



# CISDUS Brief

## Trends in Ganja Use by Students, 1998-2010

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This brief discusses ganja use and its related problems among students in grades 7 through 12 in the Cayman Islands, and trends in ganja use between 1998 and 2010. The findings are based on data from the Cayman Islands Student Drug Use Surveys (CISDUS), which were conducted in 1998, 2000, 2002, 2006 and most recently in 2010.

### Ganja Prevalence in 2010

In 2010, 7.4% of students in grades 7 to 12 reported using ganja at least once during the month before the survey (current use or past month prevalence). Approximately 12.8% used ganja at least once during the past year (Figure 1). About 20.1% of all students used ganja at least once in their lifetime.

### Key Highlights

- In 2010, more than one out of ten (1/10) students used ganja at least once in the year prior to the survey.
- Males were more likely than females to use ganja. Ganja use increased as grade level increased. There was variation among the districts.
- Trends in the past year ganja use showed that the prevalence was higher in 2010 (13%) compared to 2006 (10%), 2002 (10%), 2000 (7%), and 1998 (7%). Males showed a significant increase in use over time, as well as females. Only students in 10<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade showed an increase in ganja use since 1998.
- One-third of all students said that ganja was “easy” or “very easy” to obtain.
- Most of ganja users reported friends and street dealers as sources. At home and at a friend’s house were the places ganja use most often reported being used.

Males are more likely than females to report past month and past year ganja use. For example, 9.3% of males used ganja in the past month compared to 5.7% of females (Figure 1).

Both past month and past year use significantly increased with grade level. Between grades 7 and 12, past month use increased from 0.6% to 14.9%, while past year use increased from 1.2% to 23.3%. Despite some variation, there were no significant differences in ganja use among the six districts. The notable difference was East End which reported 12.5% past month use and 17.7% of past year ganja use.

### Trends in Past Year Ganja Use

Table 1 and Figure 1 presents trend in past year ganja use between 1998 and 2010 for all students as well as among demographic subgroups. Overall ganja use in 2010 (12.8%) was notable higher than the rates found in 2006 (9.7%), 2002 (9.5%), 2000 (7.2%), and 1998 (6.6%).

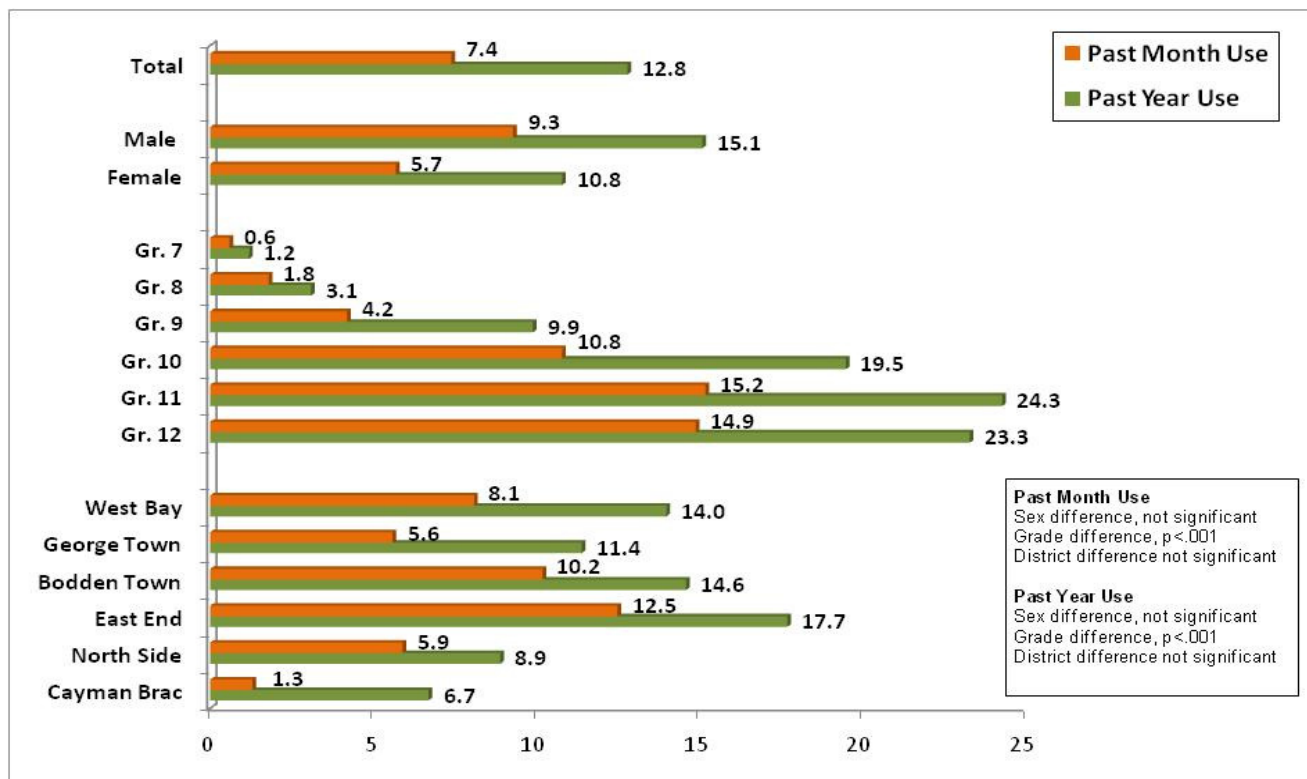
The 2010 prevalence among males was almost double the prevalence reported in 1998. Use among females remained stable over time except in 2010, which was notable higher.

Ganja use by students in grades 10 and 12 showed an increase between 1998 and 2010, while use among other grades remained stable.

All the districts showed increases in ganja use in 2010 compared to the other years. There is an exception for Cayman Brac which had reported a higher prevalence in 2002.

As seen in Figure 2, past year incidence of ganja use (new users during the last 12 months),— remained stable between 2006 (6.9%) and 2010 (6.7%).

**Figure 1: Past Year and Past Month Ganja Use By Sex, Grade and District, 2010 (N=2,612)**



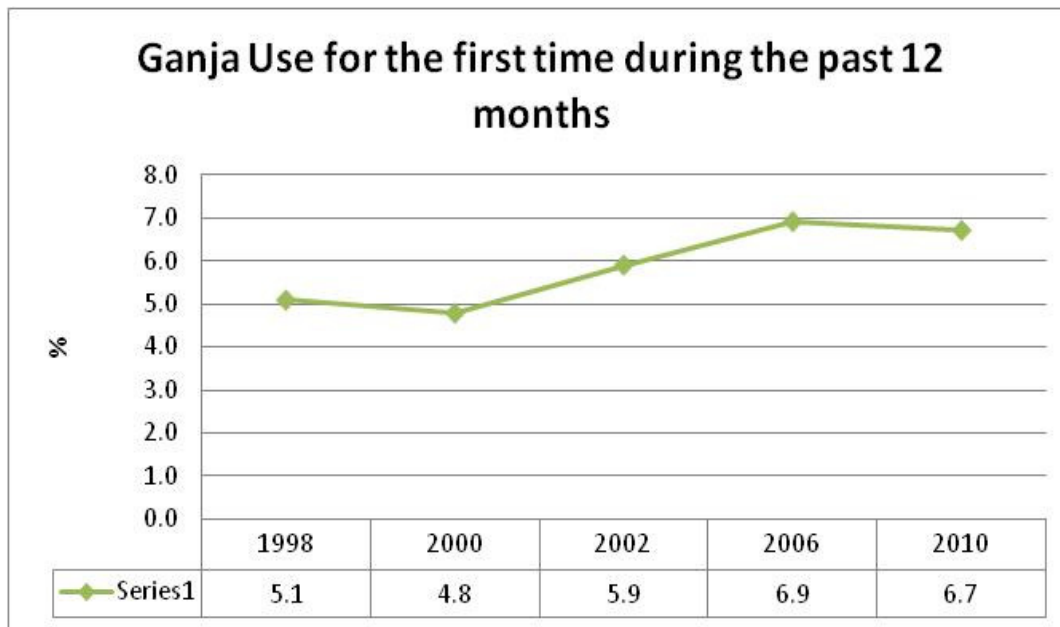
Source: CISDUS2010, National Drug Council

**Table 1: Trends in Past Year Ganja Use (%), by Sex, Grade and District, 1998-2010**

Year	1998	2000	2002	2006	2010	
N	(1946)	(2186)	(2187)	(2451)	(2612)	
<b>Overall Total</b>	6.6	7.2	9.5	9.7	12.8	
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	8.5	8.3	11.8	12.9	15.1
	<b>Female</b>	4.7	6.1	7.4	6.4	10.8
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	1.7	1.2	1.9	2.4	1.2
	<b>Grade 8</b>	2.9	2.4	3.6	3.8	3.1
	<b>Grade 9</b>	5.8	5.3	6.5	6.0	9.9
	<b>Grade 10</b>	6.4	9.4	13.9	13.1	19.5
	<b>Grade 11</b>	14.0	10.9	18.8	16.8	24.3
	<b>Grade 12</b>	11.9	16.0	16.6	18.4	23.3
<b>District</b>	<b>West Bay</b>	10.6	6.8	10.1	9.9	14.0
	<b>George Town</b>	6.5	7.6	9.8	10.0	11.4
	<b>Bodden Town</b>	3.9	7.1	10.0	9.9	16.4
	<b>East End</b>	5.7	7.8	3.8	12.1	17.7
	<b>North Side</b>	4.0	7.8	6.8	6.0	8.9
	<b>Cayman Brac</b>	4.5	3.9	10.0	5.4	6.7

Source: CISDUS2010, National Drug Council

**Figure 2: Ganja Use for the first time during the past 12 months, Grades 7-12, 1998-2010**



Source: CISDUS2010, National Drug Council

### Perception of Availability

In 2010, one-fourth (36%) of all students surveyed reported that it was “easy” or “very easy” to obtain ganja. This increased linearly with grade from 11.8% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders to 65.6% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

### Perception of Risk

A quarter (25%) of surveyed students considered that a person who tries ganja once or twice, will have a *slight risk* of harm either physically or in other ways. More than one in every ten (1/10) students considered that a person who tries ganja once or twice will have a *great risk* of harm either them physically or in other ways.

### Age of First Use

The 2010 CISDUS noted that, among those reporting ever using ganja (N=525), the average age of first use was 13 years.

About 16.8% of users reported an “early onset” of use; that is, they first used ganja between the ages of 6 and 11 years.

### Source of obtaining Ganja

The CISDUS asked students two questions about place of ganja use and source:

1. Where do you most often use ganja?
2. From whom/where do you usually get ganja?

In 2010, the most likely place students reported using ganja was in the category “other” and this was reported by 8.3% of students. This was followed by a *friend’s house* (5.1%) and *at home* (3.7%).

Most users (9.8%), obtained the ganja from *friends*, followed by “*other*” sources (4.3%) and from *street dealers* (2.6%).

## Comparisons with Other Student Surveys

Table 2 compares estimates of past year ganja use among students in grades 8, 10 and 12 in the Cayman Islands, Ontario Canada, the United States and Barbados.

In general, ganja use by Cayman Islands students from grade 8<sup>th</sup> is relatively lower than that of Ontario, America, and Barbados students.

It is notable that the trends in the upper grades (10 and 12) are higher than the trends reported in Barbados.

**Table 2: Past Year Ganja Use (%) for Grades 8, 10, and 12: Comparing the CISDUS2010, OSDUS2009, and the MTF Survey2009 and Barbados - SIDUC2006 Survey Findings:**

	CISDUS	OSDUS	MTF	SIDUC
Grade 8	3.1	6.4	11.8	4.6
Grade 10	19.5	30.7	26.7	11.6
Grade 12	23.3	45.6	32.8	14.9

Note: **OSDUS** is the *Ontario Student Drug Use Survey*, which was conducted in Ontario Canada; **MTF** is the *Monitoring the Future* survey, which was conducted across the USA; **SIDUC** is the *Sistema Interamericano de Datos Uniformes sobre Consumo de Drogas* (American System of Uniform Data on Drug Use), which was conducted in Barbados in 2006.

## Methods

The CISDUS employs a census (i.e., a 100% sample) of students enrolled in grades 7 to 12. In 2010, 9 middle and high schools and Eagle House participated in the survey. For 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2006 all twelve middle and high schools in the Cayman Islands participated in the surveys. Student participation rates were 88% in 2010; 84% in 2006, 88% in 2002, 94% in 2000 and 86.0% in 1998. The demographic composition of the sample did not significantly change between 1998 and 2010.

Because of the survey's complete sample (i.e., a census) there is no sampling error attached to an estimate (although estimates still have error based on non-sampling error, such as misreporting). Thus, no confidence intervals are required. Regarding the survey results, readers should bear in mind the following points:

- Since there is still the element of chance findings, the element of non-sampling errors, we cannot treat all absolute differences in percentages as meaningful and important.
- Small percentages are more unreliable than larger percentages.

## Terminology

- **Past Month Ganja Use** is defined as use of ganja (i.e., marijuana) at least once during the past 4 weeks.
- **Past Year Ganja Use** is defined as use of ganja (i.e., marijuana) at least once during the past 12 months.
- **Early Age of Onset** is defined as first using ganja between the ages of 6 and 11.
- **Perceived Availability** is defined as reporting that it is "easy" or "very easy" to obtain ganja if one wanted.
- **Source of Ganja** was measured with the question "From whom/where do you usually get marijuana?".
- **Place of Use** was measured with the question "Where do you most often use marijuana?".
- **Significant Difference** refers to a difference between percentages that is not likely due to chance. For example, a difference found at the  $p < .05$  level of statistical significance is one that is less than 5% likely to occur by chance alone. In this report, any difference is considered statistically significant if the probability is at the .05 level or lower.

## Source

CISDUS 2010 - Cayman Islands: National Drug Council.

To obtain the CISDUS questionnaire or other CISDUS Reports, please visit our web site: [www.ndc.ky](http://www.ndc.ky)