

From Crisis Counselor, Lance Friis

Jan10, 2008

A recent Contra Costa Times article discussed the results of a University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research study that showed a decline in the use of **illicit drugs by teens**.

The declines were in the use of alcohol, marijuana, methamphetamines, and tobacco. Ecstasy use had a statistically insignificant increase which researchers will continue to monitor. Prescription drug abuse, however, showed a significant increase.

Prescription drug abuse has been a growing problem for some time. The medications most commonly used for recreational use include **painkillers** (e.g. Vicodin, Oxycotin) and stimulants prescribed for the treatment of ADD (e.g. Adderall, Ritalin). Those who use medication inappropriately will routinely look for unused prescriptions or steal the medication of siblings or friends. Prescription medication is **often used in conjunction with alcohol or other drugs** and this interaction can be dangerous. It is crucial that parents monitor the family medicine cabinet. Appropriately discard unused painkillers and other medications.

The Institute's report does not conclude that substance use is no longer an issue for teens. **The use of alcohol and other drugs by students at Northgate still occurs.** If your child is abusing any substance, it doesn't matter if overall statistics have declined. Parents still need to be caring and vigilant with regard to their children's use of alcohol and other drugs.

<http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/>