

Parents' Attitudes & Behaviors Toward Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention

February, 2007



Introduction

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- Roper Public Affairs & Media was commissioned by The Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey to conduct a telephone survey among a sample of 500 parents with children ages 12-15 in New Jersey.
- The sample was randomly drawn from listed sample purchased from American Student Lists.
- Interviews for this wave were conducted from December 5-17, 2007.
- Data were weighted to New Jersey census data for key demographics of households with children ages 12-15.
- Margin of error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 5 percentage points for the total sample.



Sample Profile

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Age of 12-15 year old child:

12-13	50%
14-15	50%

Gender of child:

Male	48%
Female	52%

Child's grade in school

4-8	59%
9 or higher	40%

Age of Parent:

Under 40	13%
40-49	57%
50 or older	30%

Gender of Parent:

Male	43%
Female	57%

Race/Ethnicity:

White	67%
African American or Black	15%
Hispanic	5%
Other	10%

Income:

Under \$25,000	10%
\$25,000 to under \$50,000	15%
\$50,000 to under \$100,000	26%
\$100,000 or more	37%



New Jersey Parents Are Lacking in Knowledge on Newer Drugs, Prescription and OTC Medications

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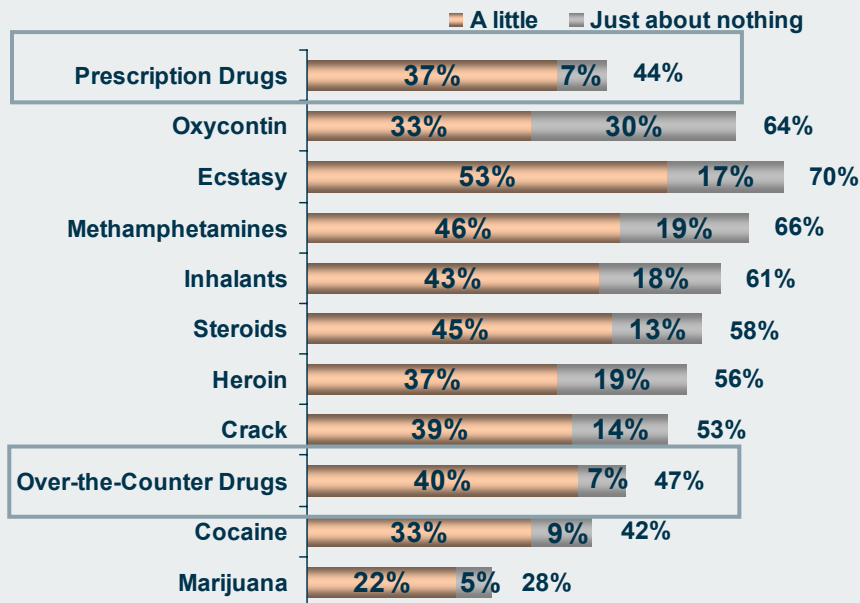
- Three in 10 parents (30%) say they know "just about nothing" about Oxycontin and about two in 10 say the same about ecstasy (17%). In addition, two in 10 report knowing "just about nothing" about methamphetamine (19%), inhalants (18%), and Methamphetamines (16%).
- Forty-seven percent (47%) of parents say they know "little/just about nothing" about over-the-counter drugs, and nearly as many (44%) report they know "little/just about nothing" about prescription drugs.



Over 4 in 10 Parents Lack Knowledge of All Drugs Including Prescription and Over the Counter Drugs, Except Marijuana

% of parents with children ages 12-15 who say they know a little/just about nothing about the following drugs in order to talk to their children about them

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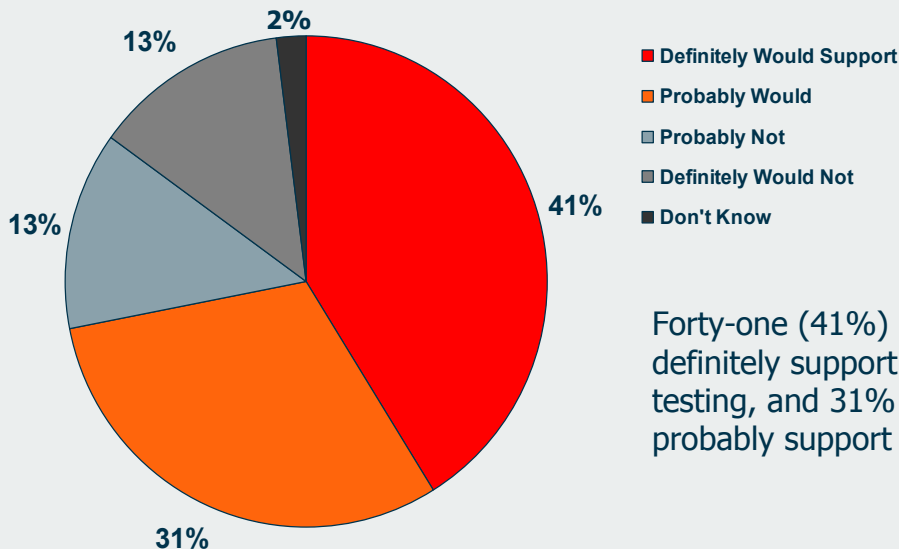
Q34 "How much would you say you know about the following drugs in order to talk to your child about them – a lot, a little, or just about nothing?"

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Seven in 10 Parents Definitely/Probably Support Random Drug Testing for Their Middle School Child

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

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Forty-one (41%) say they would definitely support random drug testing, and 31% say they would probably support such testing.



Q.41 - On a different topic, how likely is it that you would voluntarily support random drug testing for your middle school child conducted at their school? Would you say you would...

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Parents' Perceptions: Importance of Parents' and Child's Friends' Opinions About Drugs

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- Parents overwhelmingly feel their opinions are very important in their children's decisions whether or not to use drugs. The proportion of parents who feel this way in the 2007 is 82%, compared to 83% in 2006 and 79% in 2004.
- Virtually no parents feel their opinions are "not that important" or "not at all important" in their child's decisions whether or not to use drugs, whereas 31% feel that way about their child's friends' opinions.



Parents' Perceptions: Importance of Parents' and Child's Friends' Opinions About Drugs. Parents May Be Underestimating Peer Influence

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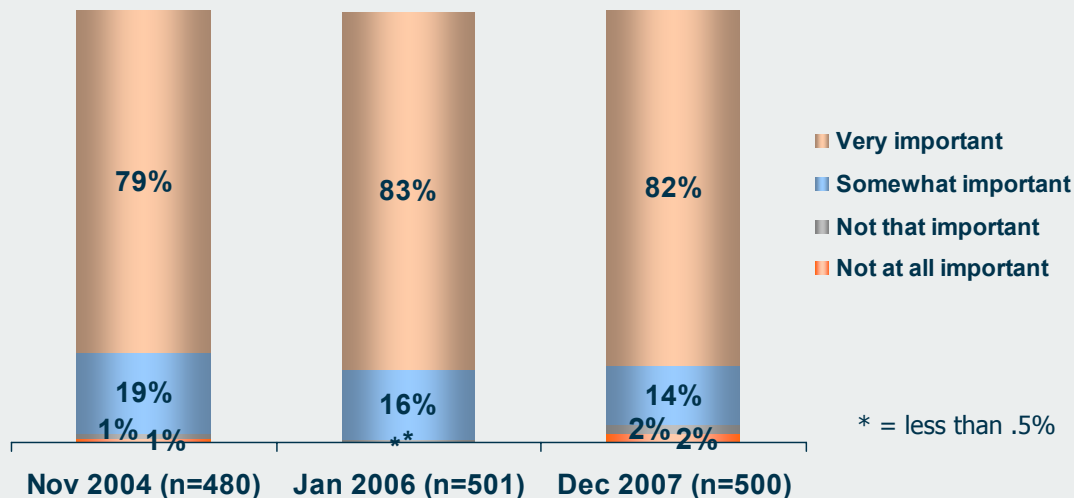
- As has been seen in previous findings, parents may be underestimating the influence of their kids' friends in deciding whether or not to use drugs.
 - As was the case in 2006 and 2004, parents are **more than twice as likely** to feel their own opinions are **very important** when it comes to their child's decision whether or not to use drugs compared to their child's friends' opinions.
 - More than eight in 10 (82%) feel their own opinions are very important vs. just over three in 10 (34%) who feel their child's friends' opinions are very important.



Parents Continue to Feel That Their Opinions Are Important in Child's Decision Whether or Not to Use Drugs

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

9



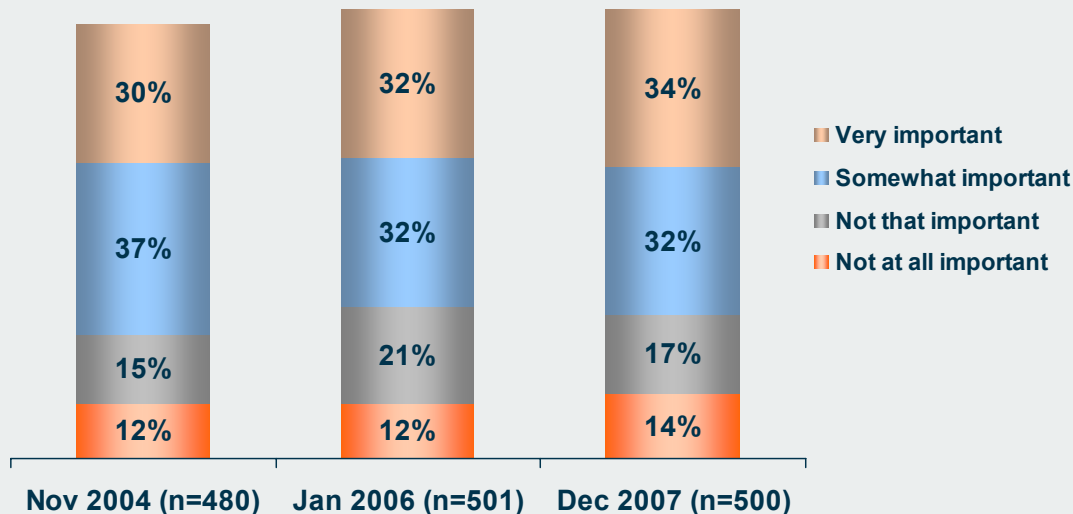
Q25 "How important do you feel your opinions are when it comes to your child's decision whether or not to use drugs?"

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Parents Feel Child's Friends' Opinions Are Less Important Than Their Own

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

10



Q26 "How important do you feel your child's friends' opinions are when it comes to his/her decision whether or not to use drugs?"



Parents' Perceptions: Importance of Parents' and Child's Friends' Opinions About Alcohol. Parents May Again Be Underestimating Peer Influence.

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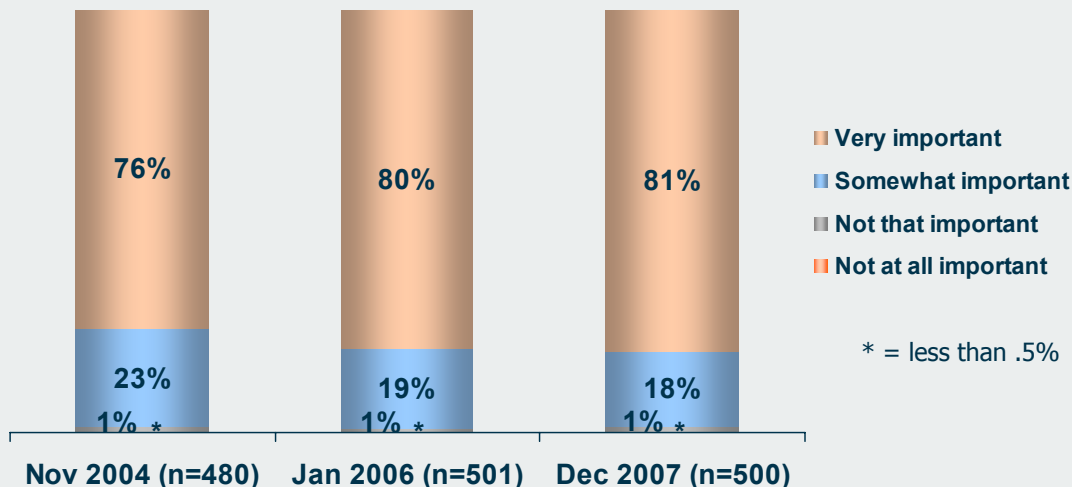
- Parents may be underestimating the impact of their child's friends' opinions in decisions about alcohol.
 - While eight in 10 (81%) parents feel their opinions are **very important** when it comes to their child's decision whether or not to drink alcohol, less than half that proportion (31%) feel their child's friends' opinions are very important.
- Parents who eat family meals with their child five days a week or more often are somewhat more likely than parents who eat with their child less often to say they feel their opinions are very important in their child's alcohol decisions (82% vs. 76%, respectively).



Parents Feel Their Opinions are Very Important in Child's Decisions About Alcohol

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

12



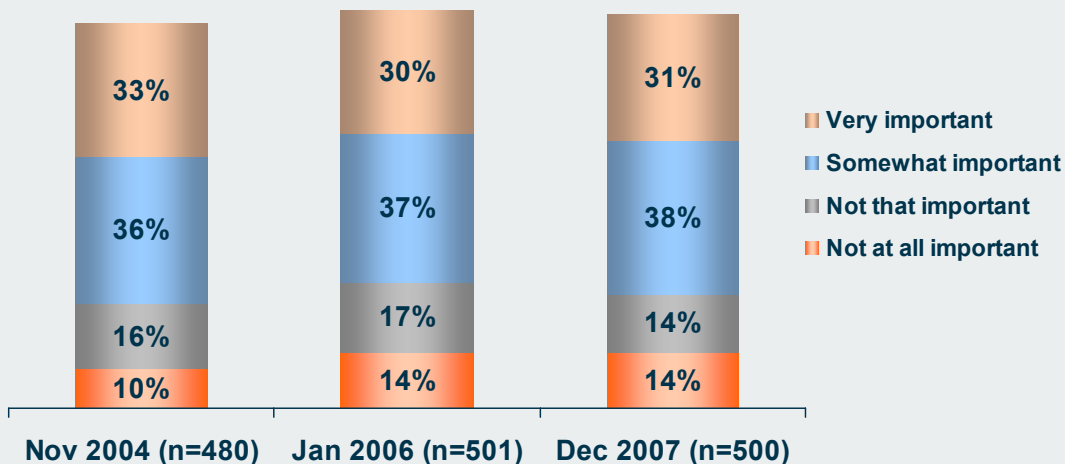
Q27 "How important do you feel your opinions are when it comes to your child's decision whether or not to drink alcohol?"



Parents Less Likely to Feel Their Child's Friends' Opinions Are Important in Decisions About Alcohol

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

13



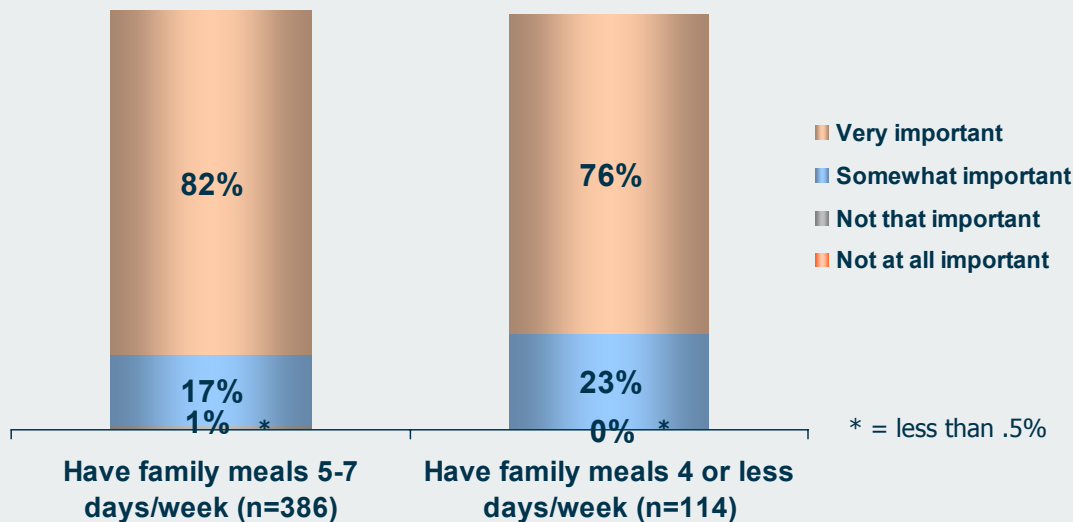
Q28 "How important do you feel your child's friends' opinions are when it comes to his/her decision whether or not to drink alcohol?"



Parents Who Eat Frequently With Their Child Are Somewhat More Likely to Feel Their Opinions Are Very Important in Child's Decisions About Alcohol

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

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Q27 "How important do you feel your opinions are when it comes to your child's decision whether or not to drink alcohol?"



Parental Influence on Attitudes Towards Drugs

- As was seen in the 2006 and 2004 findings, parents continue to feel they have a great impact on their child's attitudes towards drugs.
- Nine in 10 (88%) parents feel they have a lot of influence on their child's attitudes towards drugs. In addition, 82% feel their opinions are very important when it comes to their child's decision whether or not to use drugs.
 - This compares to the 91% of parents who felt they had a lot of influence on their child's attitudes towards drugs and the 83% who felt that their opinions were very important to their children's decision whether or not to use drugs in 2006.
 - In 2004, 92% of parents felt they had a lot of influence on their child's attitudes towards drugs and 79% felt their opinions were very important to their child's decision whether or not to use drugs.

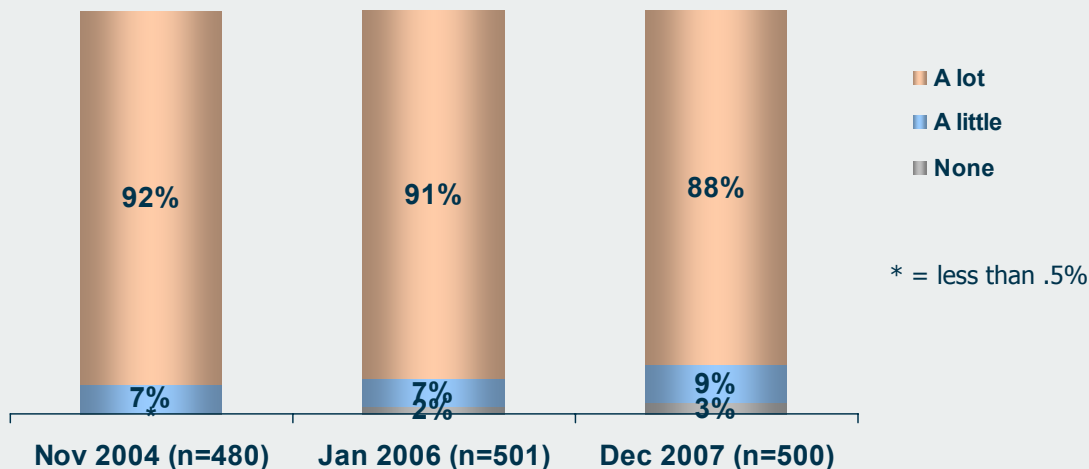
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Parents Feel They Have Great Influence Over Their Children's Attitudes Towards Drugs

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

16



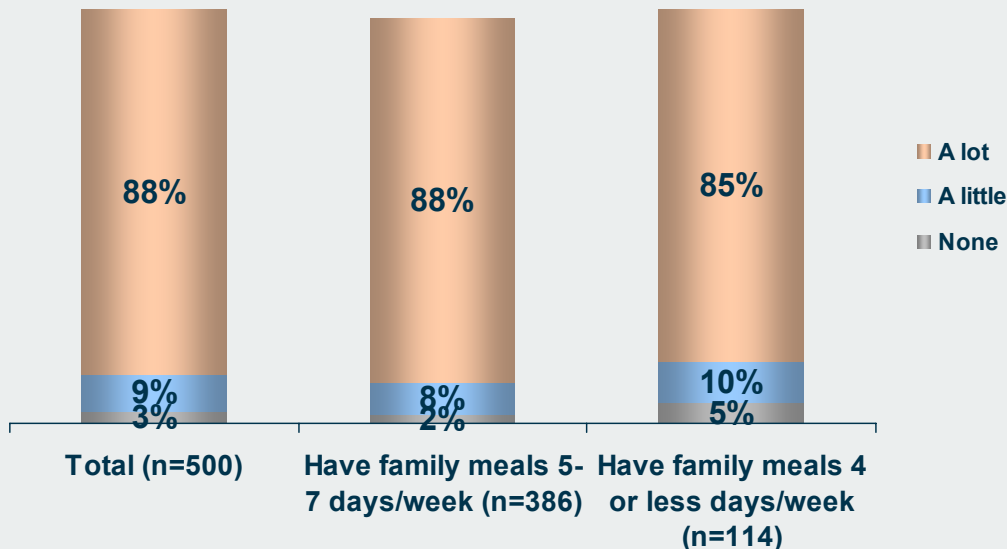
Q23 "How much influence do you feel you have had on your child's attitudes towards drugs?"



Parents Feel They Have Great Influence Over Their Children's Attitudes Towards Drugs

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

17



Q23 "How much influence do you feel you have had on your child's attitudes towards drugs?"



Parental Influence on Attitudes Towards Alcohol

- Consistent with their feelings about drugs, parents also continue to feel they have a great impact on their child's attitudes towards alcohol.
- More than eight in 10 (85%) parents feel they have a lot of influence on their child's attitudes towards alcohol and 82% feel their opinions are very important when it comes to their child's decision whether or not to drink alcohol.
- When comparing parents who have family meals frequently with those who do not, the proportion of parents who are more likely to feel they have great influence over their child's attitudes towards alcohol is comparable – 85% of parents who eat with their children frequently feel they have a lot of influence compared to 87% of parents who have family meals less frequently. This deviates from the 2006 and 2004 measurements which found that eating more frequently was indicative of increased feelings of influence over the child's attitudes towards alcohol.

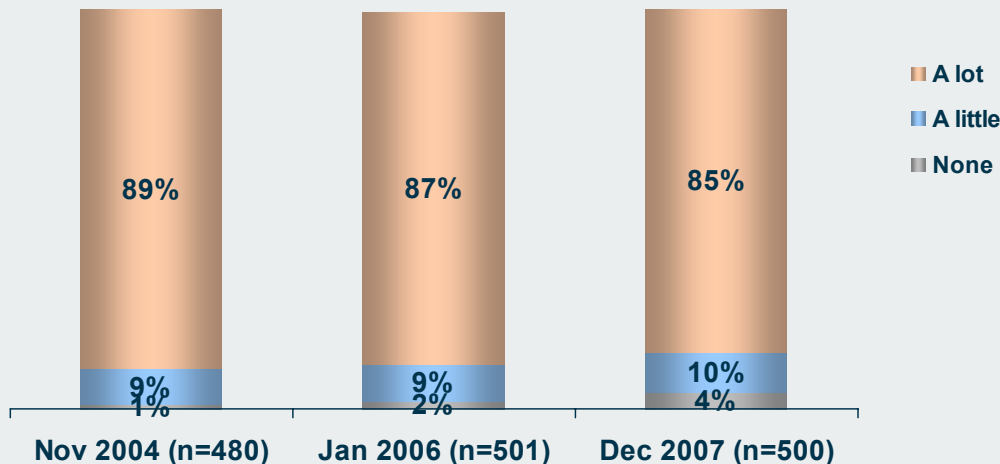
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Parents Feel They Have Great Influence Over Their Children's Attitudes Towards Alcohol

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

19

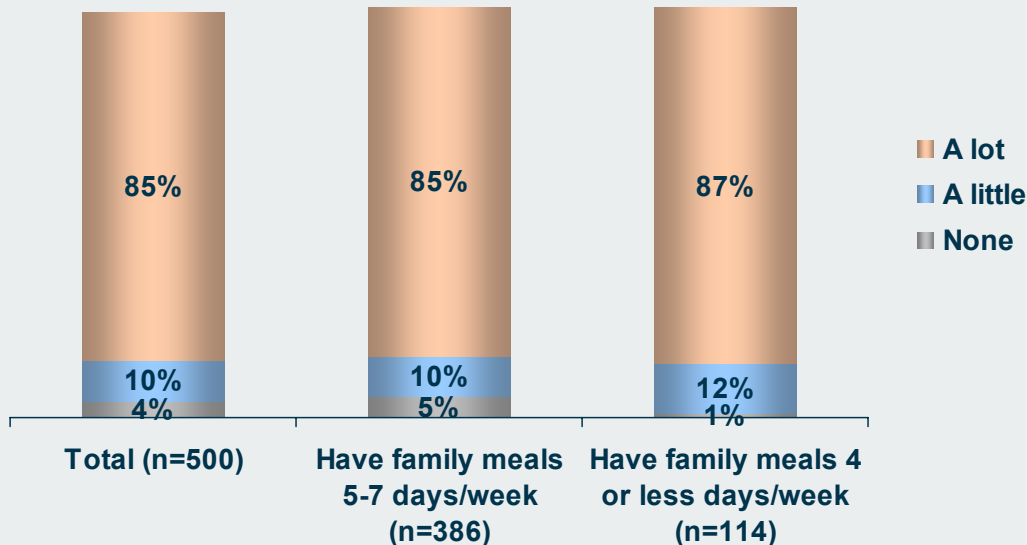


Q24 "How much influence do you feel you have had on your child's attitudes towards alcohol?"

Parents Feel They Have Great Influence Over Their Child's Attitudes Towards Alcohol

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

20



Q24 "How much influence do you feel you have had on your child's attitudes towards alcohol?"



Perceived Health Risks of Marijuana and Alcohol

21

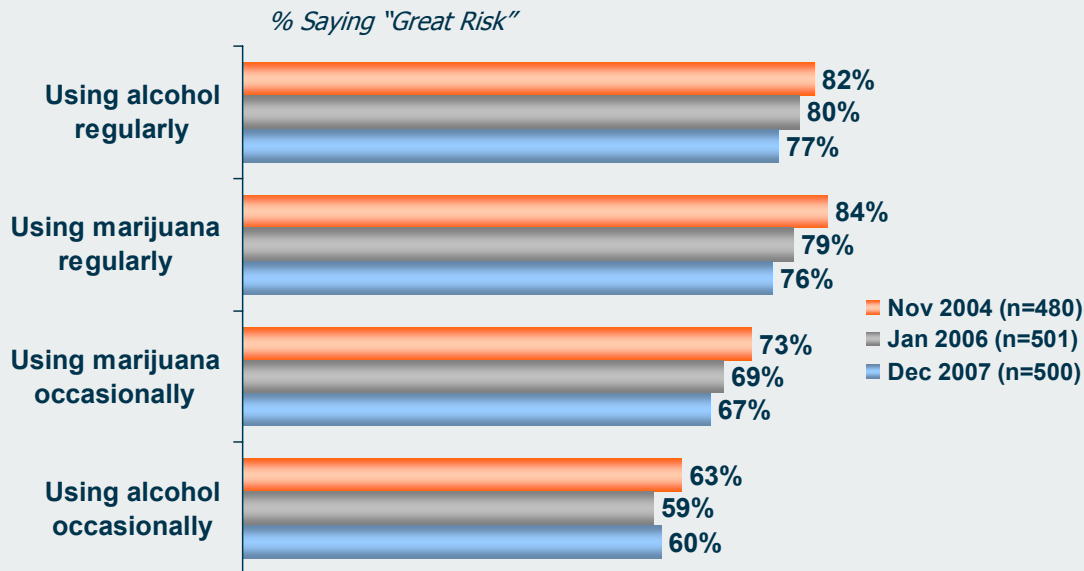
- The majority of parents feels using marijuana or alcohol occasionally or regularly pose a "great risk" to their child's health. Somewhat fewer view occasional drinking as a great risk than occasional marijuana usage (60% vs. 67%).
 - About three-quarters feel using alcohol regularly or marijuana regularly pose great risks to a child's health – 77% for alcohol and 76% for marijuana.
 - About seven in 10 (67%) find using marijuana occasionally to be a great risk, while 60% find using alcohol occasionally to be a great risk.
 - On the downside, one in four parents (23%) view occasional alcohol usage by their kids as only a slight health risk or no risk, comparable to the 24% found in 2006 and up somewhat from the 18% found in 2004. The corresponding number for occasional marijuana usage was 21% in 2007, comparable to the 19% in 2006 and up from the 17% found in 2004.



Parents Consistently Feel That Marijuana and Alcohol Use Would Be a "Great Risk" to Their Child's Health

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

22



Q30 "How great a risk do you feel each of the following would be to your child's health – a great risk, moderate risk, slight risk, or no risk at all?"

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First Discussion About Drugs and Alcohol

23

Those parents who have spoken to their child about drugs and alcohol start young, and feel the best age to start may be slightly younger than the age when they actually did so.

- These parents say they first spoke to their child about drugs, on average, at age 9.1.
 - The most commonly cited ages of "first speaking" are ages 12 (17%), 11 (14%), 10 (21%), 9 (12%), and 8 (11%).
- Parents of a child ages 12 to 15 feel that, on average, the best age to talk to kids about drugs is age 8.4. The most commonly cited ages are 10 (24%), 8 (14%), and 6 (10%). It should also be noted that 17% of parents said it is best to first talk to kids about drugs at age five or under.
- Parents say they first spoke to their child about alcohol, on average, at age 9.6, but parents say the best age to first talk to kids about alcohol is, on average, age 8.8.
 - The most commonly cited ages of "first speaking" are ages 10 (26%), 5 and under (15%), 12 (12%), 11 (11%), 8 (11%), and 9 (11%). For best age to talk about alcohol, the most commonly cited ages are 10 (25%), 8 (11%), 12 (9%), and 9 (9%).



2007 Drug/Alcohol Discussions

	Age Spoke to Child About Drugs (Among those who spoke)	Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Drugs	Age Spoke to Child About Alcohol (Among those who spoke)	Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Alcohol
	Dec 2007 (n=485)	Dec 2007 (n=500)	Dec 2007 (n=470)	Dec 2007 (n=500)
	%	%	%	%
5 and Under	9	17	8	15B
6	7	10a	3	6
7	6	5	5	6
8	11	14	11	11
9	12	6	11	9
10	21	24	26	25
11	14A	5	11	6
12	8	8	12	9
13	4	3	4	3
14	1	2	4	2
15+	-	-	*	1
Don't Know	6	6	4	6
Mean	9.1	8.4	9.6	8.8

First Discussion About Prescription or Over-the-Counter Drugs

25

Among parents who have spoken to their child about the proper use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs (59% of the total), the average age they reported doing so (10.1 years of age) is essentially the same age all parents believe this discussion should take place (10.3 years of age).

- Among parents who have spoken to their children, the most commonly cited ages of "first speaking" are ages 12 (21%), 11 (16%), 10 (22%), and 5 and under (10%).
- Among all parents, the ages to speak to children most commonly cited are 12 (19%), 10 (23%), and 5 and under (10%).



First Discussion About/Best Age to Speak to Child About Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs

Age Spoke to Child About Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs (Among those who spoke)*	
	Dec 2007** (n=293)
	%
5 and Under	10
6	3
7	5
8	6
9	3
10	22
11	16
12	21
13	7
14	5
15	3
Don't Know	5
Mean	10.1

Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs	
	Dec 2007 (n=500)
	%
5 and Under	10
6	3
7	2
8	9
9	5
10	23
11	9
12	19
13	6
14	5
15	7
16	2
17	*
18	1
Don't Know	6
Mean	10.3

26

* Based on all parents who have spoken to child about prescription and over-the-counter drugs

** Respondents were not asked about prescription and over-the-counter drugs in 2004 or 2006

Q39.2 "How old was this child when you first talked to...about prescription or over-the-counter drugs and their proper use?"



2007 Drug/Alcohol Discussions

27

	Age Spoke to Child About Drugs (Among those who spoke)	Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Drugs		Age Spoke to Child About Alcohol (Among those who spoke)	Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Alcohol		Age Spoke to Child About Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs (Among those who spoke)*	Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs
Mean	9.1	8.4		9.6	8.8		10.1	10.3



Stated/Estimated Percent of NJ Middle School Students Who Abuse OTC Drugs

When asked to estimate what percentage of New Jersey middle school students they would say abuse prescription and over-the-counter drugs such as cough syrup and pain relievers, the overall average percentage is 23%. One in five parents said they that they do not know (20%).

Available national data for prescription and OTC drug abuse suggest that this is an overestimate. At the same time, because the increased abuse of prescription and OTC drugs is a relatively new phenomenon, studies tend to look at types of prescription and OTC medications discretely, and do not classify them under a generalized heading such as "Prescription Drugs/OTC Medications."

Stated / Estimated Percentage of NJ Middle School Students Who Abuse OTC Drugs

28

	Dec 2007 (n=500)
Estimated Percent	%
0%	1
1-10%	28
11-20%	19
21-30%	15
31-40%	8
41-50%	6
51-60%	2
61-70%	1
71-80%	*
81-90%	-
91-100%	*
Don't Know	20
Mean Estimated Percent	23%



Parents' Alcohol Policies

29

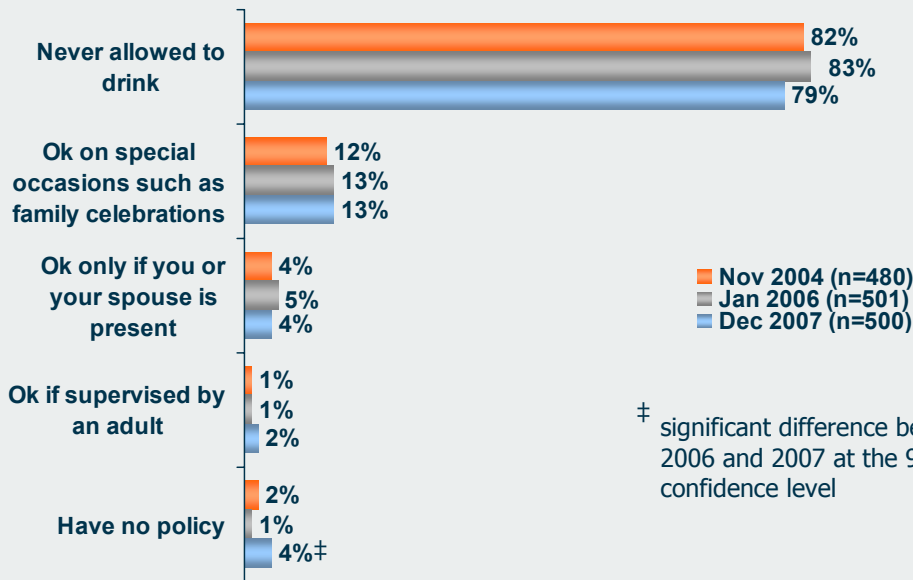
- New Jersey parents' alcohol policies appear somewhat less stringent in 2007 than in 2006.
 - 63% of parents of a 12 to 15-year-old child said their child would **never be allowed to drink** when they reached ages 16 to 17 – vs. 72% in 2006 and 65% in 2004. The proportion found in 2007 is significantly lower than the 2006 finding.
 - 79% of parents of a 14 to 15 year old say their child is never allowed to drink – vs. 80% in 2006 and 76% in 2004.
 - When it comes to parents of 12 to 13 year olds saying their child is never allowed to drink, the numbers are somewhat lower in 2007 (80%) than in 2006 (86%) and 2004 (87%).
 - As the above suggests, parents appear more lenient in permitting drinking as children reach their later teens.
- 4% of parents say they currently have no policy on their 12 to 15 year-old-drinking alcohol.



The Majority of Parents Say Their 12 to 15 Year Old is Never Allowed to Drink

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

30



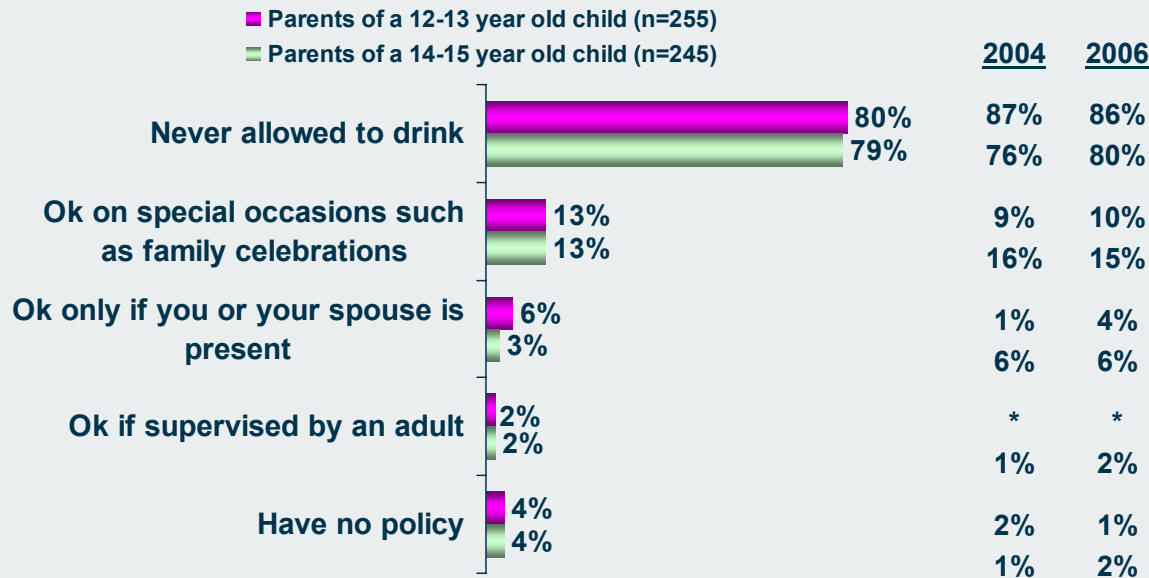
Q35 "Which of the following, if any, is your policy on your [AGE] year old child occasionally drinking alcohol?"



Parents of 12 to 13 Year Olds Have Become Somewhat More Lenient in Their Drinking Policies

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

31



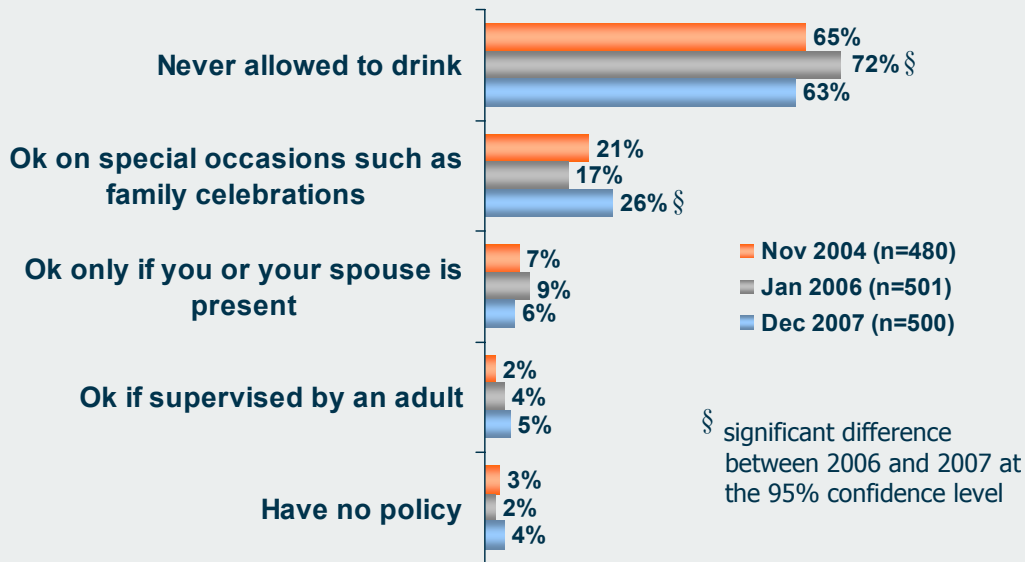
Q35 "Which of the following, if any, is your policy on your [AGE] year old child occasionally drinking alcohol?"

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Drinking Policies Become More Lenient as Parents Think of Later Teen Years

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

32



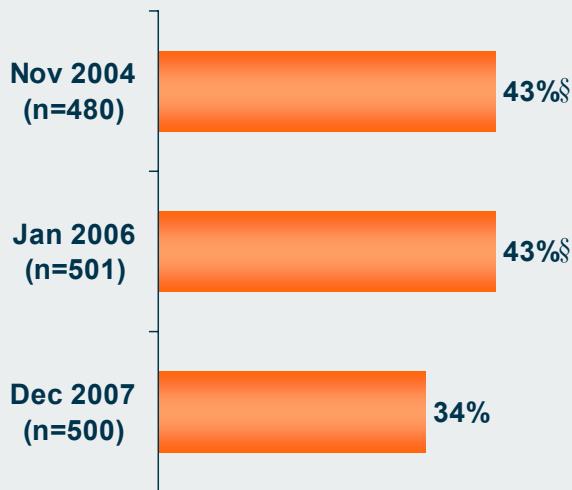
Q36 "What about when your child reaches age 16 to 17? Which of the following, if any, will be your policy on your 16 to 17 year old child occasionally drinking alcohol?"

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One-Third of New Jersey Parents Have Had Instances of Alcohol or Drug Abuse in their Own Families

Among all parents with a 12-15 year old child

33



When compared to findings in 2004 and 2006, there is a significant decrease in 2007 in the proportion of parents saying that they have had instances of drug and alcohol abuse in their families.

§ significant difference between all years at the 95% confidence level



Q37 "In the past, have you ever had any instances in your family of alcohol or drug abuse?"

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Drug Prevention Education

34

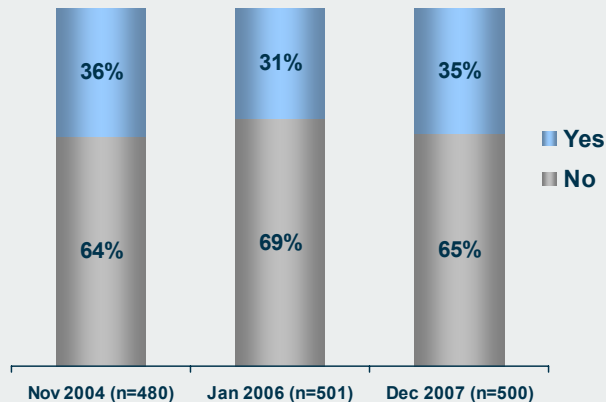
- One-third (35%) of parents have attended a drug prevention parent education class, seminar, or workshop. This is somewhat higher than in 2005 (31%) and is comparable to the proportion in 2004 (36%).
 - Four in ten (40%) of parents in families with a history of drug or alcohol abuse say they have attended a class, seminar or workshop on drug prevention. This is up four percentage points from 2006's 36% and down nine percentage points from 2004's 49%.



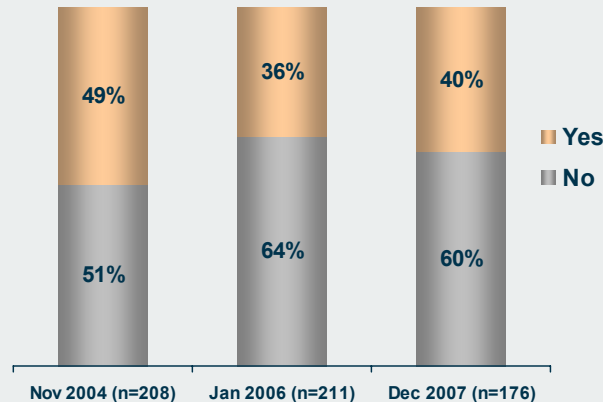
Drug Prevention Education

35

Among Total Parents of Children Ages 12-15



Among Parents of Children Ages 12-15 Who Have Had Instance of Drug/Substance Abuse in Their Families



Q18 "Have you ever attended a drug prevention parent education class, seminar, or workshop?"



Parents' Attitudes & Behaviors Toward Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention

- February, 2007



Appendix



First Discussion About Drugs

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Age Spoke to Child About Drugs (Among those who spoke)			
	Nov 2004 (n=466) A	Jan 2006 (n=483) B	Dec 2007 (n=485) C
	%	%	%
5 and Under	13b	8	9
6	7	7	7
7	7	9	6
8	13	12	11
9	9	12	12
10	22	21	21
11	8	11	14A
12	12	11	8
13	4b	2	4
14	1	1	1
Don't Know	4	5	6
Mean	8.9	9.0	9.1

* Based on all parents who have spoken to child about drugs

* Capital letters indicate testing at the 95% confidence level; lowercase letters indicate testing at the 90% confidence level

Q12 "How old was your child when you first talked to him/her about drugs?"



Best Age to Start Discussing Drugs With Children

39

Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Drugs

	Nov 2004 (n=480) A	Jan 2006 (n=501) B	Dec 2007 (n=500) C
	%	%	%
5 and Under	17b	12	17
6	6	7	10a
7	7	12AC	5
8	16	14	14
9	7	9	6
10	23	21	24
11	6	7	5
12	7	9	8
13	3	2	3
14	1	1	2
Don't Know	7	6	6
Mean	8.4	8.6	8.4

* Based on all parents, including those who have not spoken to child about drugs

* Capital letters indicate testing at the 95% confidence level; lowercase letters indicate testing at the 90% confidence level

Q15 "What do you think is the best age to first talk to your kids about drugs?"

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First Discussion About Alcohol

40

Age Spoke to Child About Alcohol (Among those who spoke)			
	Nov 2004 (n=449) A	Jan 2006 (n=473) B	Dec 2007 (n=470) C
	%	%	%
5 and Under	13Bc	7	8
6	5	6	3
7	8	7	5
8	12	13	11
9	8	9	11
10	22	24	26
11	8	12	11
12	11	13	12
13	8b	4	4
14	3	3	4
15+	-	*	*
Don't Know	3	2	4
Mean	9.2	9.4	9.6

* Based on all parents who have spoken to child about alcohol

* Capital letters indicate testing at the 95% confidence level; lowercase letters indicate testing at the 90% confidence level

Q.21 - How old was this child when you first talked to him/her about alcohol?



Best Age to Start Discussing Alcohol With Children

41

Best Age Parents Feel They Should Speak to Child About Alcohol			
	Nov 2004 (n=480)	Jan 2006 (n=501)	Dec 2007 (n=500)
	%	%	%
5 and Under	13B	8	15B
6	6	6	6
7	8	8	6
8	11	14	11
9	7	9	9
10	23	21	25
11	4	10A	6
12	10	11	9
13	7Bc	3	3
14	4	2	2
15+	2	1	1
Don't Know	6	7	6
Mean	9.1	9.2	8.8

* Based on all parents, including those who have not spoken to child about alcohol

* Capital letters indicate testing at the 95% confidence level; lowercase letters indicate testing at the 90% confidence level

Q.22 What do you think is the best age to first talk to your kids about alcohol?

