

PEER PRESSURE TO USE ATOD

In answer to the question of how much pressure they feel from friends and schoolmates to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs by drug type, structured response choices of “none,” “a little,” “some,” or “a lot” were provided. The following results were obtained:

Percentage of Students Reporting Perceived Peer Pressure by Type of ATOD Use, Tennessee High School Students, 1995/1997

<u>Type of ATOD Use</u>	<u>Percentage Feeling Any Peer Pressure⁶</u>	<u>Percentage Feeling a Lot of Peer Pressure</u>
Drink alcoholic beverages	38%	6%
Smoke cigarettes/use tobacco	29%	4.1%
Use marijuana/pot	27%	6%
Take “pills” or prescription drugs for non-medical purposes	11%	2.8%
Use other illegal drugs, not otherwise specified	9%	2.8%
Use LSD and other hallucinogens	9%	2.6%
Use cocaine/crack	8%	2.7%
Use heroin	6%	2.5%

Drinking alcohol is associated with the most peer pressure from friends, followed by using marijuana/pot. Smoking cigarettes or using other forms of tobacco is less subject to peer pressure than the use of alcohol or marijuana, suggesting the possibility of some success in targeting tobacco use reduction messages to youth.

Among drugs that youth feel any pressure from friends and peers to use, alcohol ranks first by far at 38% of youth who feel pressure to drink, followed by cigarette smoking/tobacco use at 29%. However, a similar proportion of students felt that “a lot” of peer pressure was associated with both drinking alcohol and using marijuana (6% each).

⁶ Any peer pressure is defined as including the categories “A Little,” “Some” or “A Lot of Pressure” compared to “None.”