

## Substance Abuse Monitoring System (SAMS)

SAMS is an alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana survey that was developed by Dr. R. Scott Olds and Dr. Dennis L. Thombs of Kent State University. Data from seven NE Ohio school districts (five suburban, two rural) from 2004-2007 indicate disturbing levels of parental involvement in teen ATOD use.

### Survey Items Used to Determine Parental Role

Survey items read:

How often have you been in homes in the last 30 days where parents permitted you to use alcohol (cigarettes, marijuana)?

How often in the last 30 days has either of your parents or another student's parents purchased alcohol (cigarettes, marijuana) for your use?

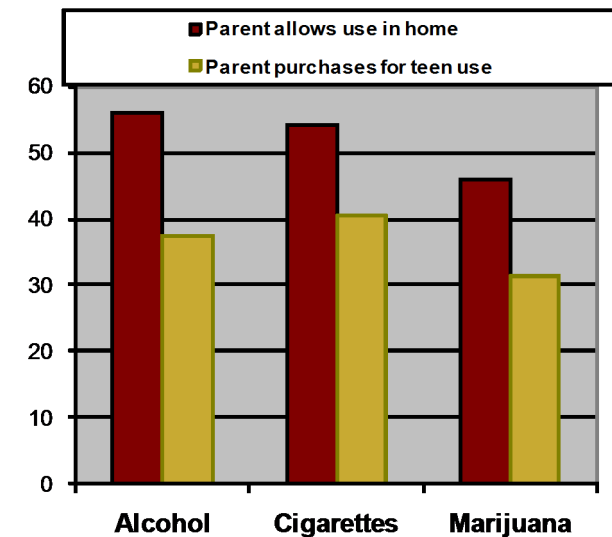
## *Crisis in ADOLESCENT ATOD USE*

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## *Crisis in ADOLESCENT ATOD USE*

*50% of students currently  
using substances use in a home  
where a parent is present  
according to local surveys.*



## *Summary of Findings*

Alcohol was the most widely used of the substances on which the survey focused. More than half, 56%, of the current teen drinkers surveyed reported using in a home with a parent's consent. More than one third (37.5%) indicated that a parent had purchased alcohol for their use.

More than half of the teen smokers (54.2%) lit up in a home with the knowledge of a parent. 40.5% of those smokers had a parent purchase cigarettes for them.

Among marijuana users, slightly less than half of those surveyed (46%) got high in a home where the parent permitted marijuana use. 31% had a parent purchase pot for them to get high.

Current use is 30 days prior to survey. All data is based on current users.

## *Dangers of Teen Alcohol Use*

Paired with the alarming trend of binge drinking among teens, our youth are put at greater risk for injury and death when irresponsible adults in our communities give them the opportunity to drink or provide alcohol. Additionally, adolescent alcohol abuse can lead to alcoholism in teens within a period of five to fifteen months.

## *Holding Parents Accountable*

Parents hosting teen parties where alcohol is served are often not held accountable unless a tragedy occurs. Local law enforcement may opt to file criminal charges against those parents but those statutes are often not enforced aggressively. Lawmakers are urged to consider a means by which to hold these parents accountable.

## *Communities Adopt Social Host Laws*

Under social host ordinances a parent in violation of teen drinking laws would typically face a fine of \$500 or more. Law enforcement would no longer need to meet the higher burden of proof required under criminal statutes. In addition, adoption of such laws would raise awareness of this disturbing trend and put parents on notice if they choose to break the law.

## *Resources*

For an overview of social host ordinances see John Ritter, [USA Today](#), "Laws crash underage drinking parties" and "Adults penalized for teen drinking," January 4, 2007. (online)

Model social host ordinance available online at [www.venturacountylimits.org](http://www.venturacountylimits.org) and click on resources / solutions.