

Depression and Substance Use in Missouri Youth

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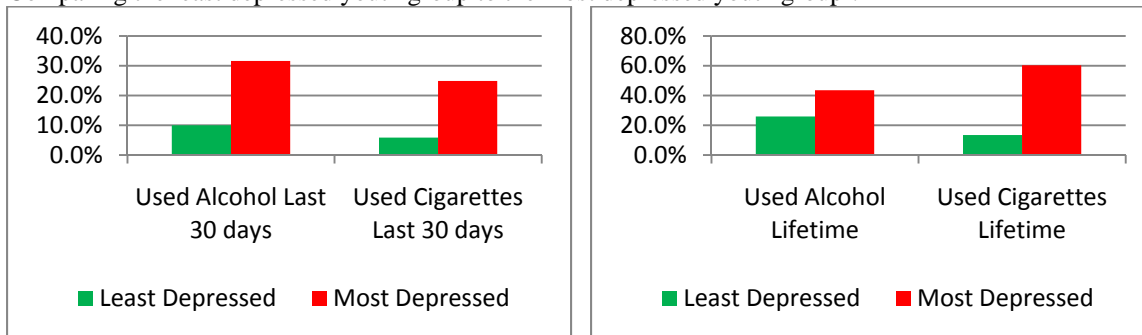
8.7% of Missouri youth (12-17) report at least one major depressive episode in the last year.¹

The following information describes 6th-12th graders across Missouri:

There is a strong relationship (significant correlation) between depression and substance use. For each drug asked about, use increased as the student's level of depression increased.

The strongest relationships were shown with alcohol and cigarette use.³

Comparing the least depressed youth group to the most depressed youth group²:



- A similar pattern was found for 30 day use for: chewing tobacco, cigar, binge alcohol, marijuana, inhalants, prescription drug abuse and over the counter drug abuse.³
- It was also found for lifetime use of all of the above plus cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, methamphetamine, club drugs and steroids.^{3,4}

Not only are the more depressed youth engaging in substance use on more occasions, they are consuming more when they do. The least depressed group smoked an average of 2.4 cigarettes on days they did smoke and drank an average of 3 drinks when they did drink. This compares to 2.6 cigarettes and 3.2 drinks for the most depressed group.³

Girls tend to show a stronger relationship than boys between depression and the use of all substances asked about, with the exception of chewing tobacco and steroid use.³

¹ <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k8state/AppB.htm#TabB-23>

² Scale items were summed. This score was used to divide the sample into quartiles. Top and bottom quartiles are displayed here.

³ 2010 Missouri Student Survey, unpublished data

⁴ Students were not asked about their 30 day use for these drugs so the relationship is unknown.