

For Immediate Release

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NATIONAL SURVEY ON TEEN DRUG USE FINDS INCREASED MARIJUANA USE AMONG 8TH, 10TH, & 12TH GRADERS

Manhasset CASA and Manhasset Public Schools to Survey Students & Parents

The 2010 Monitoring the Future (MTF) Survey, released Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010 by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the University of Michigan, showed an increase in marijuana use rates among all grades measured in the survey – 8th, 10th and 12th graders. Particularly concerning are that more youth report smoking marijuana on a daily basis, with 6.1 percent of high school seniors, 3.3 percent of 10th graders, and 1.2 percent of 8th graders reporting daily use, compared to last year's rates of 5.2 percent, 2.8 percent, and 1.0 percent, respectively. Among 12th graders it was at its highest point since the early 1980's.

In addition, the survey found that fewer 10th and 12th graders perceive regular marijuana use as harmful; suggesting that marijuana use among youth may continue its upward trend in future years. Lisbeth Shibley, Executive Director Manhasset CASA, concerned about the upward trend and effect on our youth, stated "The simple fact is that pot, in addition to containing THC, is a mix of more than 400 different chemical components. While we don't know about the possible long term effects, we do know that THC zeros in on the brain and central nervous system. In the short run, marijuana tilts the balance of chemicals that regulate learning, memory and reduce logical thinking and calculation skills, and impairs a user's ability to perform complex tasks like driving a car. Parents need to understand that marijuana use poses a far more serious risk to young people and the only foolproof way to safeguard against problems, is to talk with their children and discourage its use."

As a recipient of a Drug Free Communities Grant, Manhasset CASA will collaborate with Manhasset Public Schools to survey its students to investigate local youth drug trends, understand root causes of drug use and develop targeted strategies to reduce youth substance abuse. "Manhasset Public Schools understands the importance in surveying our students and we will again participate in the Bach Harrison Student Risk Survey. As a school community, it is critical that we continue to strive to gain greater understanding of how we can address the problem of teen alcohol and drug abuse," stated Charles Cardillo, Superintendent of Manhasset Public Schools.

During the week of January 31, 2011 Manhasset Public School students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 will participate in the Bach Harrison Online Prevention Needs Assessment Survey which will assist Manhasset CASA to assess current conditions and prioritize areas of greatest need in its efforts to reduce youth substance abuse in the Manhasset Community. In addition, district parents will be invited to participate in an online survey which will provide CASA further feedback in developing family based prevention programs that reduce youth substance abuse.

In 2009, the Manhasset Public Schools Bach Harrison survey results indicated that, in their lifetime,

- 14% of 6th grade students had used alcohol;
- 29% of 8th grade students had used alcohol; and by
- 10th grade, 70% of students had used alcohol (above the national average).

In light of the results, CASA embarked on the spring 2009 social marketing campaign *Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don't be a party to underage drinking. It's against the law.* The campaign, developed by the Drug-Free Action Alliance, partnered with members of the community in order to educate parents and residents to the health, safety and legal consequences of underage drinking.

For more information regarding the 2010 Monitoring the Future Survey Results, go to www.manhassetcasa.org.

