

Data Spotlight

Drug Abuse Warning Network

November 13, 2012

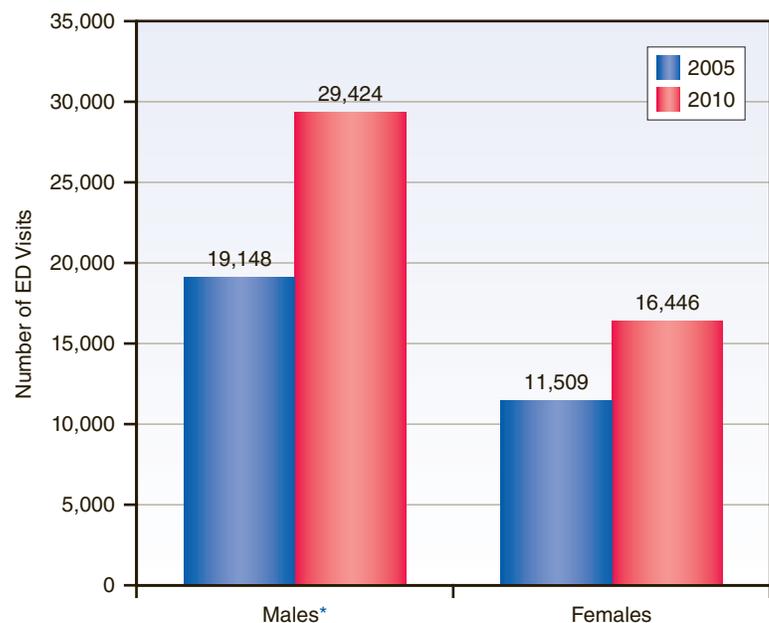
Emergency Department Visits Involving Marijuana among Adolescents Aged 15 to 17: Increase from 2005 to 2010 Varied by Gender

Past month marijuana use among adolescents aged 15 to 17 has increased steadily since 2006, and perception of great risk from smoking marijuana has decreased.¹ At the same time, the number of marijuana-related emergency department (ED) visits for adolescents aged 15 to 17 increased 50 percent between 2005 and 2010 (from 30,657 to 45,938 visits). Population rates also increased during this period (from 232 per 100,000 population in 2005 to 355 per 100,000 population in 2010), which confirms that the increased number of visits cannot be attributed to population growth. These ED visits were for marijuana alone or in combination with other substances. Data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) show that the increase in marijuana-related ED visits varied by gender. Visits among males increased 54 percent (from 19,148 visits in 2005 to 29,424 visits in 2010) (Figure). While the number of visits among females appeared to also increase, the difference did not reach statistical significance.

Substance use prevention messages are important during the teen years, because this is when adolescents often experience peer pressure to use drugs. Marijuana use can affect decision-making and put teens at risk for injuries and other dangerous consequences. Resources on helping teens stay drug-free can be found at <http://easyread.drugabuse.gov/drug-free-children-teens.php>.

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2012). [2006 through 2011 NSDUH data on marijuana use and perception of risk among persons aged 15 to 17]. Unpublished raw data.

Marijuana-Related Emergency Department (ED) Visits among Adolescents Aged 15 to 17, by Gender: 2005 and 2010



* The difference between 2005 and 2010 for males is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Source: The Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) is a public health surveillance system that monitors drug-related hospital emergency department (ED) visits and drug-related deaths to track the impact of drug use, misuse, and abuse in the United States.

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