



**MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
INNOVATION FOR TECHNOLOGY

**SMOKING, DRINKING & DRUG  
ABUSE AMONG SECONDARY  
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN  
MAURITIUS IN 2003**

**Final Report**

*October 2004*

**MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL**

*Address:*  
La Maison de Carné  
Royal Road  
Rose Hill  
Mauritius

Telephone: (230) 465 1235  
Fax: (230) 465 1239 e-  
mail: [mrc@intnet.mu](mailto:mrc@intnet.mu)  
Website: [www.mrc.org.mu](http://www.mrc.org.mu)

**This report is based on work supported by the Mauritius Research Council under award number MRC/RUN-0208. Any opinions, findings, recommendations and conclusions expressed herein are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the Council.**

# Smoking, drinking & drug use among secondary school students in Mauritius in 2003

**Project Manager CASR**

Professor M Joynathsing

**Asst. Research Fellow / Principal Author**

Nigel Richards

**Research Officer / Author**

Aveeraj Peedoly

Centre for Applied Social Research  
University of Mauritius  
October 2004

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgement</b>	I
<b>Summary</b>	I
<b>Introduction</b>	1
Background To The Study	2
Main Objectives	4
<b>Methodology</b>	5
1 Coverage	5
2 Sample Design	5
3 Sample Size	6
4 Fieldwork Procedures	6
5 Response Rates	7
6 Data Entry	7
7 Reliability of Pupils' Answers	7
<b>Demographic Data</b>	10
<b>Chapter 1 – Smoking</b>	13
1.1 Smoking Behaviour	13
1.2 Smoking Behaviour In Relation To Age, Sex & Educational Region	16
1.3 Cigarette Consumption	22
1.4 Dependence On Smoking	24
1.5 Attitudes Of The Family Towards Pupils Smoking	30
1.6 Where Respondents Obtain Their Cigarettes & Reasons For Smoking	32
1.7 Influences On Smoking Behaviour	35
<b>Chapter 2 - Drinking</b>	43
2.1 Introduction	43
2.2 Drinking Frequency	59
2.3 Drinking In the Previous Week	53
2.4 Usual Purchasing Point Of Alcohol	62
2.5 Influences On Drinking Behaviour	64

<b>Chapter 3 - Drugs</b>	67
3.1 Drugs Awareness	67
3.2 Drug Use	69
3.3 Availability of Drugs	79
<b>Chapter 4 - Attitudes To Substance Abuse</b>	84
4.1 Linkage Between Smoking, Drinking and Taking Drugs	84
4.2 Attitudes To Tobacco	89
4.3 Attitudes To Alcohol	93
4.4 Attitudes To Drug Use	97
4.5 Most Harmful Substance	101
4.6 Information On Substance Abuse	103
4.7 Substance Abuse & Behaviour At School	107
<b>Conclusion -</b>	113
<b>Charts</b>	
<b>Demographic Data</b>	
Chart 1 Percentage of Respondents	
From Each Educational Region	10
Chart 2 Home District of Respondents	11
Chart 3 Stated Religion of Respondents	12
<b>Chapter 1 – Smoking</b>	
Chart 1.1 Ever Smoked By Sex	16
Chart 1.2 Ever Smoked By Age Group	17
Chart 1.3 Ever Smoked By Educational District	18
Chart 1.4 Ever Smoked by Father’s Educational Group	18
Chart 1.5 How Difficult To Stop Smoking For One Day by	
Length of Time As Smoker	24
Chart 1.6 How Difficult To Stop Smoking For One Week by	
Length of Time As Smoker	25
Chart 1.7 How Difficult To Stop Smoking Completely by	
Length of Time As Smoker	26
Chart 1.8 Ever Tried To Give Up Smoking by	
Length of Time As Smoker	26
Chart 1.9 Would Like To Quit Smoking	27
Chart 1.10 Do Teachers At Your School Smoke	36
Chart 1.11 Ever Smoked (Major Religions)	36
Chart 1.12 Ever Smoked By Sex Type of School	37
Chart 1.13 Ever Smoked by Type of School & Sex of Respondent	38
Chart 1.14 Ever Smoked by District of Residence of Respondent	38

## **Chapter 2 - Drinking**

Chart 2.1	Currently Drink Alcohol	44
Chart 2.2	Preferred Alcoholic Drink by Sex	45
Chart 2.3	Currently Drink Alcohol by Educational Region	46
Chart 2.4	Currently Drink Alcohol By Father's Occupational Group	46
Chart 2.5	Days in Last 7 Days Drank Alcohol	53
Chart 2.6	Currently Drink Alcohol (Major Religions)	54
Chart 2.7	Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex of School	55
Chart 2.8	Currently Drink Alcohol by Type of School & Sex of Respondents	55
Chart 2.9	How Often Get Drunk by Age Group & Sex	56
Chart 2.10	Where Usually Buy Alcohol by Sex of Respondents Who Currently Drink Alcohol	62
Chart 2.11	Parents Drink Alcohol	64

## **Chapter 3 - Drugs**

Chart 3.1	Drugs Heard Of	67
Chart 3.2	Classmates of Close Friends Use Illicit Drugs by Sex of Respondent	70
Chart 3.3	Ever Used Drugs by Sex & Age Group	71
Chart 3.4	Ever Used Drugs by Sex of School	71
Chart 3.5	Ever Used Drugs by type of School & Sex of Respondent	72
Chart 3.6	Drug Users by Educational Region	73
Chart 3.7	Ever Used Drugs (Major Religions)	73
Chart 3.8	Ever Used Drugs by Father's Occupational Group	74
Chart 3.9	How Long Would Take To Buy Gandia	79
Chart 3.10	Is School Drug Free	80

## **Chapter 4 - Attitudes To Substance Abuse**

Chart 4.1	Drug Users Ever Smoked & Currently Drink Alcohol	84
Chart 4.2	Would Report Student Drug Use by School Type	85
Chart 4.3	Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol, Ever Used Drugs by School Type	85
Chart 4.4	Harmfulness of Tobacco Use by Smoking Behaviour	89
Chart 4.5	Harmfulness of Alcohol Use by Smoking Behaviour	93
Chart 4.6	Harmfulness of Drug Use by Drug Use of Respondents	97
Chart 4.7	Most Harmful Substance	101
Chart 4.8	Any Information on Smoking , Drinking, Drugs in Previous 12 Months (All Respondents)	103

Chart 4.9 Had Information in Previous 12 Months on Smoking Drinking or Drugs by Educational District	104
Chart 4.10 Truancy Prevalence Among Respondents That Have Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol, Ever Taken Drugs	108

## Tables

### Chapter 1 – Smoking

Table 1.1.1 Ever Smoked	15
Table 1.1.2 Current Smoking Habits	15
Table 1.1.3 Classmates Or Close Friends Smoke	15
Table 1.1.4 Ever Smoked by Smoking Behaviour of Classmates or Close Friends	15
Table 1.2.1 Ever Smoked by Sex	19
Table 1.2.2 Smoking Behaviour by Sex	19
Table 1.2.3 Ever Smoked by Age Group	19
Table 1.2.4 Current Smoking Behaviour by Age Group	20
Table 1.2.5 Ever Smoked by Educational Region	20
Table 1.2.6 Age At Which Started Smoking	21
Table 1.2.7 Ever Smoked by Father's Occupational Group	21
Table 1.3.1 Number of Cigarettes Smoked by Sex	23
Table 1.4.1 How Long Have Been Smoking At Least One Cigarette Per Week	28
Table 1.4.2 How Difficult to Quit Smoking For One Day by Length of Time As Smoker	28
Table 1.4.3 How Difficult to Quit Smoking for One Week by Length of Time As Smoker	28
Table 1.4.4 How Difficult To Quit Smoking Completely by Length of Time As Smoker	29
Table 1.4.5 Ever Tried to Quit Smoking by Length of Time As Smoker	29
Table 1.4.6 Would Like To Quit Smoking by Length of Time As Smoker	29
Table 1.5.1 Do Parents Know That Respondent Smokes by Age Group	31
Table 1.5.2 How Do Parents React to Respondent Smoking by Age Group	31
Table 1.6.1 Where Usually Get Cigarettes	33
Table 1.6.2 How Often Buys Cigarettes	33
Table 1.6.3 How Much Spends On Cigarettes Per Week	33
Table 1.6.4 Why Respondent Smokes	34

Table 1.6.5 Why Respondent Smokes (Other Reasons Given)	34
Table 1.7.1 Do Either Of Parents Smoke	39
Table 1.7.2 Which Parent Smokes	39
Table 1.7.3 Any Brothers Or Sisters Smoke	39
Table 1.7.4 Any Teachers At School Smoke	39
Table 1.7.5 Ever Smoked by Religion	40
Table 1.7.6 Ever Smoked by Type of School	40
Table 1.7.7 Ever Smoked by Sex of School	40
Table 1.7.8 Ever Smoked Mixed Sex School by Sex of Respondent	40
Table 1.7.9 Ever Smoked by District of Residence	41

## **Chapter 2 - Drinking**

Table 2.1.1 Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex	47
Table 2.1.2 Currently Drink Alcohol by Age Group	47
Table 2.1.3 Classmates or Close Friends Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex & Age Group	47
Table 2.1.4 Preferred Alcoholic Drink by Sex	48
Table 2.1.5 Currently Drink Alcohol by Educational Region	48
Table 2.1.6 Currently Drink Alcohol By Father's Occupational Group	48
Table 2.2.1 How Often Usually Drink Alcohol by Age Group	51
Table 2.2.2 Why Drink Alcohol by Sex	51
Table 2.2.3 Why Drink Alcohol (Other Reasons Given) by Sex	52
Table 2.3.1 When Last Drank Alcohol (Prior To Survey Date) by Sex	57
Table 2.3.2 When Last Drank Alcohol (Prior to Survey Date) by Age Group	58
Table 2.3.3 Which of Seven Days Prior To Study Day Had Drank Alcohol by Age Group	59
Table 2.3.4 Currently Drink Alcohol by Religion	59
Table 2.3.5 Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex Type of School	59
Table 2.3.6 Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex Type of School (Boy Respondents Only)	60
Table 2.3.7 Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex Type of School (Girl Respondents Only)	60
Table 2.3.8 Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex Type of School (Girl Respondents Only) by Age Group	60
Table 2.3.9 Currently Drink Alcohol by Sex Type of School (Girl Respondents Only) by Age Group	61
Table 2.3.10 How Often Get Drunk When Drink by Sex & Age Group	61



Table 2.4.1	Where Usually Buy Alcohol by Sex	63
Table 2.4.2	Where Usually Buy Alcohol by Age Group	63
Table 2.5.1	Do Parents Drink Alcohol	65
Table 2.5.2	If Parents Drink Alcohol Which Parents Drink by Sex	65
Table 2.5.3	Do Parents Know That Respondents Drink Alcohol by Sex	65
Table 2.5.4	Do Parents Know That Respondent Drinks Alcohol by Age Group	66
Table 2.5.5	How Do Parents Who Know That Respondent Drinks Alcohol React	66

### **Chapter 3 - Drugs**

Table 3.1.1	Heard of Drugs	68
Table 3.1.2	Drugs Heard Of	68
Table 3.1.3	Other Drugs Heard Of	68
Table 3.2.1	Ever Used Any Drugs	75
Table 3.2.2	Classmates Or Close Friends Ever Use Drugs	75
Table 3.2.3	Class or Close Friends Ever Use Drugs by Sex & Age Group	75
Table 3.2.4	Last Time Used Drugs Prior to Study Day	76
Table 3.2.5	Ever Used Any Drugs by Sex & Age Group	76
Table 3.2.6	Ever Used Drugs by Sex of School	76
Table 3.2.7	Ever Used Drugs by Sex of School (Boys Only)	77
Table 3.2.8	Ever Used Drugs by Sex of School (Girls Only)	77
Table 3.2.9	Ever Used Drugs by Educational Region	77
Table 3.2.10	Ever Used Drugs by Religion	78
Table 3.2.11	Ever Used Drugs by Father's Occupational Group	78
Table 3.3.1	Ever Been Offered Any Drugs	81
Table 3.3.2	Ever Been Offered Any Drugs by Sex & Age Group	81
Table 3.3.3	Ever Been Offered Any Drugs by Educational District	81
Table 3.3.4	How Long To Buy Gandia	81
Table 3.3.5	How Long to Buy Gandia (Drug Users)	82
Table 3.3.6	Is School Drug Free by Sex	82

### **Chapter 4 - Attitudes To Substance Abuse**

Table 4.1.1	Drug Users Ever Smoked	86
Table 4.1.2	Drug Users Currently Use Alcohol	86
Table 4.1.3	Drug Users – Age When First Used Drugs	86
Table 4.1.4	Drug Users – Age When First Drank Alcohol	86
Table 4.1.5	Drug Users – Age When First Smoked	87

Table 4.1.6	If Saw A Student Using Drugs Would Report Them by Sex	87
Table 4.1.7	If Saw A Student Using Drugs Would Report Them by Age Group	87
Table 4.1.8	Would Report Student Drug Use by School Type	88
Table 4.1.9	Ever Smoked Currently Drink Alcohol, Ever Used Drugs By School Type	88
Table 4.2.1	How Harmful to Health Is Tobacco	91
Table 4.2.2	How Harmful to Health Is Tobacco by Sex	91
Table 4.2.3	How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco by Respondents Who Ever Smoked	91
Table 4.2.4	How Harmful to Health Is Tobacco by Respondents Who Have Never Smoked	92
Table 4.2.5	How Likely Non Smoker Will Experiment With Smoking by Age Group	92
Table 4.3.1	How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol	95
Table 4.3.2	How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol by Sex	95
Table 4.3.3	How Harmful Is Alcohol Use (Current Alcohol Drinkers)	95
Table 4.3.4	How Harmful Is Alcohol Use (Non – Alcohol Drinkers)	96
Table 4.3.5	How Likely Will Drink Alcohol In the Future (Non – Drinkers)	96
Table 4.4.1	How Harmful to Health Are Drugs	99
Table 4.4.2	How Harmful To Health Are Drugs by Sex	99
Table 4.4.3	How Harmful to Health Are Drugs (Drug Users)	99
Table 4.4.4	How Harmful To Health Are Drugs (Non – Drug Users)	99
Table 4.4.5	How Likely To Experiment With Drug Use (Non – Drug Users)	100
Table 4.5.1	Most Harmful Substance	102
Table 4.6.1	Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months	105
Table 4.6.2	Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months by Sex	105
Table 4.6.3	Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months by Age Group	106
Table 4.6.4	Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months by Educational District	106
Table 4.7.1	Ever Truanted	109
Table 4.7.2	Ever Truanted by Sex	109

Table 4.7.3	Truancy Prevalence of Respondents Who Have Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol, Ever Taken Drugs	109
Table 4.7.4	Ever Been Excluded From School	110
Table 4.7.5	Ever Been excluded From School Smokers, Drinkers, Drug Users	110
Table 4.7.6	Type Of Exclusions From School Ever Smoked	110
Table 4.7.7	Exclusions From School Currently Drink Alcohol	110
Table 4.7.8	Exclusions From School Ever Used Drugs	111

**Appendix (i)** Sampling List Of Secondary Schools

**Appendix (ii)** Questionnaire

## Acknowledgement

This survey was conceived and designed by the Centre for Applied Social Research (CASR). The questionnaire was derived from a similar study carried out by the National Centre for Social Research in Scotland and from a review of other surveys from around the world.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Mauritius Research Council without which this survey would not have been possible. I would also like to thank my colleagues at CASR, Nigel Richards and Aveeraj Peedoly in particular and all those who carried out the field work and assisted at different stages of the survey.

Finally my thanks go to schools for their co-operation and, most important of all, to the pupils who took part in the survey.

Professor M Joynathsing  
Project Manager  
CASR

## Summary

In general the percentage of respondents admitting to current usage of tobacco, alcohol and drugs was fairly low, but as is made clear throughout the report, some degree of under-reporting was to be expected. Although 12% of respondents admitted to being current smokers some 71% of non-smokers said that although they themselves did not currently smoke, their classmates or close friends did.

Smoking, drinking and drug use appears to be more prevalent among boys than girls and it is also interesting to note that the rates of smoking, drinking and drug use amongst boys increases when they attend a mixed sex school. Given the age range of the respondents it is perhaps reasonable to assume that adolescent behaviour and development factors are at play. Tobacco products appeared easy to come by with many adolescent smokers buying their cigarettes from shops and supermarkets.

There was little evidence of binge drinking, and where respondents did admit to drinking alcohol it seemed to be at the level of social drinking with the majority of those that drink alcohol saying that they only do so a few times per year. However, around 13% of respondents who drink alcohol say that they do so at least once per week. The majority of the respondents that drink, and more so among the older age group, said that their parents were aware that they drank while only just over a third of smokers said that they thought their parents were aware that they smoked.

As with smoking, many of those that indulge in alcohol use said that they buy it from shops, even though, because of their age, the law prohibits them from doing so.

Some 7% of respondents admitted to having ever used drugs although, as with smoking and drinking, more respondents admitted to their friends using drugs. A major finding is that some 46% of respondents said that, in their opinion, the school they attended was not drug free. The educational regions where drug use was most prevalent were the Central and Port Louis regions. On the availability of drugs, 16% of all respondents said that they could buy Gandia within one day, should they so wish, while over half of the respondents who were drug users said that they could get hold of some Gandia within the day.

Almost a quarter of respondents who used drugs said that they would be able to buy some Gandia within the hour.

Three quarters of the respondents who used drugs said that they also drank alcohol while almost all of them had ever smoked.

Just over half of all respondents said that they would report a fellow student they saw using drugs, with girls and younger respondents being more likely than boys to do so.

With regard to respondents belonging to the major religions, smoking, drinking and drug use was more prevalent among Christians than Hindus or Muslims. As regards the social background of those involved in some form of substance abuse it was found that smokers, drinkers and drug takers were more likely to come from a background where the father was employed in a middle tier occupation than from either the upper or lower tiers.

More respondents see drugs as being harmful to health than alcohol and tobacco.

It is important that information on substance abuse is widely distributed, however just under half of all respondents said that some information on alcohol had been provided at school in the previous 12 months, while more had been given information on drug use and 62% had received some information on smoking. Information was more likely to be given to boys and those in the older age group and was least likely to be provided for those studying in the Southern Educational Region.

In conclusion, the main findings show that although smoking, drinking and drug taking are prevalent among secondary school students in Mauritius, the levels of substance abuse, particularly concerning drug use, are perhaps at a lower level than many commentators would have predicted. Smoking rates are at a level that match findings in other international studies and while some students, in particular those of the older age group, are drinking alcohol, there is no hard evidence of binge drinking.

Drug taking is an activity that always warrants concern; what is perhaps noteworthy is the ease with which many respondents said that they would be able to purchase Gandia should they so wish.



## Introduction

The Centre for Applied Social Research (CASR) was commissioned by the Mauritius Research Council to conduct a survey on smoking, drinking and illicit drug use among secondary school pupils in Mauritius.

Recently, there appears to have been growing concern about the ill-effects of smoking, drinking and illicit drug use on Mauritian youth. However, as yet, there is no official and reliable baseline data available on the real extent and nature of the problem.

In order to effectively target information campaigns and future service provision among secondary school students, it is necessary to gain insights into the current levels of substance abuse and to explore the causes of such behaviour.

The central aims of this survey are to measure the prevalence of smoking, drinking and drug use among young people attending secondary schools and to provide the basis for further monitoring of trends. Such information is vital for a coherent overall plan to help young people resist substance abuse. By doing so this will help them to achieve their full potential in society as well as to protect our communities from drug-related, anti-social and criminal behaviour.

On a similar level of importance, the findings of this survey will also lead to a better understanding of the effectiveness of current substance abuse prevention programmes in secondary schools. The success of a programme aimed at helping secondary school pupils to resist the usage of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs will depend on a better understanding of the complex linkages between the factors impacting on substance abuse in secondary schools.

It should also be noted that in several developed countries such as the U.K., similar surveys are carried out regularly as a time series exercise which acts as an official measure of progress towards targets for reducing smoking, drinking and drug use among young people. A similar project for Mauritius is no doubt of great national importance and will surely contribute in a very long way to improving our society and the future of our youth.



## Background To The Study

One of the worst aspects of the substance abuse problem is that it affects primarily those who are most vulnerable, such as young people. The transition from adolescence to young adulthood is a crucial period and is often the time when experimentation with tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs begins. These substances may have a strong appeal to young people who are beginning their struggle for independence and searching for their identity. Because of their innate curiosity and desire for new experiences, peer pressures, their resistance to authority, sometimes low self-esteem and problems in establishing positive interpersonal relationships, young people are particularly susceptible to the allure of such substances. Advertisers and suppliers are well aware of this and many products are actively targeted towards these age groups while accentuating the supposed glamour of such products.

Substance abuse can have a seriously destructive effect on the health and career opportunities of young people. Although in the local context there is a dearth of reliable data on such issues, the adverse effects of substance abuse on young people are well documented in other countries. For example, it has been noted elsewhere that young substance abusers have a lower desire for control, drive, eagerness, energy and competitiveness leading to low continuity of studies and higher rates of dropping out.<sup>1</sup> It has also been reported that sexual activity as well as physical and sexual violence are higher among adolescents consuming alcohol and illicit drugs<sup>2</sup>.

Unfortunately, it is often the case that teenagers do not see the link between their actions today and the possible consequences to-morrow. Young people also have a tendency to feel indestructible and immune to the problems that others may experience.

Using alcohol and tobacco at a young age may increase the risk of using other drugs later. Some teens will experiment and stop; some will continue to be occasional users without developing

---

<sup>1</sup> E.g. See Epstein and Tamir (1994) : 'Health-related behaviour of adolescents: change over time'. *Journal of adolescent health care*

<sup>2</sup> Strunin and Hingson (1992): 'Alcohol, Drugs and adolescent sexual behaviour', *International Journal of Addictions*.

significant problems; others will develop a dependency, and may move on to experimenting with more dangerous drugs that may cause significant harm to themselves and to others.

Adolescence is a time for trying new things and teenagers may use drugs for many reasons. These reasons can include curiosity, to alter perception, to reduce stress, to feel grown up or to fit in, etc. It is difficult to know which teens will experiment and stop and which will develop serious problems.

Studies have revealed that teenagers who smoke tobacco are three times more likely than non-smokers to use alcohol, eight times more likely to use marijuana and twenty two times more likely to use hard drugs.

Mauritius has not been spared from the epidemics of alcohol use, tobacco smoking and illicit drugs. With the breakdown of barriers of entry to female employment since the 1980s, an increasing number of women are now at work and many social commentators have interpreted this as a shift in responsibilities away from traditional parental care and supervision. In recent times, school children have been allowed greater freedom of movement, which often predisposes them towards experiments with substance abuse. Studies undertaken by CASR have revealed that children are often being left on their own between the school finishing time and the time when their parents return home from work.

A recent study of Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices of Substance Abuse Among Youth (12-24 yrs) in Mauritius<sup>3</sup>, found that 54.6% of youth had experimented with cigarette smoking while 40.9% were current smokers with 13.3% being heavy smokers. Some 61.5% had experimented with alcohol while 36.9% were current drinkers and 22.8% drank heavily. Moreover according to the same report, 18.2% of youth alleged having experimented with illicit drugs in their lifetime.

Although these disconcerting figures apply for the youth population of 12-24, it is not clear from the above report to what extent the same applies to secondary school children.

The present study has the merits of adopting a scientific approach, which is clearly focused on establishing the true level of

---

<sup>3</sup> Ameerbeg and Pottaya (2001), under the aegis of the Mauritius Institute of Health

consumption of the above substances among secondary school students. The findings will enable policy-makers to initiate educational programmes to regulate the lifestyle of students in order for them to fulfill their own expectations and ambitions and those of their parents, teachers and of society at large.

## Main Objectives

The main objectives of this study are to identify the consumption patterns and trends of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs among secondary school students in the Island of Mauritius. The study investigates possible influences on smoking, drinking and drug use while also covering other areas that may be useful to policy-makers and parents, such as the ways and means used in purchasing the substances under investigation.

## Methodology

### 1. Coverage

The survey geographically covered the island of Mauritius, the target population being all pupils of Form III to Form VI in private and state secondary schools with the exception of non-aided private schools.

### 2. Sample Design

The sample of respondents was selected in two stages. At the first stage 20 schools were selected from the list of all schools, provided to CASR by the Ministry of Education, after stratification by type of school (private or state) and whether schools were single sex or mixed and then by the number of pupils.

In order to ensure that all pupils, regardless of the size of their school, had equal chances of being selected, a probability proportional to size sampling procedure was adopted. This meant that the probability of the selection of each school was proportional to the number of pupils eligible for the survey in the school. Therefore, larger schools had a higher chance of selection.

The second stage was the selection of pupils from within those schools selected during the first stage. Approximately 40 students were selected in each of the 20 schools identified. The frame used for this stage was the school registers for Forms III – VI from each of the 20 schools. The selection of the 40 students per school was effected through using systematic sampling after sorting by Form, and, for mixed schools, by gender.

Clearly, at this stage, each pupil in larger schools had a relatively small chance of being selected. This counter-balanced the method of selecting schools to fulfill the criterion that, overall, every eligible pupil had an equal chance of participating in the survey. The 40 or so selected pupils per school were drawn from across all classes from Form III to Upper VI.

### 3. Sample size

The survey aimed to achieve a sample of 800 pupils. It was expected that all schools and all students would co-operate and agree to take part in the survey. However, since it may not have been possible to achieve the expected response rate the number of pupils per school was increased from 40 to 44 to allow for a non-response rate of 10%. The final sample size, after weighting, was 828.

### 4. Field Work Procedures.

The first visit to the selected schools was to draw the sample from the school registers. Those involved in the process were requested to maintain secrecy and confidentiality on the subject of the study. Arrangements were made with schools for a convenient time to conduct the survey, within the reference week. Where schools had reasons to believe that certain days presented difficulties, arrangements were made to conduct the study on a day convenient to them.

All pupils selected to take part in the survey were gathered together in a suitable location during one school period to complete a questionnaire under the supervision of two CASR researchers. A brief introduction was given explaining why the survey was being carried out and how the questionnaire should be filled. The question types and methods of completion were discussed and where it was expected that some respondents might need further explanation, these explanations were given. Pupils were not allowed to discuss the questions with each other or to look at other pupils' answers. Although exam-like conditions were sought, pupils could request and receive help if they did not understand questions. Although the questionnaire was in English, questions could be asked in whatever language the pupil felt most comfortable with. No teachers or other members of the school staff were present during the completion of questionnaires in order to encourage pupils to give honest answers.

Interviewers ensured that the respondents' answers remained completely confidential. No identification numbers or names were used on the questionnaires and upon completion the questionnaires were sealed and given over to the custody of

the senior researcher. No information was released to school staff.

The Questionnaires were serially numbered for administrative purposes only after completion of the fieldwork and prior to data input, by which method the serial numbers could not be linked to any individual respondents thereby maintaining confidentiality.

## 5. Response Rates

Some 19 schools fully participated in the survey out of the 20 selected, giving a very high response rate of 95%. The data collected from one school was not usable as a proportion of the original sample, particularly from the older age groups, absent on the reference day, meant that it was not possible to effect replacement while maintaining the integrity of the original sampling methodology.

To compensate for this the sample data has been appropriately weighted. Taking into account the weighting procedure the overall response rate was 89%.

## 6. Data Entry

After editing, the data from the questionnaires was entered into the master database using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 11.5)

## 7. Reliability of Pupils' Answers

To ensure honest reporting of the type of behaviour many pupils may wish to conceal from parents, or to exaggerate to their peers, the self-completion questionnaire was administered in school classrooms, under exam-like conditions, rather than in pupils' homes. Moreover, pupils were repeatedly assured both in the questionnaire and verbally that their answers would be completely confidential and would not reflect on them or their schools.

Biochemical evidence from surveys carried out in the U.K. has indicated that pupils generally give honest answers about their smoking behaviour.

While there is no specific evidence that the same applies in Mauritius it is assumed that the approach adopted for the collection of information would yield a higher level of honesty in reporting than a questionnaire administered in a face-to-face interview.

However, honest reporting is by no means the only factor affecting accuracy of responses. Recall levels of the consumption of cigarettes or alcohol is yet another factor that can affect the accuracy of responses, while survey estimates are subject to other types of error or bias including under-reporting or over-reporting of claimed behaviour.

## Notes

- Percentages may not necessarily add up to 100% because of rounding.
- Because of the conditions in which the questionnaires were filled there was no interviewer to ensure that all questions relevant to the respondent were completed. Even taking account of the various pathways of completion of the questionnaire, not all students answered all questions that they were required to, which accounts for the varying bases describing the same population. Where necessary, appropriate filters have been used to track certain groups of respondents during the analysis phase.



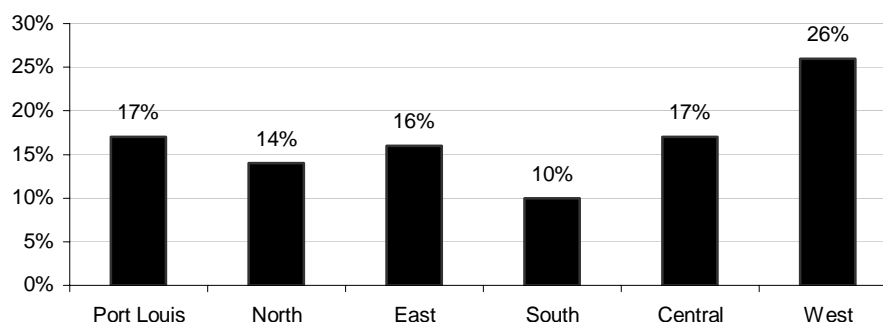
## Demographic Data

The final study population, after weighting, consisted of 828 secondary school students of whom 52% were male and 48% were female. Of these, 53% were aged between 16 and 18 years old and 47% were between 13 and 15 years old. Chart 1 shows the proportion of respondents from each educational region<sup>4</sup> and Chart 2 shows the proportion from each administrative district in which respondents actually lived.<sup>5</sup>

Sex	
Boy	52%
Girl	48%

Age Group	
13 – 15 years old (inclusive)	47%
16 – 18 years old (inclusive)	53%

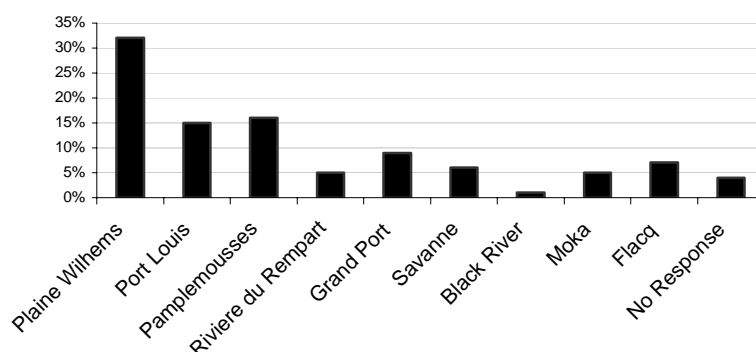
Chart 1  
Percentage Of Respondents From Each Educational Region



<sup>4</sup> The secondary schools in Mauritius are grouped into 6 educational regions. A complete list of secondary schools in the targeted population is in Appendix (i)

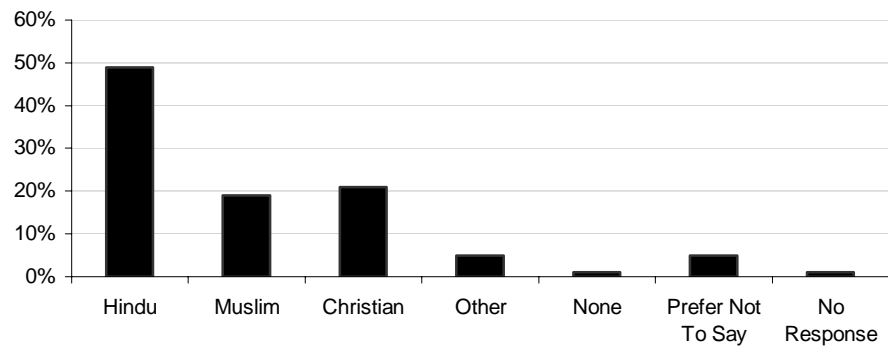
<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that 4% of respondents did not give a response to the question asking in which district they lived

Chart 2 Home District Of Respondents



For the purposes of this study, a high priority was placed on the confidential nature of the information provided by the respondent. For this reason, fewer questions were asked on biographical details. However it was felt that a key variable to analysis was either the ethnic group of the respondent or the religion, if any, that they followed. It has been identified in previous social surveys implemented in Mauritius that there is usually a close correlation between ethnicity and religion. Consequently, it was decided to include only one question on the religion of the respondent with the option of non-disclosure. This question was addressed towards the end of the questionnaire, rather than at the beginning, to maintain the confidence of the respondent. 49% of respondents were Hindu, 21% Christian and 19% Muslim. Those that preferred not to state a religion or gave no response to the question accounted for 6% of all respondents.

Chart 3 Stated Religion Of Respondents



## 1 – Smoking

### 1.1 – Smoking Behaviour

The first part of the smoking section of the self-completion questionnaire attempts to elicit the smoking behaviour of respondents and of their classmates and close friends. Following on from the biographical data questions in the questionnaire, Questions 6 to 32 ask about the smoking behaviour of the respondent and their perception of the smoking behaviour of their classmates and close friends. From Question 11 onwards smoking and non-smoking respondents follow different pathways of completion, coming together again at Question 31.

#### Smoking Behaviour According to the Questionnaire

The results from the three categories of smokers have been combined to provide a clearer picture of those who had *ever* smoked and those who had *never* smoked.<sup>1</sup> We find that 41% of all respondents had experimented with smoking at sometime, regardless of the number of cigarettes smoked and including former and current smokers, while 59% said that they have never smoked.

Some 12% of all respondents admitted to being current smokers. However, in a study of this type we can suspect that there may be some degree of under-reporting, particularly when respondents are being asked to reveal aspects of their behaviour that they might otherwise not normally wish to disclose. There may also be a tendency to under-report 'unhealthy' behaviour such as cigarette smoking.

Further questioning provides information about the perception of the respondent on the smoking habits of their peers as well as providing what is perhaps a more realistic picture of the levels of smoking in secondary schools.

---

<sup>1</sup> The categories for Question 6 were: 1 – I have never smoked, 2 – I only ever tried smoking once, 3 – I used to smoke sometimes but I never smoke a cigarette now and 4 – I smoke cigarettes now. It was the responses to categories 2, 3 and 4 that were combined to create the category of *Ever Smoked* while responses to category 1 became *Never Smoked*. (see appendix (ii))

What we find is that as many as 71% of respondents say that their classmates or close friends smoke.

Of course, everybody in the study, when not answering questions directly about their own behaviour, is a classmate or friend of at least some of the other respondents. Yet we have to recognize that there is a huge difference between the 12% of respondents who admit to being current smokers and the 71% who say that their classmates or close friends are current smokers.

Possible influences of classmates and friends who smoke on the smoking behaviour of respondents is evidenced by the fact that a greater proportion of respondents that ever smoked, 88%, than those that never smoked, 58%, say that their close friends and classmates smoke.

(Tables 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4)

## Tables

**Table 1.1.1 Ever Smoked**

	No.	%
Ever Smoked	338	41%
Never Smoked	490	59%
Group Total	828	100%

**Table 1.1.2 Current Smoking Habits**

		No.	%
Smoking Habits	Never Smoked	490	59%
	Only Ever Tried Smoking Once	168	20%
	Used To Smoke Sometimes But Never Smoke Now	72	9%
	Smoke Now	99	12%
Group Total		828	100%

**Table 1.1.3 Classmates Or Close Friends Smoke**

		No.	%
Any Classmates or Close Friends Smoke	Yes	580	71%
	No	140	17%
	Don't Know	99	12%
Group Total		819	100%

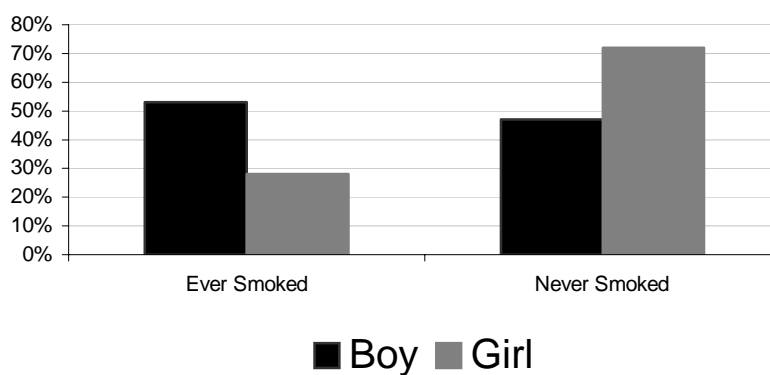
**Table 1.1 4 Ever Smoked By Smoking Behaviour Of Classmates Or Close Friends**

		Ever Smoked		Never Smoked		Group Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Any Classmates or Close Friends Smoke	Yes	300	88%	280	58%	580	71%
	No	13	4%	127	27%	140	17%
	Don't Know	27	8%	72	15%	99	12%
Group Total		340	100%	479	100%	819	100%

## 1.2 – Smoking Behaviour in Relation to Sex, Age, Educational Region & Occupation of Father

There are clear differences in the proportion of boys and girls who smoke cigarettes. Some 53% of all boy respondents have ever smoked compared to 29% of all girl respondents. 20% of boys and 4% of girls say that they currently smoke.

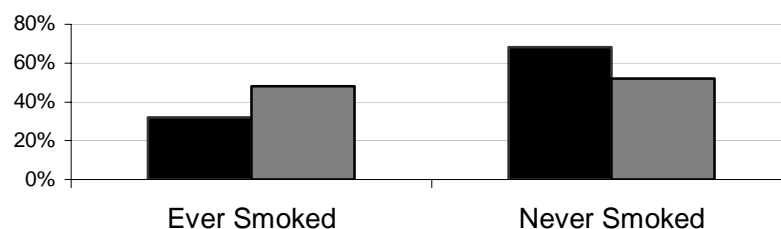
Chart 1.1 Ever Smoked By Sex



There is also a difference between the smoking habits across the age groups. Incidences of *ever* having smoked are higher for those respondents aged between 16 and 18 years old, (48%) than those aged between 13 – 15 years old (32%). More particularly, there are considerably more respondents who say that they currently smoke in the older age group of 16 – 18 year olds, 17%, than of those aged between 13 and 15 years, 6%.

(Tables 1.2.3, 1.2.4)

Chart 1.2 Ever Smoked by Age Group



■ 13 - 15 years old (incl) ■ 16 - 18 years old

There is also a noticeable difference in the prevalence of smoking in the different educational regions. Educational regions that incorporate parts of the major conurbation have higher percentages of respondents who have ever smoked. The Port-Louis educational region and the West educational region, which includes Lower Plaine Wilhems and Bambous, top the list with 48% and 47% of pupils in each region respectively who have ever smoked. Next comes the Central region, which includes Upper Plaine Wilhems, with 46% of respondents who have ever smoked. The prevalence of smoking is least pronounced in the other education regions, which are predominantly rural.

Of those who have ever smoked, some started smoking at quite a young age, with 10% saying that they had their first cigarette at 10 years of age or younger. However, it appears that it is the teenage years when the temptation to start smoking grows stronger. There is a steady climb in the percentages of respondents who started smoking between the ages of 9 years old to 13 years old, an age at which 25% of respondents who have ever smoked said that they had their first cigarette. The ages of 14, 15 and 16 years old are also ages where the percentages of young people starting smoking are fairly high. It then drops at ages of 17 and 18 years old.

(Table 1.2.6)

Where respondents were living with their parents the occupations of parents were asked for. These were then categorized according to the National Standard for International Classification of Occupations, and the occupation of the Father was used a variable for analysis.



For the purpose of this study these occupations have been summarized in three groups. In Chart 1.4 we see that respondents were more likely to have Ever Smoked where their Father was engaged in an occupation in the middle range of the classification, with the lowest percentage of smokers among those whose father had an occupation in the highest tier of occupations.

(Table 1.2.7)

Chart 1.3 Ever Smoked by Educational Region

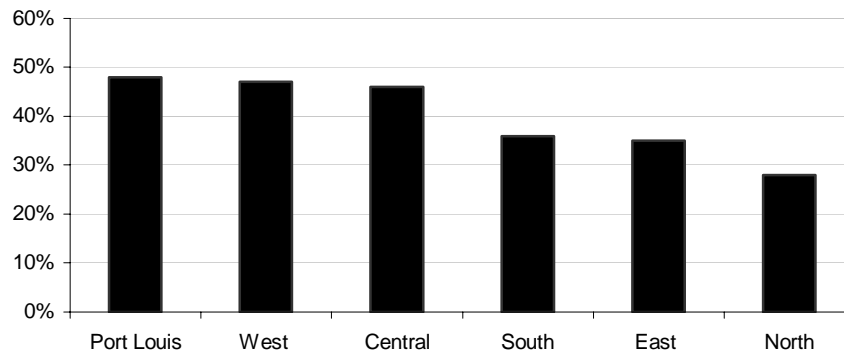
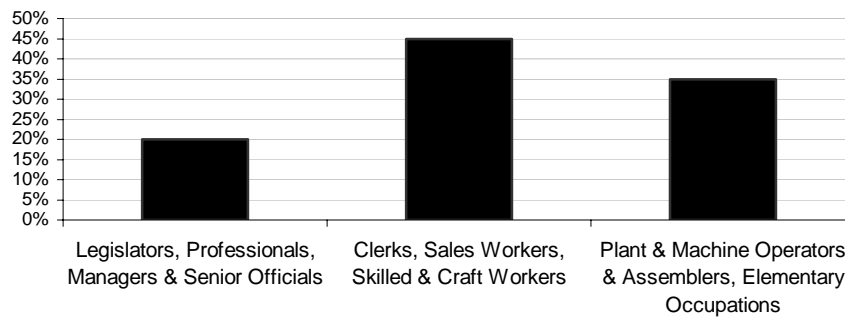


Chart 1.4 Ever Smoked  
by Father's Occupational Group



## Tables

**Table 1.2.1 Ever Smoked By Sex**

	Sex				Group Total	
	Boy		Girl		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Smoked	227	53%	111	28%	338	41%
Never Smoked	203	47%	287	72%	490	59%
Group Total	430	100%	398	100%	828	100%

**Table No. 1.2.2 Smoking Behaviour by Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Smoking Habits	Never Smoked	203	47%	287	72%	490	59%
	Only Ever Tried Smoking Once	98	23%	70	18%	168	20%
	Used To Smoke Sometimes But Never Smoke Now	45	10%	27	7%	72	9%
	Smoke Now	85	20%	14	4%	99	12%
Group Total		430	100%	398	100%	828	100%

**Table 1.2.3 Ever Smoked By Age Group**

	Age Group				Group Total	
	13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Smoked	127	32%	211	48%	338	41%
Never Smoked	265	68%	226	52%	490	59%
Group Total	392	100%	436	100%	828	100%

**Table 1.2.4 Current Smoking Behaviour By Age Group**

		Age Group			
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)	
		No.	%	No.	%
Smoking Habits	Never Smoked	265	68%	226	52%
	Only Ever Tried Smoking Once	74	19%	94	22%
	Used To Smoke Sometimes But Never Smoke Now	29	7%	43	10%
	Smoke Now	25	6%	74	17%
Group Total		392	100%	436	100%

**Table 1.2.5 Ever Smoked By Educational Region**

	Educational Region											
	Port Louis		North		East		South		Central		West	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Smoked	66	48%	32	28%	45	35%	30	36%	67	46%	103	47%
Never Smoked	73	52%	84	72%	84	65%	53	64%	77	54%	115	53%
Group Total	139	100%	116	100%	129	100%	83	100%	144	100%	218	100%

**Table 1.2.6 Age At Which Started Smoking**

		No.	%
Age When First Smoked	No Answer	180	53%
	7	2	1%
	8	7	2%
	9	2	1%
	10	5	1%
	11	14	4%
	12	19	6%
	13	35	10%
	14	26	8%
	15	20	6%
	16	19	6%
	17	7	2%
	18	3	1%
Group Total		338	100%

**Table 1.2.7 Ever Smoked By Father's Occupational Group (Where Stated)**

		Ever Smoked	
		No.	%
Father's Occupational Group	Legislators, Professionals, Managers and Senior Officials	54	20%
	Clerks, Sales Workers, Skilled and Craft Workers	121	45%
	Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers, Elementary Occupatio	95	35%

### 1.3 - Cigarette Consumption

Current smokers were asked a series of questions on their cigarette consumption patterns. It was at this point that the two pathways for completion of the questionnaire separated; current smokers completed Questions 11 to 30 while other respondents, including those who had ever smoked, moved forward to Question 31. Some respondents who had said that they did not currently smoke went on to give details of their current cigarette consumption but they have not been included in the analysis. Question 6 was used as a filter question and only those who stated that they currently smoked in response to this question were included in this part of the analysis. However, the fact that some respondents who had not admitted to currently smoking gave details on their current smoking habits reinforces the point made earlier of suspected under-reporting of smoking behaviour.

It is often suspected that many smokers consistently underestimate the number of cigarettes they smoke per day. In this instance, as we were dealing with secondary school students, it was also likely that cigarette consumption would to some extent depend upon the availability of disposable income, which, if scarce, may mean that the smoker has no choice but to seek out their smoking material in ways other than by purchasing it.

71% of current smokers smoke at least one cigarette per day. However, the reported patterns of consumption are very different for boys and girls with 78% of boys smoking at least 1 cigarette per day, compared to 38% of girl smokers. Girls are more inclined to be occasional smokers. 62% of girls only smoke cigarettes when they can get them, compared to 23% of boy smokers. However, this particular statement does not give a clear picture of how often they are able to get cigarettes and therefore the level of consumption of cigarettes gained in this way is not quantifiable.

Nor are we able to know how easy or difficult it is for them to acquire cigarettes or the means of acquisition they use. What is quantifiable is that 48% of boys and 38% of girls smoke between 1 and 3 cigarettes per day and 30% of boys smoke in excess of 4 cigarettes a day

(Table 1.3.1)

## Tables

**Table No. 1.3.1 Number of Cigarettes Smoked By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Number of Cigarettes Respondent Smokes	1 to 3 per day	36	48%	5	38%	41	46%
	4 or 5 per day	10	13%	0	0%	10	11%
	More than five per day	13	17%	0	0%	13	14%
	Only Smoke When Can Get Them	18	23%	8	62%	26	29%
Group Total		76	100%	13	100%	89	100%

## 1.4 - Dependence on Smoking

Current smokers were asked a series of questions intended to assess the extent to which they were dependent on smoking.

Tobacco dependency is one of the major issues connected with cigarette smoking. It is well known to science that the use of tobacco creates a dependency on the product and that many of the constituent elements of cigarettes are not only injurious to health but are addictive in nature.

With this in mind, the self-declared smokers in the study group were asked to respond to questions on how easy or difficult they think it would be to go without smoking for one day, then for a week and finally to give it up altogether.

Chart 1.5 How Difficult to Stop Smoking For One Day  
By Length Of Time As Smoker

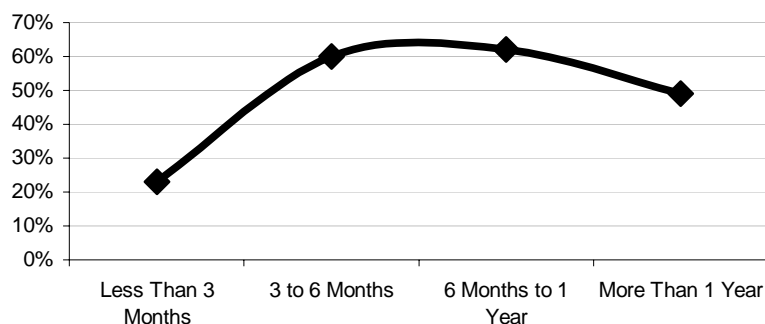


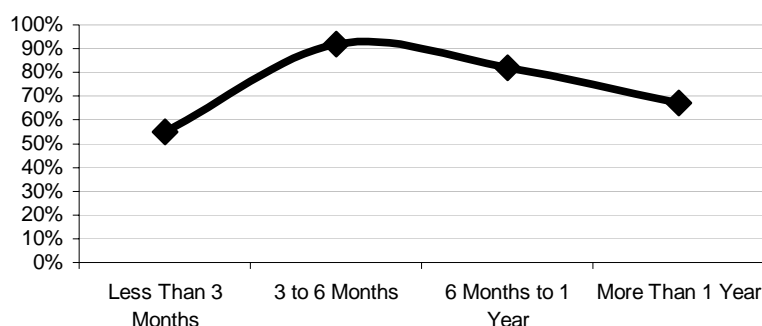
Chart 1.5 clearly shows that many smokers new to the habit believe that it will be fairly easy not to smoke for *one day*, but begin to see it as more difficult as their length of time as a smoker increases.

(Table 1.4.2)

Chart 1.6 shows that the percentage of respondents who would find it difficult to go without smoking for *one week* rises by the length of time that the respondent has been smoking, peaking at 92% of respondents who have been smoking for between 3 to 6 months. The trend then begins to fall for longer-term smokers, with 67% of smokers who have been smoking for more than one year saying that they would find it difficult to go without smoking for a week.

(Table 1.4.3)

Chart 1.6 How Difficult To Stop Smoking For One Week by Length  
Of Time As Smoker

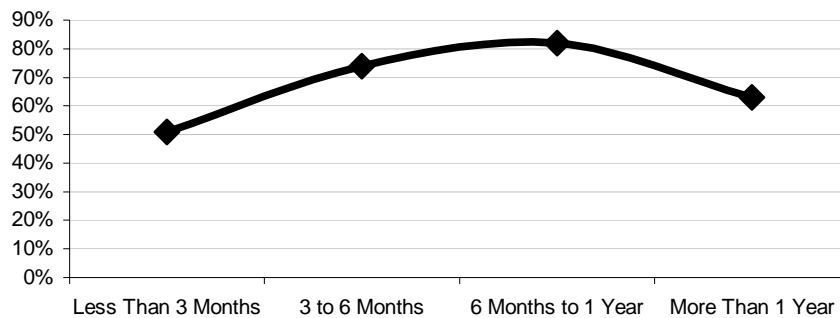


Respondents were asked whether they felt they would find it difficult to stop smoking altogether. In Chart 1.7 we see that 82% of smokers who have been smoking for between six months and one year say that it would be difficult for them to stop smoking. Of those who have been smoking for more than one year 63% think that it would be difficult to stop smoking.

(Table 1.4.4)



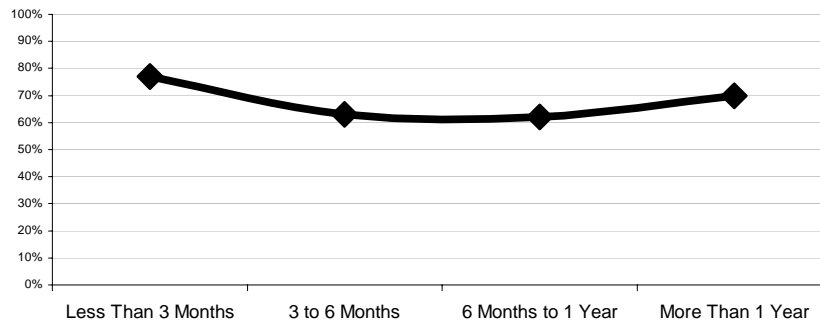
Chart 1.7 How Difficult To Stop Smoking Completely  
by Length of Time As Smoker



The smoker's desire to stop smoking was also investigated. Smokers were asked if they had ever tried to give up smoking. Chart 1. 8 shows that 70% of current smokers who have smoked for more than one year have at some point tried to stop smoking. A higher percentage of those who were relatively new to smoking, 77% who have been smoking for less than 3 months, have also previously unsuccessfully tried to stop smoking at some time. Overall, 69% of current smokers have at some time tried to stop smoking more than double those, 31%, who have not already tried,

(Table 1. 4. 5)

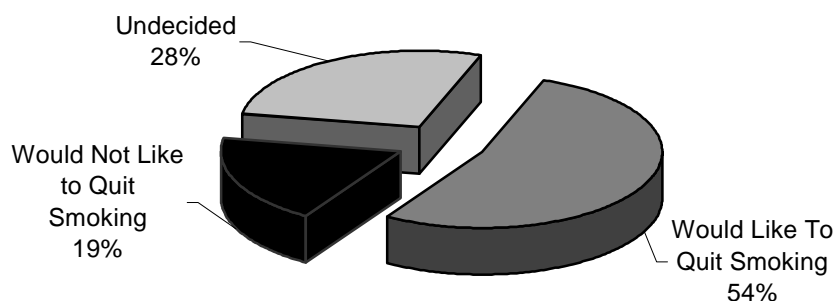
Chart 1.8 Ever Tried To Give Up Smoking  
by Length of Time As Smoker



41% of all those who have been smoking for less than 3 months and 63% of those who have smoked for between 3 and 6 months would like to quit. However the percentage of respondents who would like to give up smoking drops from 71% for those who have smoked for between 6 months and one year to 51% for those who have been smoking for more than a year, which shows that pupils who have been smoking regularly for more than a year are much more likely to feel dependent on cigarettes than those who have started smoking more recently. Overall, 54% of current smokers would like to quit and 28% are undecided leaving only 19% of current smokers who are certain that they do not want to quit.

(Table 1.4.6)

Chart 1.9 Would Like To Quit Smoking



## Tables

**Table 1.4.1 How Long Have Been Smoking At Least One Cigarette per Week**

		No.	%
How Long Been Smoking At Least 1 Cigarette Per Week	Less Than 3 Months	15	15%
	3 to 6 Months	12	12%
	6 Months to 1 Year	11	12%
	More Than 1 Year	57	60%
Group Total		95	100%

**Table 1.4.2 How Difficult To Quit Smoking For One Day by Length of Time As Smoker**

		How Long Been Smoking At Least 1 Cigarette Per Week								Group Total	
		Less Than 3 Months		3 to 6 Months		6 Months to 1 Year		More Than 1 Year		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
How Difficult Would Find Not Smoking For 1 Day	Very Difficult	0	0%	3	26%	2	18%	6	10%	11	11%
	Fairly Difficult	3	23%	4	34%	5	44%	22	39%	34	36%
	Fairly Easy	5	32%	4	31%	2	21%	15	27%	26	27%
	Very Easy	7	45%	1	9%	2	18%	14	25%	24	25%
Group Total		15	100%	12	100%	11	100%	57	100%	95	100%

**Table 1.4.3 How Difficult To Quit Smoking For One Week by Length of Time As Smoker**

		How Long Been Smoking At Least 1 Cigarette Per Week								Group Total	
		Less Than 3 Months		3 to 6 Months		6 Months to 1 Year		More Than 1 Year		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
How Difficult Would Find Not Smoking For 1 Week	Very Difficult	4	25%	5	43%	4	35%	28	50%	41	43%
	Fairly Difficult	4	30%	6	49%	5	47%	9	17%	25	26%
	Fairly Easy	5	32%	1	9%	1	9%	11	20%	18	19%
	Very Easy	2	14%	0	0%	1	9%	7	13%	10	11%
Group Total		15	100%	12	100%	11	100%	56	100%	94	100%

Smoking, Drinking And Illicit Drug Use  
Among Secondary School Students In Mauritius CASR 2003

**Table 1.4.4 How Difficult To Quit Smoking Completely by Length of Time As Smoker**

		How Long Been Smoking At Least 1 Cigarette Per Week								Group Total	
		Less Than 3 Months		3 to 6 Months		6 Months to 1 Year		More Than 1 Year		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
How Easy or Difficult Would Find Giving Up Smoking Completely	Very Difficult	3	24%	4	34%	3	26%	21	37%	31	33%
	Fairly Difficult	4	27%	5	40%	6	56%	15	26%	30	32%
	Fairly Easy	6	41%	3	26%	1	9%	14	24%	23	25%
	Very Easy	1	7%	0	0%	1	9%	7	13%	9	10%
Group Total		14	100%	12	100%	11	100%	57	100%	94	100%

**Table 1.4.5 Ever Tried To Quit Smoking by Length of Time As Smoker**

		How Long Been Smoking At Least 1 Cigarette Per Week								Group Total	
		Less Than 3 Months		3 to 6 Months		6 Months to 1 Year		More Than 1 Year		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Tried to Give Up Smoking	Yes	11	77%	7	63%	7	62%	40	70%	65	69%
	No	3	23%	4	37%	4	38%	17	30%	29	31%
Group Total		15	100%	12	100%	11	100%	57	100%	95	100%

**Table 1.4.6 Would Like To Quit Smoking by Length of Time As Smoker**

		How Long Been Smoking At Least 1 Cigarette Per Week								Group Total	
		Less Than 3 Months		3 to 6 Months		6 Months to 1 Year		More Than 1 Year		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Would Like To Give Up Smoking	Yes	6	41%	7	63%	8	71%	29	51%	51	54%
	No	4	30%	1	9%	1	12%	11	19%	18	19%
	Don't Know	4	30%	3	29%	2	18%	17	29%	26	28%
Group Total		15	100%	12	100%	11	100%	57	100%	95	100%

## 1.5 - Attitudes of the Family Towards Pupils' Smoking

All current smokers were asked how their parents felt about their smoking. Any smoker who replied that their parents did not know they smoked was then asked how they thought their parents *would feel* if they knew they smoked. The answers provide an idea of the perceived parental attitudes towards their children smoking.

Just over one third, 35%, of current smokers stated that their parents are aware of their smoking habits while a further 10% could not say whether their parents were aware or not. This leaves 56% of respondents who currently smoke stating that their parents are unaware of their smoking behaviour. For the younger age group, 13 to 15 year olds, the percentage stating that their parents are not aware that they smoke is as high as 68%, while it is 52% of those respondents aged 16 to 18 years old. It appears clear that for the majority of respondents smoking is a fairly clandestine activity.

Overall, parents who are aware of their offspring's smoking behaviour view it negatively. 27% of respondents say that their parents try to stop them smoking while 64% say that their parents try to persuade them to stop smoking. Only 3% of parents would do nothing.

In general, most respondents who smoke answered that their parents would either stop them smoking or would try to persuade them not to smoke.

(Tables 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3)

## Tables

**Table 1.5.1 Do Parents Know That Respondent Smokes By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Do Parents Know That Respondent Smokes	Yes	4	18%	29	40%	33	35%
	No	16	68%	37	52%	53	56%
	Don't Know	3	14%	6	8%	9	10%
Group Total		24	100%	72	100%	96	100%

**Table 1.5.2 How Do Parents React to Respondent Smoking By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
How Parents React To Respondent Smoking	Try To Stop Me	2	54%	7	23%	9	27%
	Try To Persuade Me Not To Smoke	1	23%	20	70%	21	64%
	Do Nothing	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%
	Don't Know	1	23%	1	3%	2	6%
Group Total		4	100%	29	100%	33	100%

## 1.6 - Where Respondents Obtain Their Cigarettes & Reasons For Smoking

Although there are laws in place that are meant to prevent the sale of cigarettes to minors it appears that many respondents who smoke have no difficulty in buying cigarettes.

Smokers were asked to choose from a list of potential sources of supply, with the possibility of naming more than one source if they got their cigarettes from different places or people.

90% of respondents who currently smoke include buying cigarettes from shops as one of their methods of getting their cigarettes. This percentage includes the 33% of respondents for whom buying from shops is their sole method of supply, notwithstanding laws prohibiting the sale of cigarettes to minors.

Although we have previously seen that many respondents stated that their cigarette consumption was relatively low, 67% buy cigarettes almost every day, while a further 20% buy them at least once or twice per week.

Cigarette smoking is relatively expensive and, with many respondents who smoke indicating that they both smoke and purchase cigarettes regularly, the amount of money spent on cigarettes is an important factor. 41% of current smokers spend less than Rs25 per week on cigarettes. However, 59% spend more than Rs26 per week. This percentage includes the 22% of current smokers who spend between Rs51 and Rs100 per week and the 13% of current smokers who spend more than Rs100 per week on cigarettes.

(Tables 1.6.1, 1. 6.2, 1. 6.3)

Asked to give a reason why they smoke, 23% of current smokers who answered this question say they smoke because their friends smoke, 15% because they see it as a grown up thing to do and 2% because other family members smoke, while 59% gave other reasons for smoking. Among those who gave other reasons for smoking 37% said that it was for leisure / relaxation or fun, 22% because they like it or want to and 11% because they think it is fashionable to smoke

(Tables 1. 6.4, 1. 6.5)

## Tables

**Table.1.6.1 Where Usually Get Cigarettes**

		No.	%
Where Usually Get Cigarettes From	From Shop	33	33%
	Friends or Relatives	7	7%
	Mother or Father	1	1%
	Shop / Friends or Relatives	48	48%
	Shop / Some Other Way	2	2%
	Friends or Relatives / Some Other Way	1	1%
	Shop / Friends or Relatives / Brother or Sister	1	1%
	from a shop / from friends & relatives / in some other way	6	6%
Group Total		99	100%

**Table1.6.2 How Often Buys Cigarettes**

		No.	%
How Often Buys Cigarettes	Almost Every Day	63	67%
	Once or Twice per Week	19	20%
	Two or Three Times per Month	4	5%
	About Once a Month	2	2%
	Only a Few Times per Year	6	6%
Group Total		95	100%

**Table1.6.3 How Much Spends On Cigarettes Per Week**

		No.	%
How Much Spends On Cigarettes per Week	Up To Rs25	38	41%
	Rs26 - Rs50	23	24%
	Rs51 - Rs100	20	22%
	More Than Rs100	12	13%
Group Total		93	100%



**Table 1.6.4 Why Respondent Smokes**

		No.	%
Why Smoke	Friends Smoke	22	23%
	Other Family Members Smoke	2	2%
	Grown Up Thing To Do	14	15%
	Other Reason	55	59%
Group Total		94	100%

**Table 1.6.5 Why Respondent Smokes (Other Reasons Given)**

		No.	%
Why Smoke Other	leisure /relaxation / fun	20	37%
	like it / want to	12	22%
	fashion	6	11%
	curiosity	2	4%
	stress	6	10%
	addicted	2	4%
	don't know	6	11%
	other	1	2%
Group Total		55	100%

## 1.7 – Influences On Smoking Behaviour

As well as the lure of advertising and the desire to be fashionable or to emulate friends and peers, there may well be other factors influencing young people to smoke. One of the more powerful of these influences could well be the effect on young people of seeing elders or role models smoking.

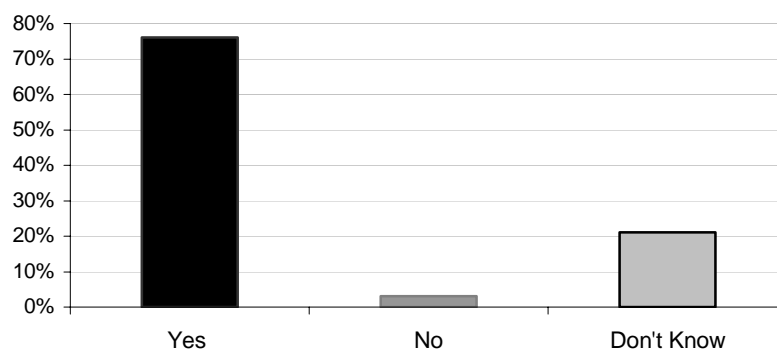
Questions 21 – 24 inquired into whether family members or teachers at the respondents' school smoke.

Asked if either of their parents smoke, 49% of current smokers stated that at least one of their parents smoke and 46% say that neither of their parents smoke. In instances where a parent smoked it was more likely to be the father, at 86%, with a further 7% saying both parents smoke. It was less likely that respondents who smoke also had brother or sisters who smoke with less than one quarter, 23%, saying that they have siblings who also smoke.

When asked whether any of the teachers at their school smoke, we see in Chart 1.10 that 76% of respondents to this question had teachers who smoke, 21% were unaware, but only 3% attended schools where according to them teachers do not smoke.

(Tables 1.7.1, 1.7.2, 1.7.3, 1.7.4)

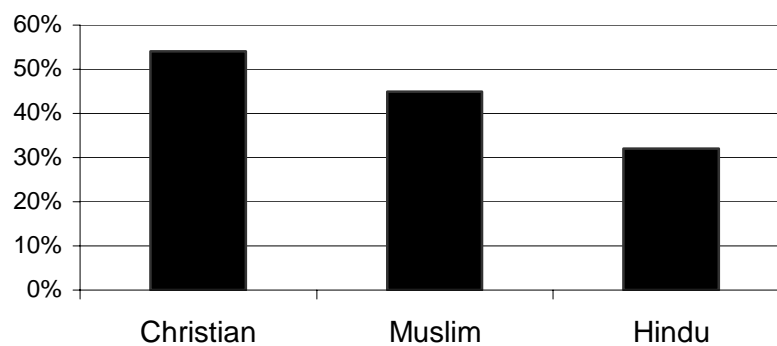
Chart 1.10 Do Teachers At Your School Smoke



Respondents were asked about their religious belonging, if any. A few preferred not to disclose their religion while of those who answered the question it emerged that 54% of Christians, 45% of Muslims and 32% of Hindus have ever smoked.

(Table 1.7.5)

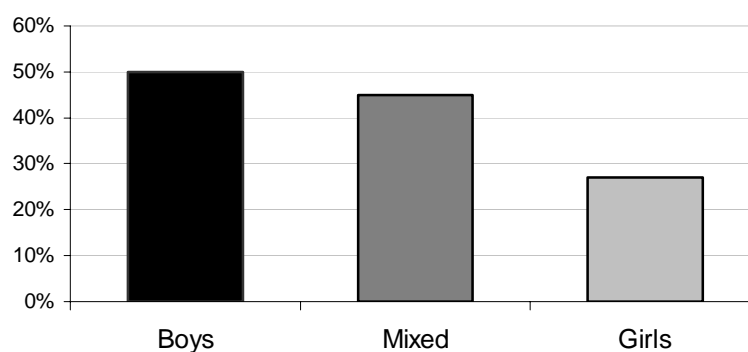
Chart 1.11 Ever Smoked (Major Religions)



The type of school the respondent attended appeared to have little influence on their decision to smoke; 39% of respondents from State secondary schools had ever smoked compared to 42% of those attending Private secondary schools. Chart 1.12 clearly illustrates that a greater proportion of boy respondents attending boys only schools had ever smoked, 50%, than girls attending girls only schools at 27%. For Mixed Sex schools the percentage of respondents who had ever smoked is at 45%. However, as we see in Chart 1.13, when broken down by sex we see that the number of boys in mixed schools who have ever smoked is higher than in boys only schools at 60% while for girls attending mixed schools the percentage of ever smokers stays the same as for girls only schools at 27%.

(Tables 1.7.6, 1.7.7, 1.7.8)

Chart 1.12 Ever Smoked By Sex of School



Pupils living in Port Louis and Plaine Wilhems are more likely to have ever smoked, at 59% and 46% respectively, than those living in other administrative districts, with Savanne returning the lowest percentage of ever smokers at 26%.

(Table 1.7.9)

Chart 1.13 Ever Smoked by Type Of School  
And Sex of Respondent

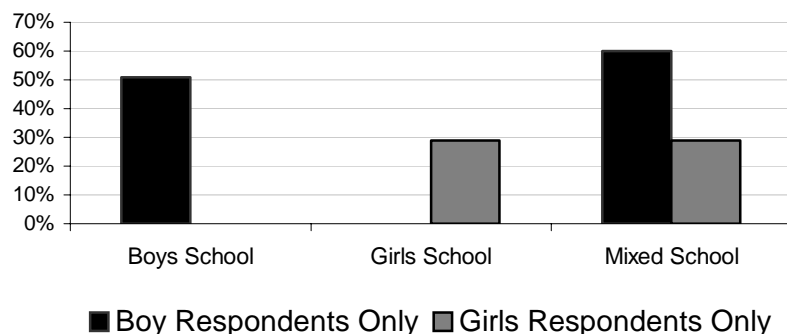
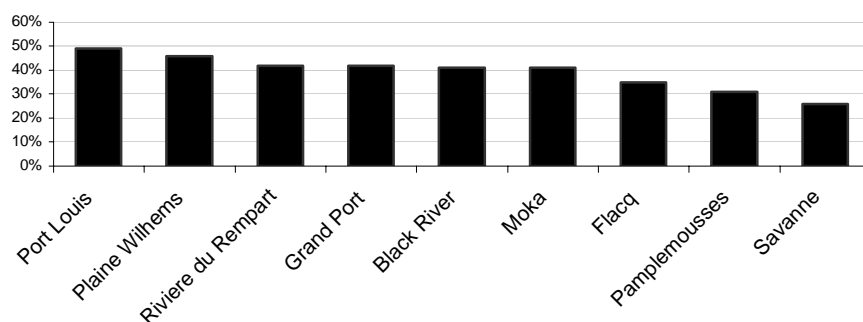


Chart 1.14 Ever Smoked  
by District of Residence of Respondent



## Tables

**Table 1.7.1 Do Either Of Parents Smoke**

		No.	%
Do Either of Parents Smoke	Yes	48	49%
	No	45	46%
	Not Applicable	3	3%
	No Response	2	2%
Group Total		99	100%

**Table 1.7.2 Which Parent Smokes**

		No.	%
Which Parents Smoke	Mother	3	7%
	Father	41	86%
	Both	3	7%
Group Total		48	100%

**Table 1.7.3 Any Brothers Or Sisters Smoke**

		No.	%
Any Brothers or Sisters Smoke	Yes	23	23%
	No	65	66%
	Don't Know	6	6%
	No Brothers or Sisters	5	5%
Group Total		99	100%

**Table 1.7.4 Any Teachers At School Smoke**

		No.	%
Teachers at School Smoke	Yes	75	76%
	No	3	3%
	Don't Know	20	21%
Group Total		99	100%

Smoking, Drinking And Illicit Drug Use  
Among Secondary School Students In Mauritius CASR 2003

**Table 1.7.5 Ever Smoked by Religion**

	Religion												Group Total	
	Hindu		Muslim		Christian		Other		None		Prefer Not To Say		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Smoked	129	32%	69	45%	92	54%	12	32%	4	57%	25	60%	333	41%
Never Smoked	274	68%	85	55%	80	46%	27	68%	3	43%	17	40%	485	59%
Group Total	404	100%	154	100	172	100	39	100	8	100	42	100%	818	100

**Table 1.7.6 Ever Smoked By Type Of School**

	State of Private			
	Private		State	
	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Smoked	227	42%	115	39%
Never Smoked	309	58%	177	61%
Group Total	536	100%	292	100%

**Table 1.7.7 Ever Smoked By Sex of School**

	Type of School						Group Total	
	Boys		Girls		Mixed		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Smoked	149	50%	77	27%	112	45%	338	41%
Never Smoked	150	50%	205	73%	135	55%	490	59%
Group Total	299	100%	282	100%	247	100%	828	100%

**Table 1.7.8 Ever Smoked Mixed Sex School By  
Sex Of Respondent**

	Type of School			
	Mixed			
	Sex			
	Boy		Girl	
	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Smoked	78	60%	34	29%
Never Smoked	53	40%	82	71%
Group Total	131	100%	116	100%

Smoking, Drinking And Illicit Drug Use  
Among Secondary School Students In Mauritius CASR 2003

**Table 1.7.9 Ever Smoked By District Of Residence**

	District Lives																	
	Plaine Wilhems		Port Louis		Pamplemousses		Riviere du Rempart		Grand Port		Savanne		Black River		Moka		Flacq	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Smoked	121	46%	62	50%	42	31%	17	42%	31	42%	12	26%	5	41%	16	41%	23	38%
Never Smoked	142	54%	61	50%	93	69%	24	58%	44	58%	36	74%	7	59%	23	59%	37	62%
Group Total	263	100%	123	100%	135	100%	42	100%	75	100%	48	100%	12	100%	39	100%	61	100%





## 2 – Drinking

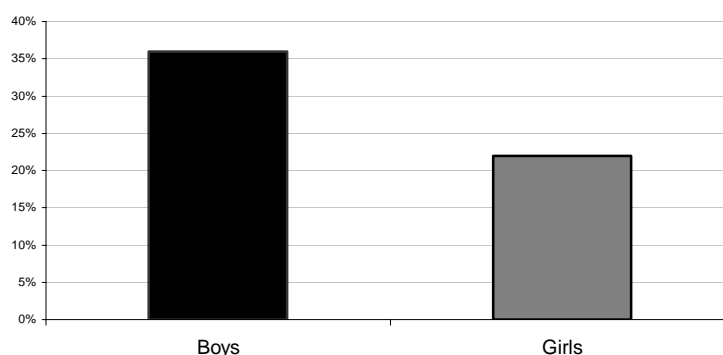
### 2.1 – Introduction

The section on drinking begins by asking pupils if they currently drink beer or any other alcoholic drinks. Those who drink alcohol are directed to more detailed questions while those who do not are directed to the next section of the questionnaire pertaining to drug use. The range of alcoholic drinks covered in the survey includes beer, wine, rum, whisky and gin etc. No attempt has been made to collect information on the alcoholic strength of the various drinks favoured or the amounts of alcohol consumed by pupils in any particular drinking session. Instead, the questionnaire seeks to capture information on the type of drink consumed and the frequency of consumption as well as parental attitudes towards their children's drinking habits.

Of all the respondents, 29% say that they currently drink alcohol. Chart 2.1 show that there is a difference in the consumption behaviour of boys and girls. Over one third of boys, 36%, currently drink alcohol, compared to less than one quarter, 22%, of girls. Not surprisingly a higher proportion of those in the older age group of 16 – 18 years old, 33%, currently drink alcohol, compared to 25% of those in the 13-15 age group.

(Tables 2.1.1, 2.1.2)

Chart 2.1 Currently Drink Alcohol



As with smoking behaviour, the follow-up question was to ascertain the respondents' perception of their classmates' and close friends' drinking behaviour.

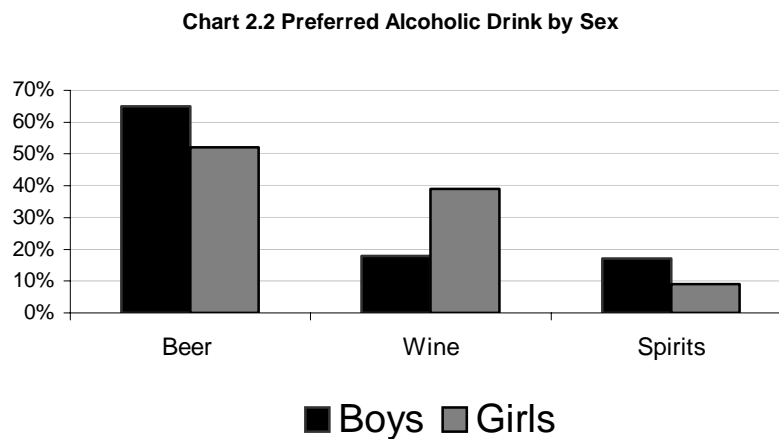
A total of 67% of all respondents state that their classmates or close friends currently drink alcohol. More boys, 77%, than girls, 57%, admit that their classmates or close friends drink alcohol. By age group, 67% of boys in the younger age group 13 – 15 years say that their peers drink compared to 85% of boys in the older age group of 16 – 18 years old. The corresponding percentages for girls are 52% and 62% respectively.

The reported drinking behaviour of boys and girls in the older age group indicate a very high prevalence of alcohol drinking among this age group. This is supported by the fact that only 5% of boys and 18% of girls in that age group say that their peers do not drink. Two points stand out; one that there is a recognizable increase in the number of respondents drinking alcohol as they get older, and the second is that, as with smoking behaviour, far more respondents state that their peers drink alcohol than admit to drinking alcohol themselves. This leaves us with the impression that there may be some uncertainty about the accuracy of responses, when it comes to respondents' personal behaviour, and under-reporting may be a real possibility.

(Table 2.1.3)

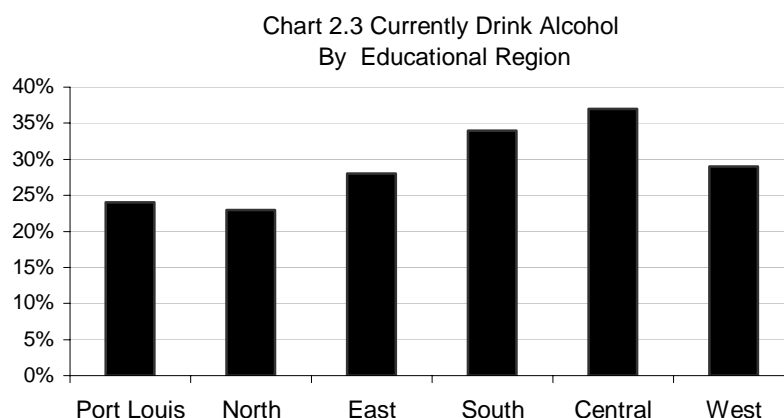
Consumption of alcohol among secondary school pupils is dominated by beer and wine. Asked about their preferred alcoholic drink, 60% of all respondents who currently drink alcohol prefer Beer, with 25% choosing Wine. Spirits are the favoured drink of just 14% of respondents. As Chart 2.2 shows, Girls are more likely to prefer wine, at 39%, while boys are more likely to prefer beer at 65%.

(Table 2.1.4)



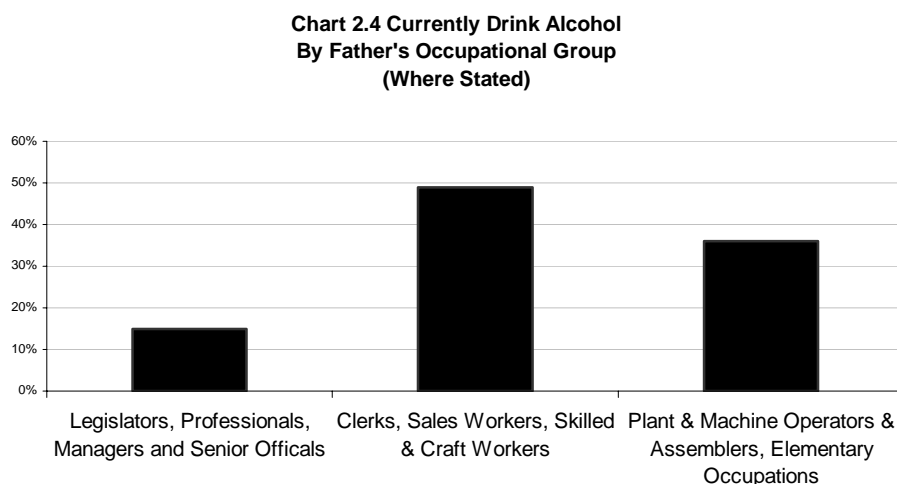
Unlike smoking behaviour, which was more prevalent in the urban districts, Chart 2.3 shows that there is a higher percentage of pupils from the Southern Education region, whose catchment area includes Rose-Belle, Mahebourg, Saint Aubin, Souillac etc., and the Central region which includes Curepipe and Phoenix who admit to drinking alcohol, while both the Eastern and Western Educational Regions have more than a quarter of respondents who say that they drink. The regions of Port Louis and the North have slightly less pupils who drink

(Table 2.1.5)



We see in Chart 2.4 that respondents whose father's worked in occupations in the middle tier of the occupations categories, 49%, were more likely to drink alcohol than other respondents, a finding that is similar to that of smokers.

(Table 2.1.6)



## Tables

**Table 2.1.1 Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	153	36%	87	22%	240	29%
	No	273	64%	307	78%	580	71%
Group Total		426	100%	394	100%	820	100%

**Table 2.1.2 Currently Drink Alcohol By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	98	25%	142	33%	240	29%
	No	291	75%	289	67%	580	71%
Group Total		388	100%	431	100%	820	100%

**Table 2.1.3 Classmates Or Close Friends Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex & Age Group**

		Columns											
		Sex											
		Boy						Girl					
		Age Group				All Boys		Age Group				All Girls	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%	13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%			No.	%	No.	%		
Class Mates or Close Friends Drink Alcohol	Yes	130	67%	199	85%	329	77%	99	52%	123	62%	222	57%
	No	17	9%	12	5%	29	7%	38	20%	36	18%	74	19%
	Don't Know	48	25%	23	10%	71	17%	53	28%	39	20%	92	24%
Group Total		195	100%	234	100%	429	100%	190	100%	198	100%	388	100%

**Table 2.1.4 Preferred Alcoholic Drink By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Preferred Alcoholic Drink	Beer	91	65%	41	52%	132	60%
	Wine	25	18%	31	39%	56	25%
	Spirits	24	17%	7	9%	31	14%
Group Total		140	100%	79	100%	219	100%

**Table 2.1.5 Currently Drink Alcohol By Educational Region**

		Educational Region											
		Port Louis		North		East		South		Central		West	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	33	24%	27	23%	36	28%	27	34%	53	37%	64	29%
	No	104	76%	88	77%	92	72%	53	66%	90	63%	153	71%
Group Total		138	100%	115	100%	128	100%	80	100%	142	100%	217	100%

**Table 2.1.6 Currently Drink Alcohol By Father's Occupational Group  
(Where Stated)**

Father's Occupational Group	Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	
	Yes	
	No.	%
Legislators, Professionals, Managers and Senior Officials	28	15%
Clerks, Sales Workers, Skilled and Craft Workers	96	49%
Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers, Elementary Occupation	69	36%

## 2.2 - Drinking Frequency

All pupils who said that they currently drink beer or other alcoholic drinks were asked how often do they drink, why they drink, when they last drank and where they usually buy alcohol.

In contemporary Mauritian society many people, including young people, drink minor amounts of alcohol on social occasions, which may be infrequent in number. The general social acceptance of alcohol drinking means that it may only be seen as a problem when it is having an adverse affect on the drinker's behaviour. What is important is to establish the frequency of drinking, the type of alcohol that the respondents drink, and for what reason. "Binge Drinking", when young people may drink large amounts of alcohol specifically to get drunk is one of the main areas of concern of those that are monitoring the drinking habits of both young and older people. The type of drink preferred, the frequency of drinking and the reasons for drinking alcohol can all help to identify if this is occurring. The survey reveals that 14% of all respondents who drink do so at least once a week while 69% are occasional drinkers who only drink a few times a year, while a further 10% drink about once a month. There is little difference between age groups.

The conclusion to be drawn is that there is very little evidence of widespread alcohol abuse among respondents from both age groups.

Although the majority of respondents who drink say that they drink alcohol only a few times per year, it is important to explore the reasons for drinking.

No single reason is given as to why some secondary school pupils drink. What we find is that 13% of respondents who drink say that they drink alcohol because their friends do. More boy respondents, 16%, than girl respondents, 9%, say that this is the reason why they drink. Some 14% of both boys and girls who drink say that they drink because other members of their family drink. More boys than girls, 17% compared to 7%, say that they drink because they believe it to be "a grown up thing to do".

Various other reasons for drinking are cited by 52% of boy and 70%, of girl drinkers. Of those who cite other reasons, 37% of respondents drink because it is "fun", they "like it" or, simply, because they "want to drink". Another 17% are social drinkers who reinforce the point that they only drink "on special occasions" or for "celebrations".



A further 10% of respondents drink “out of curiosity”, although it is not easy to determine when curiosity turns into a confirmed fondness for alcohol.

Girl respondents, 14%, are more likely to drink out of curiosity than boy respondents at 7%. 9% of respondents who drink alcohol do so to alter their mood; that is for alcohol usage to help them when dancing or when going out to parties etc.

(Tables 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3)

## Tables

**Table 2.2.1 How Often Usually Drink Alcohol By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
How Often Usually Drink Alcohol	Almost Every Day	3	4%	2	1%	5	2%
	About Twice per Week	2	2%	8	6%	10	5%
	About Once per Week	5	6%	11	8%	16	7%
	About Once per Fortnight	6	7%	10	7%	17	7%
	About Once per Month	8	9%	16	11%	24	10%
	Only A Few Times Per Year	67	73%	91	66%	158	69%
Group Total		92	100%	138	100%	230	100%

**Table 2..2. 2 Why Drink Alcohol By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Why Drink Alcohol	Friends Drink Alcohol	23	16%	7	9%	30	13%
	Members of Family Drink Alcohol	20	14%	11	14%	31	14%
	Grown Up Thing To Do	25	17%	6	7%	31	14%
	Other Reason	74	52%	57	70%	131	59%
Group Total		142	100%	81	100%	223	100%

**Table 2.2. 3 Why Drink Alcohol ( Other Reasons Given) By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Why Drink Alcohol Other	Fun / Like It / Want To	28	36%	22	38%	50	37%
	For Health	4	6%	1	2%	5	4%
	Addicted	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
	Stress / Tiredness / Loneliness / Emotional Reasons	9	11%	6	10%	15	11%
	Celebrations Only	13	16%	11	19%	24	17%
	Fahion / Influence of Other People	6	8%	5	9%	11	8%
	Curiosity	5	7%	8	14%	13	10%
	To Alter Mood	9	11%	4	7%	13	9%
	Don't Know	3	4%	1	2%	4	3%
Group Total		78	100%	58	100%	136	100%

## 2.3 – Drinking in the Previous Week

The reported infrequency of drinking alcohol by many respondents who drink is supported by the fact that 48% of all respondents who drink say that they last had an alcoholic drink more than one month ago<sup>1</sup>, with 25% saying that it is more than 6 months since they have had a drink. The percentage of girl respondents saying that it is longer than 6 months since they drank is almost three times that of boys at 43% and 15% respectively. On the other hand, 30% of all respondents who say that they drink alcohol had drunk an alcoholic drink at some time during the 7 days preceding the filling of the survey questionnaire.

(Tables 2.2.1, 2.3.3)

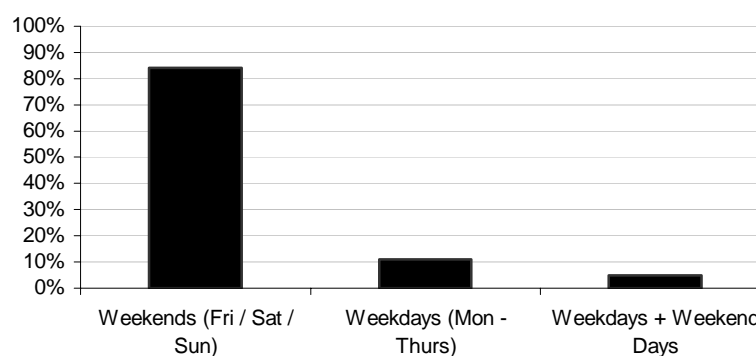
By Age Group, respondents from the younger age group are more likely to have reported not having had an alcoholic drink for 6 months or more. Over one third, 34%, of respondents aged 13 – 15 years old who drink alcohol say that it is this long since they last had an alcoholic drink, compared to less than a quarter of respondents, 20%, aged 16 – 18 years old.

(Tables 2.3.1, 2.3.2)

Chart 2.5 shows that where respondents who drink had had an alcoholic drink in the seven days prior to the study day, the majority, 84%, had drunk at the weekend. However, some respondents, 18% of the older age group and 13% of the younger, indicate that they had drunk on either weekdays, weekends or a combination of both, in the week prior to the study day.

(Table 2.3.3)

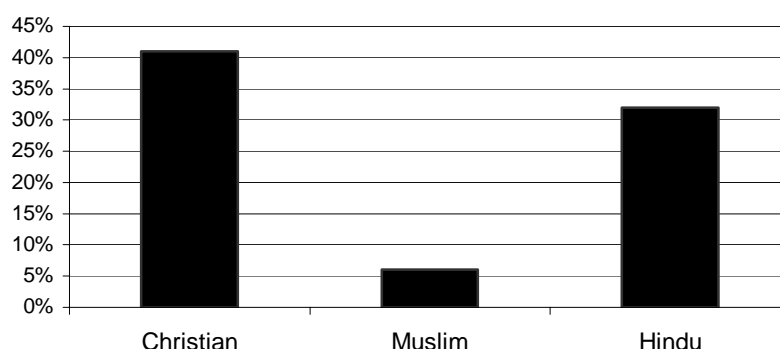
Chart 2.5 Days In Last 7 Days Drank Alcohol



As we see in Chart 2.6, concentrating on respondents who belong to the major religions, 41% of Christians, 32% of Hindus and 6% of Muslim respondents currently drink alcohol.

(Table 2.3.4)

Chart 2.6 Currently Drink Alcohol (Major Religions)



Those respondents attending Mixed secondary schools are also more likely to currently drink alcohol, 37%, than those from Boys Only schools, 30%, and Girls only schools, 22%. (Chart 2.6)

At first sight this may suggest that attending a Mixed Sex school encourages more pupils to drink, but a closer look at the results is more revealing. Chart 2.7 shows that the percentage of boys who drink alcohol in Mixed schools, 48%, is far higher than those who attend Boys only schools, at 30%. However, for girls the percentage remains fairly constant whatever type of school they attend. Perhaps one of the conclusions to be drawn is that boys attending mixed schools drink alcohol to impress the girls. This pattern is similar to the smoking behaviour of boys attending mixed schools whereas for girls the percentage of those smoking remains constant regardless of the type of school they attend.

---

<sup>1</sup> One month prior to the day of the completion of the study questionnaire

In Mixed schools the percentage of girls in the older age group who currently drink, 21%, is actually less than the 25% in the younger age group. However, for boys attending Mixed schools the percentage of older respondents aged 16 – 18 years old who drink is three times the percentage of respondents in the younger age group.

(Tables 2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.3.7, 2.3.8, 2.3.9)

Chart 2.7 Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex of School

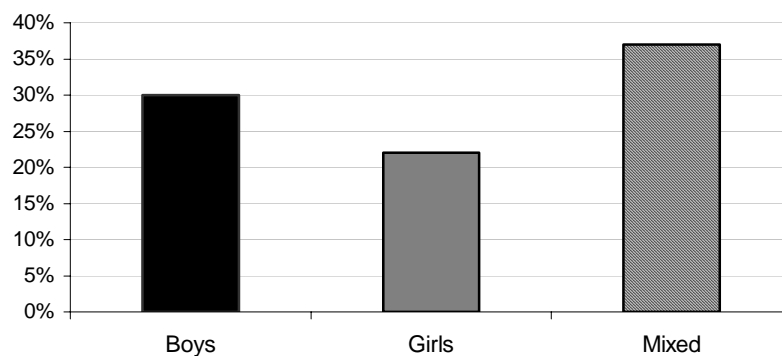
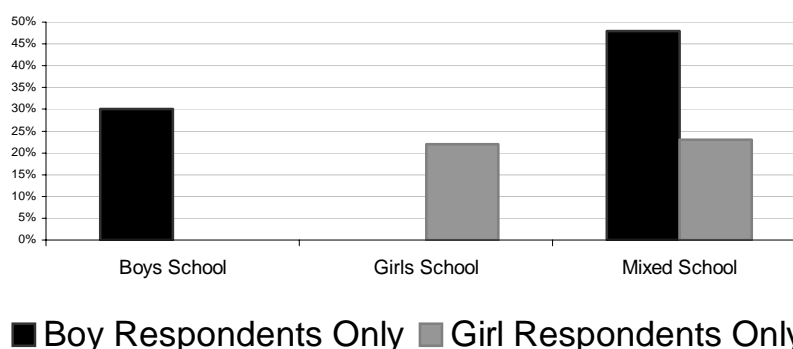


Chart 2.8 Currently Drink Alcohol  
By Type of School and Sex of Respondents



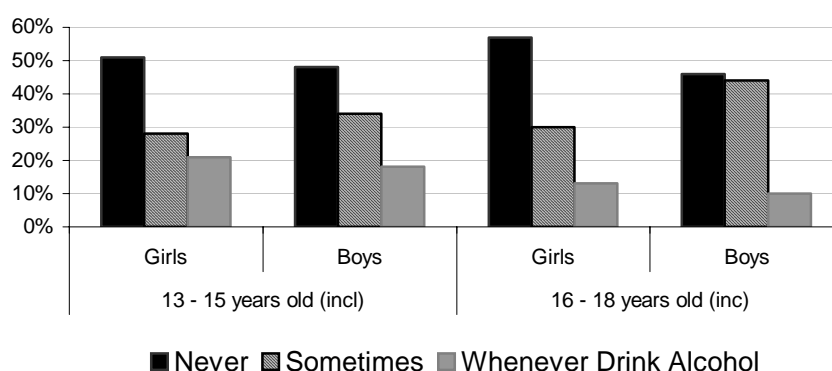
■ Boy Respondents Only ■ Girl Respondents Only

As one of the main effects of drinking alcohol is intoxication the respondents were asked how often they get drunk. However, no definition of “being drunk” was given by the research team leaving respondents to interpret the question in the way that they wished. In response, more girls say that they never get drunk, 54% than boys, 47%. Some 29% of girls who drink say that they get drunk sometimes, compared to 40% of boys. However, slightly more girls, 16%, than boys, 13%, say that they get drunk every time they drink alcohol.

Getting drunk whenever one drinks is more prevalent among the younger respondents. In Chart 2.9 we see that 21% of girl drinkers in the younger age group of 13 to 15 years old get drunk every time they drink alcohol compared to 13% in the older 16 to 18 years old age group. Corresponding rates for boys are 18% of younger boys and 10% of older boys who drink.

(Table 2.3.10)

**Chart 2.9 How Often Get Drunk By Age Group & Sex**



## Tables

**Table 2.3.1 When Last Drank Alcohol (Prior To Survey Day)**

		Sex				Group	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
When Drunk Alcohol (prior to survey date)	Today	1	1%	0	0%	1	0%
	Yesterday	12	8%	5	6%	17	7%
	Some Other Time During The Last 7	42	29%	13	15%	55	23%
	1 week But Less Weeks	14	10%	7	8%	21	9%
	2 Weeks But Less 4 Weeks	20	14%	6	7%	26	11%
	1 Month But Less 6 Months	35	24%	19	22%	54	23%
	6 Months Ago or More	22	15%	37	43%	59	25%
Group Total		147	100%	87	100%	234	100%



**Table 2.3.2 When Last Drank Alcohol (Prior To Survey Day) By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
When Last Drunk Alcohol (prior to survey date)	Today	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
	Yesterday	8	8%	10	7%	17	7%
	Some Other Time During The Last 7 Days	20	21%	35	25%	55	23%
	1 week But Less Than 2 Weeks Ago	7	8%	14	10%	21	9%
	2 Weeks But Less Than 4 Weeks Ago	10	10%	16	12%	26	11%
	1 Month But Less Than 6 Months Ago	18	19%	36	26%	54	23%
	6 Months Ago or More	32	34%	27	20%	59	25%
Group Total		96	100%	138	100%	234	100%

**Table 2.3.3 Which of 7 Days Prior To Study Day Had Drank Alcohol By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Days of Week Drank Alcohol in Last 7 Days	Weekends (Fri / Sat / Sun)	55	87%	85	82%	140	84%
	Weekdays (Mon - Thurs)	4	6%	14	14%	18	11%
	Weekdays + Weekend Days	4	7%	4	4%	8	5%
Group Total		64	100%	103	100%	166	100%

**Table 2.3.4 Currently Drink Alcohol by Religion**

		Religion												Group Total	
		Hindu		Muslim		Christian		Other		None		Prefer Not To Say		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	126	32%	9	6%	71	41%	9	22%	4	57%	18	42%	237	29%
	No	274	68%	143	94%	100	59%	30	78%	3	43%	24	58%	575	71%
Group Total		401	100	153	100	171	100	39	100%	8	100	42	100	812	100

**Table 2.3.5 Currently Drink Alcohol  
By Sex Type Of School**

		No.	%
Type of Schoo	Boys	90	37%
	Girls	60	25%
	Mixe	90	38%
Group Total		240	100%

**Table 2.3.6 Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex Type Of School  
(Boy Respondents Only)**

		Type of School			
		Boys		Mixed	
		No.	%	No.	%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	90	30%	63	48%
	No	206	70%	67	52%
Group Total		296	100%	130	100%

**Table 2.3.7 Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex Type Of School  
(Girl Respondents Only)**

		Type of School			
		Girls		Mixed	
		No.	%	No.	%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	60	22%	27	23%
	No	218	78%	89	77%
Group Total		278	100%	116	100%

**Table 2.3.8 Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex Type Of School (Girl Respondents Only) By Age Group**

		Type of School							
		Girls				Mixed			
		Age Group				Age Group			
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	25	18%	35	25%	15	25%	12	21%
	No	111	82%	107	75%	44	75%	45	79%
Group Total		136	100%	142	100%	59	100%	57	100%

Smoking, Drinking And Illicit Drug Use  
Among Secondary School Students In Mauritius CASR 2003

**Table 2.3.9 Currently Drink Alcohol By Sex Type Of School (Boy Respondents Only) By Age Group**

		Type of School							
		Boys				Mixed			
		Age Group				Age Group			
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	37	29%	53	31%	21	32%	42	66%
	No	91	71%	115	69%	45	68%	22	34%
Group Total		127	100%	168	100%	66	100%	64	100%

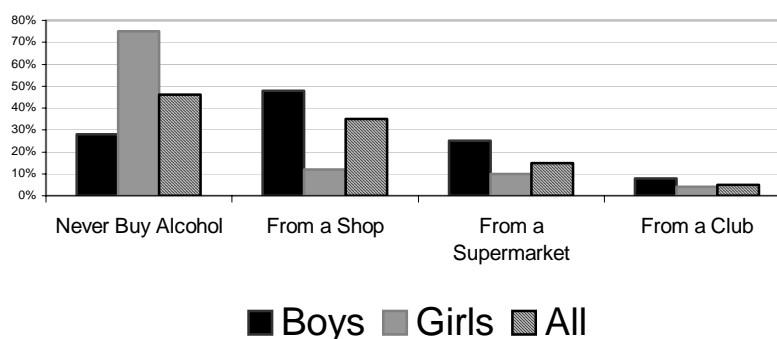
**Table 2.3.10 How Often Get Drunk When Drink By Sex And Age Group**

		Sex											
		Boy						Girl					
		Age Group				Group Total		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%	13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%			No.	%	No.	%		
How Often Get Drunk	Never	27	48%	41	46%	68	47%	20	51%	26	57%	46	54%
	Sometimes	19	34%	39	44%	58	40%	11	28%	14	30%	25	29%
	Whenever Drink Alcohol	10	18%	9	10%	18	13%	8	21%	6	13%	14	16%
Group Total		55	100%	89	100%	144	100%	39	100%	46	100%	85	100%

## 2.4 – Usual Purchasing Point of Alcohol

As with cigarettes, the laws governing the sale of alcohol to minors does not appear to deter many of the respondents from purchasing their drinks from ordinary retail outlets. Although 46% of those respondents who drink never buy alcohol, 35% buy it from shops and 15% buy it from supermarkets.

Chart 2.10 Where Usually Buy Alcohol  
By Sex of Respondents Who Currently Drink Alcohol



Three quarters of Girl respondents and 28% of Boy respondents who drink never buy alcohol. 48% of Boys and 12% of Girls usually buy alcoholic drinks from a shop.

55% of respondents from the younger age group of 13 to 15 years old, who currently drink never buy alcohol, while 27% of the younger respondents usually buy alcohol from a shop compared to 40% of the older age group of 16 – 18 year olds.

(Tables 2.4.1, 2.4.2)

## Tables

**Table 2.4.1 Where Usually Buy Alcohol By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Where Usually Buys Alcohol	From a Shop	67	48%	10	12%	77	35%
	From a Club	8	6%	3	4%	11	5%
	From a Supermarket	25	18%	8	10%	33	15%
	Never Buy Alcohol	39	28%	63	75%	102	46%
Group Total		138	100%	84	100%	222	100%

**Table 2.4.2 Where Usually Buy Alcohol By Age Group**

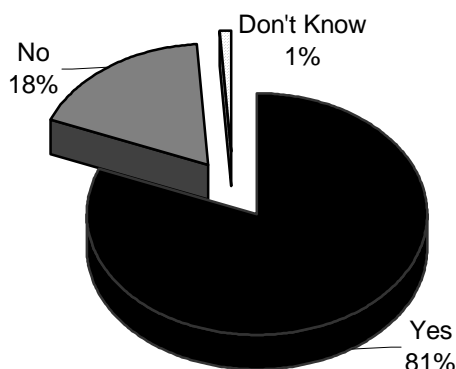
		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Where Usually Buys Alcohol	From a Shop	25	27%	52	40%	77	35%
	From a Club	4	5%	6	5%	11	5%
	From a Supermarket	13	14%	20	16%	33	15%
	Never Buy Alcohol	51	55%	51	39%	102	46%
Group Total		94	100%	129	100%	222	100%

## 2.5 Influences on Drinking Behaviour

Some questions were asked on whether significant people in the respondents' life drank alcohol. Chart 2.11 shows that of those pupils who drink, some 81%, had at least one of their parents who also drink alcohol.

(Table 2.5.1)

Chart 2.11 Parents Drink Alcohol



Of this group, in 51% of cases both parents drink while in 45% of cases it is only the father who drinks.

The next question asked was whether the parents of the respondents were aware of them drinking to which 58% answered that their parents were aware. More Girls who drink, 73%, say that their parents know about their drinking than do Boys, 49%.

While 42% of respondents from the younger age group of 13 – 15 year olds say that their parents are aware of their drinking for those in the older age group of 16 – 18 years old it increases to 68%.

Of those respondents whose parents know that they drink 33% say that their parents either try to stop them drinking or try to persuade them not to drink. 34% say that their parents do nothing about their drinking.

(Tables 2.5.3, 2.5.4, 2.5.5)

## Tables

**Table 2.5.1 Do Parents Drink Alcohol**

		No.	%
Parents Drink Alcohol	Yes	186	81%
	No	41	18%
	Not Applicable	1	0%
	Don't Know	2	1%
Group Total		230	100%

**Table 2.5.2 If Parents Drink Alcohol Which Parents Drink By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Which Parent Drinks Alcohol	Mother	1	1%	5	7%	6	3%
	Father	56	50%	28	38%	84	45%
	Both	55	49%	40	55%	95	51%
Group Total		112	100%	73	100%	185	100%

**Table 2.5.3 Do Parents Know That Respondent Drinks Alcohol By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Do Parents Know Respondent Drinks	Yes	70	49%	63	73%	133	58%
	No	58	40%	20	23%	78	34%
	Don't Know	16	11%	3	3%	19	8%
Group Total		145	100%	86	100%	231	100%



**Table 2.5.4 Do Parents Know That Respondent Drinks Alcohol By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Do Parents Know Respondent Drinks	Yes	40	42%	94	68%	133	58%
	No	47	50%	31	23%	78	34%
	Don't Know	7	7%	12	9%	19	8%
Group Total		94	100%	137	100%	231	100%

**Table 2.5.5 How Do Parents Who Know That  
Respondent Drinks Alcohol React**

		No.	%
How Do Parents React To Respondent Drinking	Try To Stop Me	8	6%
	Try To Persuade Me Not To Drink	36	27%
	Do Nothing	45	34%
	Encourage Me To Drink	1	1%
	Don't Know	27	20%
	Not Applicable	16	12%
Group Total		132	100%

## 3 - Drugs

### 3.1 – Drugs Awareness

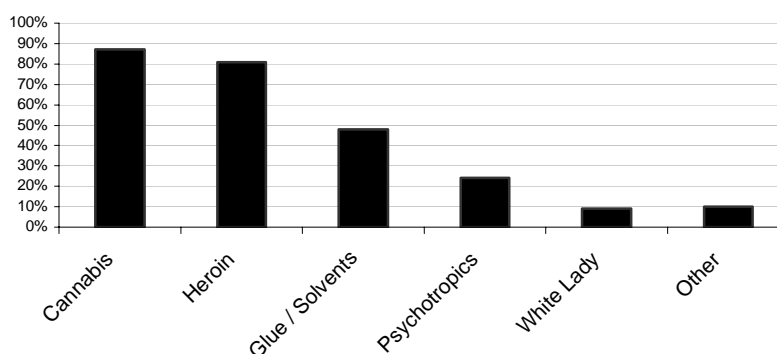
The questions on the use of drugs followed a similar pattern to those on smoking and drinking. However, the first question was not on the respondent's personal usage but on which of the listed drugs they had heard of.<sup>1</sup>

During the briefing prior to the completion of the questionnaire the respondents were told that in response to *part (F) Other drugs*, they could give the “street” name of any drugs that they had heard of and that it was not necessary to give its proper chemical, proprietary or generic name. In fact, 95% of all respondents say that they have heard of at least one of the drugs mentioned.

For this particular question on "drugs heard of " multiple answers were permitted, making various permutations possible. To simplify matters, the types of drugs have been re-categorized by the number of respondents who have heard of them. In Chart 3.1 we see that 87% of all respondents have heard of Cannabis, 81% Heroin, 48% Sniffing Glue / Solvents and 24% Psychotropic Drugs. 10% have also heard of other drugs including cocaine, opium and morphine etc.

(Tables 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3)

Chart 3.1 Drugs Heard Of



<sup>1</sup> The drugs listed were: Cannabis / Gandia, Psychotropic Drugs, White Lady, Sniffing Glue, Heroin / Brown Sugar and “Other” Drugs – see questionnaire in Appendix - Q 52

## Tables

**Table 3.1.1 Heard Of Drugs**

		No.	%
Heard Of Drugs	Heard Of Drugs	785	95%
	Not Heard Of Drugs / No Answer	43	5%
Group Total		828	100%

**Table 3.1.2 Drugs Heard Of**

		No.	%
Heard of Cannabis / Gandia		718	87%
Heroin Heard Of		672	81%
Solvents / Glue Heard Of		398	48%
Psychotropic Drugs		195	24%
White Lady Among		79	9%
Heard Of Other Drugs		85	10%

**Table 3.1.3 Other Drugs Heard Of**

		No.	%
Other Drugs Heard Of	Cocaine	15	18%
	Hashish / Marijuana	22	26%
	Cough Medicines	5	6%
	Ecstasy	6	7%
	Opium	5	6%
	Morphine	3	4%
	Other	29	34%
Group Total		85	100%

## 3.2 Drug Use

Questions on drug usage were included, but in what is essentially a reverse order. The respondent was first asked about the perceived behaviour of their friends and classmates and whether they had ever been offered drugs before being asked about their own usage. However, to assist the flow of this report we will look at usage patterns in a different order. The first element we shall concentrate on is whether the respondent themselves had ever used drugs.

In response to this question just 7% of respondents admit to having used any drugs at any time. However, as with the questions on smoking and drinking, a question was also asked of the perceived behaviour and usage patterns of their classmates and close friends.

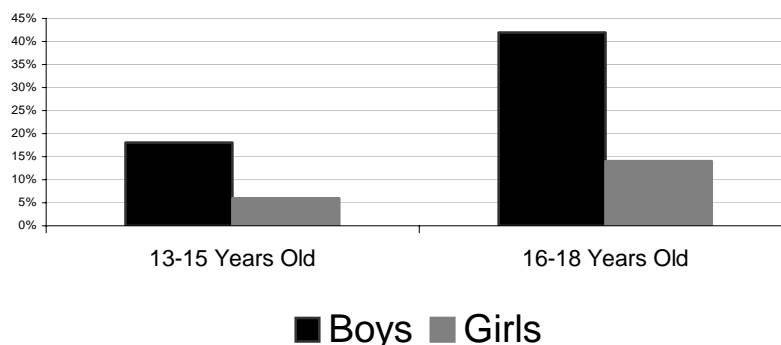
Here we find that 21% of respondents say that their classmates or close friends have ever used Gandia or other drugs. This follows the same pattern as with smoking and drinking where the rates for usage are higher when the respondents are reporting on the behaviour of their peers, rather than on their own behaviour.

(Table 3.2.1, 3.2.2)

There is a significantly higher percentage of boys, at 31%, than girls, at 10%, reporting that their classmates or close friends use drugs, although for both sexes the percentage of respondents reporting drug use by their peers is higher among those in the older age group of 16 – 18 years old than those in the younger age group of 13 – 15 years old. The percentage of boys reporting drug use by peers is 18% of those in the younger age group and 42% of those in the older age group while for girls the corresponding percentages are much lower at 6% and 14% respectively. (Chart 3.2)

(Table 3.2.3)

Chart 3.2 Classmates Or Close Friends Use Illicit Drugs  
By Sex Of Respondent



While the survey does not contain information on the frequency of any drug use, pupils who reported having ever used drugs were asked when they had last used them. This allows us to look at those who have used drugs in the last month and those who have used them 6 months ago or longer.

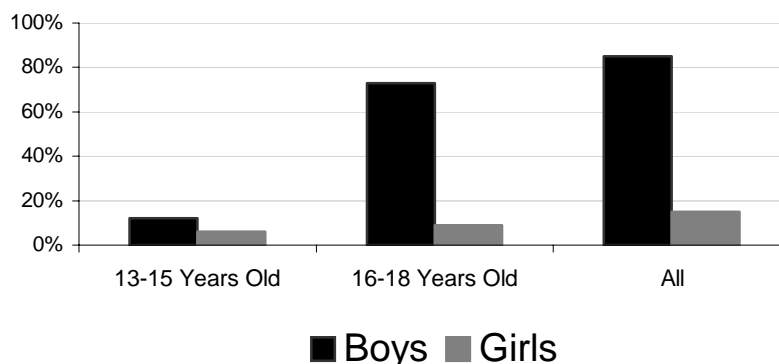
Some 42% of respondents who had admitted to using drugs said that they had used drugs in the month prior to the study, a proportion that includes 20% who said that they had used drugs in the week leading up to the study day. A further 25% of this group of respondents had used drugs in the previous six months while the remaining 33% had not used drugs for six months or more.

(Table 3.2.4)

Of respondents who say that they have ever used drugs 85% are boys, of whom 73% are aged between 16 and 18 years old.

(Table 3.2.5)

Chart 3.3 Ever Used Drugs By Sex and Age Group



By the type of school attended, we see from Chart 3.4 that respondents attending Girls Only schools are least likely to have ever used drugs, at only 1%, while 9% of respondents from Mixed schools and 10% from Boys Only schools have ever used drugs.

However, as with cigarette smoking and alcohol drinking, boys from Mixed Schools, 13%, were more likely to report having used drugs than those attending Boys Only schools at 10%.

(Tables 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.2.8)

Chart 3.4 Ever Used Drugs By Sex of School

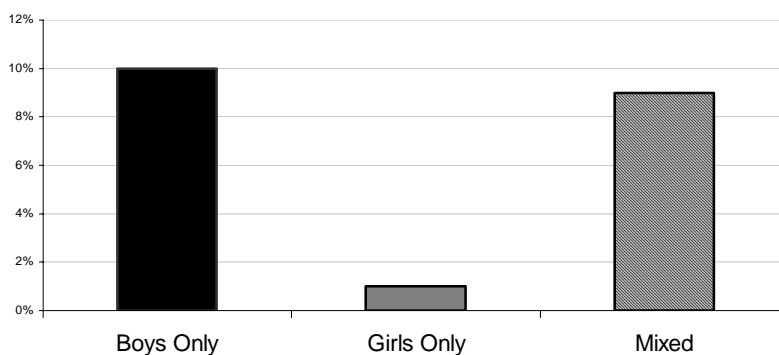
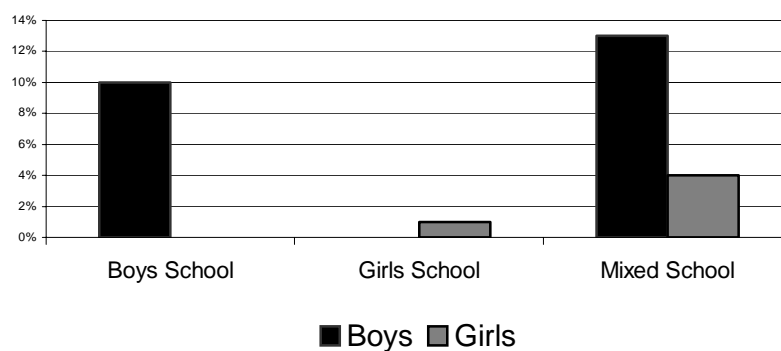


Chart 3.5 Ever Used Drugs By Type Of School  
And Sex Of Respondent



In Chart 3.6, we see that those respondents attending schools in the Central and Port Louis Educational Regions, 11% and 10% respectively, are more disposed towards drug use than those going to schools in the other educational regions, where the percentages range from 2% to 6%.

(Table 3.29)

Chart 3.6 Drug Users By Educational Region

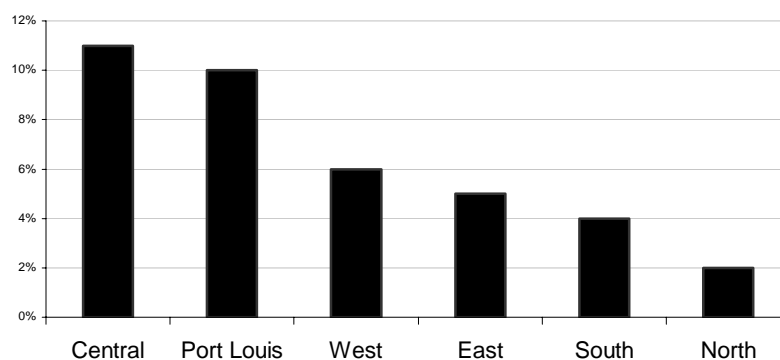
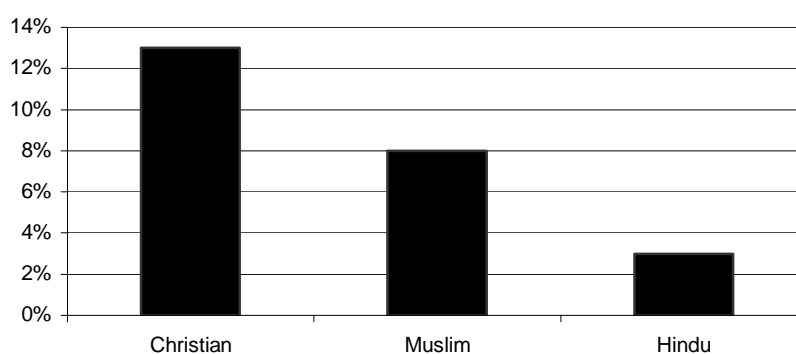


Chart 3.7 shows that of those respondents who disclosed that they belong to one of the major religions 13% of Christians, 8% of Muslims and 3% of Hindus have ever used drugs.

(Table 3.2.10)

Chart 3.7 Ever Used Drugs (Major Religions)

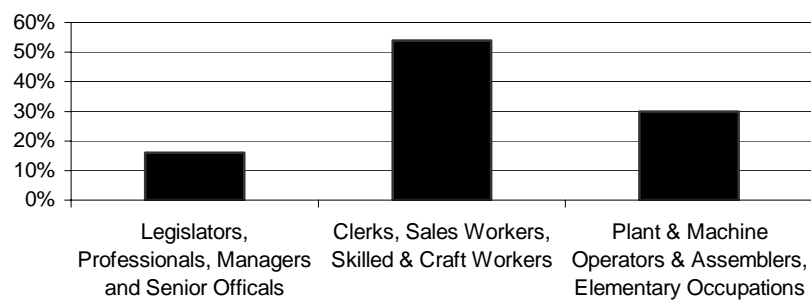


Of those respondents who have ever used drugs the highest percentage are among those whose fathers work in middle tier occupations, correlating with the results for smoking and drinking where ever smokers and current drinkers were also more likely to have fathers who worked in these types of occupations than in those of the higher and lower tiers.

(Table 3.2.11)



Chart 3.8 Ever Used Drugs  
By Father's Occupational Group  
(Where Stated)



## Tables

**Table 3.2.1 Ever Used Any Drugs**

		No.	%
Ever Used Any Drugs	Yes	54	7%
	No	759	93%
Group Total		813	100%

**Table 3.2.2 Classmates of Close Friends Ever Use Drugs**

		No.	%
Classmates or Close Friends Use Illicit Drugs	Yes	170	21%
	No	382	47%
	Don't Know	267	33%
Group Total		819	100%

**Table 3.2.3 Classmates of Close Friends Ever Use Drugs By Sex & Age Group**

		Sex											
		Boy						Girl					
		Age Group				Group Total		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%	13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%			No.	%	No.	%		
Classmates or Close Friends Use Illicit Drugs	Yes	35	18%	98	42%	132	31%	11	6%	27	14%	38	10%
	No	78	41%	60	25%	138	32%	125	64%	119	60%	244	62%
	Don't Know	79	41%	77	33%	156	37%	59	30%	52	26%	111	28%
Group Total		192	100%	234	100%	426	100%	195	100%	198	100%	393	100%

**Table 3.2.4 Last Time Used Drugs Prior To Study Day**

		No.	%
Last Time Ever Used Drugs	No Answer	2	4%
	In The Previous Week	10	19%
	In The Previous Month	11	21%
	In The Last Six Months	13	25%
	Between 6 Months And A Year	9	17%
	More Than A Year Ago	8	15%
Group Total		54	100%

**Table 3.2.5 Ever Used Any Drugs By Sex & Age Group**

				No.	%
Sex	Boy	Age Group	13 - 15 years old (incl)	7	12%
			16 - 18 years old (incl)	40	73%
		Group Total		46	85%
	Girl	Age Group	13 - 15 years old (incl)	3	6%
			16 - 18 years old (incl)	5	9%
		Group Total		8	15%

**Table 3.2.6 Ever Used Drugs By Sex Of School**

		Type of School					
		Boys		Girls		Mixed	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Used Any Drugs	Yes	29	10%	3	1%	22	9%
	No	268	90%	271	99%	220	91%
Group Total		297	100%	274	100%	242	100%

**Table 3.2.7 Ever Used Drugs By Sex Of School  
(Boys Only)**

		Sex			
		Boys			
		Type of School			
		Boys		Mixed	
		No.	%	No.	%
Ever Used Any Drugs	Yes	29	10%	17	13%
	No	268	90%	112	87%
Group Total		297	100%	129	100%

**Table 3.2.8 Ever Used Drugs By Sex Of School (Girls Only)**

		Sex			
		Girl			
		Type of School			
		Girls		Mixed	
		No.	%	No.	%
Ever Used Any Drugs	Yes	3	1%	5	4%
	No	271	99%	108	96%
Group Total		274	100%	113	100%

**Table 3.2.9 Ever Used Drugs By Educational Region**

		Educational Region											
		Port Louis		North		East		South		Central		West	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Used Any Drugs	Yes	14	10%	2	2%	6	5%	3	4%	16	11%	13	6%
	No	122	90%	112	98%	120	95%	75	96%	126	89%	204	94%
Group Total		137	100%	114	100%	126	100%	78	100%	142	100%	217	100%

Smoking, Drinking And Illicit Drug Use  
Among Secondary School Students In Mauritius CASR 2003

**Table 3.2.10 Ever Used Drugs by Religion**

		Religion												Group Total	
		Hindu		Muslim		Christian		Other		None		Prefer Not To Say		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Used	Yes	13	3%	11	8%	22	13%	1	3%	1	13%	6	14%	54	7%
Any Drugs	No	386	97%	139	92%	147	87%	38	97%	7	87%	36	86%	752	93%
Group Total		399	100	151	100	169	100	39	100	8	100	42	100%	807	100%

**Table 3.2.11 Ever Used Drugs By Father's Occupational Group  
(Where Stated)**

Father's Occupational Group	Ever Used Any Drugs	
	Yes	
	No.	%
Legislators, Professionals, Managers and Senior Officials	6	16%
Clerks, Sales Workers, Skilled and Craft Workers	22	54%
Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers, Elementary Occupations	12	30%

### 3.3 Availability of Drugs

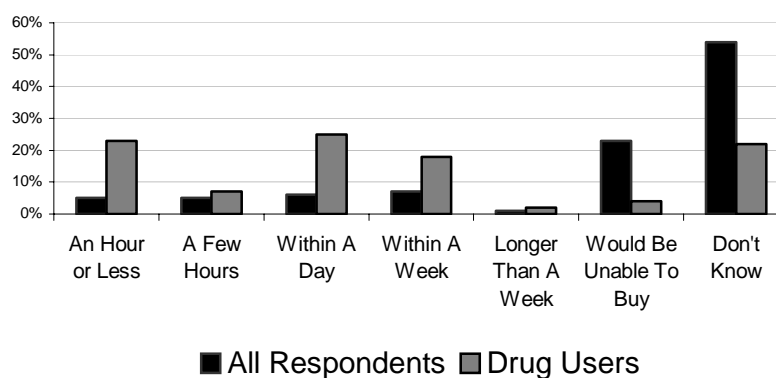
Respondents were asked a number of questions about the availability of drugs. Overall, 12% of secondary school pupils have at some time been offered drugs, and the likelihood of boys having been offered drugs is more pronounced at 18%, than girls at 5%. The likelihood also increases markedly with age, with 25% of the boys aged between 16 and 18 years having at some time been offered drugs compared to 9% of the younger boys aged 13 to 15 years old.

The corresponding percentages for girls are 8% of the older age group and 3% of the younger age group. The educational regions where drugs are more likely to be offered are, perhaps not altogether unsurprisingly, the same as where the incidences of drug use are highest, with Port Louis and Central both showing 17%, the West 12% and the other educational regions ranging between 4% and 10%.

(Table 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3)

When asked how long it would take them to buy Gandia, of all the respondents, 5% say that they could buy Gandia within the hour, 5% within a few hours, 16% within a day and 7% within a week. More than 75% of respondents would either be unable to buy it or don't know where to buy it.

Chart 3.9 How Long Would Take to Buy Gandia

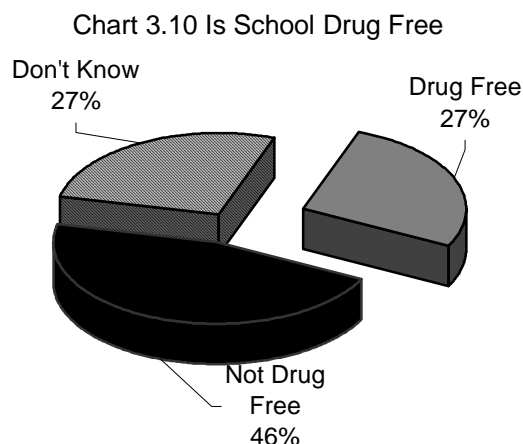


Of those who admit to having used drugs 23% could buy Gandia within the hour, 55% within the day and a further 18% could buy it within a week.

(Tables 3.3.4, 3.3.5)

Asked as to whether or not their school was drug free, only just over one quarter or all respondents, 27%, say that their school is drug free, with 46% saying that their school is not drug free. (Chart 3.10) Girls were more likely to report a drug free school, at 34%, compared to boys at 20%.

(Table 3.3.6)



## Tables

**Table 3.3.1 Ever Been Offered Any Drugs**

		No.	%
Ever Been Offered Any Drugs	Yes	98	12%
	No	724	88%
Group Total		822	100%

**Table 3.3.2 Ever Been Offered Any Drugs By Sex & Age Group**

		Sex											
		Boy						Girl					
		Age Group				All Boys		Age Group				All Girls	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%	13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%			No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Been Offered Any Drugs	Yes	18	9%	60	25%	77	18%	6	3%	15	8%	21	5%
	No	176	91%	176	75%	352	82%	188	97%	184	92%	372	95%
Group Total		194	100%	235	100%	429	100%	194	100%	199	100%	393	100%

**Table 3.3.3 Ever Been Offered Any Drugs By Educational District**

		Educational District											
		Port Louis		North		East		South		Central		West	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Been Offered Any Drugs	Yes	24	17%	5	4%	13	10%	5	6%	25	17%	27	12%
	No	115	83%	110	96%	115	90%	74	94%	119	83%	191	88%
Group Total		139	100%	115	100%	128	100%	79	100%	144	100	218	100%

**Table 3.3.4 How Long To Buy Gandia**

		No.	%
How Long Would Take To Procure Drugs	An Hour or Less	36	5%
	A Few Hours	35	5%
	Within A Day	48	6%
	Within A Week	54	7%
	Longer Than A Week	10	1%
	Would Be Unable To Buy	178	23%
	Don't Know	418	54%
Group Total		780	100%



**Table 3.3.5 How Long To Buy Gandia (Drug Users)**

		No.	%
How Long Would Take To Procure Drugs	An Hour or Less	12	23%
	A Few Hours	4	7%
	Within A Day	13	25%
	Within A Week	10	18%
	Longer Than A Week	1	2%
	Would Be Unable To Buy	2	4%
	Don't Know	12	22%
Group Total		54	100%

**Table 3.3.6 Is School Drug Free By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Is School Drug Free	Drug Free	84	20%	132	34%	216	27%
	Not Drug Free	230	54%	143	37%	373	46%
	Don't Know	112	26%	111	29%	223	27%
Group Total		426	100%	386	100%	812	100%



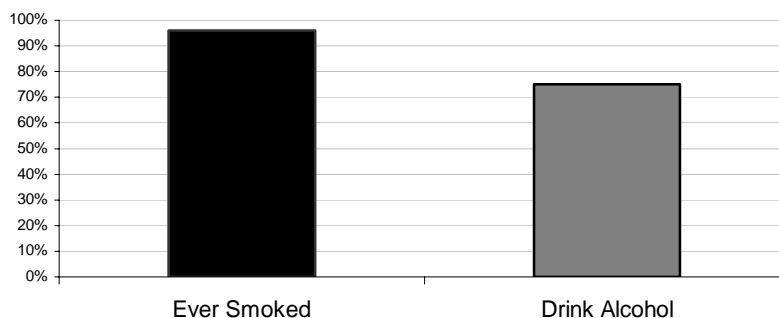
## 4 - Attitudes To Substance Abuse

### 4.1 – Linkage between Smoking, Drinking and Taking Drugs

It has been found that 7% of the total sample of secondary school students admitted to having ever used drugs. But do these students turn to drug use only or do they use more than one of the substances covered in the survey, perhaps progressing from one substance to the other?

Of the group of respondents who had ever used drugs, 96% say that they have at some time smoked cigarettes and 75% say that they currently drink alcohol.

Chart 4.1 Drug Users Ever Smoked  
& Currently Drink Alcohol



The age at which they first use a substance may also be an indicator of progression from one to another. 58% of drug users say they first used drugs between the ages of 15 and 16 years old. 97% of drug users that also drink alcohol say that they first drank alcohol when younger than 15 – 16 years old. 53% of those respondents that use drugs and currently drink alcohol began drinking when younger than 15 years old.

Of this group of drug users who smoke 85% had started smoking by the age of 14 years old.

(Tables 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.5)

Respondents were asked whether they would report any drug use they saw. Just over half of all respondents, 53%, would report any drug use they saw, 21% don't know if they would or not, leaving some 26% who would not. A higher percentage of girls, 67%, than boys, 40%, would report fellow students they saw using drugs. More respondents from the younger age group of 13 – 15 years old, 60%, compared to 47% from the older age group of 16 – 18 years old, would report drug use by fellow students. (Chart 4.2)

A higher percentage of students attending Private schools would report drug use than those attending State schools at 57% and 47% respectively. However, the percentages of respondents smoking, drinking alcohol and using drugs are higher in Private schools than in State Schools. (Chart 4.3)

(Tables 4.1.6, 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.1.9)

Chart 4.2 Would Report Student Drug Use  
By School Type

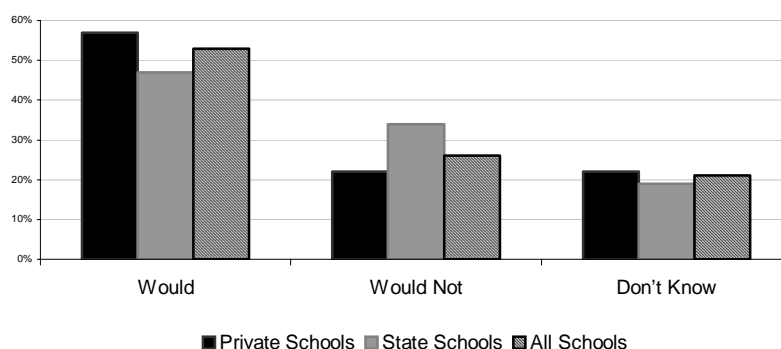
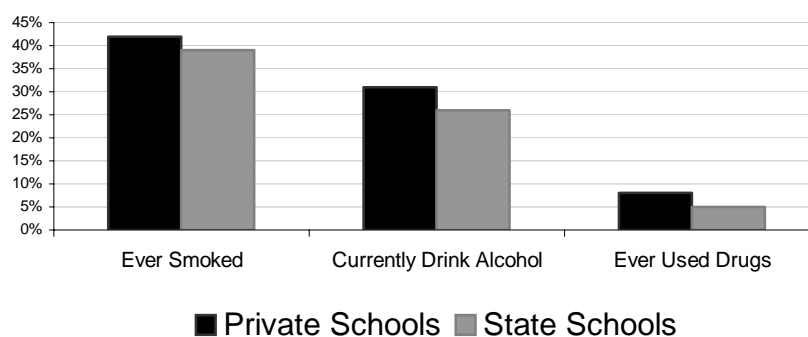


Chart 4.3 Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol, Ever Used  
Drugs By School Type



## Tables

**Table 4.1.1 Drug Users Ever Smoked**

	No.	%
Ever Smoked	52	96%
Never Smoked	2	4%
Group Total	54	100%

**Table 4.1.2 Drug Users Currently Use Alcohol**

		No.	%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	41	75%
	No	14	25%
Group Total		54	100%

**Table 4.1.3 Drug Users - Age When First Used Drugs**

		No.	%
Age When First Used Drugs	No Answer	3	6%
	12 to 14 years Old	11	20%
	15 to 16 Years Old	31	58%
	17 to 18 + Years Old	9	17%
Group Total		54	100%

**Table 4.1.4 Drug Users - Age When First Drank Alcohol**

		No.	%
Age When First Drank Alcohol	No Answer	7	17%
	10 Years Old Or Less	5	13%
	11 to 12 Years Old	4	10%
	13 to 14 Years Old	12	30%
	15 to 16 Years Old	11	27%
	17 to 18 + Years Old	1	2%
Group Total		41	100%

**Table 4.1.5 Drug Users - Age When First Smoked**

		No.	%
Age When First Smoked	No Answer	9	18%
	10 Years Old Or Less	6	12%
	11 to 12 Years Old	8	16%
	13 to 14 Years Old	21	39%
	15 to 16 Years Old	7	14%
Group Total		52	100%

**Table 4.1.6 If Saw a Student Using Drugs Would Report Them? By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
If Saw A Student Using Drugs Would Report to School Officials	Would	171	40%	264	67%	435	53%
	Would Not	151	36%	64	16%	215	26%
	Don't Know	104	24%	66	17%	170	21%
Group Total		426	100%	394	100%	820	100%

**Table 4.1.7 If Saw a Student Using Drugs Would Report Them? By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
If Saw A Student Using Drugs Would Report to School Officials	Would	233	60%	202	47%	435	53%
	Would Not	72	19%	143	33%	215	26%
	Don't Know	85	22%	85	20%	170	21%
Group Total		390	100%	430	100%	820	100%

**Table 4.1.8 Would Report Student Drug Use By School Type**

		State of Private				Group Total	
		Private		State		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
If Saw A Student Using Drugs Would Report to School Officials	Would	299	57%	136	47%	435	53%
	Would Not	115	22%	100	34%	215	26%
	Don't Know	114	22%	56	19%	170	21%
Group Total		528	100%	292	100%	820	100%

**Table 4.1.9 Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol, Ever Used Drugs By School Type**

		State of Private				Group Total	
		Private		State		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Smoked		227	42%	115	39%	342	41%
Never Smoked		309	58%	177	61%	486	59%
Group Total		536	100%	292	100%	828	100%
Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks	Yes	165	31%	75	26%	240	29%
	No	365	69%	215	74%	580	71%
Group Total		530	100%	290	100%	820	100%
Ever Used Any Drugs	Yes	40	8%	14	5%	54	7%
	No	485	92%	274	95%	759	93%
Group Total		525	100%	288	100%	813	100%

## 4.2 Attitudes To Tobacco

All respondents were asked to answer questions on the harmfulness of the substances covered by the study.

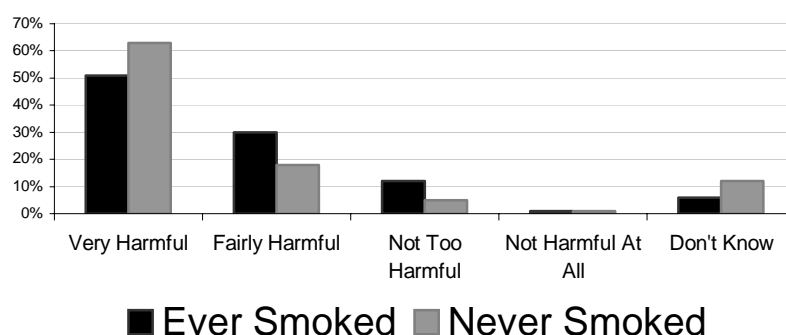
The results show that an overwhelming majority of respondents, 81%, are aware that tobacco use is harmful to the health with 58% believing it to be “very harmful”. A higher percentage of girls, 62%, than boys, 55%, believe tobacco use to be “very harmful”.

(Tables 4.2.1, 4.2.2)

Looking at the differences of opinion between those respondents who have Ever Smoked and those who have Never Smoked we see in Chart 4.4 that those respondents who have Never Smoked, 63%, are more likely to view tobacco use as “very harmful” than those who have Ever Smoked, 51%.

(Tables 4.2.3, 4.2.4)

Chart 4.4 Harmfulness of Tobacco Use  
by Smoking Behaviour





A follow-up question elicited the opinions of those respondents who had never smoked by asking them how likely it was that they would experiment with smoking in the future.

Over three quarters of the respondents who have never smoked, 78%, seem convinced that they will not turn to tobacco use in the future. More of those in the older age group of 16 to 18 year olds, 81%, than those in the younger age group of 13 to 15 year olds, 76%, say that it “will never happen”. There is also a higher percentage of those in the younger age group, 17%, who say that they “don’t know” than those in the older age group, 11%.

(Table 4.2.5)

## Tables

**Table 4.2.1 How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco	Very Harmful	479	58%
	Fairly Harmful	189	23%
	Not Too Harmful	64	8%
	Not Harmful At all	9	1%
	Don't Know	81	10%
Group Total		821	100%

**Table 4.2.2 How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco	Very Harmful	233	55%	246	62%	479	58%
	Fairly Harmful	109	25%	80	20%	189	23%
	Not Too Harmful	40	9%	24	6%	64	8%
	Not Harmful At all	6	1%	3	1%	9	1%
	Don't Know	40	9%	41	10%	81	10%
Group Total		427	100%	394	100%	821	100%

**Table 4.2.3 How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco By Respondents Who Ever Smoked**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco	Very Harmful	174	51%
	Fairly Harmful	101	30%
	Not Too Harmful	40	12%
	Not Harmful At all	3	1%
	Don't Know	22	6%
Group Total		340	100%

**Table 4.2.4 How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco By Respondents Who Have Never Smoked**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Is Tobacco	Very Harmful	305	63%
	Fairly Harmful	87	18%
	Not Too Harmful	24	5%
	Not Harmful At all	6	1%
	Don't Know	59	12%
Group Total		481	100%

**Table 4.2.5 How likely Non Smoker Will Experiment With Smoking By Age Group**

		Age Group				Group Total	
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Non - Smokers How Likely Will Experiment With Smoking In Future	Very Likely	1	0%	1	0%	2	0%
	Somewhat Likely	1	0%	3	1%	4	1%
	Not Very Likely	16	6%	13	6%	29	6%
	It Will Never Happen	183	76%	175	81%	358	78%
	Don't Know	41	17%	24	11%	65	14%
Group Total		241	100%	216	100%	457	100%

### 4.3 Attitudes To Alcohol

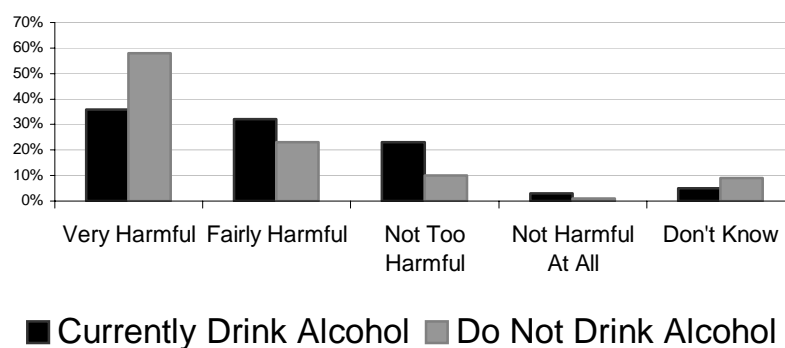
As with tobacco use, the majority of respondents, 77%, are aware of the harmfulness of alcohol to health, 51% believe it to be “very harmful”. A higher percentage of girls, 59%, than boys, 45%, believe alcohol use to be “very harmful”.

(Tables 4.3.1, 4.3.2)

Looking at the differences of opinion between those respondents who currently drink and those who do not, we see in Chart 4.5 that those respondents who do not currently drink alcohol, 58%, are more likely to view alcohol as “very harmful” than those who do currently drink at, 36%.

(Tables 4.3.3, 4.3.4)

**Chart 4.5 Harmfulness Of Alcohol Use  
By Drinking Behaviour**



Respondents who did not drink were asked how likely it was that they would drink in the future.

Over half, 52%, of respondents who do not currently drink alcohol say that drinking in the future “will not happen”. 10% see it as a likely occurrence with 2% seeing it as “very likely”. More non-drinkers from the younger age group of 13 to 15 years old, 57%, than from the older age group of 16 to 18 years old, 48%, say that, for them, drinking alcohol is something that “will never happen”.

(Tables 4.3.5)

## Tables

**Table 4.3.1 How Harmful To Health is Alcohol**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol	Very Harmful	422	51%
	Fairly Harmful	211	26%
	Not Too Harmful	111	14%
	Not Harmful At all	14	2%
	Don't Know	63	8%
Group Total		821	100%

**Table 4.3.2 How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol	Very Harmful	191	45%	231	59%	422	51%
	Fairly Harmful	130	30%	81	21%	211	26%
	Not Too Harmful	66	15%	45	11%	111	14%
	Not Harmful At all	8	2%	6	2%	14	2%
	Don't Know	33	8%	30	8%	63	8%
Group Total		428	100%	393	100%	821	100%

**Table 4.3.3 How Harmful is Alcohol Use  
(Current Alcohol Drinkers)**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol	Very Harmful	86	36%
	Fairly Harmful	77	32%
	Not Too Harmful	55	23%
	Not Harmful At all	7	3%
	Don't Know	13	5%
Group Total		239	100%

**Table 4.3.4 How Harmful is Acohol Use  
(Non - Alcohol Drinkers)**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Is Alcohol	Very Harmful	336	58%
	Fairly Harmful	131	23%
	Not Too Harmful	56	10%
	Not Harmful At all	5	1%
	Don't Know	49	9%
Group Total		577	100%

**Table 4.3.5 How Likely Will Drink Alcohol In The Future  
(non-drinkers)**

		No.	%
Non - Alcohol Drinkers How Likely Will Experiment With Alcohol In Future	Very Likely	12	2%
	Somewhat Likely	42	8%
	Not Very Likely	98	19%
	It Will Never Happen	269	52%
	Don't Know	95	18%
Group Total		515	100%

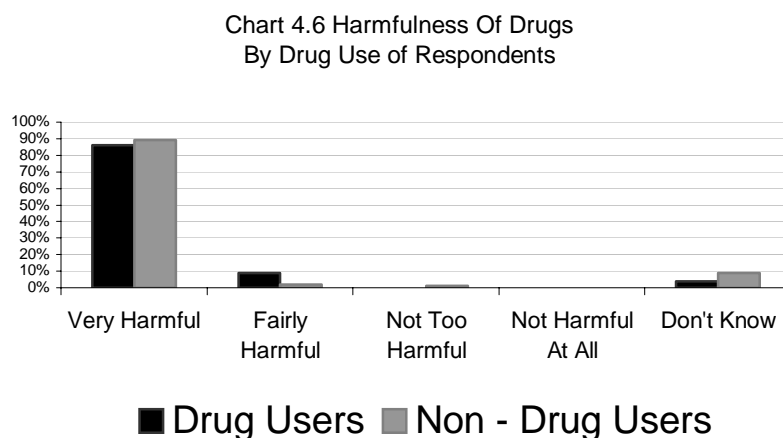
## 4.4 Attitudes To Drug Use

As with tobacco and alcohol, an overwhelming majority of respondents, 90%, view drug use as harmful to the health with 88% believing it to be “very harmful”. This high percentage means that this is a fairly general opinion but there is a slightly higher percentage of girls, 90%, than boys, 87%, who say that they believe using drugs is “very harmful”.

(Tables 4.4.1, 4.4.2)

Looking at the differences of opinion between those respondents who have used drugs and those who never have, we see in Chart 4.6 that those who have used drugs, 86%, are slightly less likely to view drug use as “very harmful” than those who have never used them, at 89%. Those respondents who have used drugs are more likely to view drug use as “fairly harmful, 9%, than non-drug users, at 2%.

(Tables 4.4.3, 4.4.4)





Respondents who have never used drugs were questioned as to the likelihood of their experimenting with them in the future.

87% of the respondents who have not used drugs say that experimentation or use of drugs in the future is “unlikely to happen”.

(Table 4.4.5)

**Table 4.4.1 How Harmful To Health Are Drugs**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Are Drugs	Very Harmful	728	88%
	Fairly Harmful	18	2%
	Not Too Harmful	6	1%
	Not Harmful At all	3	0%
	Don't Know	68	8%
Group Total		823	100%

**Table 4.4.2 How Harmful To Health Are Drugs By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
How Harmful To Health Are Drugs	Very Harmful	374	87%	354	90%	728	88%
	Fairly Harmful	10	2%	8	2%	18	2%
	Not Too Harmful	3	1%	3	1%	6	1%
	Not Harmful At all	3	1%	0	0%	3	0%
	Don't Know	39	9%	29	7%	68	8%
Group Total		429	100%	394	100%	823	100%

**Table 4.4.3 How Harmful To Health Are Drugs (Drug Users)**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Are Drugs	Very Harmful	47	86%
	Fairly Harmful	5	9%
	Don't Know	2	4%
Group Total		54	100%

**Table 4.4.4 How Harmful To Health Are Drugs  
(Non - Drug Users)**

		No.	%
How Harmful To Health Are Drugs	Very Harmful	670	89%
	Fairly Harmful	12	2%
	Not Too Harmful	6	1%
	Not Harmful At all	3	0%
	Don't Know	65	9%
Group Total		757	100%

**Table 4.4.5 How Likely To Experiment With Drug Use  
(Non - Drug Users)**

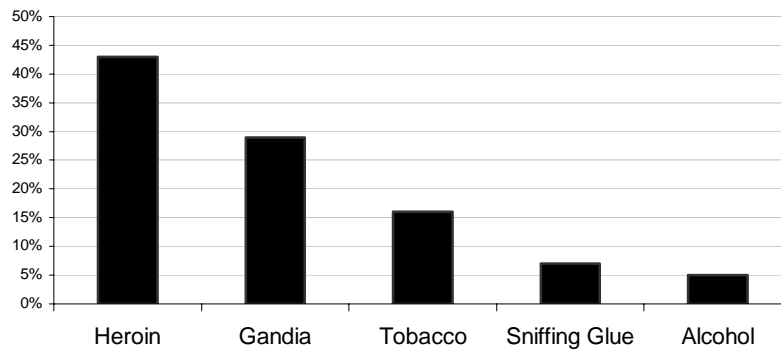
		No.	%
Non -Drug Users How Likely Will Experiment With Drugs In Future	Very Likely	6	1%
	Somewhat Likely	8	1%
	Not Very Likely	25	4%
	It Will Never Happen	578	87%
	Don't Know	51	8%
Group Total		668	100%

## 4.5 Most Harmful Substance

The most harmful substance the respondents identified was Heroin, at 43%, followed by Gandia at 29% and Tobacco, at 16%. (Chart 4.7)

(Table 4.5.1)

Chart 4.7 Most Harmful Substance



## Tables

**Table 4.5.1 Most Harmful Substance**

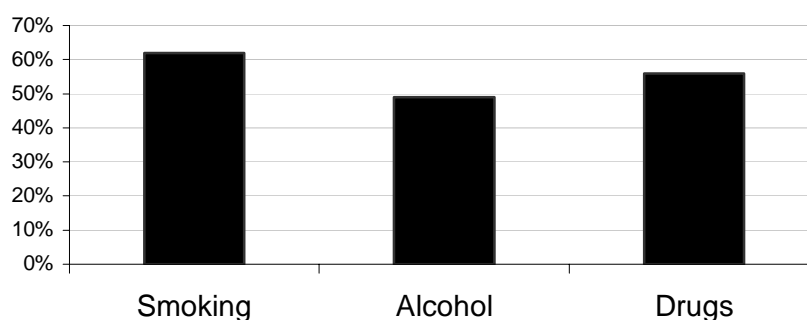
		No.	%
Which is Most Harmful	Tobacco	117	16%
	Gandia	210	29%
	Alcohol	39	5%
	Sniffing Glue	50	7%
	Heroin	318	43%
Group Total		733	100%

## 4.6 Information on Substance Abuse

62% of all respondents have in the last twelve months received some information at school on Smoking, 49% on Alcohol and 56% on Drugs. (Chart 4.8)

(Table 4.6.1)

Chart 4.8 Any Information on Smoking, Drinking, Drugs  
in Previous 12 Months (All Respondents)



Boy respondents tend to have had more information on smoking and drinking than girls while for drugs the amount of information is almost the same. The percentages for having had information on smoking are 66% for boys and 57% for girls while for drinking, 50% for boys and 47% for girls. Some 57% of boys and 56% of girls have had some information on drugs.

(Table 4.6.2)

A higher percentage of respondents from the older age group have had information on smoking, drinking and drugs. Information on smoking is acknowledged by 60% of the younger age group of 13 to 15 years old and 63% of the age group 16 to 18 years old. For drinking the percentage of younger respondents having had information on the subject is 45% compared to 52% of the older age group, and for drugs 49% and 63% respectively.

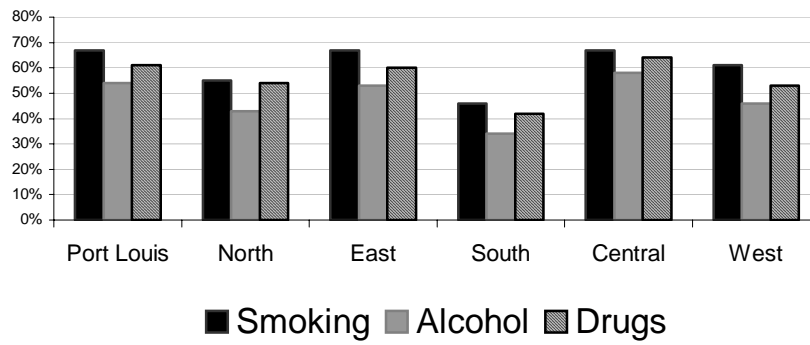
(Table 4.6.3)

Looking at information provided by Educational Region we see in Chart 4.9 that the percentage of respondents from the South who have had some form of information in the 12 months prior to the study day is consistently lower for smoking, drinking and drugs than percentages in other Educational Regions.

(Table 4.6.4)

Smoking, Drinking And Illicit Drug Use  
Among Secondary School Students In Mauritius CASR 2003

Chart 4. 9 Had Information In Previous 12 Months  
on Smoking, Drinking or Drugs By Educational Region



## Tables

**Table 4.6.1 Had Information In Class On  
Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months**

		No.	%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Smoking	Yes	473	62%
	No	244	32%
	Don't Know	50	7%
Group Total		768	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Alcohol	Yes	360	49%
	No	313	42%
	Don't Know	65	9%
Group Total		738	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Drugs	Yes	426	56%
	No	268	35%
	Don't Know	64	8%
Group Total		758	100%

**Table 4.6.2 Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last  
12 Months By Sex**

		Sex			
		Boy		Girl	
		No.	%	No.	%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Smoking	Yes	267	66%	206	57%
	No	115	28%	129	36%
	Don't Know	24	6%	26	7%
Group Total		407	100%	361	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Alcohol	Yes	193	50%	167	47%
	No	158	41%	155	44%
	Don't Know	33	9%	32	9%
Group Total		384	100%	354	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Drugs	Yes	221	57%	205	56%
	No	138	35%	130	35%
	Don't Know	31	8%	33	9%
Group Total		390	100%	368	100%



**Table 4.6.3 Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months By Age Group**

		Age Group			
		13 - 15 years old (incl)		16 - 18 years old (inc)	
		No.	%	No.	%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Smoking	Yes	219	60%	255	63%
	No	122	33%	122	30%
	Don't Know	25	7%	26	6%
Group Total		365	100%	402	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Alcohol	Yes	160	45%	201	52%
	No	167	47%	146	38%
	Don't Know	29	8%	36	9%
Group Total		356	100%	382	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Drugs	Yes	176	49%	250	63%
	No	154	43%	115	29%
	Don't Know	30	8%	34	9%
Group Total		359	100%	398	100%

**Table 4.6.4 Had Information In Class On Substance Abuse In Last 12 Months By Educational Region**

		Educational Region											
		Port Louis		North		East		South		Central		West	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Smoking	Yes	90	67%	55	53%	83	67%	32	46%	84	67%	130	61%
	No	33	25%	42	40%	36	29%	31	45%	37	30%	65	31%
	Don't Know	11	8%	7	7%	5	4%	6	9%	4	3%	18	8%
Group Total		133	100%	104	100%	124	100%	69	100%	125	100%	213	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Alcohol	Yes	71	54%	43	42%	65	53%	21	34%	68	58%	93	46%
	No	43	33%	52	50%	48	39%	31	51%	43	37%	96	47%
	Don't Know	18	14%	8	8%	9	7%	9	15%	6	5%	15	8%
Group Total		131	100%	103	100%	122	100%	61	100%	117	100%	204	100%
Any Lessons in Last Twelve Months on Drugs	Yes	80	61%	54	52%	76	60%	28	42%	79	64%	109	53%
	No	42	32%	41	40%	40	32%	33	49%	38	31%	74	36%
	Don't Know	9	7%	8	8%	10	8%	6	9%	7	6%	24	11%
Group Total		132	100%	103	100%	126	100%	67	100%	124	100%	206	100%

## 4.7 Substance Abuse And Behaviour At School

Over one quarter of all respondents, 26%, have at some time truanted from school.

Truancy is also more prevalent among boys than girls with over one third of boys, 36% have at some time truanted compared to 14% of girls.

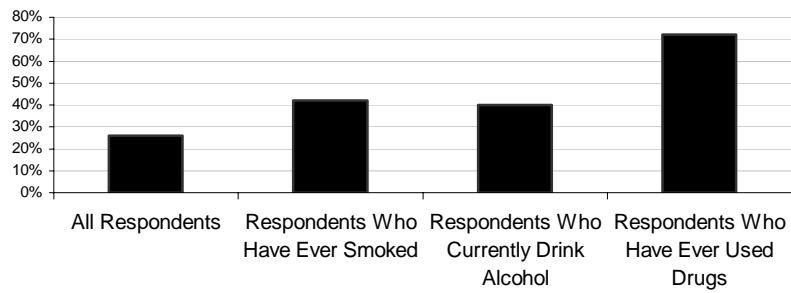
Chart 4.10 shows the prevalence of truancy among those respondents who have ever smoked, currently drink alcohol or take drugs. 42% of those who have ever smoked, 40% of those who currently drink alcohol and 72% of those who have ever used drugs have at some time truanted from school.

(Table 4.7.3)

Turning to exclusion from school because of behaviour, just 4% of all respondents say that they have ever been excluded from school. However, the percentages of respondents who smoke, drink or take drugs are higher at 7%, 10% and 18% respectively. For 77% of those who have Ever Smoked and who have been excluded it was a fixed term exclusion. Of those who currently drink and have been excluded from school, 81% had a fixed term exclusion and for those who have ever used drugs and been excluded, 76% had served a fixed term exclusion.

Tables (4.7.4, 4.7.5, 4.7.6, 4.7.7, 4.7.8)

Chart 4.10 Truancy Prevalence Among Respondents  
That Have Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol,  
Ever Taken Drugs



## Tables

**Table 4.7.1 Ever Truanted**

	No.	%
Ever Truanted Yes	206	26%
No	596	74%
Group Total	802	100%

**Table 4.7.2 Ever Truanted By Sex**

		Sex				Group Total	
		Boy		Girl		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Ever Truanted	Yes	151	36%	55	14%	206	26%
	No	269	64%	327	86%	596	74%
Group Total		420	100%	382	100%	802	100%

**Table 4.7.3 Truancy Prevalence Of Respondents Who Have Ever Smoked, Currently Drink Alcohol , Ever Taken Drugs**

		Ever Smoked		Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks		Ever Used Any Drugs	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ever Truanted	Yes	143	42%	96	40%	39	72%
	No	195	58%	142	60%	15	28%
Group Total		337	100%	238	100%	54	100%

**Table 4.7.4 Ever Been Excluded From School**

		No.	%
Ever Been Excluded From School	Yes	33	4%
	No	770	96%
Group Total		804	100%

**Table 4.7.5 Ever Been Excluded From School  
Smokers, Drinkers, Drug Users**

		Ever Smoked		Currently Drink Alcoholic Drinks		Ever Used Any Drugs	
		No.	%	Yes		Yes	
				No.	%	No.	%
Ever Been Excluded From School	Yes	24	7%	23	10%	10	18%
	No	310	93%	212	90%	45	82%
Group Total		334	100%	235	100%	54	100%

**Table 4.7.6 Type Of Exclusions From School  
Ever Smoked**

		Ever Smoked	
		No.	%
Type of Exclusion	Fixed Term Exclusion	18	77%
	Don't Know	5	23%
Group Total		23	100%

**Table 4.7.7 Exclusions From School  
Currently Drink Alcohol**

		No.	%
Type of Exclusion	Fixed Term Exclusion	18	81%
	Don't Know	4	19%
Group Total		22	100%

**Table 4.7.8 Exclusions From School - Ever Used Drugs**

		No.	%
Type of Exclusion	Fixed Term Exclusion	7	76%
	Don't Know	2	24%
Group Total		10	100%



## Conclusion

The data captured during the fieldwork for this study gives an insight only into the situation as it was when the study was implemented. However, the population under study is fluid, as each year different pupils move through the school system, changing their attitudes and behaviour patterns as they age and become exposed to different influences. Fashions and other sources of influence also change and for these reasons it is suggested that a study of this nature be undertaken at regular intervals, perhaps every 3 years. This will provide a valuable tool to identify if, and when, the situation is changing. It will also permit the tracking of changes in attitudes and behaviour and will provide information on any developing trends in substance abuse.

In turning to what conclusions can be made from the current study, it may well be that some people will be shocked by the reported levels of substance abuse among secondary school students, while others will be surprised that these levels appear to be lower than they expected.

The main findings indicate that although smoking, drinking and drug taking are prevalent among secondary school students in Mauritius, substance abuse is not necessarily at a level that would constitute a crisis.

It is clear from this study that many secondary students are aware of the dangers of smoking but still decide to take up the habit. It also remains a fact that, along with alcohol use, smoking is a more socially acceptable form of substance abuse than drug taking. It has also been noted that even though it is illegal to sell cigarettes to minors many of the respondents who smoked stated that they regularly buy their cigarettes from shops and supermarkets.

With alcohol drinking, the main area of investigation focused on the prevalence of drinking and, where drinking was taking place, the consumption patterns. There was little evidence of what could be seen as "problem" or "binge" drinking, that is where young people are regularly drinking large quantities of alcohol in a short space of time in order to become inebriated. There are some students, particularly those of the older age group, who are drinking alcohol, some even fairly regularly, but the evidence points less to binge drinking and more



towards alcohol usage being generally controlled and centred on social events. This in itself may be because, like smoking, drinking is not only socially acceptable among most social groups, but is even an integral part of many social events and celebrations.

Turning to drug use, this is always an activity that warrants concern. However, stripping away the sensationalism that often accompanies any reporting of drug use, we see that there is a relatively low percentage of self-confessed drug users among secondary school students.

Even allowing for some under-reporting, the number of drug users in secondary schools appears to be not as high as many would believe. This is not to say that the issue should not be taken seriously.

One of the more noteworthy aspects that emerged from the study was the ease with which many respondents, both drug users and non- drug users, said that they would be able to purchase Gandia should they so wish.

Where we may have suspected some degree of under reporting in other aspects, here we may suspect some element of over-reporting. However, if the data were to be accepted at face value, many secondary students would find it very easy to buy Gandia.

In looking at attitudes to the dangers of the usage of certain substances, it is not surprising to see that more respondents view drug use as more dangerous than either smoking or drinking. Drug use is dangerous and debilitating but we should perhaps also not lose sight of the fact that there is a recognised direct link between smoking and serious disease. The apparent ease of purchasing cigarettes and the general social acceptability of smoking combine to make cigarettes a serious threat to health.

In all the areas of substance abuse studied it was noticed that there was a degree of adolescent behaviour integral to the rates of use and abuse. In particular, it was noticed that in Mixed Sex Schools the rate of Boys indulging in smoking, drinking and drug use was higher than for those in Boys Only schools.

The assumption to be made being that not only peer pressure but the desire to impress both the same and the opposite sex has a role to play in encouraging boys to indulge in substance abuse. Should a further study be done this is one area of investigation that could be broadened to allow for more significant findings to be made.

Among adherents to the major religions, those from a Christian background were more likely to indulge in smoking, drinking and drug use. It is also noted that those respondents who were more likely to be involved in some form of substance abuse came from backgrounds where their fathers were employed in a middle tier occupation

The main weapon against substance abuse is information on the dangers of indulging, as prevention is better than cure. In general, it would appear that more, and better targeted, information sessions are needed to inform and direct secondary students on the dangers of all forms of substance abuse. It is imperative to ensure that all students have an equal chance of receiving the same standard of information and for this reason it would perhaps be better that information campaigns are mounted regularly on a national scale.

## **Appendix (i)**

### **Sampling List of Secondary Schools**

This is the Master List of Schools from which the schools that took part in the study were sampled.

NAME OF SCHOOL	TYPE
ALL REGIONS	
REGION 1: PORT-LOUIS	
STATE	
LA TOUR KOENIG SSS	G
ROYAL COLLEGE PL	B
SIR A. R. MOHAMED SSS	B
R. SEENEEVASSEN SSS	G
PROF. HASSAN RAFFA SSS	B
TERRE ROUGE SSS	B
PAILLES SSS	G
MEDCO	
MEDCO TRINITY 'ABERC.'	B
MEDCO CASSIS	G
MEDCO A.BHUJOHARRY	G
PRIVATE AIDED	
BHUJOHARRY COL	B
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S COL	BG
ALPHA COLLEGE	BG
EDEN COLLEGE	B
LONDON COLLEGE	BG
PORT LOUIS HIGH SCH	BG
D. ANGLO VEDIC COL	BG

ISL. CULTURAL COLLEGE	B
LORETO CONVENT PL	G
MADAD UL ISLAM	G
MUSLIM GIRLS COLLEGE	G
BRADLEY COLLEGE	BG
S. MUNRAKHUN COL	BG
PRIVATE UNAIDED	
INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC & SECULAR STUDIES	BG
PORT LOUIS ACADEMY	B
PERE LAVAL COLLEGE	B
REGION 2: NORTH	
STATE	
D. RAMPHUL SSS	G
R. TAGORE SSS	BG
PAMPLEMOUSSES SSS	G
LADY S. RAMGOOLAM SSS	G
TRIOLET SSS	B
PT SHARMA JUGDAMBI SSS	G
ADOLPHE DE PLEVITZ SSS	B
R. PRAYAG SSS	B
PRIVATE AIDED	
MERTON COLLEGE	BG
PAMPLEM. HIGH SCH	BG
COSMOPOLITAN COL	B
COSMOPOLITAN COL	G
INTERNATIONAL COL	BG
FRIENDSHIP COLLEGE	B
FRIENDSHIP COLLEGE	G
COLLEGE IDEAL	BG

PROGRESSIVE COLLEGE	BG
UNIVERSAL COLLEGE	BG
PRIVATE UNAIDED	
ECOLE DU NORD	BG
REGION 3: EAST	
STATE	
B.AIR RIVIERE SECHE SSS	G
SIR L. TEELock SSS	B
R. GUJADHUR SSS	G
SEBASTOPOL SSS	B
MANILALL DOCTOR SSS	G
MAHATMA GANDHI INST.	BG
SMT INDIRA GANDHI SSS	B
PRIVATE AIDED	
N. EDUCATIONAL COL	BG
PROF. B. BISSOONDOYAL	B
PROF. B. BISSOONDOYAL	G
BYRON COLLEGE	BG
DARWIN COLLEGE	BG
MODERN COLLEGE	BG
MAYFLOWER COLLEGE	BG
ROYAL HOLLOWAY COL	BG
QUARTIER MILITAIRE COL.	BG
LORETO CONVENT ST P	G
NELSON COLLEGE	BG

PRIVATE UNAIDED	
LE BOCAGE INTERNATIONAL	BG
CENTRE PIERRE POIVRE	BG
LYCEE DES MASCAREIGNES	BG
REGION 4: SOUTH	
STATE	
EMMANUEL ANQUETIL SSS	B
F. BOYER DE LA GIRODAY SSS	G
S. BISSOONDOYAL SSS	B
M. SUNGEELEE SSS	B
ST AUBIN SSS	B
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA SSS	G
PRIVATE AIDED	
LORETO CONVENT MHB	G
HAMILTON COLLEGE	B
WILLOUGHBY COLLEGE	B
WILLOUGHBY COLLEGE	G
MACMILLAN COLLEGE	BG
HAMILTON COLLEGE	G
ROSE BELLE HIGH SCH	BG
UNITY COLLEGE	BG
WINDSOR COLLEGE	B
WINDSOR COLLEGE	G
KEATS COLLEGE	B
KEATS COLLEGE	G

GRAND BOIS COLLEGE	BG
PRESIDENCY COLLEGE	BG
NEWTON COLLEGE	BG
THANACODY COLLEGE	BG
REGION 5: CENTRAL	
STATE	
DR.MAURICE CURE SSS	G
SIR A. RAMAN OSMAN SSS	B
DHUNPUTH LALLAH SSS	G
ROYAL COLLEGE CPE	B
FOREST SIDE SSS	G
MEDCO	
MEDCO CLAIRFONDS	BG
PRIVATE AIDED	
LE LYCEE MAURICIEN	BG
ALEEMIAH COLLEGE	BG
ADVENTIST COLLEGE	BG
ST HELENA	BG
N. SADDUL COLLEGE	BG
HINDU GIRLS	G
CUREPIPE COLLEGE	B
IMPERIAL COLLEGE	B
LORETO CONVENT CPE	G
PRESIDENCY COLLEGE	B
SAINT JOSEPH COLLEGE	B
MAURITIUS COLLEGE	B
NOTRE DAME COLLEGE	G
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE	BG
RENASCECE COLLEGE	BG

PRESIDENCY COLLEGE	G
MAURITIUS COLLEGE	G
PRIVATE UNAIDED	
ST NICHOLAS GRAMMAR SEC	BG
LYCEE LABOURDONNAIS	BG
ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE	BG
L'OCEP INSTITUTE	BG
REGION 6: WEST	
STATE	
QUEEN ELIZABETH COL.	G
MARCEL CABON SSS	B
JOHN KENNEDY COLLEGE	B
DR. R. CHAPERON SSS	B
GAETAN RAYNAL SSS	BG
SWAMI SIVANANDA SSS	G
NEW BAMBOUS SSS	B
MEDCO	
S. MURDAY	B
COL. MAINGARD (CASSIS MEDCO)	G
PRIVATE AIDED	
VICTORIA COLLEGE	BG
LORETO CONVENT RHILL	G
NEW ETON COLLEGE	B
ST ANDREW'S	BG
SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE	B
EDEN COLLEGE (B) RH	B



PATTEN COLLEGE (G)	G
COL. BON ET P. SECOURS	G
COL. DES VILLES SOEURS	BG
NEW DEVTON COLLEGE	BG
LYCEE DE BEAU BASSIN	G
COL. DE LA CONFIANCE	B
ISLAMIC CULTURAL COL.	B
PATTEN COLLEGE	B
EDEN COLLEGE	G
COLLEGE DU ST ESPRIT	B
LORETO CONVENT QB	G
REGION 7: RODRIGUES	
Not included in Sample	

**UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS**  
**Centre For Applied Social Research**

**SURVEY OF SMOKING, DRINKING AND ILLICIT DRUG USE  
AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MAURITIUS**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Instructions for Completion**

**Please read carefully before completing the questionnaire**

Most of the questions can be answered by putting a circle around the number next to the answer that applies to you, like this

Yes....1

No.....2

But sometimes you have to write a longer answer on a dotted line

*Like this – please write clearly as we need to be able to read it*

.....

Not all of the questions apply to everybody. So when you have completed a question you must check to see if there is an instruction that tells you which question to answer next. Follow these instructions carefully. Ignore the questions you have been asked to skip.

***IN ORDER*** that the results of the study reflect the real life situation please take care to be honest in your answers. You are not being judged. This study has been designed so that nobody will know which answers you give. Nobody will know who you are and nobody will be able to identify you. No names are used and when analysing the results we will have no idea who filled in which questionnaire. Rest assured that the teaching staff and others will not have any access to the completed questionnaires. Once the data has been analysed the questionnaires will be destroyed.

**Q1** Are you a boy or a girl?

Boy.....1

Girl.... 2

**Q2** Which form are you in at college?

Form 3..... 1

Form 4..... 2

Form 5.....3

Form 6 Lower .....4

Form 6 Upper.... ..5

**Q3** How old are you now?

13 years old.....1

14 years old.....2

15 years old.....3

16 years old.....4

17 years old.....5

18 and above.....6

**Q4** a) Do you live with your biological mother

Yes.....1

No.....2

b) If **Yes**, Mother's Profession.....(if **No** go to **Question 5**)

**Q5** a) Do you live with your biological father

Yes.....1

No.....2

b) If **Yes**, Father's profession.....(if **No** go to **Question 6**)

**The next set of questions are about cigarettes. Remember that your name is not on the questionnaire, so no-one who knows you will find out your answers.**

**Q6** Now read the following statements carefully and circle the number next to the one which best describes you.

I have never smoked.....1

I only ever tried smoking once.....2

I used to smoke sometimes but I never smoke a  
cigarette now.....3

I smoke cigarettes now.....4

**Q7** Do any of your classmates or close friends smoke?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**If No, go to Question 11)**

**Q8** How often do they smoke

Not very often .....1

Sometimes.....2

Everyday.....3

**Q9** Do they ever encourage you to smoke?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q10** Do they smoke during school hours

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q11 Answer if you smoke cigarettes now.**  
**If you do not smoke go to Question 31**

Please circle the number next to the number of cigarettes you smoke

1 to 3 per day.....1

4 or 5 per day.....2

More than 5 per day.....3

Put the Number.....

I only smoke when I can get them.....4

**Q12** How long is it since you started smoking at least one cigarette a week?

Less than 3 months.....1

3-6 months.....2

6 months to 1 year.....3

more than 1 year.....4

**Q13** How easy or difficult would you find it to go without smoking for a day

Very difficult.....1

Fairly difficult.....2

Fairly easy.....3

Very easy.....4

**Q14** How easy or difficult would you find it to go without smoking for a week

Very difficult.....1

Fairly difficult.....2

Fairly easy.....3

Very easy.....4

**Q15** How easy or difficult would you find it to give up smoking altogether if you had to?

Very difficult.....1

Fairly difficult.....2

Fairly easy.....3

Very easy.....4

**Q16** Would you like to give up smoking altogether?

Yes.....1

No.....2

I don't know.....3

**Q17** Have you ever tried to give up smoking?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q18** Do your parents know that you smoke?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Don't Know.....3

**If Yes please answer Question 19 - if No or Don't Know go to Question 20**

**Q 19** How do your parents react to your smoking?

They try to stop me.....1

They try to persuade me not to smoke.....2

They do nothing.....3

They encourage me to smoke.....4

I don't know.....5

**Q20** If your parents knew that you smoked how do you think that they would react?

- They would try to stop me.....1
- They would try to persuade me not to smoke.....2
- They would do nothing .....3
- They would encourage me to smoke.....4
- I don't know.....5

**Q21** Do either of your parents smoke?

- Yes.....1
- No.....2
- Not Applicable.....3

**If No or Not Applicable go to Question 23**

**Q22** Which of your parents smoke?

- Mother.....1
- Father.....2
- Both.....3

**Q23** Do any of your brothers or sisters smoke?

- Yes.....1
- No.....2
- I don't know.....3
- I don't have any brothers or sisters.....4

**Q24** Do any of the teachers at your school smoke?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Don't Know.....3

**Q25** Why do you smoke?

Because my friends smoke.....1

Because other members of my family smoke .....2

Because it is a grown up thing to do.....3

Other Reason (specify).....

**Q26** Are you allowed to smoke at home if you want to?

Yes.....1

No.....2

I don't know.....3

**Q27** Where do you usually get your cigarettes from? (Please circle more than one number if you often get cigarettes from different people or places).

I buy them from a shop.....1

I get them from friends or relatives.....2

My brother or sister gives them to me.....3

My mother or father gives them to me.....4

I get them in some other way.....5

**Q28** How old were you when you first tried smoking a cigarette, even if it was only a puff or two? Write on the dotted line your **age then**, in **numbers** not words.

I was.....Years old



**Q29** How often do you buy cigarettes?

- Almost every day.....1
- Once or twice a week.....2
- Two or three times a month.....3
- About once a month.....4
- Only a few times a year.....5

**Q30** How much would you say you spend on cigarettes **per week**

- Up to Rs25 per week.....1
- Between Rs26 and Rs50 per week.....2
- Between Rs51 and Rs100 per week.....3
- More than Rs100 per week .....4

**Q31** At your school do students smoke on school grounds?

- Yes.....1
- No.....2
- Don't Know.....3

**Q32** At your school do teachers smoke on school grounds (includes Staff Room)

- Yes.....1
- No.....2
- Don't Know.....3

**The next set of questions are about ALCOHOL. Remember that your name is not on the questionnaire, so no-one who knows you will find out your answers.**

**Q33** Do you currently drink beer or any other alcoholic drinks?  
(Alcoholic drinks include: Beer, Wine, Rum, Whisky, Gin etc.)

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q34** Do any of your classmates or close friends drink beer or other alcoholic drinks?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Don't Know.....3

**If No go to Question 37**

**Q35** How often do they drink?

Occasionally.....1

Once a week.....2

Regularly (more than once a week).....3

Don't Know.....4

**Q36** Do they ever encourage you to drink?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**If you have said Yes to Question 33 please answer Question 37**

**If you answered No to Question 33 please go to Question 52**

**Q37** How old were you when you drank your first beer or other alcoholic drink?  
Write on the dotted line your **age then**, in **numbers** not words.  
(If you have never drunk alcohol go to **Question 45**)

I was.....years old

**Q38** How often do you **usually** drink beer or any other alcoholic drink?

Almost everyday.....1

About twice a week.....2

About once a week.....3

About once a fortnight.....4

About once a month.....5

Only a few times a year.....6

**Q39** If you buy beer or any other alcoholic drink where do you **usually** buy it?

From a shop.....1

From a nightclub.....2

From a supermarket.....3

I never buy alcohol.....4

**Q40** When did you last drink beer or any other alcoholic drink?

Today.....1

Yesterday.....2

Some other time during the last 7 days.....3

1 week, but less than 2 weeks ago.....4

2 weeks, but less than 4 weeks ago .....5

1 month, but less than 6 months ago.....6

6 months ago or more.....7

**Q41** On which of these days during **the last 7 days** did you drink beer or any other alcoholic drink? **Circle whichever apply and you can circle more than one day.**

Sunday.....1

Monday.....2

Tuesday.....3

Wednesday.....4

Thursday.....5

Friday.....6

Saturday.....7

**Q42** Which is your preferred alcoholic drink?

Beer.....1

Wine.....2

Whisky.....3

Rum.....4

Gin.....5

Vodka.....6

Other (please  
specify).....

**Q43** How often do you get drunk

Never.....1

Sometimes.....2

Whenever I drink alcohol.....3

**Q44** Why do you drink alcohol?

Because my friends drink alcohol.....1

Because other members of my family drink alcohol.....2

Because it is a grown up thing to do.....3

Other (Specify).....

**Q45** Do either of your parents drink beer or other alcoholic drinks?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Not Applicable ....3

Don' Know.....4

**If you said No or Not Applicable go to Question 49**

**Q46** Which of your parents drink beer or other alcoholic drinks?

Mother.....1

Father.....2

Both.....3

**(If Mother go to Question 47 – If Father go to Question 48  
if Both answer Questions 47 and 48)**

**Q47** In a typical week how often will your mother drink wine, beer or another alcoholic beverage?

Daily.....1

Twice a week.....2

3 or more times a week.....3

Only Drinks Occasionally....4

Don't Know.....5

**Q48** In a typical week how often will your father drink wine, beer or another alcoholic beverage?

Daily.....1

Twice a week.....2

3 or more times a week.....3

Only Drinks Occasionally....4

Don't Know.....5

**Q49** Do your parents know that you drink?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Don't Know.....3

**If you answered 'Yes' go to Question 50 – if you answered 'No' go to Question 51**

**Q50** How do your parents react to your drinking?

They try to stop me.....1

They try to persuade me not to drink.....2

They do nothing.....3

They encourage me to drink.....4

I don't know.....5

Not Applicable.....6

**Q51** If your parents knew that you drank alcohol how do you think that they would react?

They would try to stop me.....1

They would try to persuade me not to drink.....2

They would do nothing.....3

They would encourage me to drink.....4

I don't know.....5

Not Applicable.....6

The next set of questions are about drugs (apart from cigarettes and alcohol). Remember that your name is not on the questionnaire, so no-one who knows you will find out your answers.

**Q52** Have you ever heard of the following drugs?

- A) Cannabis / Gandia.....1
- B) Psychotropic Drugs  
(such as Valium, Librium, Mogadon, Activan, Rohypnol,  
Rivotril, Subutex, Codeine Syrup).....2
- C) White Lady .....3
- D) Solvents / Glue.....4
- E) Heroin / Brown Sugar ..... 5
- F) Other drugs .....6  
that would not be given to you by a doctor or chemist  
please write the name of the drugs.....  
.....

**Q53** Do any of your classmates or close friends use gandia or other illicit drugs?

- Yes.....1
- No.....2
- Don't Know.....3

**Q54** Have you ever been offered gandia or other illicit drugs?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q55** Have you ever used gandia or other illicit drugs?  
(even if only once)

Yes.....1

No.....2

**If No go to Question 58**

**Q56** Thinking about the first time you used gandia or other illicit drugs how old were you then? Write on the dotted line your **age then**, in **numbers** not words.

I was..... years old

**Q57** When was the last time you ever used gandia or other illicit drugs?

In the last week.....1

In the last month.....2

In the Last 6 Months.....3

Between 6 Months And A Year Ago.....4

More than a year ago.....5

**Q58** Is your school a drug-free school or it is not drug-free?

Drug-free.....1

Not Drug-free.....2

Don't know.....3



**Q59** If you personally saw a student using gandia or other illicit drugs at school would you report the student to school officials or not?

I would.....1

I would not.....2

Don't know.....3

**Q60** If you wanted to buy gandia right now how long do you think it would take you to get it.

An hour or less.....1

A few hours.....2

Within a day.....3

Within a week.....4

Longer than a week.....5

Would be unable to buy.....6

Don't know.....7

**Q61** How harmful to the health of someone of your age is the regular use of

**(a) Tobacco**

Very harmful.....1

Fairly harmful.....2

Not too harmful.....3

Not harmful at all.....4

Don't know.....5

**(b) Alcohol**

Very harmful.....1  
Fairly harmful.....2  
Not too harmful.....3  
Not harmful at all.....4  
Don't know.....5

**(c) Drugs**

Very harmful.....1  
Fairly harmful.....2  
Not too harmful.....3  
Not harmful at all.....4  
Don't know.....5

**(d) Which of the following is  
Most Harmful to your health  
and which one is the Next Most  
Harmful**

	Most Harmful	Next Most Harmful
Tobacco	1	1
Gandia	2	2
Alcohol	3	3
Solvents / Glue	4	4
Heroin / Brown Sugar	5	5

**Q62 If you don't smoke now, how likely is it that you will experiment with smoking in the future. (If you smoke now go to Question 63)**

Very likely.....1

Somewhat likely.....2

Not very likely.....3

It will never happen.....4

Don't know.....5

**Q63 If you don't drink alcohol now, how likely is it that you will try to drink beer or other alcoholic drink in the future.  
(If you drink alcohol now go to Question 64)**

Very likely.....1

Somewhat likely.....2

Not very likely.....3

It will never happen.....4

Don't know.....5

**Q64 If you don't use gandia or other illicit drugs now how likely is it that you will try drugs in the future.  
(If you do use gandia or other illicit drugs now now go to Question 65)**

Very likely.....1

Somewhat likely.....2

Not very likely.....3

It will never happen.....4

Don't know.....5

**The next set of questions are more general questions. Remember that your name is not on the questionnaire, so no-one who knows you will find out your answers.**

**Q65** Have you ever stayed away from school without permission (truanted)?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q66** Have you ever been excluded from school?

Yes.....1

No.....2

**Q67** Was it a fixed term exclusion or a permanent exclusion?

A **fixed term exclusion (or suspension)** is when you are not allowed to go to school for a set amount of time because of your behaviour.

A **permanent exclusion** is when you are **never** allowed to go back to your school because of your behaviour.

Fixed-term exclusion.....1

Permanent exclusion.....2

Don't know.....3

**Q68** In the last twelve months have you had any lessons, videos or discussions in class on any of the following topics:?

**Circle the number in one box on each line.**

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a) Smoking.....	1	2	3
b) Alcohol.....	1	2	3
c) Drugs.....	1	2	3

**Q69** Could you just please state your religion

Hindu.....1  
Muslim.....2  
Christian.....3  
Other.....4  
None.....5  
Prefer not to say....6

**Q70** In which district do you live?

Plaine Wilhems.....1  
Port Louis.....2  
Pamplemousses.....3  
Riviere du Rempart.....4  
Grand Port.....5  
Savanne.....6  
Black River.....7  
Moka.....8  
Flacq.....9

**This is the end of the questionnaire – thank you very much for cooperating with the study.**