

## Selected Studies for Social Norms and Marijuana

Title: **Misperceptions of College Student Marijuana Use: Implications for Prevention**

Authors: [Kilmer, Jason R.](#); [Walker, Denise D.](#); [Lee, Christine M.](#); [Palmer, Rebekka S.](#); [Mallett, Kimberly A.](#); [Fabiano, Patricia](#); [Larimer, Mary E.](#)

Source: [J.Stud.Alcohol](#), 2006, 67, 2, 277-281, Alcohol Research Documentation, US

Abstract: Objective: This study investigates the relationship between marijuana use, perceived norms of use by friends and students in general, and negative experiences or problems from alcohol and drug use. It was hypothesized that students would overestimate the marijuana use of students in general and that perceptions about the prevalence of marijuana use would be related to drug-related consequences. Method: In this study, 5,990 participants provided information on the perceptions and consequences of drug use via an online survey or via a paper-based survey. Results: Although two thirds of participants reported no marijuana use, 98% of respondents incorrectly predicted that students in general use marijuana at least once per year. Perceptions of use by friends and students in general accounted for variance in drug use and related problems or experiences. Conclusions: Given the relationship between norm misperception and behavior with marijuana use, future research could explore the impact of targeting misperceived norms through prevention and intervention efforts.

URL: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=psyh&AN=2006-02770-011&site=ehost-live>

Title: **"But Others Do It!": Do Misperceptions of Schoolmate Alcohol and Marijuana Use Predict Subsequent Drug Use Among Young Adolescents?**

Authors: [Juvonen, Jaana](#); [Martino, Steven C.](#); [Ellickson, Phyllis L.](#); [Longshore, Douglas](#)

Source: [J.Appl.Soc.Psychol.](#), 2007, 37, 4, 740-758

Abstract: We examined the effects of perceived prevalence of drug use among same-age peers on adolescents' subsequent drug use. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, participants estimated prevalence of alcohol and marijuana use among 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students in their school, reported own use of these drugs, receipt of offers to use these drugs, and frequency of contact with peers who use these drugs. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, participants reported their frequency of alcohol and marijuana use. Although perceived prevalence of drug use predicted subsequent alcohol and marijuana use when controlling for actual prevalence, these effects disappeared once participants' prior levels of drug use and proximal peer

contacts were considered. Implications of findings for intervention programs aiming solely to increase accuracy of perceived prevalence estimates are discussed.

URL: <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00183.x>

Title: **Differences Between Actual and Perceived Student Norms: An Examination of Alcohol Use, Drug Use, and Sexual Behavior**

Authors: [Martens, Matthew P.](#); [Page, Jennifer C.](#); [Mowry, Emily S.](#)

Source: [Journal of American College Health](#), 2006, 54, 5, 295-300

Abstract: Researchers in the social norms area have previously focused primarily on alcohol consumption, paying comparatively less attention to drug use and sexual behavior. The major purposes of this study were to (1) compare perceptions of peer norms in the areas of alcohol use, drug use, and sexual behavior with actual behavior and (2) determine if a relationship existed between a student's perceptions of normative behavior and a student's actual behavior. Participants were 833 college students at a large, public university in the Northeast. Study participants overestimated alcohol use, drug use, and sexual behavior among their peers. There was also a positive relationship between actual behavior and perceived peer norms, although the effect sizes for all behaviors were small to moderate. The authors provide further support for the tenets of social norms theory and suggest that social norms interventions are appropriate both campus-wide and to targeted high-risk groups. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Link: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16539222>

Title: **Misperceptions of the norms for the frequency of alcohol and other drug use on college campuses**

Authors: [Perkins, H. Wesley](#); [Meilman, Philip W.](#); [Leichliter, Jami S.](#)

Source: [Journal of American College Health](#), 1999, 47, 6, 253-258

Abstract: A study examined misperceptions of the norms for the frequency of alcohol and other drug use on college campuses. Data were obtained from the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey national database of college students. Results revealed that many students misperceived the norms of their peers by perceiving considerably exaggerated alcohol and other drug use as typical at their college.

Links: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10368559>

Title: **Comparing injunctive marijuana use norms of salient reference groups among college student marijuana users and nonusers.**

Authors: LaBrie, J. W., Hummer, J. F., & Lac, A.

Source: [Addictive Behaviors](#), 2011, 36(7), 717-720.

Abstract: Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug among college students and has the potential for various negative outcomes. Perceptions of what constitutes typical approval/acceptability of a reference group (i.e. injunctive social norms) have been shown to have strong utility as predictors of health-risk behaviors in the college context, yet this construct remains significantly understudied for marijuana use despite its potential for use

in social norms-based interventions. The current research evaluated individuals' marijuana approval level and their perceptions of others' marijuana approval level (i.e. injunctive norms) for various reference groups (typical student on campus, one's close friends, and one's parents) as a function of individual user status (abstainers, experimenters, occasional users, and regular users). A diverse sample of 3553 college students from two universities completed an online survey. Among all user status groups, individual approval yielded mean scores paralleling that of perceived close friends' approval and all groups were relatively uniform in their perception of typical students' approval. Higher levels of marijuana use tended to produce higher endorsements of individual approval, perceived close friends' approval, and perceived parental approval. Among occasional and regular users, there were no differences between one's own approval level for use and the perceptions of close friends' approval, nor did they think the typical student was more approving than themselves. Abstainers and experimenters, however, perceived typical students and close friends to have more permissive attitudes than themselves. Implications and future directions for research regarding the role of injunctive marijuana use norms in the development of social norms intervention are discussed.

Link: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306460311000621>

Title: **The Influence of Social Norms on College Student Alcohol and Marijuana Use**

Authors: Lewis, Todd F., Clemens, Elysia

Source: *Journal of College Counseling*, 2008, 11 (1), 19-52

Abstract: The Alcohol and Other Drug survey (adapted from D. Thombs, 1999) was administered to 235 undergraduates at a southeastern university to assess the influence that gender-specific normative perceptions have on 2 substance abuse patterns. Multiple regression analyses confirmed that gender-specific normative beliefs accounted for variance in alcohol use intensity and frequency of marijuana use beyond the variance accounted for by sociodemographic variables. Implications for college counselors are discussed.

Link: [http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=EJ791925&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=EJ791925](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ791925&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ791925)

**The following site may also be of use to you:**

### 1) Marijuana Use Among Students at Institutions of Higher Education

An August 2008 report from the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention, this source has information and resources on marijuana use at American colleges and universities.

<http://www.higheredcenter.org/files/product/marijuana.pdf>