

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

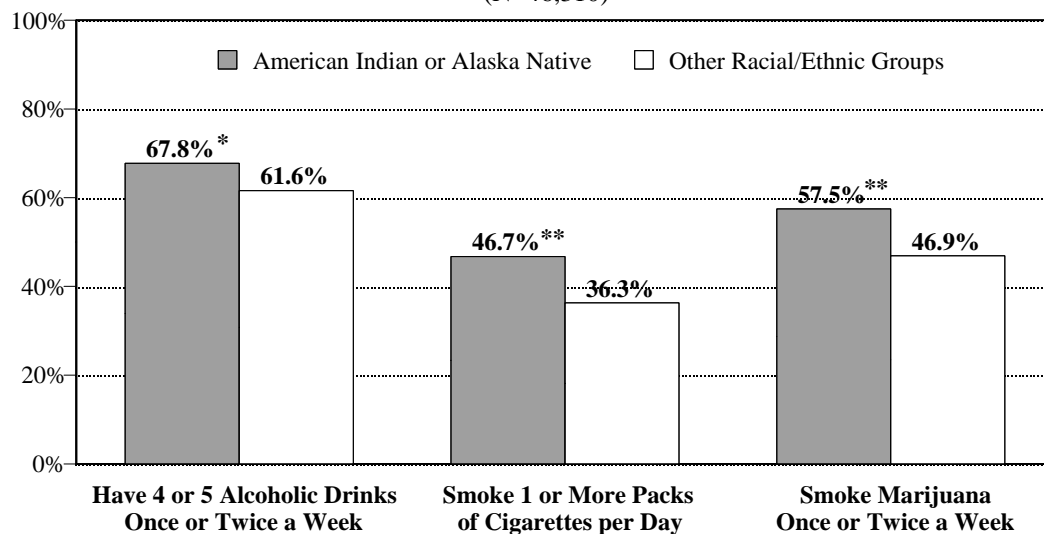
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American Indian and Alaska Native Youths More Likely to Perceive Minimal Risk of Harm from Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Use

American Indian and Alaska Native youth had the highest rate of past month illicit drug use (20.2%) in 2002 and 2003, nearly twice the average rate of all youth (11.4%).¹ American Indian and Alaska Native youths are also more likely than other races/ethnicities to perceive minimal risk of harm from substance use, according to a recent special analysis of data from the 2002 and 2003 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health. For example, more than one-half (57.5%) of American Indian and Alaska Native youths reported that they thought there was moderate, slight, or no risk of harm from smoking marijuana once or twice a week, compared to 46.9% of other races/ethnicities (see figure below). Previous research has shown an association between decreased perceptions of risk and increased substance use (see CESAR FAX, Volume 12, Issue 5).

Percentage of Youths (12 to 17 Years Old) Reporting Perceived Moderate to No Risk in Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Use, by Race/Ethnicity, 2002 and 2003

(N=46,310)



*p<0.05 **p<0.01

¹Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. *Results from the 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings*, 2004.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. "Risk and Protective Factors for Substance Use Among American Indian or Alaska Native Youths," *The NSDUH Report*, September 24, 2004. Available online at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k4/AmIndianYouthRF/AmIndianYouthRF.cfm>.

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CESAR FAX is supported by BYRN 2004-1206, awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. CESAR FAX may be copied without permission. Please cite CESAR as the source.