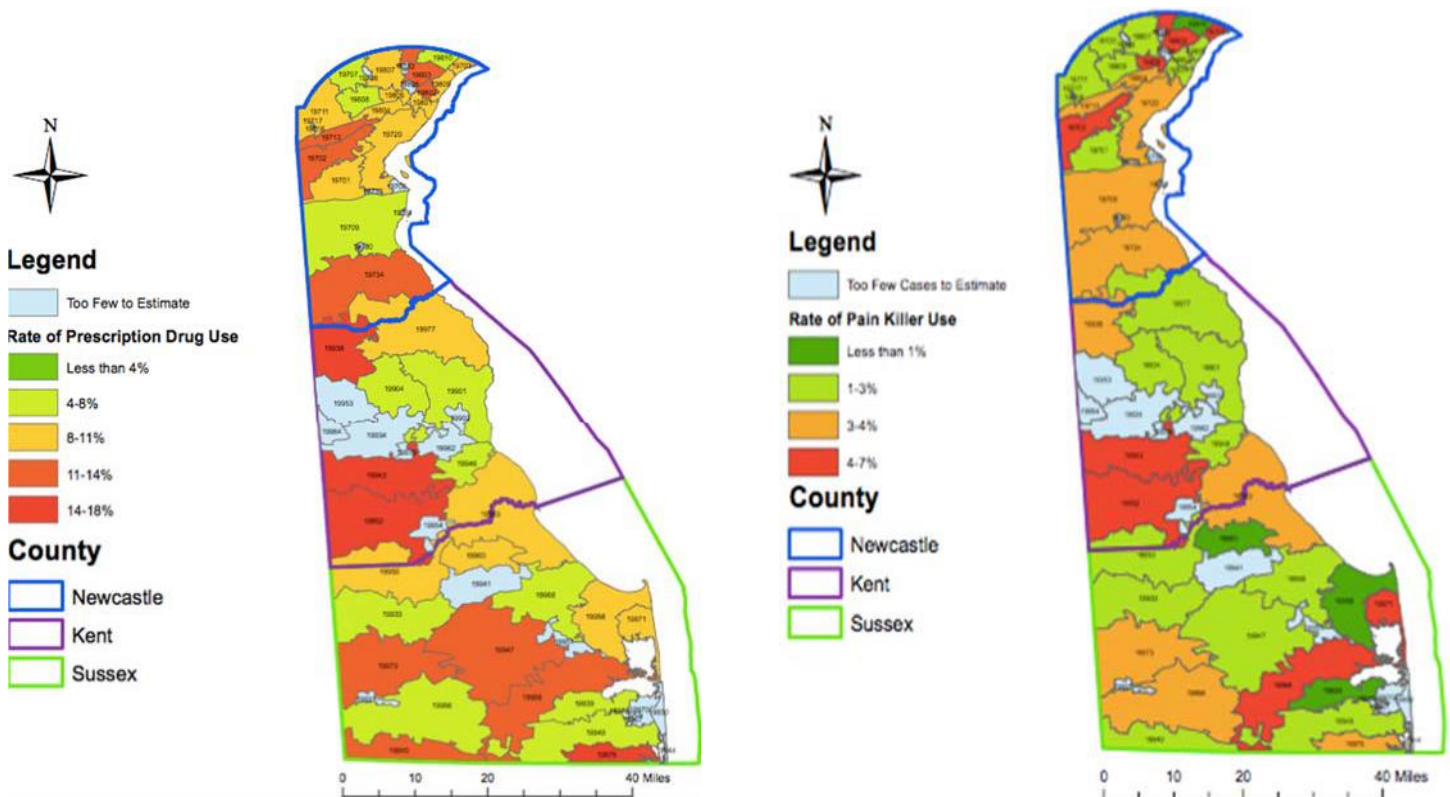
³ Other also includes those that identify as Asian.

The Delaware School Survey collects data on the zipcodes of the students that take the survey. Data are then [mapped](#) to show the areas difference in misuse and abuse. The below maps use 2016 Delaware School Survey combined 8th and 11th grade data.

Among 8th and 11th graders, in 2016, the zipcodes with the highest prevalence (between 14-18 percent) of past year prescription drug use (i.e., painkillers, stimulants, and depressants) without a doctor’s prescription were mostly located in Kent County: 19938, 19943, and 19952. However, the zipcode 19975 in Sussex County also had a high prevalence of prescription drug use.

The zipcodes with the highest prevalence (between 4-6 percent) of past year prescription painkiller use without a doctor’s prescription were 19702, 19805, 19803, 19703, 19943, 19952, 19966, and 19971. While there were more zipcodes in New Castle County with the highest percentages of use, the areas covered by the zipcodes in Sussex and Kent Counties with the highest percentage of prescription painkiller use are larger.

Figure 1 and 2: Past Year Delaware Youth Prescription Drug Misuse/Abuse & Pain Killer Misuse/Abuse Hotspots, DSS 2016.



Although it is possible to denote hotspots with the highest prevalence of misuse and abuse within each county, the average prevalence of each county does not vary greatly or deviate greatly from the state's average (Table 2).

<u>8th grade</u>	Past year misuse of Rx Drugs	<u>11th grade</u>	Past year misuse of Rx Drugs
State (n=4548)	7%	State (n=4320)	12%
NC County (n=2942, 64.7%)	7%	NC County (n=2436, 56.4%)	13%
Kent County (n=578; 12.7%)	8%	Kent County (n=800, 18.5%)	12%
Sussex County (n=1028; 22.6%)	8%	Sussex County (n=1084; 25.1%)	12%

Prevalence of the Misuse and Abuse of Prescription Drugs by Age

The National Study on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) provides substance use data by state. Table 3 highlights the prevalence of nonmedical past year pain reliever use by age group. Ages 18-25 report misusing and abusing pain relievers more often than those aged 12-17 or 26 and older.

Year	Ages 12-17	Ages 18-25	Ages 26+
2013-2014	4.6%	9.5%	3.4%

Conclusion

Both the DSS and NSDUH show that prescription pain killer misuse and abuse, is an issue for teenagers and young adults. The DSS shows that 11th grade students' abuse and misuse prescription drugs at a higher rate than their 8th grade counterparts. This trend is reflected by the NSDUH which shows individuals aged 18-25 abuse and misuse Pain Relievers at a higher rate than their younger counterparts. For the state of Delaware rates of youth misuse and abuse vary from zipcodes, with some higher and lower than the state average. However, it still shows that misuse and abuse of prescription drugs among youth is an issue worth addressing in every part of Delaware.