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Rumours or Numbers?

Activity Sheet



Sometimes it can seem like “everyone is doing it,” and we might assume that most students are vaping, drinking, or using cannabis. But is that really true? The 2023 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) gives us real facts that tell a different story.

In this activity, you’ll explore what over 10,000 students in grades 7 to 12 across Ontario reported through this anonymous health survey.

Instructions

1. Read the true/false questions and choose the ones you want to use for the activity.
2. Find a good space inside or outside. Use masking tape, paper, chalk, or sticks to make a giant line on the ground with true on one side and false on the other. If you’re working at a table, you can draw the line on a whiteboard or sheet of paper.
3. Invite players to join a fun, respectful game about data on substance use among Ontario students. Then, explain the activity.
4. Read out each statement about rates of substance use. Ask players to move to the spot that shows whether they think the statement is true or false.
5. After each statement, and once players have chosen their answers, read the answer aloud. Invite players to share their reflections about what the data is saying versus students’ ideas. Listen respectfully to others.
6. At the end, have a short closing conversation. Share what you learned or found most surprising about the data.



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True or false statements

Statement	True	False
1. "Most Grade 8 students vaped in the past year."		
2. "About half of Grade 8 students used cannabis in the past year."		
3. "For Grade 8 students, drinking alcohol is more common than vaping."		
4. "Around one-third of Grade 7 students drank alcohol in the past year."		
5. "Since 2019, vaping has increased among students in Grades 7-8. "		
6. "In 2023, fewer than 1 in 20 students (Grades 7–12) smoked cigarettes in the past year."		
7. "Most secondary school students drink alcohol at least weekly."		
8. "Since legalization in 2018, most secondary school students have tried cannabis at least once in the past year."		
9. "Since the late 1990s, student alcohol and cigarette use in Ontario has mostly gone down."		
10. "Since 2019, nonmedical use of prescription pain medications—such as Tylenol #3, codeine, and OxyNeo—has increased among students."		
11. "From 1999 to 2023, the share of Ontario students in Grades 7, 9 and 11 who didn't use any drugs — including alcohol, nicotine, or cannabis—increased by 15%."		



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	Statement	True/False	Explanation
1.	"Most Grade 8 students vaped in the past year."	False	Only 5% of Grade 8 students reported past-year vaping.
2.	"About half of Grade 8 students used cannabis in the past year."	False	About 5.4% reported past-year cannabis use.
3.	"For Grade 8 students, drinking alcohol is more common than vaping."	True	Alcohol 14.6% vs. vaping 5.0% (past year).
4.	"Around one-third of Grade 7 students drank alcohol in the past year."	False	Grade 7 alcohol use was 6.9% (past year).
5.	"Since 2019, vaping has increased among students in Grades 7-8."	False	Rates of vaping have decreased since 2019.
6.	"In 2023, fewer than 1 in 20 students (Grades 7–12) smoked cigarettes in the past year."	True	Tobacco cigarettes 3.2% (past year).
7.	"Most secondary school students drink alcohol at least weekly."	False	Weekly drinking is uncommon across Grades 9–12 (roughly 2–11%, rising with grade).
8.	"Since legalization in 2018, most secondary school students have tried cannabis at least once in the past year."	False	Most students did not use cannabis at all in the past year; about 1 in 6 used cannabis (Grades 7–12, Ontario).
9.	"Since the late 1990s, student alcohol and cigarette use in Ontario has mostly gone down."	True	Long-term trend shows declines; alcohol 66.0% → 35.6%, cigarettes 28.4% → 3.2% (past year).
10.	"Since 2019, students' nonmedical use of prescription opioid pain relievers has significantly increased."	True	Nonmedical use increased from 11.0% in 2019 to 21.8% in 2023.
11.	"From 1999 to 2023, the share of Ontario students in Grades 7, 9 and 11 who used no drugs—including alcohol, nicotine, or cannabis—increased by 15%."	True	More students are choosing not to use any drugs: from about 27 out of 100 in 1999 to about 42 out of 100 in 2023.

Source: [CAMH, 2023 OSDUHS Drug Use Summary and Full Trend reports.](#)



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