

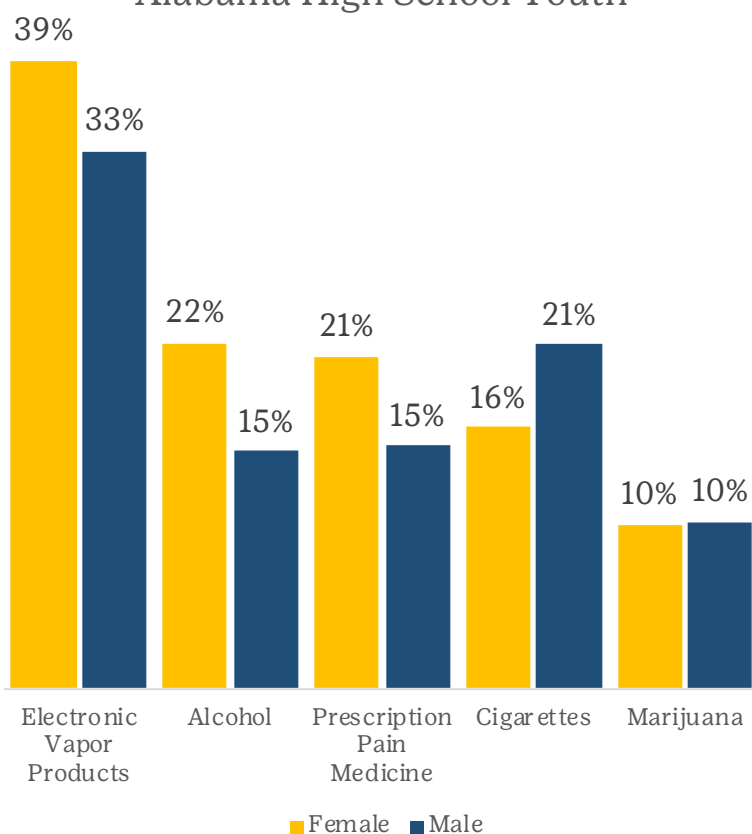


Substance Abuse Among Girls

Commissioned by the Girl Scout Councils Serving Alabama

More girls are engaging in substance abuse in high school than boys.

Substance Abuse among Alabama High School Youth



Substance abuse among high school youth decreased during the pandemic as quarantine limited access to drugs and alcohol. However, more high school girls report abusing substances like alcohol, tobacco products, and prescription pain medicine compared to boys:

- 40% of high school girls have tried electronic vaping products;
- 1 in 5 high school girls currently drink alcohol;
- 1 in 5 high school girls are abusing prescription pain medicine.

Studies show that substance abuse during adolescence is particularly dangerous as it interferes with brain development. Girls also face a greater risk of substance use disorders later in life.

The immediate threat to girls lies in the substances themselves: drug overdoses are on the rise, driven by the use of fentanyl in high-risk drugs.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, CDC, Alabama, 2021

Substance Abuse Prevention = Role Models

One of the most consistent findings in preventing substance abuse among youth is the role of social influences. These powerful factors can either promote the use of drugs and alcohol by positively portraying substance use or achieve the opposite. In Girl Scouts, girls learn to become responsible members of their community, take care of their bodies, and build positive relationships with role models who lift girls up.

60%
fewer high school girls are drinking alcohol compared to 10 years ago (from 35% to 22%).