

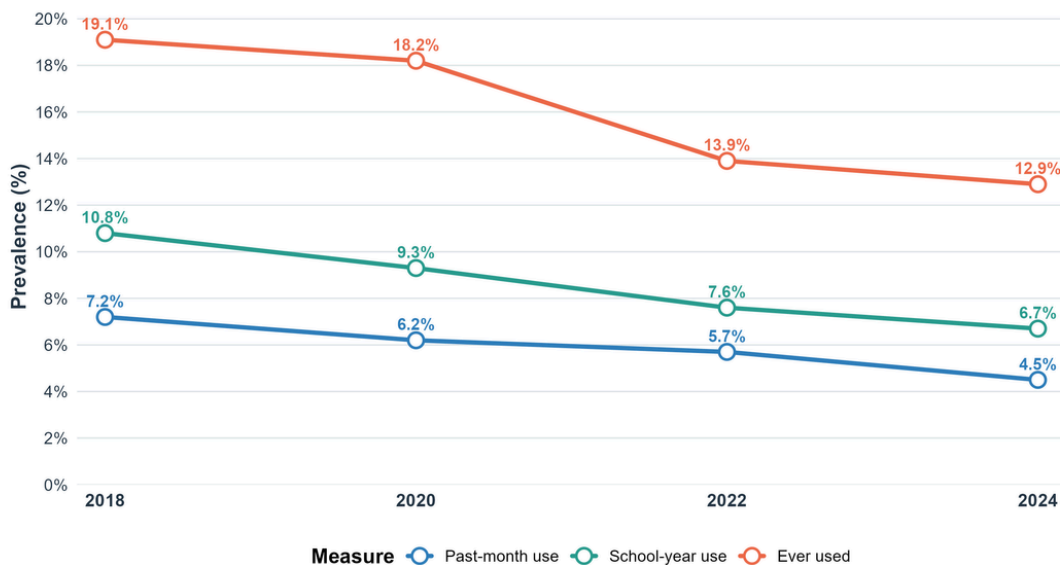
PRC 7 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



APPROXIMATELY 1 IN 8 STUDENTS IN THE COMBINED HHSC REGIONS 6&7 REPORTED EVER USING A PRESCRIPTION DRUG THAT WAS NOT PRESCRIBED TO THEM IN 2024

Prescription Drug Misuse Among Students, 2018-2024

HHSC Regions 6 & 7, grades 7-12



Prescription drug misuse in this newsletter refers to using medication that was not prescribed to the student or using prescription drugs without a doctor's direction. The Texas School Survey findings represent self-reported, weighted estimates among Texas public-school students in grades 7-12. The national Monitoring the Future measure includes nonmedical use of amphetamines, sedatives, narcotics other than heroin, or tranquilizers, and is reported only for 12th graders.

Figure 1:

- **Lifetime misuse declined from 19.1% in 2018 to 12.9% in 2024, a decrease of 6.2 percentage points.**

- **School-year misuse decreased from 10.8% to 6.7%.**
- **Past-month misuse declined from 7.2% to 4.5%.**
- **Although all three measures decreased, approximately 1 in 8 students still reported lifetime prescription drug misuse in 2024.**

Prescription Drug Misuse Among Students, 2024

HHSC Regions 6 & 7 compared with Texas, grades 7-12

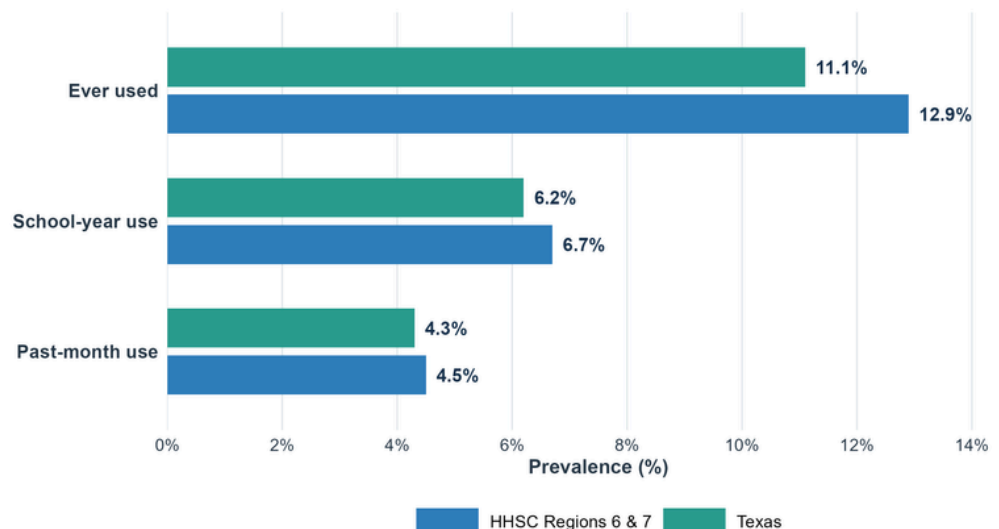


Figure 2:

- **Lifetime prescription drug misuse was slightly higher in HHSC Regions 6 & 7 than statewide: 12.9% compared with 11.1%.**
- **School-year misuse was 6.7% regionally, compared with 6.2% across Texas.**
- **Past-month misuse was similar but slightly higher regionally: 4.5% compared with 4.3% statewide.**

Source: 2024 Texas School Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use. Misuse refers to use of a prescription drug that was not prescribed to the student.

These are descriptive differences.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE VARIES BY DRUG TYPE, GRADE, AND STUDENT GROUP

Lifetime Prescription Drug Misuse by Type and Grade

HHSC Regions 6 & 7, 2024

Codeine cough syrup	8.2%	6.2%	7.1%	7.1%	6.0%	7.6%
Opioid pain relievers	0.9%	0.7%	0.9%	2.1%	2.2%	4.7%
Benzodiazepines	1.1%	1.5%	0.7%	1.9%	2.4%	4.9%
Prescription stimulants	2.2%	1.8%	3.0%	5.3%	3.8%	7.0%
Other prescription drugs	5.8%	5.9%	8.1%	6.8%	7.6%	6.6%
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12

Source: 2024 Texas School Survey, HHSC Regions 6 & 7, Table D-12.

- Codeine cough syrup and other prescription drugs showed comparatively high lifetime misuse across multiple grade levels.
- Among 12th graders, prescription stimulant misuse was 7.0%, followed by benzodiazepines at 4.9% and opioid pain relievers at 4.7%.
- Prescription drug misuse was reported beginning in Grade 7, supporting the importance of prevention education before and throughout high school.

- Female students reported slightly higher lifetime prescription drug misuse than male students: 7.2% compared with 6.6%.
- Students in rural areas had the highest prevalence at 9.7%, followed by suburban students at 7.4% and students in cities at 5.7%.
- Among the racial and ethnic groups shown, non-Hispanic White students had the highest prevalence at 8.1%, followed by Hispanic students at 7.1% and non-Hispanic Black students at 4.7%.
- Overall, 7.1% of U.S. 12th graders reported lifetime misuse of any prescription drug in 2024.

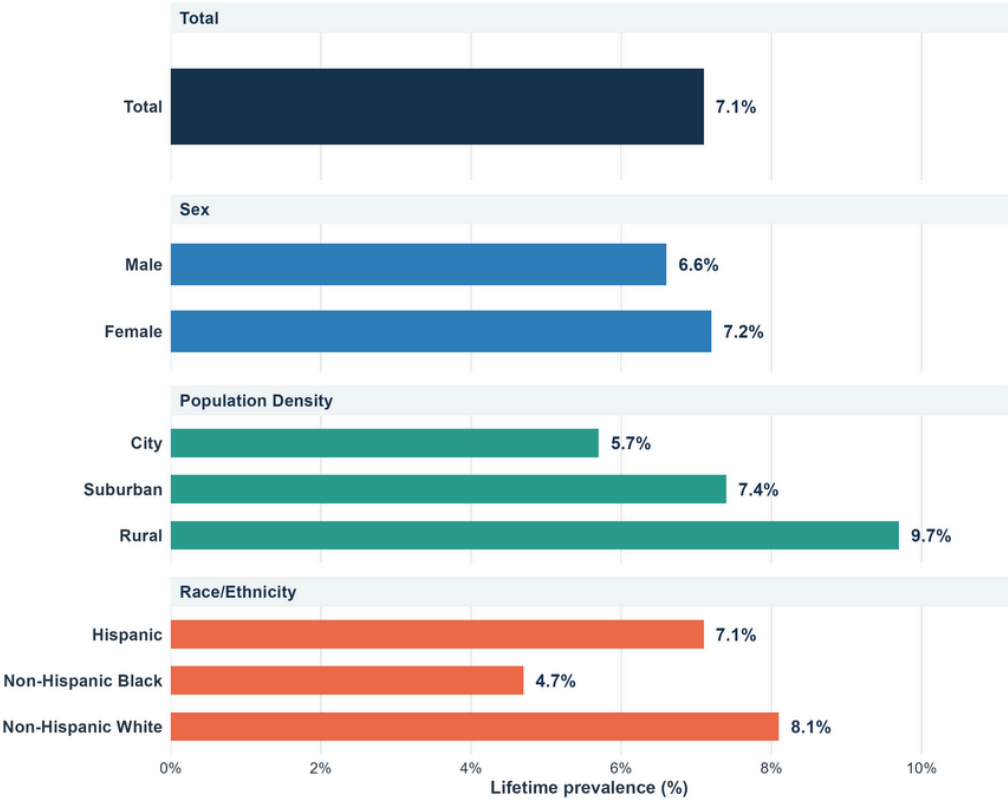
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KEY TAKEAWAY:

Overall, regional and national data show encouraging declines in youth prescription drug misuse, but continued prevention remains essential. Families, schools, healthcare professionals, and community organizations can help by promoting **medication safety**, **discouraging prescription sharing**, supporting **secure storage and disposal**, and ensuring that young people understand that **prescription medications can cause harm** when used without appropriate medical supervision.

Lifetime Prescription Drug Use Among 12th Graders

United States, 2024



Source: Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use, 1975-2024, Table 4-1 (continued).