
Grey Bruce

Parent Norms Survey



Parenting Behaviours and Perceptions
Associated with Teen Substance Use

STUDY RESULTS

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Executive Summary

The Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey was adapted from the Montana Parent Norms Survey (2000) as part of an overall strategy to better understand parenting behaviours and perceptions and to reduce substance use among Grey Bruce teens and young adults.

Over 1300 parents made up the original study sample. They were elementary school parents of grades seven and eight students, and secondary school parents of grades nine and eleven students from across six school areas. A total of 660 surveys were completed and returned.

Parents were asked 41 questions about their teen's behaviours and their own parenting behaviours. Some of the questions focused on level of parental concern about their teen's use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana: others focused on parents' relationships with their teens and how influential they are with their teens. Parents were also asked to estimate the incidence of alcohol and other drug use by teens in Grey Bruce.

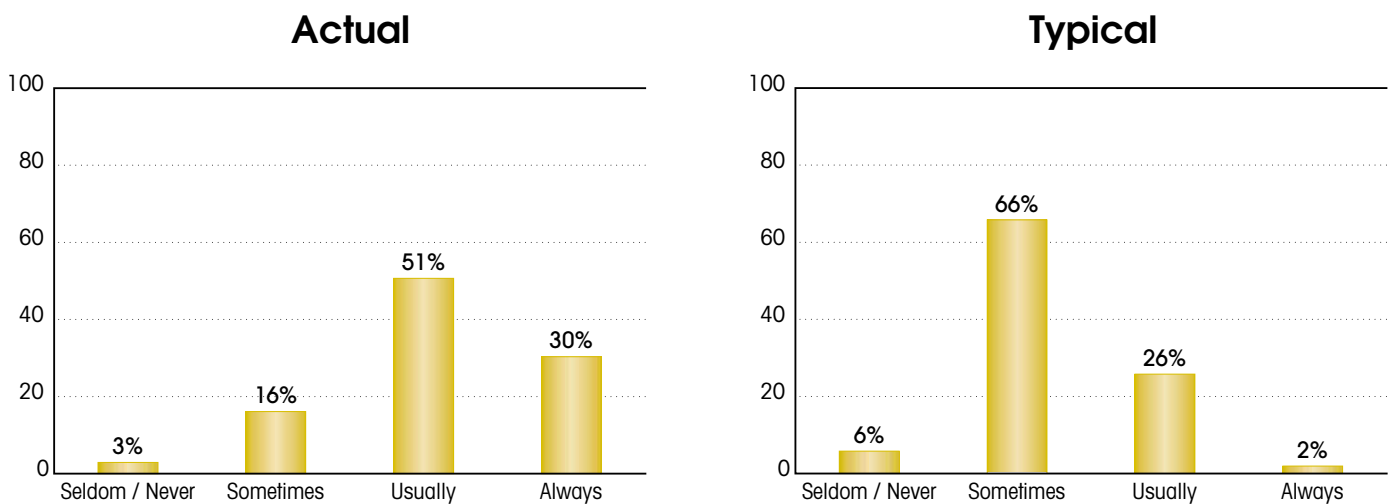
To our knowledge, it is the first time a survey has focused on documenting the normative expectations, attitudes and behaviours of parents of teenagers in Grey and Bruce Counties. Comparisons were made between actual reported parenting behaviours (reports about themselves) and perceived parenting behaviours (perceptions of the typical Grey Bruce parent).

Respondents expressed very strong concerns about their teenagers using alcohol, tobacco and marijuana and felt that they have either some or great influence over their teen's decision-making around use of these substances. They also stated that they had very good to excellent relationships with their children and that they knew a lot about their teen's behaviours.

However, when asked about *typical* Grey Bruce families, our respondents' perceptions were:

- that typical parents do **not** have the same quality of relationship with their teenager as they themselves do,
- that typical teens do **not** approach their parents as often when they have a serious problem as their own teens do, and
- that typical parents do **not** have as much influence over their teens' decision-making around substance use as they themselves do.

The following is an example of parents' perceptions of how often their teen discusses serious problems with them, compared to how often they felt that **typical** Grey Bruce teens would discuss serious problems with their parents:



Eighty one percent (81%) of respondents indicated that their teen 'usually' or 'always' discusses serious problems with them. Interestingly, 72% felt that the typical Grey Bruce teen only 'sometimes' or 'never' discusses serious problems with their parents.

The Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey provides important insight into the behaviours, perceptions, and misperceptions that exist in Grey Bruce parents around the issue of teen substance use/abuse. This information serves as the basis for structuring messages that support parents by reducing misperceptions that exist and by reinforcing the positive behaviours already practiced by the majority of parents across the two counties.

The following are a number of key findings from the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey:

a) Parents report they have a great amount of influence over their teens' decisions to smoke cigarettes, use marijuana and/or drink alcohol.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...ninety four percent (94%) reported they have either 'some' or 'great' influence over their teens' decisions to smoke, drink and/or use marijuana
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...however, only seventy five percent (75%) believed that the typical Grey Bruce parent had the same amount of influence over their teen; in fact, eighty four percent (84%) felt that the typical Grey Bruce parent has only 'some' or 'very little' influence over their teens' decisions to smoke, drink and/or use marijuana.

b) Parents do not regularly discuss family rules about drug non-use with their teens.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...only forty nine percent (49%) reported that they had discussed family rules about drug non-use with their teen in the 30 days prior to the survey
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...furthermore, only 26% of respondents felt that typical Grey Bruce parents discussed family rules about drug non-use with their teens in the 30 days prior to the survey.

c) Parents reported that their teens bring forward and discuss serious problems with them.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...eighty one percent (81%) of respondents reported that their teen 'usually' or 'always' discusses serious problems with them
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...but, only twenty six percent (26%) felt that typical Grey Bruce teens 'usually' or 'always' discusses serious problems with their parents. In fact, 73% of respondents felt that typical Grey Bruce teens only discuss serious problems with their parents 'sometimes' or 'never'.

d) Parents indicated they know where their teens spend time outside the home and who they are with.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...ninety eight percent (98%) of respondents reported 'usually' or 'always' knowing where their teen is and whom they are with when they are not home, with sixty seven (67%) reporting that they always know this information
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...only fifty one percent (51%) felt that the typical Grey Bruce parent 'usually' or 'always' knows where their teen is and whom they are with; in fact, respondents believed that only three percent (3%) of typical Grey Bruce parents 'always' know where their teen is and whom they are with.

e) Parents know when their teens do not come home on time.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...eighty two percent (82%) of respondents reported that they 'always' know when their teen does not come home on time
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...however, only five percent (5%) felt that the typical Grey Bruce parent 'always' knows when their teen does not come home on time.

f) Parents believe that allowing their teens and their teens' friends to drink in their home sends the wrong message.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...fifty nine percent (59%) of respondents reported that they felt allowing drinking in their home by their teen and their teen's friends sends the wrong message.
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...however, comments made at the end of the survey by respondents indicated that they feel they are in the minority when it comes to thinking that allowing teens and their friends to drink in their home sends the wrong message, when, in fact, they are in the majority.

g) Parents do not allow their teens to drink alcohol in their home with them or with other adults.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...fifty one percent (51%) of respondents reported that they never allow their teen to drink in their home with them or other adults, even if it is a small glass of wine or beer with dinner.
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...comments made at the end of the survey by some respondents indicated that they feel they are in the minority when it comes to not allowing their teen to drink in their home.

h) Parents believe their teens do not drink alcohol and drive afterward.

- **Parent Respondents (Actual Parent Behaviour)**...ninety nine percent (99%) of respondents reported that they believe their teen had never driven after he/she had been drinking alcohol. When asked to estimate the number of times their teen had driven after drinking alcohol, in the 30 days prior to the survey, respondents estimated an average of 0.5 times.
- **Perceived Typical Parent Behaviour**...in contrast, only fifteen percent (15%) of respondents felt that typical Grey Bruce teens had never driven after drinking alcohol. They also felt that, on average, typical Grey Bruce teens had driven 5.2 times in the 30 days before the survey after they had been drinking alcohol.

Conclusion

Grey Bruce parents who responded to this survey were concerned about teen substance use. As parents, addressing the issue of substance use/abuse is an ongoing challenge. There are obvious differences between actual parenting behaviour and the perceptions that parents have regarding the typical parenting behaviour of other Grey Bruce parents. The information gained from this study provides many implications for healthy parenting behaviour across Grey Bruce.

Social norms theory provides an understanding of how the behavioural misperceptions of one's peer reference group can impact the behaviour of individuals (Montana Parent Norms Survey, 2000). By using the information from this study to develop clear messages for parents about actual parenting behaviour in Grey Bruce, these misperceptions can be reduced and therefore allow a healthy change in behaviour to occur. The hope is that parents will begin to believe the 'actual' norms, rather than the 'perceived' ones, and therefore positive behaviour changes will be made toward the actual norms.

For the majority of parents who already practice positive parenting behaviour, as evidenced by the results of the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey, this study will serve to reinforce to them the fact that they are not alone, as many of the respondents to this study felt was the case. The results may therefore encourage them to continue their positive parenting behaviour, while encouraging others to move closer to the norm. Application of a social norms approach to messaging for parents can provide a means to increase the number of parents practicing positive parenting behaviours and thereby reduce the incidence of teen substance use/abuse in Grey Bruce.

INTRODUCTION, PROJECT BACKGROUND AND STUDY METHODOLOGY

Introduction to Social Norms Theory:

What are social norms? Social norms are what people believe is the normal or acceptable code of human social behaviour. Hence, if a certain social behaviour is perceived or believed to be the norm, then this belief can shape or influence human behaviour. The concern occurs when people have a misperception about what is actually the norm for certain social behaviour. When believing in a false norm, behaviour may be influenced so that they follow that false norm and therefore perpetuate it.

Social Norms Theory suggests that human behaviour is vulnerable to incorrect perceptions of how other members of our peer group and/or other social groups think and act (Berkowitz, 1998). The theory suggests that over-estimations about problem behaviour will increase the amount of that problem behaviour, while under-estimations of healthy behaviours discourage people from engaging in healthy choices. Much of Social Norms Theory and research has been focused on looking at college and university students' alcohol intake and drinking patterns.

Many studies show that college and university students overestimate how much drinking is actually going on among their peers on campus before they even arrive at college or university. Experts suggest that this misperception can influence students to drink more, "just to be perceived as normal". In other words, someone may incorrectly think they are in the majority when actually they are in the minority and are acting out of a false sense of security, while someone else may believe that they are in the minority when they are actually in the majority. Social Norms Theory suggests that each of these misperceptions operates in a different way and affects behaviour differently (Berkowitz, 1998).

For example, college and university students who drink heavily (i.e., more than five drinks at a time more than 4 times per month, ODSUS, 2001) are motivated to believe that drinking norms or drinking levels are much higher on campus than is actually true; so, their misperception may justify their own abusive drinking rates. In terms of addressing on campus drinking behaviour, social norms theory suggests that "correcting these misperceptions is likely to result in decreased on campus drinking or an increased prevalence of healthy protective behaviours" (Berkowitz, 2001).

One method used to correct student misperceptions is through a social marketing campaign. This method involves using a mass marketing technique to provide accurate, statistically relevant information via the media to college and university students regarding the on campus drinking 'norm' as well as other factual information.

The application of the social norms theory to the results of the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey provides a framework for the researchers to examine what parents reported as reality or the 'norm' around their actual parenting style for youth between the ages of 12 and 17 years.

Project Background:

The Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey was developed to be an integral part of an overall strategy to reduce substance use among teens and young adults. Data from this survey will be used to develop messages and materials as part of an overall social marketing campaign to reduce teen substance abuse and increase parents' awareness of the problem. It will also be used to help design educational programs and teaching packages, and to promote parenting strategies that will help raise healthy youth.

The results from this survey provide the research base for addressing the misperceptions associated with parental expectations and norms, and strengthen existing positive and protective parenting behaviours. To our knowledge, this was the first time a survey like this had been done in Ontario. It documents the normative expectations, attitudes and actions of parents of teenagers in the Grey Bruce area.

Respondents were asked to think about the typical Grey Bruce parent. The researchers' goal was to construct and compare two sets of data. The first focuses on **actual** reported parenting behaviours, based on what respondents stated about their own parenting behaviours. The second looks at **perceived typical parenting** behaviours, based on respondents' perception of the typical Grey Bruce parent's behaviour. Any differences between what is actually happening with parenting behaviours and what is perceived to be happening with **typical** parenting behaviours guides the researchers in health promotion planning.

Study Methodology:

All materials and the study methodology received ethical approval from both school boards (Bluewater District School Board and Bruce Grey Catholic Separate School Board) and the Grey Bruce Health Unit.

Questionnaire:

The questionnaire entitled the *Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey* was adapted from a study tool called the *Montana Parent Norms Survey* (Montana Social Norms Project, 2000). The original study was conducted by Montana State University and the Montana Department of Health and Human Services with a goal of improving the delivery of state-funded prevention practices. Their survey was a compilation of questions from three national questionnaires that were adapted for parent responses. The length of the original survey tool was shortened to meet the purposes of this study.

Piloting of the Study Materials:

Two versions of the survey were piloted with two different groups. The first, a group of local volunteer community members who are parents of youths, provided the project team with information such as the length of time it took for them to complete the survey (average 20 minutes) and detailed feedback with regard to wording, formatting and impressions about the survey. One parent of a teen said that the survey served as a conversation starter about family rules around teen drinking. Another member of the group felt that the survey "hits the nail on the head" about parenting issues while another found it to be highly "personal but very good".

Feedback was used to construct a subsequent version with several wording changes and led to the inclusion of an additional question about teens being a passenger in a car driven by someone who had been drinking. The second pilot study, conducted with six parents of teens, included a revised survey tool and a letter of information for participants. Their feedback indicated that the study materials were "easy to read". Several editorial suggestions were made, along with revisions to a question that was difficult to understand. They also suggested adding a 'comments' section. These changes were included in the final version of the survey and can be found in Appendix 1.

Sample:

Over 1,300 parents made up the original study sample. They were elementary school parents of grades seven and eight students, and secondary school parents of grades nine and eleven students from across six school areas located across Grey and Bruce Counties. There were two Catholic schools (one elementary, one secondary) and four public schools (two elementary, two secondary). Each school board provided the research team with printed mailing labels for the selected grades and schools. It should be noted that some families had more than one child attending schools and the grades of interest; therefore, some parents were mailed more than one survey. The researchers were informed about three sets of duplicate surveys by parents and these were recorded. A total of 660 surveys were completed and returned.

Methods:

A Letter of Information (Appendix 2), and the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey were mailed to parents, along with a postage-paid return envelope. Identification numbers were printed on all study materials for tracking purposes. These identification numbers were tracked and recorded by reception staff at the Grey Bruce Health Unit, as return envelopes arrived by mail and as any of the original envelopes were returned marked undelivered.

Participation was voluntary. Parents/guardians were informed that they could refuse to participate in the survey, but were asked to return the blank survey in the envelope provided to indicate their refusal. This action prevented them from receiving a follow-up mailing and provided more accurate information for the calculation of response rates and refusal rates.

Individual survey responses were strictly confidential. A unique identification code, mentioned above, was assigned to all study materials in order to track respondents.

Approximately four weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up mailing was sent to all parents who had not mailed back their survey or who had not received their original survey. The second mailing contained all of the study materials from the first mailing, as well as a reminder letter (Appendix 3). It was sent to 834 parents (or 62% of original sample) in an effort to increase the response rate and, in turn, increase the overall generalizability of the survey results.

No individual parent or school results are revealed in this report; only overall group results are reported. All data was kept in a locked file cabinet and was seen only by research staff. Surveys were destroyed at the end of the study.

Research findings were shared with participants if they completed the form at the end of the survey. This form was removed from the survey and kept in a separate file in a locked cabinet.

Results:

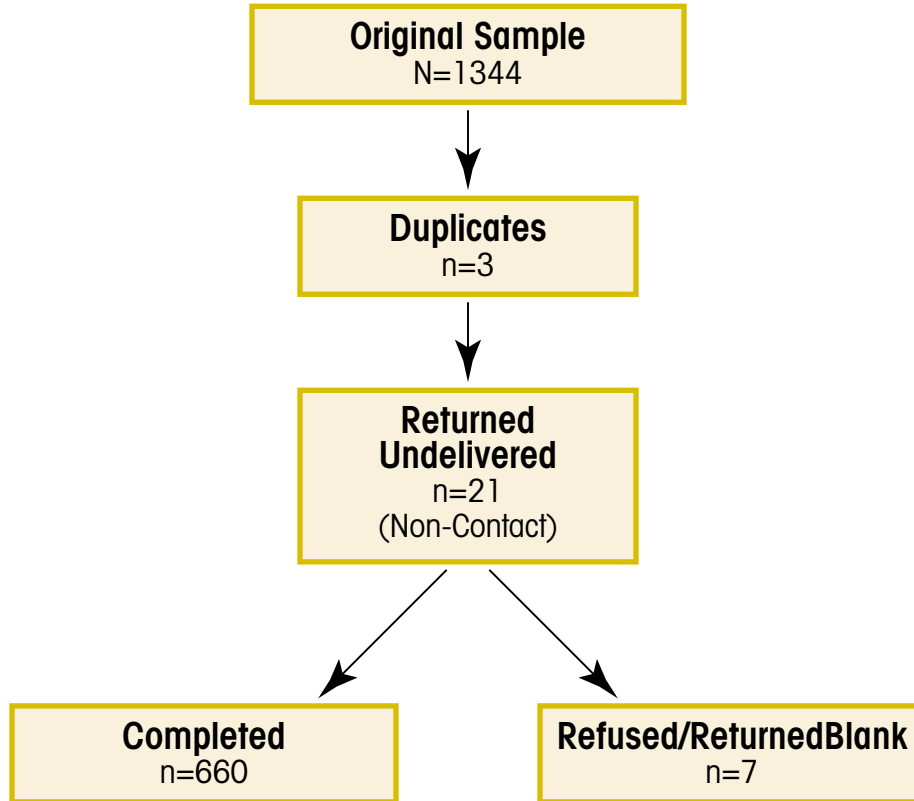
The data from the completed surveys were entered into a computerized data entry form. Data entry was started at the Grey Bruce Health Unit and later finished by a local contractor, who prepared the data for statistical analysis. Statistical analyses were computed using SPSS version 10.0 and performed by the Grey Bruce Health Unit Epidemiologist.

Open-ended responses and comments were typed into a word processor. Study team members reviewed the comments made in several questions that included an "other" response category. Common themes were organized and additional categories were created. Comments made by respondents at the end of the survey were reviewed by the study team and summarized using a consensus process.

Response Rate:

The following (Figure 1) shows the outcomes of the two mailings for the original sample of over 1,300 parents.

Figure 1. Population Hierarchy for Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey



The following calculation was used to determine the response rate for this survey.

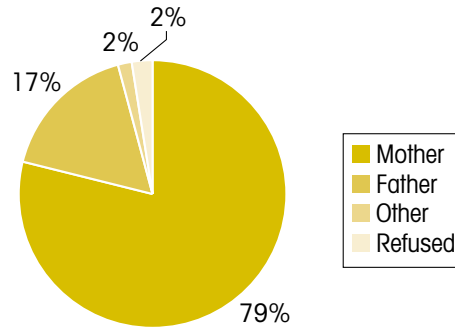
Response Rate:
$$\frac{\text{Completed}}{\text{Original sample} - \text{Duplicates} - \text{Undelivered}}$$

$$\frac{660}{1344-7-21} = \frac{660}{1316} = \mathbf{50\%}$$

Sample Description:

There were 660 respondents to the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey. Over three-quarters of respondents were the mothers of Grey Bruce teens, while less than 20% were fathers, as shown in Figure 2.

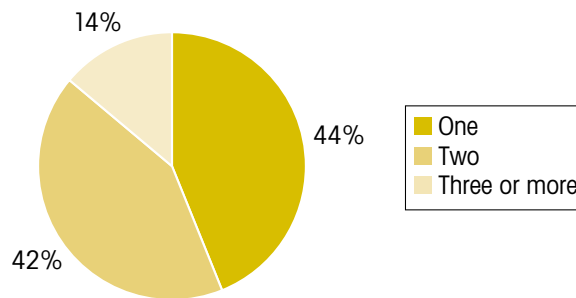
Figure 2. Respondent's Relationship to Grey Bruce Teen.



The average age of respondents was 43 years, with the reported ages being between 23 to 61 years and having a median of 43 years.

The average number of children reported by respondents was 1.7. Just over 40% had only one or two children. Figure 3 shows the distribution.

Figure 3. Number of Children in Respondent's Family.



Survey Results:

In the following section, some, but not all, survey questions and responses are highlighted, along with an analysis. For the full table of survey results, see appendix 4.

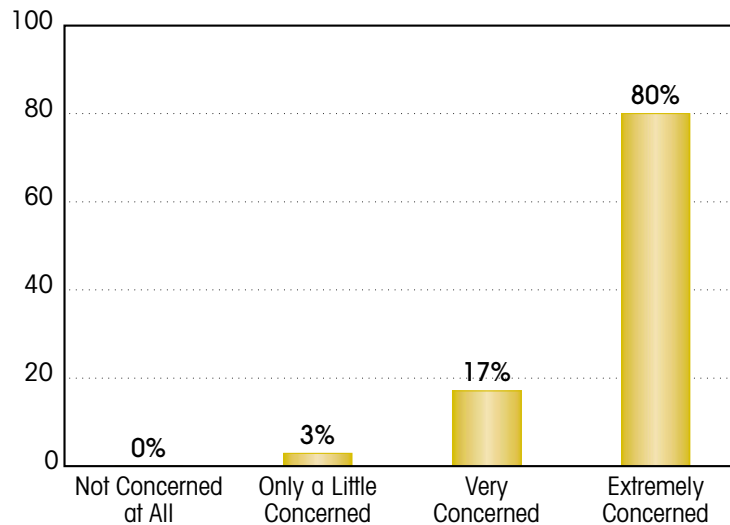
In some cases, a “Did You Know...” section provides interesting comparative data from other relevant studies conducted locally and provincially. One study used for comparison is the Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (OSDUS) 1977-2001. It is the longest ongoing study of adolescent drug use in Canada, spanning 13 years and has been conducted every two years since 1977 in Ontario. In 2001, 4211 students from 41 school boards, 106 schools and 272 classes participated in this survey. Also, the Ontario Health Survey (OHS) 1996-1997 was used to provide regional information. The Community Needs Assessment, 1999, conducted for the Owen Sound & Brockton Focus Project, was also used. The Community Needs Assessment examined results of focus group discussions with students from grades three-OAC in Grey Bruce, specifically the Owen Sound & Brockton area.

NOTE: Some survey question analyses stand alone in the results section, while others have been grouped for incorporation of trends and comparisons.



Suppose you found out your teenager was drinking alcohol regularly, how concerned would you be?

- Not concerned at all
- Only a little concerned
- Very concerned
- Extremely concerned



Results:

Ninety seven percent (97%) of respondents would be either extremely concerned or very concerned if they found out that their teen was drinking regularly.

None of the respondents indicated that they would not be at all concerned.

Did You Know...

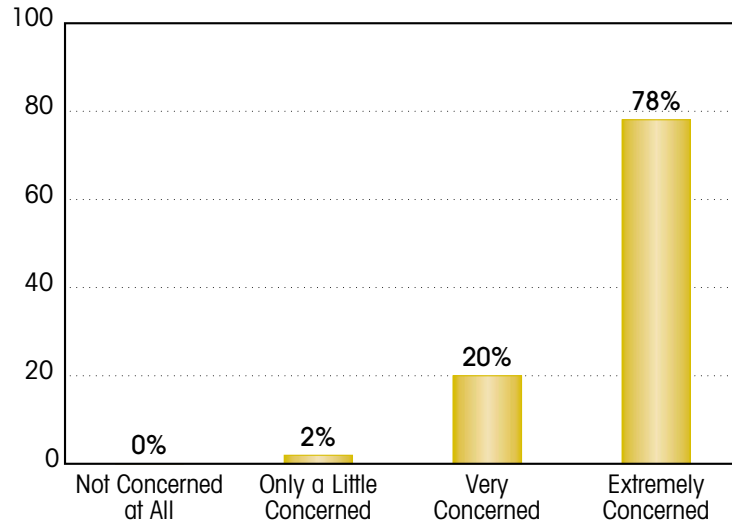
According to the Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (OSDUS), 2001:

- Sixty one percent (61%) of students in 2001 aged 12-16 reported drinking alcohol within the past year;
- Increases in past year drinking were especially notable since 1993 ;
- About 22% of grade 7, 9 and 11 students in 2001 binge drank (i.e. five or more drinks of alcohol in a row) within the four weeks prior to the survey; and,
- Drinking increases significantly with grade: rates climb approximately 10 percentage points by each grade, between grade 7 and 11 (from 36% to 81%).



Suppose you found out your teenager smoked cigarettes regularly, how concerned would you be?

- Not concerned at all
- Only a little concerned
- Very concerned
- Extremely concerned



Results:

Ninety eight percent (98%) of respondents would be either extremely concerned or very concerned if they found out that their teen was smoking cigarettes regularly.

Did You Know...

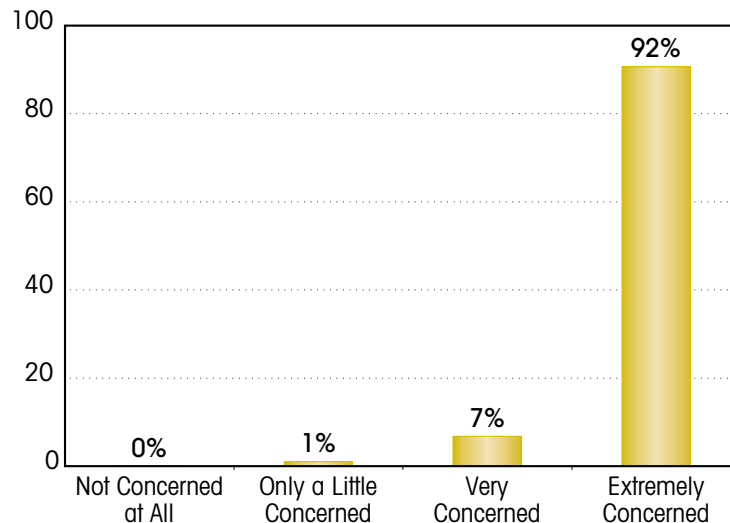
According to the OSDUS, 2001:

- 21% of students in grades 7-11 reported smoking during the past year;
- 22.6% of students reported smoking daily; and,
- Smoking is significantly related to grade level. Rates of smoking increase with age, from 5% of 7th graders; 11% of 8th graders; 23% of 9th graders; 30% of 10th graders; peaking in 11th (36%) and 12th (36%) grade.



Suppose you found out your teenager smoked marijuana regularly, how concerned would you be?

- Not concerned at all
- Only a little concerned
- Very concerned
- Extremely concerned



Results:

Nearly all (99%) of respondents would be either 'extremely concerned' or 'very concerned' if they found out that their teen was smoking marijuana regularly

Did You Know...

According to the OSDUS, 2001:

- Twenty six percent (26%) of students in grades 7-11 reported using marijuana during the past year;
- Although fewer students are using tobacco and marijuana at an early age, the early onset of ALCOHOL remained stable (16% of 7th graders reported using alcohol for the first time by grade 4, which is up slightly from 1999 but similar to rates found in 1997);
- In 2001, about 30% of students in grades 7-OAC used marijuana during the past year and 34% used marijuana in their lifetime. Past year use is higher among males than females (34% vs. 26%), and varies by grade (from 5% of 7th graders to 46% of 11th graders); and,
- Past year marijuana use remains significantly higher than 1993 (from 13% in 1993 to 30% in 2001).

Question



What is your best guess of the percentage of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages 12 and 17 years old who have ever tried a marijuana cigarette?

Results:

On average, respondents estimated that 42% of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages of 12 and 17 years have tried a marijuana cigarette.

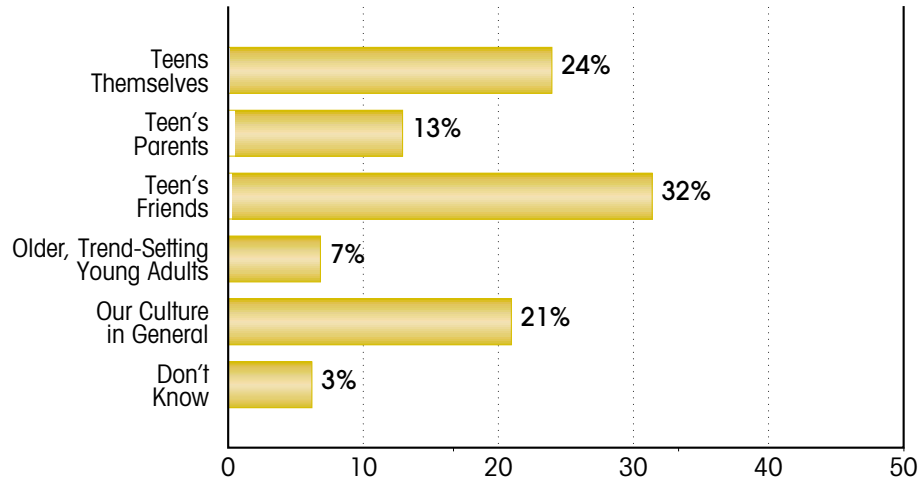
Did You Know...

- According to the OSDUS, 2001, 34% of students grades 7-OAC reported using marijuana in their lifetime.



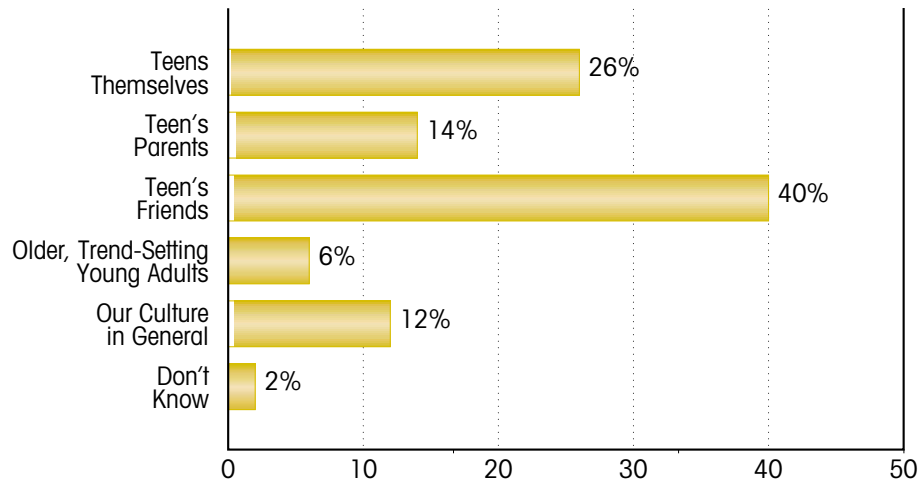
Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to drink alcohol?

- The Teen Themselves
- The Teen's Parent
- The Teen's Friends
- Older, Trend-Setting Young Adults
- Our Culture, in general
- Don't Know



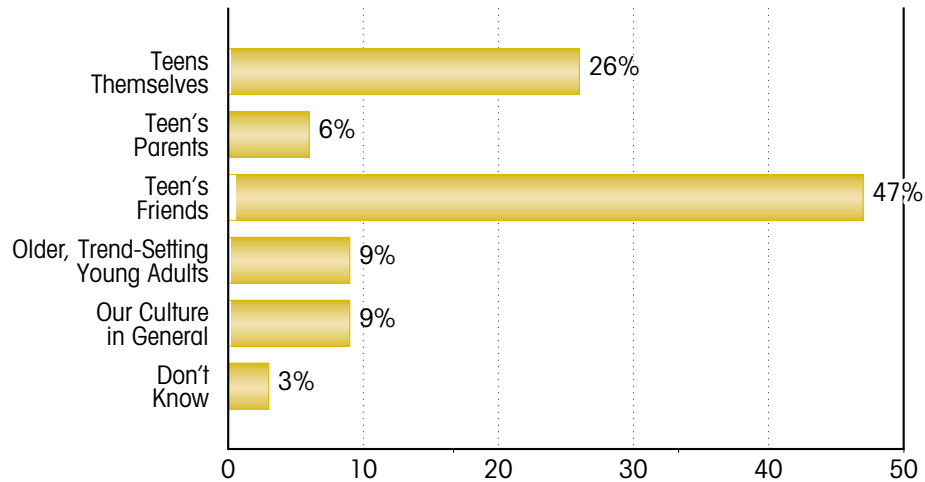
Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to smoke cigarettes?

- The Teen Themselves
- The Teen's Parent
- The Teen's Friends
- Older, Trend-Setting Young Adults
- Our Culture, in general
- Don't Know



Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to smoke marijuana?

- The Teen Themselves
- The Teen's Parent
- The Teen's Friends
- Older, Trend-Setting Young Adults
- Our Culture, in general
- Don't Know



Results:

Respondents named the following people as being responsible for a teen starting to **drink alcohol**:

1) teen's friends (32%), 2) teens themselves (24%), 3) our culture in general (21%), 4) teen's parents (13%).

Respondents named the following people as being responsible for a teen starting to **smoke cigarettes**:

1) teen's friends (40%), 2) teens themselves (26%), 3) teen's parents (14%), 4) our culture in general (12%).

Respondents named the following people as being responsible for a teen starting to **smoke marijuana**:

1) teen's friends (47%), 2) teens themselves (26%), 3) older, trend-setting young adults and our culture in general (9% respectively).

Did You Know...

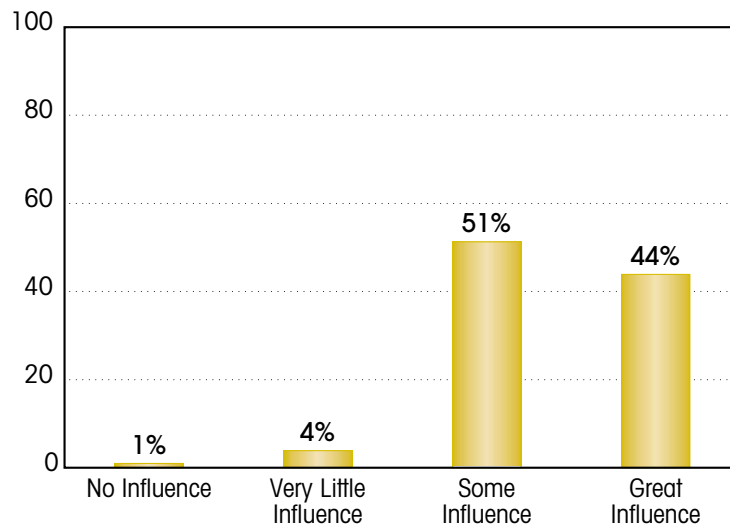
According to the Community Needs Assessment, (1999), which was based on focus groups of youth grade 3 to OAC in the Grey Bruce area:

- When asked, "What do you think would influence someone your age to use alcohol or drugs?" there was overwhelming evidence that families influence their children's behaviour;
- Thirty three percent (33%), or a third, of focus group participants from grades 7-10 reported parents and role models as having significant influence over their use of alcohol and other drugs; and,
- Interestingly, the amount of reported parental influence over their use of alcohol and other drugs decreased among the focus group participants **after** grade 10; only then was it overtaken by peers, with 56% of students in these grades naming peers as their primary influence.



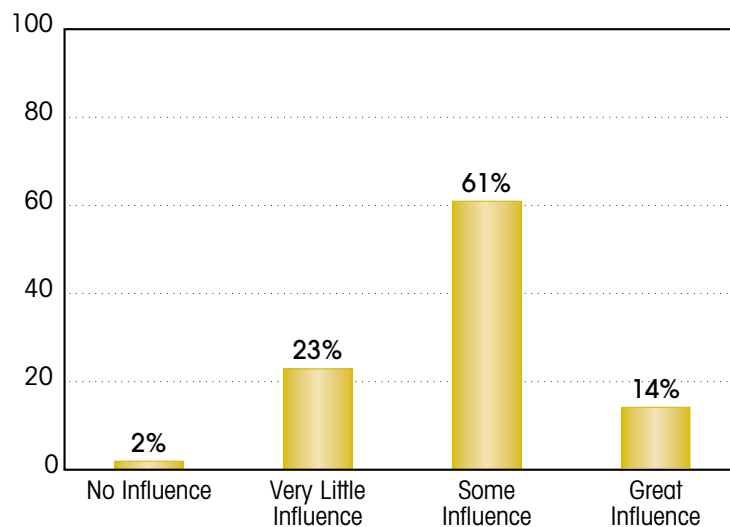
Do you think that you have influence over your teen's decisions whether or not to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and/or use marijuana?

- No Influence
- Very Little Influence
- Some Influence
- Great Influence



*How much influence do you think **typical** Grey Bruce parents have over their teens' decision whether or not to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and/or use marijuana?*

- No Influence
- Very Little Influence
- Some Influence
- Great Influence



Results:

Ninety five percent (95%) of respondents indicated that they feel they have either 'some influence' or 'great influence' over their teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and/or use marijuana; however, only 75% indicated that they felt the **typical** Grey Bruce parent had the same amount of influence.

Four percent (4%) of respondents felt that they have 'very little influence'; however, 23% felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce parent has 'very little influence'.

Did You Know...

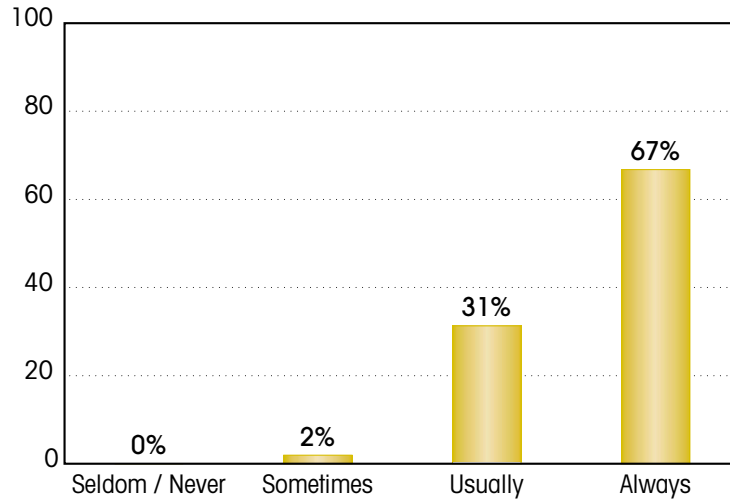
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- Thirty three percent (33%), or a third of focus group participants from grades 7-10 reported parents and role models as having significant influence over their use of alcohol and other drugs; and,
- Interestingly, the amount of reported parental influence over their use of alcohol and other drugs decreased among the focus group participants **after** grade 10; only then was it overtaken by peers, with 56% of students in these grades naming peers as their primary influence. (Community Needs Assessment, 1999).



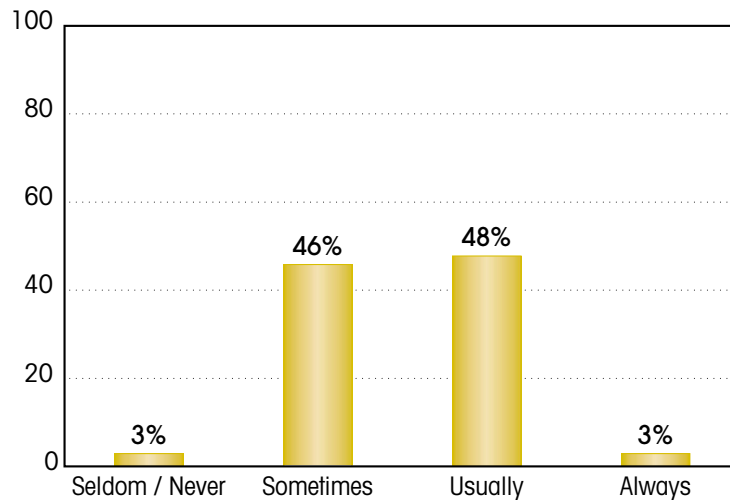
When my teen is not home, I or the other parent know where he/she is and who he/she is with.

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



*I think **typical** Grey Bruce parents know where their teens are and who they are with when not home.*

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



Results:

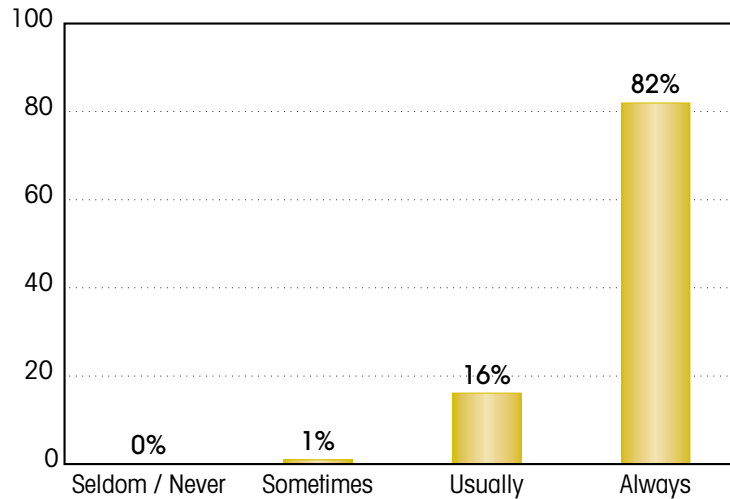
Ninety eight percent (98%) of respondents reported that either themselves or the other parent either 'usually' or 'always' know where their teen is and who they are with when they are not home, but only 51% believed the same of the **typical** Grey Bruce parent.

Sixty seven percent (67%) of respondents reported that they 'always' know where their teen is and who they are with when they are not home, but only 3% felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce parent 'always' knows that.



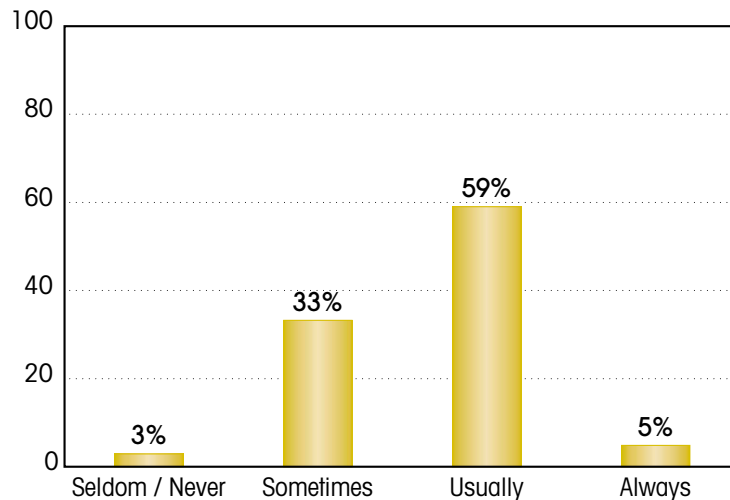
I know when my teen does not come home on time.

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



*I think **typical** Grey Bruce parents know when their teens do not come home on time.*

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



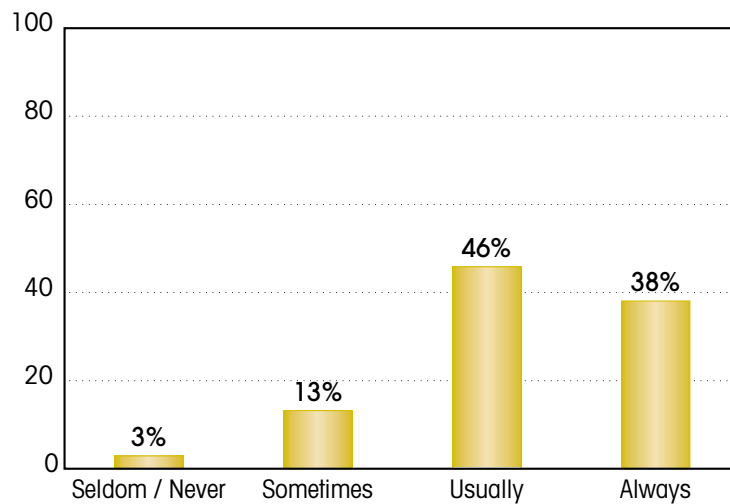
Results:

Eighty two percent (82%) of respondents indicated that they 'always' know when their teen does not come home on time, but only 5% felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce parent 'always' knows when their teen does not come home on time.



I would know if my teen drank beer, wine or liquor without my permission.

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



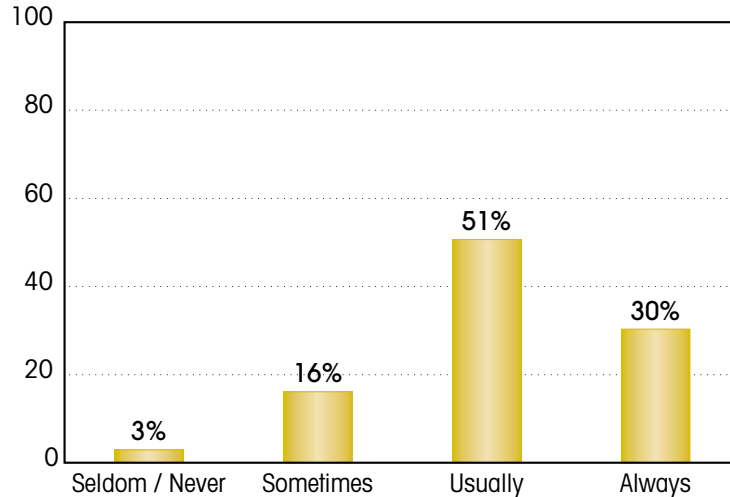
Results:

Eighty four percent (84%) of respondents felt that they 'usually' or 'always' know if their teen drank beer, wine or liquor without their permission.



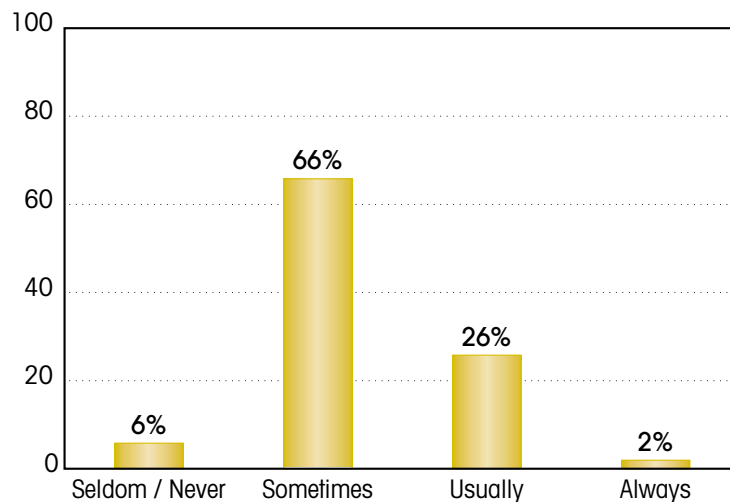
When your teen has a serious problem, how often does he/she discuss it with you?

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



*When the **typical** Grey Bruce teen has a serious problem, how often do you think he/she discusses it with his/her parents?*

- Seldom/Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



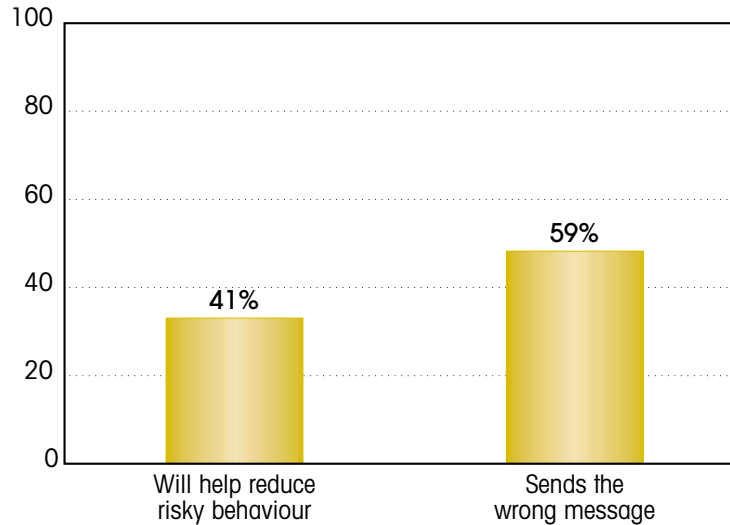
Results:

Although most respondents (81%) indicated that their teen 'usually' or 'always' discusses serious problems with them, only 28% felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce teen 'usually' or 'always' discusses serious problems with his/her parents. In fact, 72% felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce teen only 'sometimes' or 'never' discusses serious problems with their parents.



Some parents of teenagers believe that if they let their teen and their teen’s friends drink in their home, it will prevent them from doing unsafe things like driving under the influence. Other parents believe that letting teens drink in their home sends the wrong message about alcohol. Which of these two views comes closer to your own? If parents let teens drink in their home it:

- Will help reduce risky behaviour such as preventing drinking and driving.
- Sends the wrong message, parents should not allow their teens to drink at home.



Results:

When respondents were asked for their beliefs about letting their teen and their teen’s friends drink in their home, 41% felt that it would reduce risky behaviour such as preventing drinking and driving, but 59% felt that it sends the wrong message, and that parents should not allow their teens to drink at home.

Did You Know...

Parents who shared written comments within the Grey Bruce Parent Norms survey reflected the 41% vs. 59% ‘struggle’ that exists around the issue of supervised underage drinking. The ‘struggle’ can be seen in comments such as:

“I’ve been told right to my face – ‘it’s better that I buy them the booze, and that they drink at home, that way they’re safe’...we’ve been shocked by this.”

“What disturbs me most is the parents of my daughter’s friends that allow drinking in their home under age 19 years!”

“We have let our 16 year old drink at home with their friends and then [we]drove them all home – it’s better than drinking and driving around with the buddies.”

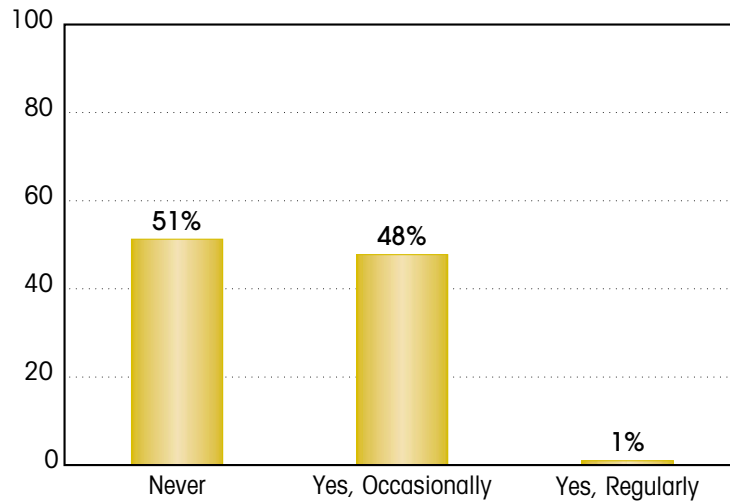
“I have let my daughter take a ‘cooler’ to a party with very strict rules – [I’ve] have changed my mind. I don’t want my kids drinking at all.”

“Parents of my son’s friends say they all want to experiment, even at 14. They trust the kids to know how many drinks to have – I disagree. For one, it is illegal and they can’t be expected to know when enough is enough (some adults don’t know).”



Do you allow your teen to drink in your home with you or other adults, even if it is a small glass (i.e., 3oz) of wine or beer with dinner?

- Yes, Regularly
- Yes, Occasionally
- Never



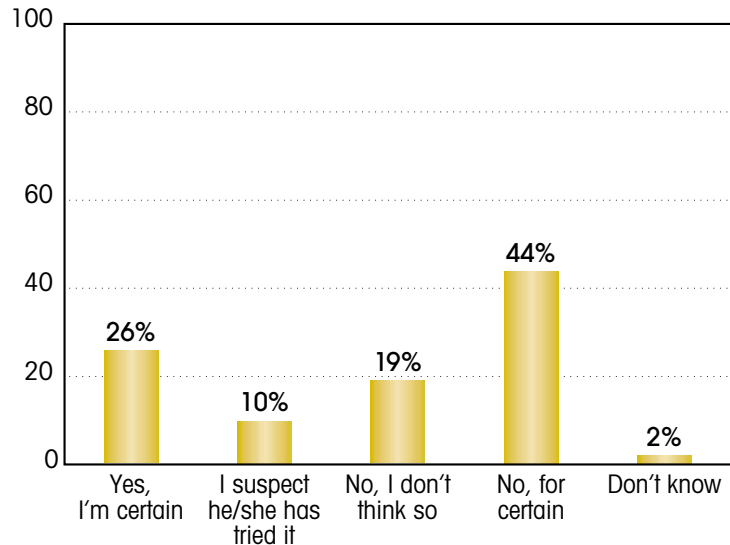
Results:

When asked if they allow their teen to drink in their home with them or other adults, even if it is a small glass of wine or beer with dinner, 51% said 'never' and 48% said 'occasionally'. Only 1% of respondents indicated that they allow drinking 'regularly'. This dispels the misperception that the majority of parents allow drinking in their home.



My teenager has tried smoking cigarettes (even once in their life).

- Yes, I'm certain
- I suspect he/she has tried it
- No, I don't think so
- No, For certain
- Don't know



*What is your best guess of the percentage of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages 12 and 17 who have **ever** smoked cigarettes?*

Results:

When parents were asked to report whether **their teenager** has tried smoking cigarettes, even once in their life, 36% of respondents felt certain or suspicious that their teen had tried smoking cigarettes.

The average response given for parents' best guess about what percentage of **Grey Bruce teens** have ever smoked a cigarette was 64%.

Did You Know...

According to the OSDUS, 2001:

- Fifty percent (50%) of students reported smoking in their lifetime;
- Seventeen percent (17%) reported smoking a few puffs; and,
- Sixteen (16%) smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime. Between 1999 and 2001, the use of cigarettes declined significantly among the total (from 29% to 24%).

According to the Ontario Health Survey (OHS), 1996-1997:

- Twenty two percent (22%) of residents 12-19 years in Grey, Bruce Huron and Perth Counties smoke.

Question



What is your best guess of the age of Grey Bruce teens when they first smoked a cigarette (even just a puff), if they did smoke?

Results:

When respondents were asked to estimate the age of Grey Bruce teens when they first smoked a cigarette, the average age given was 12.6 years old.

Did You Know...

Girls start smoking at a younger age than boys. An estimated 41% of girls aged 15-17 who smoke report having had their first cigarette before age 13, compared to 29% of boys (source: Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey February-June 1999).



*What is your best guess as to the age of most teens in Grey Bruce when they start smoking **marijuana**, if they are going to smoke it?*

Results:

The average age of most teens in Grey Bruce when they start smoking marijuana was estimated by respondents as being 14.7 years of age.

Did You Know...

According to the OSDUS 2001, marijuana usage increases with age, with reports of use more than doubling between respondents in grade 8 and grade 9 (12% vs. 29% respectively).



*During the past two weeks, what is your best guess at the percentage of Grey Bruce teens between the ages of 12 and 17 who **binge drank** (i.e., had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row)?*

Results:

Respondents estimated that, on average, 31% of Grey Bruce teens between the ages of 12 and 17 binge drank during the past two weeks (i.e. had 5 or more alcoholic drinks in a row).

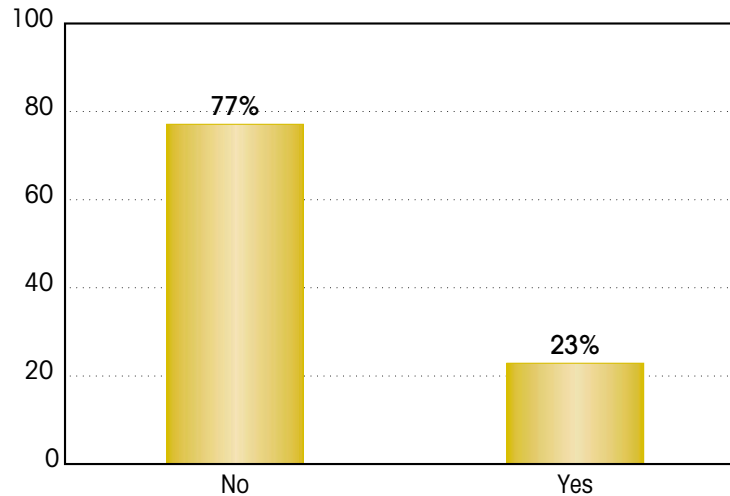
Did You Know...

- According to the OSDUS, 2001, 6.4% of drinkers reported binge drinking at least five times during the four weeks before the 2001 survey, which is significantly higher than in 1995 (3.9%) and 1993 (4.2%). Rates of binge drinking continue to exceed rates found in the early 1990's.
- OSDUS 2001 results indicate that in 20 years (1981-2001), the rate of binge drinking for students in grades 7-OAC has increased by 10%.
- The Bruce Grey Huron Perth region is significantly higher than Ontario (62% vs. 45% respectively) for the age category of 12-19 year olds for consuming 5 or more drinks on at least one occasion during the past year (OHS, 1996-1997).



To the best of your knowledge, has your teen used alcohol *during the past 30 days*?

- Yes
- No



Results:

Twenty three percent (23%) of respondents indicated that, to the best of their knowledge, their teen **has used** alcohol during the past month.

Did You Know...

According to the OHS 1996-1997 data, in Bruce Grey Huron Perth:

- 32% of teens report drinking at least one drink each month;
- Bruce Grey Huron Perth is significantly higher than Ontario (32% versus 24% respectively) for regular (i.e. at least one drink each month) drinkers aged 12-19;
- 44% of teens in Bruce Grey Huron Perth report drinking alcohol *two or more* times per month;
- Bruce Grey Huron Perth region is significantly higher than Ontario (44% versus 30% respectively) for teen current drinkers drinking 2 or more times per month; and,
- In 2001, 17% of the drinkers in that sample (grades 7-OAC) drank alcohol weekly (OSDUS, 2001).



During the past 30 days if he/she drove, how many times did your teenager drive a car or other vehicle when he/she had been drinking alcohol?

*During the past 30 days, how many times did **typical** Grey Bruce teenagers drive a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol?*

*During the past 12 months, how often do you think your teenager has been a **passenger** in a car driven by someone who had been drinking?*

Results:

Ninety nine percent (99%) of respondents who had teens with a driver's license felt that, within the 30 days prior to the survey, their teen had **never** driven after he/she had been drinking alcohol. In contrast, only 15% of respondents felt that within the 30 days prior to the survey the **typical** Grey Bruce teen had never driven after he/she had been drinking alcohol.

When asked how often in the last 12 months their teenager has been a **passenger** in a car driven by someone who had been drinking, the average number of times estimated was 1.

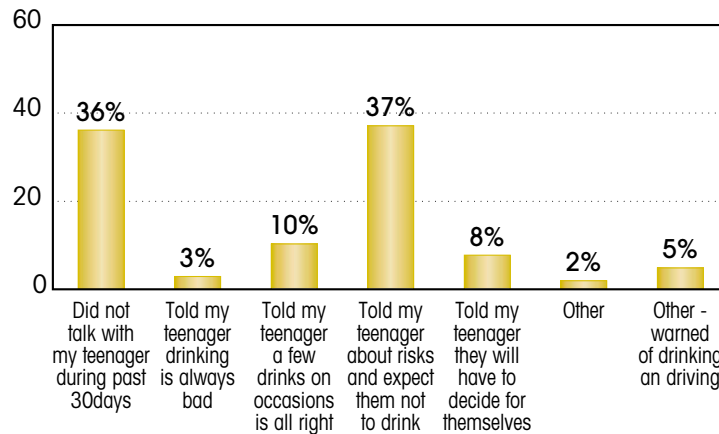
Did You Know...

- According to the OSDUS, 2001, 15% of all drivers in 2001 drove within an hour after consuming two or more drinks of **alcohol** (down from almost 60% in 1977). Interestingly, nineteen (19%) of respondents reported driving a vehicle within 1 hour after using **marijuana** in the past year (OSDUS, 2001).
- In 2001, 32% of students surveyed in the OSDUS reported being a passenger in a car driven by someone who had been drinking at least once within the past 12 months.
- In Ontario in 1997, less than 1% of teen drivers between the ages of 16 and 18 years old were involved in *crashes* where they either had been drinking or were found to be impaired. (Drinking and Driving Statistical Yearbook, 1997).



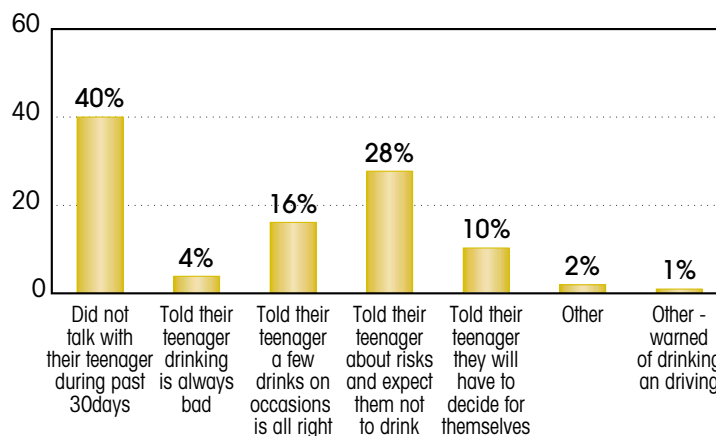
During the past 30 days, have you talked to your teenager about family rules regarding his/her drinking? Which of the following statements best characterizes your discussion with your teenager?

- I did not talk with my teenager about drinking during the past 30 days.
- I told my teenager that drinking is always bad and that he/she should never try it.
- I told my teenager that a few drinks, on special occasions, is all right.
- I told my teenager about the risks of underage drinking and that I expect him/her not to drink.
- I told my teenager that they will have to decide for themselves how much to drink.



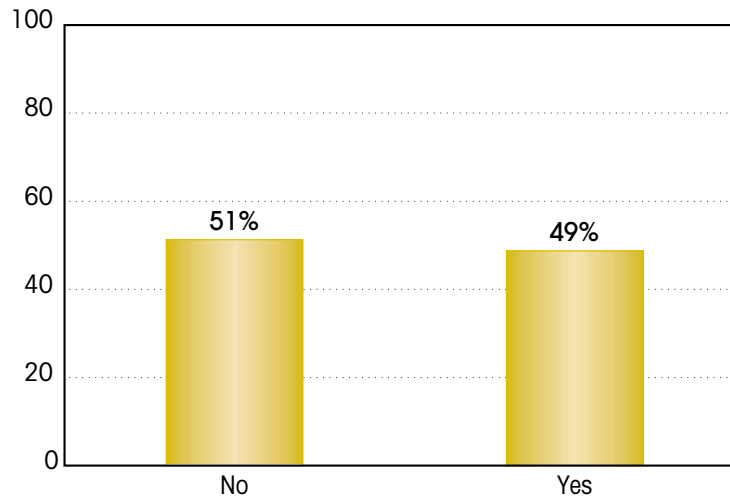
During the past 30 days, do you think that Grey Bruce parents talked to their teenager (ages 12 to 17) about family rules regarding their teens' drinking? Which of the following statements best characterizes typical Grey Bruce parents' discussion with their teenagers?

- They did not talk to their teen about drinking during the past 30 days.
- They told their teenager that drinking is always bad and he/she should never try it.
- They told their teenager that a few drinks, on special occasions, is all right.
- They told their teenager about the risks of underage drinking and that they expect him/her not to drink.
- They told their teenager that he/she will have to decide for himself/herself how much to drink.
- Other:



During the past 30 days, I discussed family rules about drug non-use with my teenager(s).

- Yes
- No



During the past 30 days, what percentage of typical Grey Bruce parents do you think discussed family rules about drug non-use with their teenager between the ages of 12 and 17?

My teen's other parent/guardian and I have discussed strategies for helping our child understand and avoid the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. If you do not have another "parent/guardian" actively helping you raise your teen. Check last box.

- Frequently
- A few times
- Maybe once
- Haven't really talked about it
- There is no other active parent for my teen

Results:

When asked whether, in the past 30 days, respondents had talked to their teenager about family rules regarding his/her **drinking**:

Sixty four percent (64%) had talked to their teenager;

Thirty six percent (36%) had not talked with their teenager; and,

Thirty seven percent (37%) told their teenager about the risks of underage drinking and that they are expected not to drink.

Sixty percent (60%) of respondents believed that the typical Grey Bruce parent had talked to their teen about family rules regarding teens drinking during the past 30 days.

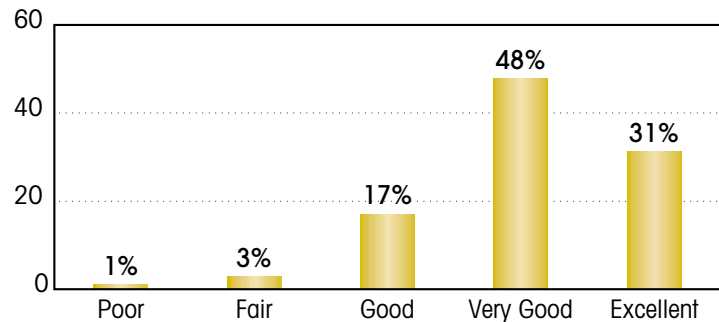
Forty nine percent (49%) of respondents indicated that they had discussed family rules about **drug non-use** with their teen in the past 30 days prior to the survey. However, on average, respondents felt that only 26% of typical Grey Bruce parents had discussed family rules about drugs during the 30 days prior to the survey.

Eighty one percent (81%) of respondents who have another active parent/guardian involved in their teen's life indicated that they have discussed strategies with that parent/guardian for helping their child understand and avoid the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.



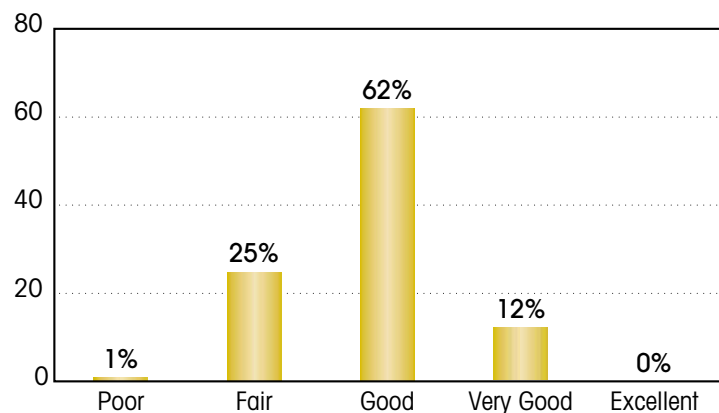
My relationship with my teen is:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent



*What kind of relationship does the **typical** Grey Bruce parent have with his/her teen from age 12 to 17? (Your best guess)*

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent



Results:

A strong majority (79%) of respondents felt that their relationship with their teen was either 'very good' or 'excellent'; however, only 12% of respondents felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce parent had the same quality relationship with their teen. In fact, 87% of respondents felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce parent has only a 'fair' to 'good' relationship with their teen.

Respondents were encouraged to share any comments or questions that they had at the end of the survey. Of the 660 surveys returned completed, 151 or 23% made comments.

Parents' Comments from the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey:

A triangulation method of analysis was used to organize the comments from the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey. Under the guidance of the Grey Bruce Health Unit Epidemiologist, team members worked independently to categorize the information from this section of the survey into the following themes:

- 1) Comments related to the survey itself;
- 2) Comments about role modeling and communication;
- 3) Comments about peer pressure and other influences;
- 4) Comments about the availability and access to alcohol and other drugs;
- 5) Comments on the culture of alcohol use in Grey Bruce;
- 6) Comments about the lack of recreational opportunities in Grey Bruce; and,
- 7) Comments about whether to support supervised underage drinking in the family home.

The following is a summary of that work.

1. Comments related to the survey itself:

A total of 66 respondents made comments about the survey itself. Several of the people who made comments, made positive comments about the nature, intent and value of the survey. There were also comments made about the importance of sharing the survey results with parents. One respondent stated, "I look forward to seeing the overall results, reading over & discussing them with my daughter." It was noted that simply filling out the survey generated discussion with some parents and their teens. For example, "When I sat down to do the survey, my 15 year old started asking questions and giving his opinion. It gave us an opportunity to talk about these issues and let me look into his 'world'. It was encouraging to know his thoughts on this subject." Some people suggested that youth may be a good group to target with a survey of this nature, so that gaps and similarities between themselves and their parents can be identified.

About 6% of survey respondents made comments suggesting that improvements to the survey were needed or that they did not see the value of the survey. There were some comments made about the difficulty of trying to estimate what the 'typical Grey/Bruce parent' practices were, and there was some concern that the results of the survey would not be statistically sound as a result of asking respondents for 'best guesses'.

2. Comments about role modeling and communication:

Parents reflected a number of comments about the importance of role modeling. They stressed the fact that what we say and do about drugs matters a lot when it comes to the choices our children make. One parent stated "...role models and parent models, good or bad, have tremendous influence on children. Your use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco will influence your children's use." Another parent commented "we must teach them by example..." and, "we need to not drink excessively and not smoke ourselves." One parent simply stated that "drug use, alcohol use and smoking are directly related to what the parents values are and what they have taught the children over the years" and that "parents have more influence than they might think."

Parents also commented on the importance of creating an environment where open communication is supported. Comments such as "keep an open line and take time to talk to children, keep them talking, keep them accountable, and keep them involved"; "A good base or foundation helps teens to make the right decisions" and "...above all, learning to respect the teenager is needed."

3. Comments about peer pressure and other influences:

Parents reflected a wide range of comments about other potent influences in a teen's life which occur outside of the family home. Parents commented about the role of peers, peer pressure and new pressures in today's school environment.

Comments such as:

"The new school curriculum has greatly increased the pressures on today's teens...the "get them through quicker faster" attitude has placed added stress on teens which has increased the drop out rates and substance abuse. Too much pressure to perform has a negative effect."

Other comments concentrated on peers themselves, such as:

"We have clean cut kids...very active in music, but peer pressure happens;"

"The use of drugs and alcohol among our young people is significant. These kids come from strong families but the peer pressure to use marijuana is significant;"

"Unfortunately when they are with their peers, they do what the group is doing;"

"..I do not drink, smoke or do drugs but my two oldest teens do on a regular basis...most of it takes place at school - not that they actually go to class...the only time I feel my teens are safe is when they are in my home, but I can't keep them there all the time."

4. Comments about the availability and access to alcohol and other drugs:

Parents also reported their experience with the ready availability of alcohol and other drugs across Grey and Bruce counties, specifically on school grounds. Parents inferred that access to alcohol and other drugs may explain the higher than average use of these substances by teens in Grey Bruce.

Comments included:

"It (alcohol) is rampant and easily available in the Grey Bruce schools;"

"When my older children went off to University they both remarked to us that kids from our area in Grey Bruce drank more than kids from the cities and felt they could handle drinking 'better';" and,

"...I know many students in high school drink or do drugs on lunch hours in their cars...and return to classes drunk or stoned...this has gone on for years...there should be strategies in place for this and for more communication with parents about the problem...there must be a team effort to prevention and teaching what is acceptable."

5. Comments on the culture of alcohol use in Grey Bruce:

Parents also shared their comments around the culture of acceptability that surrounds alcohol use and its availability in the Grey Bruce area. Some parents suggested that alcohol use is endorsed within the very cultural fabric of Canada.

Parents reflected their concerns around how to raise youth in a culture that supports alcohol use across a broad context. For example:

"We've moved from Europe and have never seen so many teenagers drinking and smoking"; and

"Canada has a beer culture; beer and hockey go together, not much else is of interest to the average Canadian. Alcohol commercials should be banned on TV and prohibited at sponsoring events or other events."

6. Comments about lack of recreational opportunities in Grey Bruce:

Parents shared their concerns around the lack of availability and access to alternative activities for youth across the Grey Bruce area. Parents support a notion that more access to recreational activities may influence youth to stave off getting involved with alcohol and other drugs.

"I feel the lack of teen activities in our area may have a great deal to do with these results. Sports (other than hockey and baseball) are low in our area. I feel a year round complex would be a great benefit;"

"The challenges are there for raising children to be responsible in all lifestyle choices. To make choices you need alternatives. Are there local activities promoting drug free/alcohol free for the young to partake in?" and,

"The biggest problem with Grey Bruce is the lack of facilities for teens to enjoy themselves."

7. Comments about whether to support supervised underage drinking in the family home:

Parents shared their struggle about whether to support supervised underage drinking in the family home or whether to "say no" to this activity. Parents are concerned that "saying no" to supervised underage drinking moves teen activities away from home into less known and potentially less safe environments.

The survey data revealed close to a 40:60 split in parental opinion surrounding the question about whether allowing teens to drink in their home sends the wrong message about alcohol. Forty percent (40%) stated that supervised underage drinking at home will help reduce risky behaviour such as drinking and driving. Sixty percent (60%) stated that this sends the wrong message, and that parents should not allow their teens to drink at home.

This parental struggle is evident in the following comments:

"I've been told right to my face - it's better that I buy them the booze, and that they drink at home, that way they're safe...we've been shocked by this;"

"What disturbs me the most is the parents of my daughter's friends that allow drinking in their home under age 19 years!"

"We have let our 16 year old drink at home with their friends and then drove them 'all' home - it's better than drinking and driving around with the buddies;" and,

"Police need to crack down on bush parties or house parties ensuring that parents are aware of their actions should they allow teens to drink in their home. Older teens need to stop purchasing alcohol for minors - they need to know risks and laws need to be tougher."

The results of this study convey important information about parenting perceptions and trends in Grey and Bruce Counties and provide insight for future substance abuse prevention program planning targeted at parents and youth in this area.

Parents' Concerns, Relationships, and Influence:

Overall, parents expressed very strong concern about their teenagers' use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana. Parents in Grey and Bruce Counties have a good understanding of their teen's behaviour. Generally, estimates were accurate as to the incidence of teen substance use when compared to regional and provincial data sources. Parents stated that they often know where their teens are going when they are not at home, who they are with, and when curfew has been missed. Grey Bruce parents stated that they have very good to excellent relationships with their teens and can discuss serious problems.

On the other hand, when asked about **typical** Grey Bruce parents, respondents' perception was that typical parents are more lenient in the manner in which they raise their children. Respondents felt that typical Grey Bruce parents do not know where their teenagers are and do not know if curfew has been missed. They also reported that typical Grey Bruce parents only have fair to good relationships with their teens and are less open to discussing serious problems.

The survey results show that the respondents are involved in their teens' lives, that they have strong relationships with their teens, and that they monitor their teens' activities. These are all factors that arguably lay the foundation for reducing teen substance use.

When parents were asked specifically about having discussions with their teens about drug non-use and family rules, there is evidence that parents may struggle with discussing this issue regularly. Although they reported having very good to excellent relationships with their teens, only a minority of parents reported discussing drug non-use and family rules within the 30 days prior the survey, and even a smaller percentage felt that the **typical** Grey Bruce parent had done so. This led the researchers to conclude that parents may be overwhelmed by the magnitude of the teen substance use issue and that they may be unsure about how or when to start conversations about these and other topics.

Results for questions pertaining to parents' influence over their teens were incongruent. Most respondents felt that they have a lot of influence over their teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol, yet when asked about who is responsible for their teen starting to drink alcohol, only 13% of parents chose the 'teen's parents'. The same trend was repeated with regard to smoking and marijuana use. This discrepancy may reflect the uncertainty that parents may be feeling as they parent in today's culture. Therefore, parents need to be reassured that they do have overwhelming influence over their teens' decisions, as indicated both in their own responses to this survey, as well as by youth themselves. According to a Community Needs Assessment completed in 1999, youth in grades 3-OAC indicated that the biggest influences over their decision to use alcohol and other drugs are their parents and role models. Only **after** Grade 10 do trends show that peer influence outweighs parental influence.

It is important for parents to understand that their teens listen and respond to their messages more than they may realize and that the more times discussions about alcohol and other drugs occur, the better the chance of teens understanding their parents' message and following their advice. To this end, parents may benefit from knowing where to get help starting a discussion with their teen about substance use and from knowing where to get accurate, timely information.

Underage Drinking and Parental Consent:

The survey results revealed a struggle among respondent parents with regard to allowing supervised underage drinking in the home versus saying “no” to this activity. A sub-analysis of survey results for questions sixteen and seventeen describes this struggle:

| | NO to underage drinking | YES to supervised underage drinking | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|
| ↓ Risk of drinking & driving | 7% | 34 % | 41% |
| Sends wrong Message | 44% | 15% | 59% |
| | 51% | 49% | |

Forty four percent (44%) of the parents believe allowing underage drinking sends the wrong message, while thirty four percent (34%) allow supervised underage drinking under the belief that it reduces risks such as drinking and driving. While a parent is told by their teen that ‘everybody else is doing it’, the data from this survey shows that, in fact, the majority of parents are **not** supportive of allowing supervised underage drinking in their home.

Drinking and Driving

An important finding to note is that 99% of parents who responded to this survey indicated that they believe their teens are **not** drinking and driving. Indeed, this estimate is accurate when examining Ontario’s drinking and driving statistics. The message of ‘call a cab, arrange for a designated driver or stay overnight’ seems to be understood and adopted by today’s youth, as reflected in the statistics. However, the same statistics show that teens are still **passengers** in vehicles driven by someone who has been drinking. As reported by parents in this survey, and as verified by provincial statistics, teens are not the ones drinking and driving. It can be assumed then, that it is not other teens they are getting into a vehicle with, and that in fact, they are getting into vehicles with adults who have been drinking. This has implications for program planning targeted at parents and other role models. What message are teens’ role models sending to them regarding drinking and driving? As a parent and/or role model what does your own alcohol, tobacco and other drug use tell your teen?

Conclusion:

When considering the survey results, including the misperceptions that parents hold about what other parents are doing, it appears that parents would benefit from an increased awareness of parenting trends and effective strategies to reduce teen substance use and abuse. One strategy that may be used to promote awareness is supporting a networking system among parents, where relevant teen issues could be discussed. A networking approach could help parents dispel the misperceptions about what ‘everybody’ is doing, and offer support and encouragement of existing positive parenting behaviours that the majority of parents are using. This networking system could be achieved through active parent committees within the school system, as well as through awareness campaigns. The biggest challenge for program planning will be helping all Grey Bruce parents understand that they do indeed have a tremendous impact on their teens’ decision making around the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Next Steps:

This survey provides important insight into the trends and misperceptions that exist around parenting behaviour associated with teenage substance use and abuse. This information will be used to structure messages that support parents by reducing misperceptions that exist and by reinforcing the positive actions already practiced by the majority of parents in Grey Bruce. The data will also be used to educate and help parents with the issues they are struggling with in their families.

The researchers hope to use a mass marketing campaign to help parents see that they are, in fact, a majority when they:

- establish clear guidelines for smoking, drinking and substance use behaviour;
- use role-modeling and open lines of communication in their parenting style; and,
- resist the 'temptation' to believe that they are the only parents in Grey Bruce who do not allow their teens to drink underage in the family home.

Providing parents with the information that has been learned from this survey may, in itself, be a start in this process of helping them become aware of misperceptions and continue to act positively and proactively.

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Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey Questionnaire

Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey

Dear **Parent or Guardian** of a Teen in Grades **7, 8, 9, and 11,**

There are **no right or wrong answers** to these questions - we just want to learn your opinions and experiences.

Thank you, in advance, for completing and returning this survey as quickly as possible. **If you do not wish to participate, please return the blank survey in the envelope provided.**

You are a teen's: Mother
 Father
 Other: _____

Your age: _____

How many children ages 12 to 17 do you have? _____

Ages of boys: _____/_____/_____/_____

Ages of girls: _____/_____/_____/_____

If you have one teen in Grades 7, 8, 9 or 11, think of him/her as you answer the following questions. **If you have more than one, think of your oldest teen as you answer the following questions.**

Please **CIRCLE** your answers or **MARK "X"** the appropriate box.

Where the question asks you to think about what **typical parents** of other teens do, please answer in terms of parents of teenagers the same age as yours in your area.

For questions 1 to 3, please use one of the following responses and **CIRCLE** the appropriate number for your answer.

- 0 = NOT CONCERNED AT ALL**
- 1 = ONLY A LITTLE CONCERNED**
- 2 = VERY CONCERNED**
- 3 = EXTREMELY CONCERNED**

| | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Suppose you found out your teenager was drinking <i>alcohol</i> regularly, how concerned would you be? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. | Suppose you found out your teenager smoked <i>cigarettes</i> regularly, how concerned would you be? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. | Suppose you found out your teenager smoked <i>marijuana</i> regularly, how concerned would you be? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

For questions 4, 5 and 6, please use one of the following responses and **CIRCLE** the appropriate number for your answer.

- 0 = THE TEEN THEMSELVES**
- 1 = THE TEEN'S PARENTS**
- 2 = THE TEEN'S FRIENDS**
- 3 = OLDER, TREND-SETTING YOUNG ADULTS**
- 4 = OUR CULTURE, IN GENERAL**
- 5 = DON'T KNOW**

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. | Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to drink <i>alcohol</i> ? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to smoke <i>cigarettes</i> ? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to smoke <i>marijuana</i> ? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

For questions 7 and 8, please use one of the following responses and **CIRCLE** the appropriate number for your answer.

- 0 = NO INFLUENCE**
- 1 = VERY LITTLE INFLUENCE**
- 2 = SOME INFLUENCE**
- 3 = GREAT INFLUENCE**

| | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Do you think that you have influence over your teen's decision whether or not to drink <i>alcohol</i> , smoke <i>cigarettes</i> and/or use <i>marijuana</i> ? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. | How much influence do you think typical Grey Bruce parents have over their teens' decision whether or not to drink <i>alcohol</i> , smoke <i>cigarettes</i> and/or use <i>marijuana</i> ? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

For questions 9 to 15, please use one of the following responses and **CIRCLE** the appropriate number for your answer.

0 = SELDOM/NEVER
1 = SOMETIMES
2 = USUALLY
3 = ALWAYS

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9. | When my teen is not home, I or the other parent know where he/she is and who he/she is with. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10 | I think typical Grey Bruce parents know where their teens are and who they are with when not home. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11 | I know when my teen does not come home on time. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12 | I think typical Grey Bruce parents know when their teens do not come home on time. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13 | I would know if my teen drank beer, wine or liquor without my permission. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14 | When your teen has a serious problem, how often does he/she discuss it with you? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15 | When the typical Grey Bruce teen has a serious problem, how often do you think he/she discusses it with his/her parents? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

16. Some parents of teenagers believe that if they let their teen and their teen's friends drink in their home, it will prevent them from doing unsafe things like driving under the influence. Other parents believe that letting teens drink in their home sends the wrong message about alcohol. Which of these two views comes closer to your own? If parents let teens drink in their home it:
- Will help reduce risky behaviour such as preventing drinking and driving.
 - Sends the wrong message, parents should not allow their teens to drink at home.
17. Do you allow your teen to drink in your home with you or other adults, even if it is a small glass (i.e., 3oz) of wine or beer with dinner?
- YES, REGULARLY
 - YES, OCCASIONALLY
 - NEVER
18. My teenager has tried smoking *cigarettes* (even once in their life).
- YES, I'M CERTAIN
 - I SUSPECT HE/SHE HAS TRIED IT
 - NO, I DON'T THINK SO
 - NO, FOR CERTAIN
 - DON'T KNOW

19. What is your best guess of the percentage of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages 12 and 17 who have ever smoked *cigarettes*?

_____ %

20. What is your best guess of the age of Grey Bruce teens when they first smoked a *cigarette* (even just a puff), if they did smoke?

_____ Years old

21. My best guess of the number of *cigarettes* smoked each day by Grey Bruce teens who smoke is:

_____ Cigarettes per day

22. Besides your teenager (who may or may not smoke), is there anyone who smokes *cigarettes* regularly in your household?

YES
 NO

23. To the best of your knowledge, has your teen used *tobacco* during the past 30 days?

YES
 NO

24. What is your best guess of the percentage of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages 12 and 17 years old who have ever tried a *marijuana* cigarette?

_____ %

25. What is your best guess as to the age of most teens in Grey Bruce when they start smoking *marijuana*, if they are going to smoke it?

_____ Years old

26. During the past two weeks, what is your best guess at the percentage of Grey Bruce teens between the ages of 12 and 17 who *binge drank* (**i.e., had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row**)?

_____ %

27. To the best of your knowledge, has your teen used *alcohol* during the past 30 days?

YES
 NO

28. Does your teenager have a driver's license?
- YES
 - NO → Go to question #31
29. If he/she does have a full license, does he/she have access to a car? (circle one)
- Yes, unlimited access; he/she can take a car any time he/she wants.
 - Yes, but somewhat limited; he/she must ask, but permission is usually granted.
 - Yes, but quite restricted; only about half of his/her requests are granted, mostly to drive to school and run family errands but rarely for his/her own personal use.
 - Yes, but very restricted; he/she only drives a couple of times each week.
30. During the past 30 days if he/she drove, how many times did **your teenager drive** a car or other vehicle when he/she had been drinking *alcohol*? (Your best guess.)
- _____ Number of times driving after drinking
31. During the past 30 days, how many times did **typical Grey Bruce teenagers drive** a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking *alcohol*? (Your best guess.)
- _____ Number of times driving after drinking
32. During the past 30 days, have you talked to your teenager about family rules regarding his/her drinking? Which of the following statements best characterizes your discussion with your teenager? (circle one)
- I did not talk with my teenager about drinking during the past 30 days.
 - I told my teenager that drinking is always bad and that he/she should never try it.
 - I told my teenager that a few drinks, on special occasions, is all right.
 - I told my teenager about the risks of underage drinking and that I expect him/her not to drink.
 - I told my teenager that they will have to decide for themselves how much to drink.
 - Other: _____

33. During the past 30 days, do you think that Grey Bruce parents talked to their teenager (ages 12 to 17) about family rules regarding their teens' drinking? Which of the following statements best characterizes **typical Grey Bruce parents'** discussion with their teenagers? (circle one)

- They did not talk to their teen about drinking during the past 30 days.
- They told their teenager that drinking is always bad and he/she should never try it.
- They told their teenager that a few drinks, on special occasions, is all right.
- They told their teenager about the risks of underage drinking and that they expect him/her not to drink.
- They told their teenager that he/she will have to decide for himself/herself how much to drink.
- Other: _____

34. During the past 12 months, how often do you think your teenager has been a **passenger** in a car driven by someone who had been drinking?

_____ Number of times driven by someone who had been drinking

For questions 35 and 36, please use one of the following responses and **CIRCLE** the appropriate number for your answer.

- 0 = POOR**
- 1 = FAIR**
- 2 = GOOD**
- 3 = VERY GOOD**
- 4 = EXCELLENT**

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 35. | My relationship with my teen is : | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 36. | What kind of relationship does the typical Grey Bruce parent Have with his/her teen from age 12 to 17? (Your best guess.) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

37. During the past 30 days, I discussed family rules about *drug non-use* with my teenager(s).

- YES
- NO

38. During the past 30 days, what percentage of **typical Grey Bruce parents** do you think discussed family rules about *drug non-use* with their teenager between the ages of 12 and 17? (Your best guess.)

_____ %

39. In general, do you think it is easier to talk to teenage girls or boys about the danger of tobacco, alcohol and/or illegal drugs?

- GIRLS ARE EASIER
- BOYS ARE EASIER
- NO DIFFERENCE

40. My teen's other parent/guardian and I have discussed strategies for helping our child understand and avoid the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. If you do not have another "parent/guardian" actively helping you raise your teen, check last box.

- FREQUENTLY
- A FEW TIMES
- MAYBE ONCE
- HAVEN'T REALLY TALKED ABOUT IT
- THERE IS NO OTHER ACTIVE PARENT FOR MY TEEN

41. If the other parent/guardian of my teen filled out this questionnaire separately, our answers would agree. If you do not have another "parent/guardian" actively helping you raise your teen, check last box.

- NEVER
- SOME OF THE TIME
- MOST OF THE TIME
- ALL OF THE TIME
- THERE IS NO OTHER ACTIVE PARENT FOR MY TEEN

This concludes the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for completing it.

Please place it in the postage paid return envelope and drop it in the mail. If you have lost the envelope, please mail the questionnaire to:

**Grey Bruce Parents Survey
c/o Grey Bruce Health Unit
920 First Ave. West
Owen Sound, Ontario
N4K 4K5**

Your individual questionnaire will be held in strict confidence. No individual results will be reported. This sheet will be removed and stored separately from your survey.

If you would like us to mail you a copy of the overall study results when the research has been completed, please provide the following information:

Name

Address

City/Town

Postal Code

Please feel free to write any questions or comments you may have below:

Letter of Information to Participants

Dear Parent or Guardian of Teenagers in Grades 7, 8, 9 and 11:

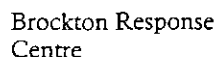
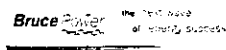
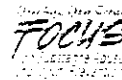
We are writing to you as a research team from the Grey Bruce Health Unit and the Focus Coalition of Owen Sound and Brockton. We strive to promote healthy lifestyles by supporting programs that prevent injuries and reduce the use of alcohol and other drugs among youth and adults across Grey and Bruce Counties.

We are asking you to consider making a contribution to Grey Bruce health knowledge by sharing some information about your parenting style.

Please take 20 minutes of your time to help us learn more about parenting from "your" perspective. A survey like this has never been completed before in Ontario. Survey results will help us design educational programs, teaching packages and parenting strategies that will help everyone raise healthy kids!

Help us keep your children safe and free of substance abuse, alcohol misuse and other injuries!

Sponsored by the following community partners:



Letter of Information

Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey

Purpose of the study

The study will show what the current parenting styles are as well as show what parenting styles are believed to be typical of Grey Bruce parents. Any differences between what is actually happening with parenting styles and what is believed to be happening with typical parents will help guide us in our health promotion work.

The study is called the Grey Bruce Parent Norms Survey and has been adapted from a similar study called the Montana Parent Norms Survey completed in July 2000. The Montana project was completed by Montana State University and the Montana Department of Health and Human Services with a goal to improve the delivery of state-funded prevention practices. Their survey was a compilation of questions from three national questionnaires that were adapted for parent responses.

Who is conducting the study?

Researchers at the Grey Bruce Health Unit will conduct the study. The study design is supported by the Focus Coalition of Owen Sound and Brockton, the Addictive Substance Committee of Walkerton, the Bluewater Board of Education and the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board. An Ethics Advisory Committee has reviewed the research process and a joint Research Agreement has been signed by the Grey Bruce Health Unit and the Bluewater and Bruce Grey Catholic District School Boards.

How will the study be done?

Over 1,000 parents will be surveyed (secondary school parents of grades 9, and 11, and elementary school parents of grades 7 and 8) across six school areas located within Grey and Bruce Counties.

The survey will be sent to parents with a postage-paid return envelope. Results will be tracked and tabulated by the Grey Bruce Health Unit.

Participation is completely voluntary. Parents/guardians may refuse to participate in the survey, but are asked to return the blank survey in the envelope provided if they choose not to participate in the survey. This will signal the researchers that you do not wish to participate.

Individual survey responses will be strictly confidential. A code will be assigned to all study materials in order to track respondents. A second mailing will be sent to parents who have not mailed back their responses after three weeks. It is beneficial to get as many surveys back as possible.

No individual parent information will be revealed. Only overall group results will be reported. All data will be kept in a locked cupboard and will be seen only by research staff. Surveys will be destroyed at the end of the study.

We would be pleased to share our research findings with you when we have completed the study. Please indicate your interest by filling out the last page of the survey.

Question or concerns?

Please do not hesitate to call:

Alanna Leffley
Public Health Epidemiologist
Grey Bruce Health Unit
519-376-9420 ext. 260

Reminder Letter for Second Mailing

Dear Parent or Guardian of Teenagers in Grades 7, 8, 9 and 11:

By now you will have received a copy of the "Parent Norms Survey" which was mailed to you in late February 2002.

If you have already mailed your survey back to us, thank you for participating in the research process! We really value your time and effort.

If you have **not** filled out the survey or have lost your first copy, please find enclosed a **new** copy of the survey with a self-addressed envelope. Please take 10 minutes of your time and fill out the survey and return it to us by May 10th, 2002.

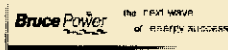
If you choose not to fill out the survey, please return one of the blank surveys in the self-addressed envelope, as we require the coding numbers from your survey for our records.

A survey like this has never been done before in Ontario. These survey results will help us design educational programs and teaching packages that will help everyone raise healthy kids!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call:

Alanna Leffley
Epidemiologist
Grey Bruce Health Unit
519-372-9420 ext. 260

Sponsored by the following community partners:



| Question | Response Category | Response |
|--|---|------------|
| You are a teen's... | Mother | 79% |
| | Father | 17% |
| | Other | 2% |
| | Refuse to Answer | 2% |
| Your age... | Average Response | 42.9 years |
| | Median | 43 years |
| | Standard Deviation | 5.03 |
| 1. Suppose you found out your teenager was drinking alcohol regularly, how concerned would you be? | Not Concerned..... | 0 |
| | A Little Concerned | 3% |
| | Very Concerned | 17% |
| | Extremely concerned | 80% |
| 2. Suppose you found out your teenager smoked cigarettes regularly, how concerned would you be? | Not Concerned..... | 0 |
| | A Little Concerned | 2% |
| | Very Concerned | 20% |
| | Extremely concerned | 78% |
| 3. Suppose you found out your teenager smoked marijuana regularly, how concerned would you be? | Not Concerned..... | 0 |
| | A Little Concerned | 1% |
| | Very Concerned | 7% |
| | Extremely concerned | 92% |
| 4. Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to drink alcohol? | Teen Themselves | 24% |
| | Teen's Parents | 13% |
| | Teen's Friends | 32% |
| | Older, Young Adults..... | 7% |
| | Our Culture | 21% |
| | Don't Know..... | 3% |
| 5. Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to smoke cigarettes? | Teen Themselves | 26% |
| | Teen's Parents | 14% |
| | Teen's Friends | 40% |
| | Older, Trend-Setting Young Adults | 6% |
| | Our Culture | 12% |
| | Don't Know..... | 2% |
| 6. Who do you think is most responsible for a teen starting to smoke marijuana? | Teen Themselves | 26% |
| | Teen's Parents | 6% |
| | Teen's Friends | 47% |
| | Older, Trend-Setting Young Adults | 9% |
| | Our Culture | 9% |
| | Don't Know..... | 3% |

| Question | Response Category | Response |
|---|-----------------------------|----------|
| 7. Do you think that you have influence over your teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and/or use marijuana? | No Influence | 1% |
| | Very little Influence | 4% |
| | Some Influence | 51% |
| | Great Influence | 44% |
| 8. How much influence do you think that typical Grey Bruce parents have over your teens' decision whether or not to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes and/or use marijuana? | No Influence | 2% |
| | Very little Influence | 23% |
| | Some Influence | 61% |
| | Great Influence | 14% |
| 9. When my teen is not home, I or the other parent know where he/she is and who he/she is with. | Seldom/Never | 0% |
| | Sometimes..... | 2% |
| | Usually | 31% |
| | Always | 67% |
| 10. I think typical Grey Bruce parents know where their teens are and who they are with when not home. | Seldom/Never | 3% |
| | Sometimes..... | 46% |
| | Usually | 48% |
| | Always | 3% |
| 11. I know when my teen does not come home on time. | Seldom/Never | 0% |
| | Sometimes..... | 1% |
| | Usually | 16% |
| | Always | 82% |
| 12. I think typical Grey Bruce parents know when their teens do not come home on time. | Seldom/Never | 3% |
| | Sometimes..... | 33% |
| | Usually | 59% |
| | Always | 5% |
| 13. I would know if my teen drank beer, wine, or liquor without my permission. | Seldom/Never | 3% |
| | Sometimes..... | 13% |
| | Usually | 46% |
| | Always | 38% |
| 14. When your teen has a serious problem, how often does he/she discuss it with you? | Seldom/Never | 3% |
| | Sometimes..... | 16% |
| | Usually | 51% |
| | Always | 30% |
| 15. When the typical Grey Bruce teen has a serious problem, how often do you think he/she discusses it with his/her parents? | Seldom/Never | 6% |
| | Sometimes..... | 66% |
| | Usually | 26% |
| | Always | 2% |

| Question | Response Category | Response |
|--|---|------------|
| 16. If parents let teens drink in their home it: | a. Will help reduce risky behaviour such as preventing drinking & driving. | 41% |
| | b. Sends the wrong message, parents should not allow their teens to drink at home. | 59% |
| 17. Do you allow your teen to drink in your home with you or other adults, even if it is a small glass of wine (i.e. 3 oz.) or beer with dinner? | Never | 51% |
| | Yes, Occasionally | 48% |
| | Yes, Regularly | 1% |
| 18. My teenager has tried smoking cigarettes (even once in their life). | Yes, I'm certain | 26% |
| | I suspect s/he tried it | 10% |
| | No, don't think so | 19% |
| | No, for certain | 44% |
| | Don't Know..... | 2% |
| 19. What is your best guess of the percentage of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages 12 and 17 who have ever smoked cigarettes? | Average Response | 63.7% |
| | Median | 70% |
| | Standard Deviation | 19.7 |
| 20. What is your best guess of the age of Grey Bruce teens when they first smoked a cigarette (even just a puff), if they did smoke? | Average Response | 12.6 years |
| | Median | 13 years |
| | Standard Deviation | 1.5 |
| 21. My best guess of the number of cigarettes smoked each day by Grey Bruce teens who smoke is: | Average Response | 9.6 cigs |
| | Median | 10 cigs |
| | Standard Deviation | 5.1 |
| 22. Besides your teenager (who may or may not smoke), is there anyone who smokes cigarettes regularly in your household? | Yes | 27% |
| | No | 73% |
| 23. To the best of your knowledge, has your teen used tobacco during the past 30 days? | Yes | 10% |
| | No | 90% |
| 24. What is your best guess of the percentage of teens in Grey Bruce between the ages 12 and 17 who have ever tried a marijuana cigarette? | Average Response | 42.1% |
| | Median | 40% |
| | Standard Deviation | 21.2 |
| 25. What is your best guess as to the age of most teens in Grey Bruce when they start smoking marijuana, if they are going to smoke it? | Average Response | 14.7 years |
| | Median | 15 years |
| | Standard Deviation | 2.5 |

| Question | Response Category | Response |
|---|---|-----------|
| 26. During the past 2 weeks, what is your best guess at the percentage of Grey Bruce Teens between the ages of 12 and 17 who binge drank (5+ drinks of alcohol in a row). | Average Response | 30.7% |
| | Median | 25% |
| | Standard Deviation | 21.3 |
| | | |
| 27. To the best of your knowledge, has your teen used alcohol during the past 30 days? | Yes | 23% |
| | No | 77% |
| 28. Does your teenager have a driver's license? | Yes | 25% |
| | No | 75% |
| 29. If s/he does have a full license, does s/he have access to a car? | Yes, unlimited access | 5% |
| | Yes, somewhat limited | 48% |
| | Yes, quite restricted | 17% |
| | Yes, very restricted | 30% |
| 30. During the past 30 days, if s/he drove, how many times did your teenager drive a car or other vehicle when s/he had been drinking alcohol? | Average Response | 0.5 times |
| | Median | 0 times |
| | Standard Deviation | 0.7 |
| 31. During the past 30 days, how many times did typical Grey Bruce teenagers drive a car or other vehicle when s/he had been drinking alcohol? | Average Response | 5.2 times |
| | Median | 3 times |
| | Standard Deviation | 6.9 |
| 32. During the past 30 days, have you talked to your teenager about family rules regarding his/her drinking? | a. Did not talk about drinking | 36% |
| | b. Told my teen drinking is always bad | 3% |
| | c. Told my teen a few drinks on special occasions is all right | 10% |
| | d. Told my teen the risks and expect them not to drink | 37% |
| | e. Told my teen they have to decide for themselves | 8% |
| | f. Other - general | 2% |
| | g. Other - warned of drinking & driving | 5% |
| 33. During the past 30 days, do you think that Grey Bruce parents talked to their teenager (ages 12 to 17) about family rules regarding their teens' drinking? | a. Did not talk about drinking | 40% |
| | b. Told their teen drinking is always bad | 4% |
| | c. Told their teen a few drinks on special occasions is all right | 16% |
| | d. Told their teen the risks and expect them not to drink | 28% |
| | e. Told their teen they have to decide for themselves | 10% |
| | f. Other - general | 2% |
| | g. Other - warned of drinking & driving | 1% |

| Question | Response Category | Response |
|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| 34. During the past 12 months, how often do you think your teenager has been a passenger in a car driven by someone who has been drinking? | Average Response | 1.2 times |
| | Median | 0 times |
| | Standard Deviation | 4.3 |
| 35. My relationship with my teen is: | Poor | 1% |
| | Fair | 3% |
| | Good | 17% |
| | Very Good | 48% |
| | Excellent | 31% |
| 36. What kind of relationship does the typical Grey Bruce parent have with his/her teen from age 12 to 17? (Your best guess.) | Poor | 1% |
| | Fair | 25% |
| | Good | 62% |
| | Very Good | 12% |
| | Excellent | 0% |
| 37. During the past 30 days, I discussed family rules about drug non-use with my teenager(s). | Yes | 49% |
| | No | 51% |
| 38. During the past 30 days, what percentage of typical Grey Bruce parents do you think discussed family rules about drug non-use with their teenager (age 12 to 17)? | Average Response | 26% |
| | Median | 20% |
| | Standard Deviation | 18.7 |
| 39. In general, do you think it is easier to talk to teenage girls or boys about the danger of tobacco, alcohol and/or illegal drugs? | Girls are easier..... | 18% |
| | Boys are easier | 6% |
| | No difference..... | 76% |
| 40. My teen's other parent/guardian and I have discussed strategies for helping our child understand and avoid the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. | Frequently..... | 35% |
| | A few times..... | 40% |
| | Maybe once | 5% |
| | Haven't really talked | 12% |
| | No other active parent | 7% |
| 41. If the other parent/guardian of my teen filled out this questionnaire separately, our answers would agree. | Never | 1% |
| | Some of the time | 11% |
| | Most of the time | 62% |
| | All of the time | 17% |
| | No other active parent | 8% |
| Wants a copy of the results | Yes | 47% |
| | No | 53% |
| Comments | Yes | 23% |
| | No | 77% |