

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

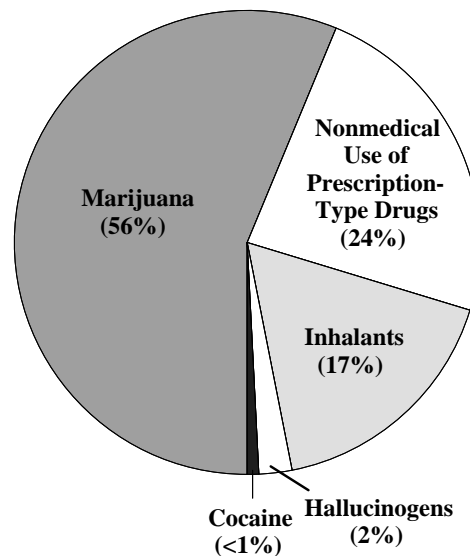
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## *56% of Youths Who First Started Using Drugs in the Past Year Began with Marijuana; Around One-Fourth Started with Nonmedical Use of Prescription-Type Drugs*

An estimated 1.5 million youths ages 12 to 17—an average of more than 4,000 per day—used a drug other than alcohol for the first time in the past year, according to data from the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. The majority of youths reported that marijuana was the first drug they tried (56%), followed by prescription-type drugs used nonmedically (24%), and inhalants (17%). Very few youths reported that their first use of drugs involved hallucinogens or cocaine (see figure below). The relative distribution of first-drug used has remained consistent over the past five years (data not shown).

### **Specific Drug Used When First Starting to Use Drugs, Among Youths Who First Started Using Drugs in the Past Year, 2007**

(Estimated N=1,471,000)



\*Prescription-type drugs includes stimulants, sedatives, tranquilizers, and pain relievers. Nonmedical use is defined as use without a prescription belonging to the respondent or use that occurred simply for the experience or feeling the drug caused.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), "Trends in Adolescent Inhalant Use: 2002-2007," *The NSDUH Report*, March 16, 2009 (available online at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k9/inhalantTrends/inhalantTrends.cfm>); and SAMHSA, *Results from the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings*, 2008 (available online at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduhLatest.htm>).

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