

More Oregon 8th And 11th Graders Free Of Drug Use

Fewer of Oregon's eighth and 11th graders are using illicit drugs today than two years ago, and 11th graders' usage is declining faster than national rates.

However even though fewer of the state's eighth graders are using drugs than in 1990, those who are using appear to be using a variety of drugs.

Those are among results of a statewide survey of tobacco, alcohol and other drug use by the state Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, announced Wednesday at a Portland news conference.

"Oregonians can be proud that more and more Oregon students are rejecting alcohol and drugs as part of their lives," Gov. Barbara Roberts told a Portland news conference. But she said the survey results, while encouraging, demand on-going efforts to ensure that Oregon meets its Benchmark goals of virtually all eighth and 11th graders free of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs by 2010.

More than 4,400 students in 43 randomly selected Oregon middle and high schools were surveyed.

These are among other key findings of the survey of Oregon eighth and 11th graders, conducted every two years since 1986:

Oregon 11th graders, well above the national average in 1986 for usage of marijuana, cocaine and amphetamines, were below national usage rates

for these drugs in 1992. Although usage of heroin, barbiturates and tranquilizers declined among Oregon 11th graders, rates are still above national levels. And 11th-grader usage of LSD and inhalants has not declined.

The percentage of eighth graders using an illicit drug during the 30 days prior to the survey has declined since 1990, although rates for using specific drugs has remained the same or increased. The survey found a two-year increase of 50 percent in eighth graders who used five or more illicit drugs in the prior year; illicit drugs of choice were marijuana and inhalants. Oregon eighth graders' usage of most illicit drugs remains above the national average.

Since 1988, Oregon 11th graders have shown statistically significant declines in 11 drug types such as alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine. Since 1990, 11th graders' usage declined in seven drug areas while eighth graders' decline in none.

Oregon 11th graders' cigarette use declined to a rate of 19.1 percent who reported having smoked during the prior month, compared with a national rate for 12th graders of 28.3 percent.

The steeper decline in use of most drugs among 11th graders appears to be a result of schools' initiating drug-prevention programs during 1988-92. In addition, one survey found that an important reason nationally is students'

recognition of how drug use has devastated their peers.

"Using alcohol and other drugs not only affects scholastic performance but also reduces a student's motivation to stay in school," said Jeffrey N. Kushner, director of the state Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs. "That's why getting these data, and doing something about them, is critical."

Kushner said drug use among the nation's 12th graders is also declining, but that Oregon's rate of decline for upper-class students is outstripping the national average.

Kevin W. Concannon, Oregon Department of Human Resources director, said state government is putting a priority on reducing tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use because they affect people in so many other ways. "Drop-outs, welfare, family violence, unemployment, unhealthy babies, crime--these problems and many more are often directly tied to use of alcohol and other drugs," he said.

"More Oregon students are free of alcohol and other drugs--and that doesn't just happen," Roberts said. "We can give credit to our children, to parents, to school programs, to commitment by business groups, to community programs, to cooperation among state agencies, and to the news media for reinforcing the message that successful lives and illicit drugs don't mix."

perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

The Thrill Is Gone

There seems to be several fundamental questions being addressed this fall in both black and white circles. Both groups ask, "will a victory by either presidential candidate materially advance my condition in the near term?"

A second query weighs the same option "would either Bush or Clinton be likely to institute measures directed at the improvement of race relations?" Since summer I've read hundreds of articles, watched television political shows, interviewed scores of people, and what do you know? Well over half of the opinions are in the negative. And this pessimistic trend grows as we near the election.

The electorate are not seen as enthusiastic campaigners for heroes who can turn around the most difficult situation in which this country has ever found itself, but as determined to vote Against the candidate they view as the worst case scenario. Never have so many negatives been offered up in media or personal evaluations of presidential candidates. Perhaps the best way to put our increasing disillusionment with the political process really is simply to say, "the thrill is gone". But has anyone suggested that the disillusionment is with ourselves or should be?

Though the other candidate of any significant stature, H. Ross Perot, has identified important economic issues the other two have shied away from, he has not brought to this political stage that degree of substance and sincerity that would make him a viable alternative. Everyone knows what is wrong in this republic, from the economy to morality and racial injustice--but the majority cannot bring themselves to admit it, or to face the hard decisions necessary to improve our condition. And these facts may apply equally to both whites and minorities.

If you think in terms of my age group--the one that has mature sons and daughters, 35 to 40 years of age--then

whose children are they, do you suppose, that became the junk bond dealers, the Savings & Loan thieves, the arms dealers, the environmental rogues, the exporters of jobs to foreign countries, the bankers and lawyers who sash money for major drug manufacturers and distributors, both home and abroad, those who are most adamant in their opposition to universal health care, the do-nothing congressmen who voted themselves a raise at midnight after cashing checks against nonexistent funds?

I believe that these were and are "our brats", admittedly, aided and abetted by some of our own peers. But the fact remains that we raised them, sacrificed our own futures to get them the best education we could afford, and we boasted of how they would "change the world." They surely have! That pretty well reads like an indictment of "those other folks", but what of the African American scene?

What have our children been doing? Now, I've been reviewing reams of statistics from both government bureaus and our own organizations; the great gains in education at all levels including terminal degrees, the large numbers of black elected officials. And I flip through Jet Magazine and Ebony on a regular basis, noting all those black mid-level corporate executives appointed (Just like Portland) are either on "soft money" projects or else "staff" appointments, not "line" positions. I know, I've been there.

Now, it goes without saying that black parents, too, have made major sacrifices to get our middle class educated--and also looked forward to their "changing the world", particularly for black folks. However, it is quite obvious that when we look at another set of statistics--the ones that reflect economic disparities--they have changed nothing at all except in relation to their particular non-getto class, and even here, while

their incomes and living standards are embarrassingly superior to those of the mass of urban black poor, our middle class is as vulnerable as ever to work force disabilities (last hired and first fired--last promoted, and the inevitable "soft money".) But look at the other side of the coin; these "children" had a group security and ethnic or collective drive that very few whites have (I know this to be a fact for at times I've lived among whites--even towns where I was the only Black person). I am speaking of a particular group ethos and drive born of oppression and discrimination that has served alienated people since time immemorial--and blacks since emancipation. So the question is, given all the relative educational advantages and special nurturing given this generation that was to become our middle class, why is it that in most U.S. cities they cannot even operate a 7-11 store or dry cleaners in competition with other minorities? Even with the mind-boggling tens of billions in buying power that African Americans have? Do we need Clinton?

Does the answer lie with the projections put forth by columnist Tony Brown in his articles and weekly television show? Tens of millions (or more) spent on "conventions, related travel, chicken wings and scotch". Has it something to do with a mentality that dictates expenditures on a Mercedes or a Cadillac when a car at half the price would leave enough money for any of a hundred types of small business enterprises or other investment--without government help (plantations). Their children wouldn't have to work at McDonalds after school.

You may say that the problem is a need for psychological compensation. I say that is ridiculous and I'll give you the answer next week. You may not like it, but we can no longer depend upon our elite for the way to go. "The Thrill is gone."

No On 9 Campaign Calls For End To Sex, Lies And Videotape

Ellen Lowe, spokesperson for the No On 9 Campaign said the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA) is waging a campaign of sex, lies and videotape. Lowe outlined objections to the OCA Measure 9 campaign at a news conference.

Sex
"The OCA has given voters its first X-rated voters pamphlet" Lowe said. The focus of the OCA on graphic details of sex acts is not only extremely offensive, it is not the type of material that should be delivered as a state service to homes where children may have access to this material.

While the descriptions may be enlightening to some, they do not shed any light on the issues involved in measure 9. Measure 9 would rewrite the constitution to require discrimination against anyone who is or who is perceived to be homosexual, or who may promote or facilitate homosexuals.

The OCA's obsession with bizarre sex acts not only distorts the real issues, it is an embarrassment.

Lies
The OCA has distributed its first tabloid at the State Fair, at several county fairs and door to door in many Oregon neighborhoods. The tabloid

contains distortions and lies.

First, the tabloid says "Even liberal Presidential Candidate Bill Clinton, who supports gay rights, sides with the OCA." The clear implication is that Bill Clinton favors measure 9. That is absolutely no true. Bill Clinton expressed his opposition to measure 9 in the same TV interview that the OCA refers to, and again through a message delivered by Bob Hattoy at the No On 9 Rally in Portland last Sunday.

Second, the tabloid says "Portland Future Focus...calls for affirmative action and hiring guidelines (job quotas) for homosexuals in all departments and agencies of the city and for private contractors who do business with the city. It also requires performance evaluations for all city managers and supervisors to ensure compliance. Those who oppose this plan may have lost their jobs."

Again, the OCA has resorted to distortions and lies. The Future Focus plan does support diversity and does suggest developing affirmative action plans. The Future Focus plan does not say anything about quotas and does not say anything about supervisors losing their jobs.

Third, the OCA tries to support the

constitutionality of their measure by quoting from an interview on the NBC Today Show.

The OCA's tabloid says: Katy Kurick "announced that she had run the measure by the NBC attorneys who had agreed that it would pass constitutional muster."

That statement was a lie. The interview was not even conducted by Katy Couric. When the NBC attorneys saw the OCA's statement they sent a letter to Lon Mabon that says: "We demand that you cease and desist from any further publication of such statement erroneously attributed to NBC."

The No On 9 campaign joins NBC in calling for the OCA to immediately cease and desist distribution of this tabloid that is filled with misleading statements.

Video Tape

The OCA is beginning to distribute a second videotape that again has a focus on sex. They use shots of a gay rights parade in San Francisco in an attempt to shift the focus of this campaign away from the real issues.

Measure 9 is about mandating discrimination. If passed, Oregon would become the first state to actually take away rights from its citizens.

Drug Elimination Grant Program Funding Renewed

The Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) received good news that an innovative program to fight drug activity has been fully funded for another year. The Public Housing Drug Elimination Grant Program is again awarded \$526,800 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The program will continue to support HAP residents and staff as they join with Multnomah County, City of Portland, and state partners in drug-related crime prevention enterprises.

"We must thank our many partner as this endeavor continues," said Denny West, executive director of the Housing Authority of Portland. "We are especially indebted to the HAP residents who became involved, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Department who helps us tackle public safety issues, and the staff from Central City Concern who work closely with families overcoming drug and alcohol problems."

Augmenting the HUD monies will be matching funds of \$77,397 from the Housing Authority, Multnomah County Sheriff's Department and Central City Concern, making the total program funding \$604,197. The program began operations in January 1992.

"This will be essentially a continuation of the same program," said Paul Parker, director of the Drug Elimination Grant Program. "We've had a number of successes but more important, we've learned that we are on the right track. Now we want to get better at it."

The drug elimination program will continue at Columbia Villa/Tamarack development in North Portland; Iris Court, a 54-unit complex in North Portland; Hillsdale Terrace, a 60-unit de-

velopment in southwest Portland; and five HAP developments clustered in the Rockwood area of Gresham -- Alderwood (20 units), Fir Acres (30 units), Eastwood Court (30 units), Stark Manor (30 units), Townhouse Terrace (32 Units).

Prevention/Intervention Services: One successful component has been the Youth Empowerment Fund, which supports youth HAP residents in developing special projects and recreational activities. At Iris Court, children planted flowers in large wooden barrels to beautify the front doors of apartments at the complex. Children conducted a clean-up campaign at Stark Manor and were rewarded with a field trip to Oaks Park. "Around 25 kids got to go to the park," said Vicky Harland, Stark Manor resident. "We also hosted a picnic to get to know our neighbors better. It went well. Two police officers came and talked to everyone. I wish we could do even more out here. In order to get things done, we all have to get involved."

Also provided in the Drug Elimination program are intervention and outreach services to at-risk families. "Michelle Winning (Central City Concern family outreach specialist) is really helpful. When drug or alcohol problems are referred to her, she's always right on hand. It's nice to know those services are here," said Lily Hunter, a resident at Hillsdale Terrace.

Other support services offer opportunities for resident involvement. "We love them," said Iris Court resident Linda Graves, speaking about Drug Elimination Program staff. "They get out here and talk with the people. Residents feel comfortable with them."

Public Safety:

The program's primary focus--public safety services--are coordinated through Safety Action Teams, made up of sheriff and police officers and community service officers who work directly with the residents, helping people learn ways to solve problems and prevent crimes in their neighborhoods.

Three police agencies cooperate with the Drug-Elimination grant Program; the Multnomah County Safety Action Team, the Portland Police Bureau and the Gresham Police Department.

"Once again, over half of the grant funding pays for public safety," said Parker. "That's a fair measure of how essential our law enforcement officers are, if we are going to be effective with the other support services."

Background
The drug elimination program was started at Columbia Villa in April 1989. Iris Court has been a special Community Policing Demonstration Project for the City of Portland since July 1990. The Rockwood developments have been served by a joint policing/public safety program (West Gresham and David Douglas Safety Action Teams) staffed by Multnomah County Sheriff's Department and the Gresham Police Department since October 1990. Hillsdale Terrace received additional policing from the Portland Police Bureau beginning July 1991. Central City Concern, a private, non-profit organization specializing in low-income housing and chemical dependency programs, started with Drug Elimination Grant Program in 1992.

For more information, call HAP Public Affairs Coordinator Joleen Colombo at 273-4521.

We are concerned that it will be impossible for us to provide ethical counseling, supervision, and administrative services under Measure 9. OCA dogma contradicts scientific research on human sexuality, (The American Psychiatric Association years ago removed homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, and under this constitutional amendment we will be unable to speak the truth without braking the law, and jeopardizing our jobs. We would be asked to consistently violate our profes-

sional ethics.
Measure 9 limits the free expression of ideas and if it becomes law it will create an atmosphere of fear, denial, and repression in which all of us will live. Please vote no on 9.

tom Barrett, MA, LPC, Deb Allison, MSW, Millie Sampson, MHS, Sally Simon, LCSW, Lynn Ashbridge, MSW, Elizabeth Goeke, M Ed, NCC, David Hanson, MS Maudie Cheney, MS, Jack Bowsky, LPC, LMDT, NCC, Kim Burgess, LCSW, Lee Silby, MSW, Sally Morkal, ACSW, Sharon Hval, MHS.

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THANK YOU FOR READING THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Letter to the Editor:

As mental health professionals we are each deeply concerned about the negative effects of Measure 9 on our clients, our colleagues our professions, and our State. We have already observed increased anxiety and stress among people who feel targeted by Measure 9 and the OCA. We believe that we will see more depression and suicide, especially among young people...if the community declares that their sexual orientation is "abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse."