



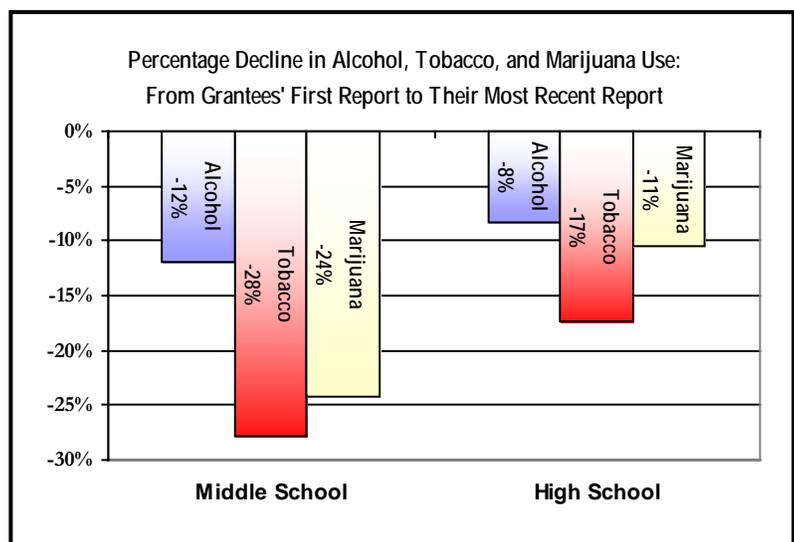
# National Evaluation of the Drug Free Communities Support Program Summary of Findings from January 2002 through November 2009

**The goals of the Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC) are to strengthen community collaboration and to reduce youth substance use.**

Administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the DFC grant program supports community coalitions in preventing and reducing youth substance use. The contributions of community coalitions constitute a critical part of the Nation's drug prevention infrastructure. They are, in fact, a significant catalyst for creating local change where drug problems manifest and affect the citizens of this country. DFC grantees are required to provide data for the national evaluation of DFC, and a summary of findings from these grantee-reported data follows.

## What Have We Found So Far?

- **Rates of Substance Use Have Declined Significantly in DFC Communities:** Past 30-day use declined significantly across all substances (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana) and all grade levels (middle school, high school) between DFC coalitions' first and their most recent data report. Moreover, prevalence of 30-day use was lower across all substances for DFC high school students than among a nationally-representative sample of high school students taking the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Differences in prevalence of 30-day use between DFC and YRBS were statistically significant for alcohol in 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009. Differences in prevalence of 30-day use were also statistically significant for marijuana in 2003, 2005, and 2007, but not in 2009.



- **Perceptions of Substance Use are Moving Significantly in the Right Direction:** Perception of risk increased significantly for alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use among DFC youth between DFC coalitions' first report and most recent report. Moreover, youth perception of parental disapproval increased significantly for alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use over the same period.

## Recent Trends

The following trends were observed among grantees that reported outcome data in 2009. Because DFC grantees are required to report outcome data every two years, these recent trends are based on data from roughly half of DFC grantees.

- **High School Tobacco Use Continues to Decline Significantly in DFC Grantee Communities:** Between DFC grantees' 2009 data report and their previous report (typically from 2007), high school tobacco use declined significantly (-1.8 percentage points). Changes in 30-day use of alcohol and marijuana were not statistically significant over the same period.
- **Perceptions of Risk of Marijuana Use Are Declining:** In 2009, DFC grantees reported a statistically significant decline in the perception of risk of marijuana use in both middle school (-2.3 percentage points) and high school (-4.8 percentage points). Although 30-day use of marijuana at the middle school and high school level did not change significantly in 2009, it is nonetheless important to carefully monitor this trend since declines in perception of risk have been shown to predict increases in substance use.

*As with any evaluation, the DFC evaluation has a number of limitations that may affect the results. Because of these limitations and the uncertainty they produce, we cannot claim a causal relationship between DFC coalition activities and the outcomes reported here. However, the results are consistent with our expectation that DFC is effective when the program has been implemented as intended.*

## ONDCP | DFC National Outcome Evaluation Status Update

*ONDCP seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities  
by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences*