

Reasons for Not Using and Perceived Harm of Alcohol & Marijuana Use Among Navajo Students

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Presented to the Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board

October 18-19, 2017



Project Overview

- ▶ Five year study of adolescent substance use (funded by NIDA)
- ▶ American Indian 7-12th grade students attending schools on or near reservations
- ▶ Schools randomly sampled
- ▶ Five Navajo schools completed “Our Youth, Our Future” survey (Spring, 2017)



Sample

▶ Total number of students surveyed	275	%
▶ Middle School students	193	70.2
▶ High School students	82	29.8
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▶ Female students	145	52.7
▶ Male students	130	47.3

Number of Indian non-Navajo students surveyed – 7-8th = 1141; 9-12 = 2364

Alcohol and Marijuana Use

Navajo/American Indian Non-Navajo

7-8 th Graders		9-12 th Graders	
Lifetime Alcohol	Lifetime Marijuana	Lifetime Alcohol	Lifetime Marijuana
19.3%/37.4%	31.4%/38.5%	62.5%/60.0%	61.3%/59.2%
Last Month Alcohol	Last Month Marijuana	Last Month Alcohol	Last Month Marijuana
6.3%/13.0%	17.8%/20.2%	25.0%/27.1%	27.5%/35.6%



Reasons for Not Using Alcohol

- ▶ **Measure**

- ▶ 12 items

- ▶ Stem – “How important are each of the following reasons you DON’T DRINK ALCOHOL?”

- ▶ 1 = Not at all important

- ▶ 2 = Somewhat important

- ▶ 3 = Very important



Reasons Not Using Alcohol



Parents don't want me to

Afraid of getting caught

Couldn't get any

Could hurt my grades

Keep me from doing things I want to do

Wouldn't like the feeling

It has hurt my family

I don't like the taste

My friends don't do it

It isn't cool

It could physically harm me

Religious or spiritual reasons



Reasons for Not Using Alcohol Factors

- ▶ Factor analyzed the 12 items
- ▶ Three scales emerged
 - ▶ **Social Reasons** (4-items; e.g., "My friends don't do it")
 - ▶ **Consequences Reasons** (5-items; e.g., "Afraid of getting caught")
 - ▶ **Alcohol-Related Reasons** (3-items; e.g., "Wouldn't like the feeling")



Reasons for Not Using Alcohol Factors by Grade Level

	7-8 th Graders	10-12 th Graders
Social Reasons	2.44	2.36
Consequences Reasons	2.67	2.64
Alcohol-Related Reasons	2.12	2.04

No significant differences in reasons for use of alcohol between middle school and high school students



Reasons for Not Using Alcohol Factors by Gender

	Females	Males
Social Reasons	2.46	2.40
Consequences Reasons*	2.74	2.58
Alcohol-Related Reasons	2.08	2.14

Female students more likely than male students to not drink for Consequences Reasons



Reasons for Not Using Marijuana



Parents don't want me to

Afraid of getting caught

Couldn't get any

Could hurt my grades

Keep me from doing things I want to do

Wouldn't like the feeling

It has hurt my family

I don't like to smoke

My friends don't do it

It isn't cool

It could physically harm me

Religious or spiritual reasons



Reasons for Not Using Marijuana Factors

- ▶ Factor analyzed the 12 items
- ▶ Three scales emerged
 - ▶ **Social Reasons** (4-items; e.g., “My parents don’t want me to”)
 - ▶ **Consequences Reasons** (5-items; e.g., “It could physically harm me”)
 - ▶ **Marijuana-Related Reasons** (3-items; e.g., “I don’t like to smoke”)



Reasons for Not Using Marijuana Factors by Grade Level

	7-8 th Graders	10-12 th Graders
Social Reasons	2.40	2.32
Consequences Reasons*	2.64	2.43
Marijuana- Related Reasons	2.23	2.20

Middle school students more likely than high school students to not use marijuana for Consequences Reasons



Reasons for Not Using Marijuana Factors by Gender

	Females	Males
Social Reasons	2.44	2.32
Consequences Reasons*	2.70	2.47
Marijuana- Related Reasons	2.25	2.20

Female students more likely than male students to not use marijuana for Consequences Reasons



Perceived Harm of Alcohol & Marijuana Use

- ▶ Perceived harm is an established protective factor against substance use
- ▶ Perceptions of substance use harm change over time and social circumstances
- ▶ Changes in medical and recreational marijuana statutes may alter adolescent perceptions of harm for marijuana and other substances



Perceived Harm of Alcohol & Marijuana

- ▶ Measures

- ▶ Stem

- ▶ “How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they . . .

- ▶ Use alcohol regularly

1 = No risk

2 = Slight risk

- ▶ Get drunk regularly

3 = Moderate risk

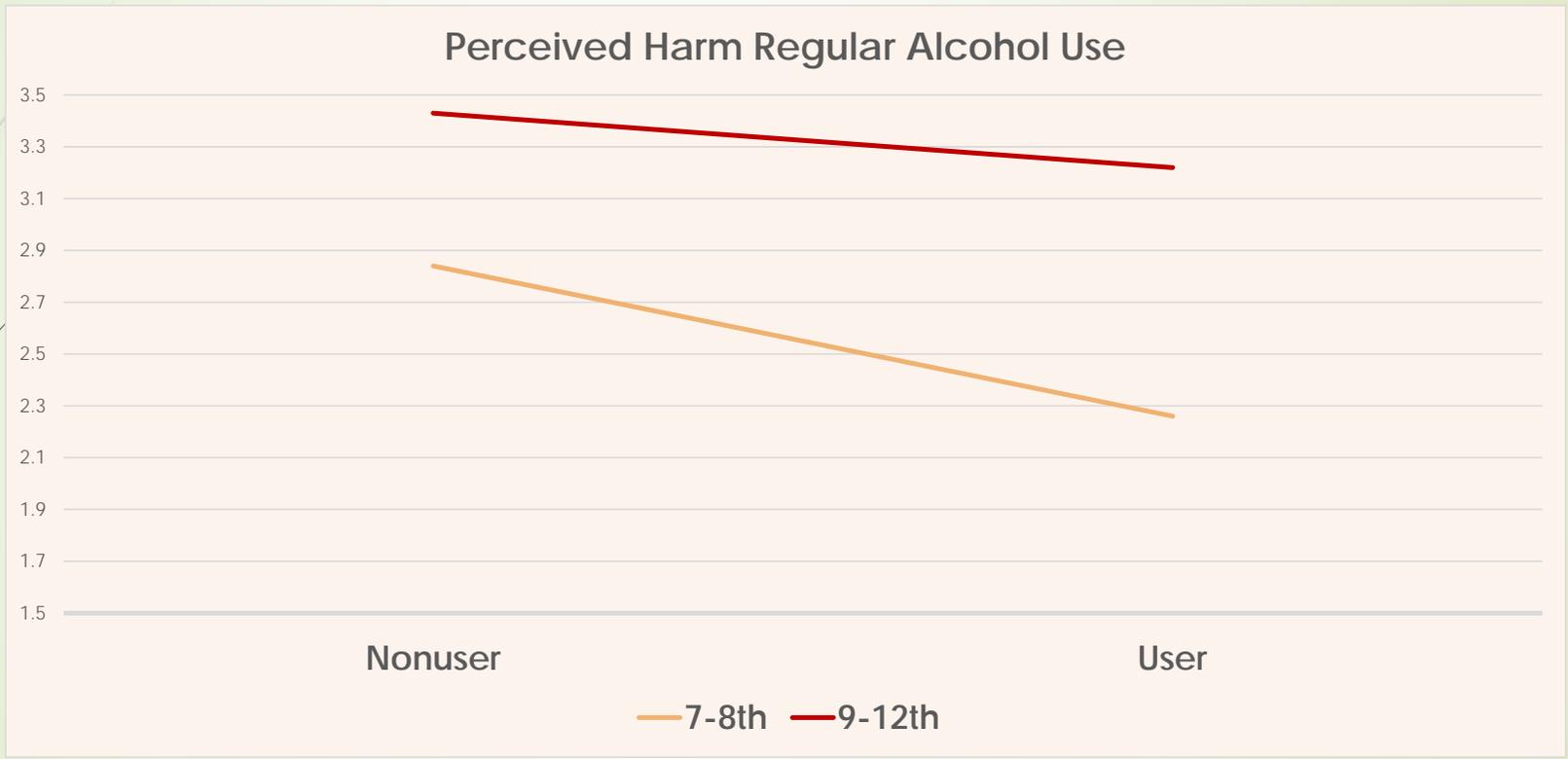
4 = Great risk

- ▶ Use marijuana regularly

Perceived Harm of Regular Alcohol Use by User-Nonuser Status and Grade Level

Grade Level***	User Status*	Mean Perceived Harm Regular Alcohol Use
7-8 th Graders	Nonuser	2.84
	User	2.26
9-12 th Graders	Nonuser	3.43
	User	3.22
*** p < .001, * p < .05		

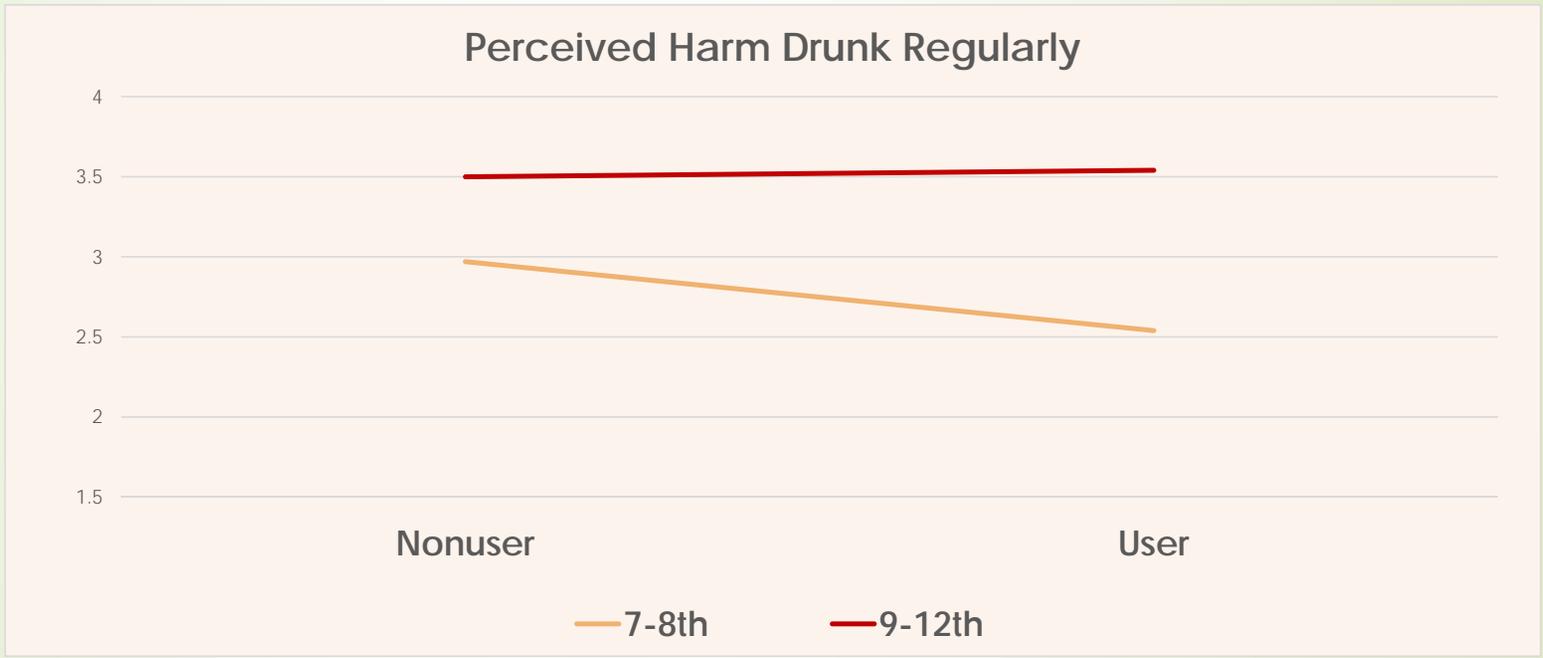
High school students rated regular alcohol use more harmful than did middle school students, and alcohol users rated regular alcohol use less harmful than nonusers.



Perceived Harm of Getting Drunk Regularly by User-Nonuser Status and Grade Level

Grade Level***	User Status	Mean Perceived Harm Drunk Regularly
7-8 th Graders	Nonuser	2.97
	User	2.54
9-12 th Graders	Nonuser	3.50
	User	3.54
*** p < .001		

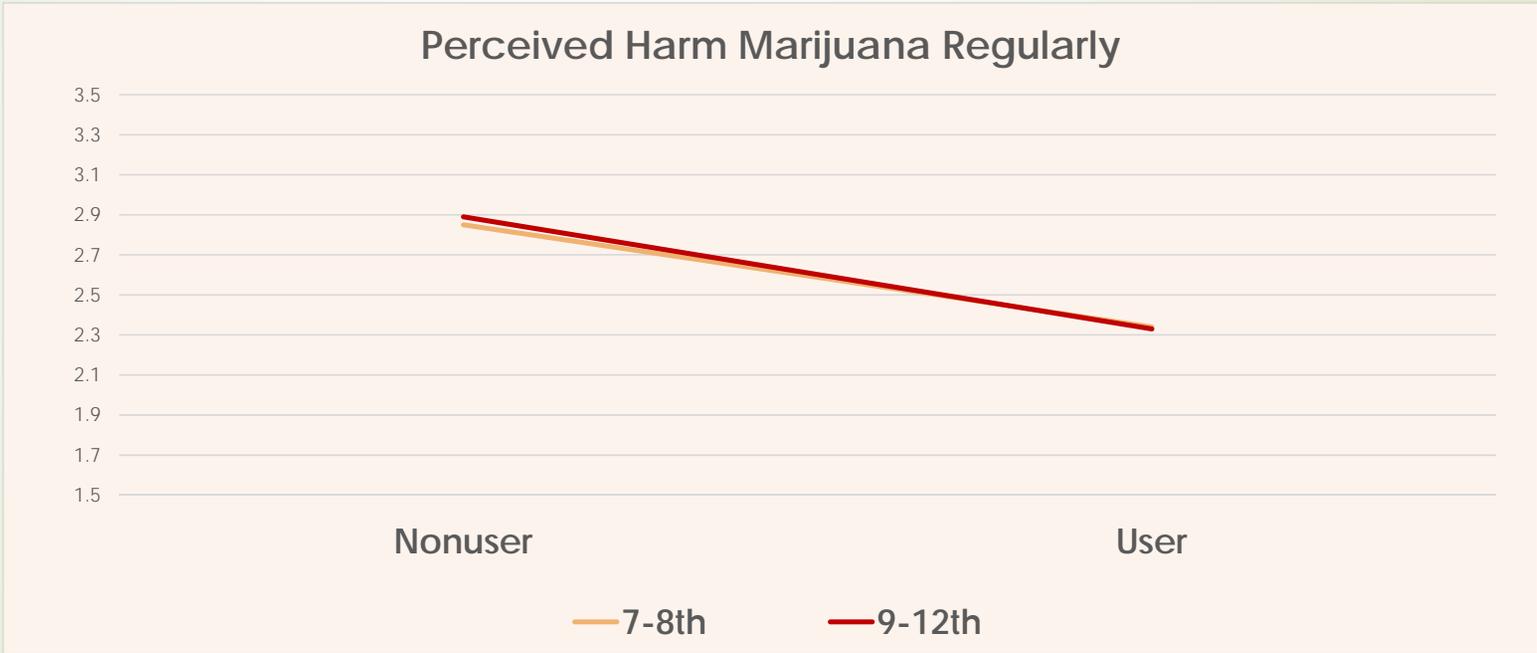
High school students rated getting drunk regularly more harmful than did middle school students



Perceived Harm of Using Marijuana Regularly by User-Nonuser Status and Grade Level

Grade Level	User Status**	Mean Perceived Harm Using Marijuana Regularly
7-8 th Graders	Nonuser	2.85
	User	2.34
9-12 th Graders	Nonuser	2.90
	User	2.33
** p < .01		

Marijuana users rated regular marijuana use less harmful than nonusers.

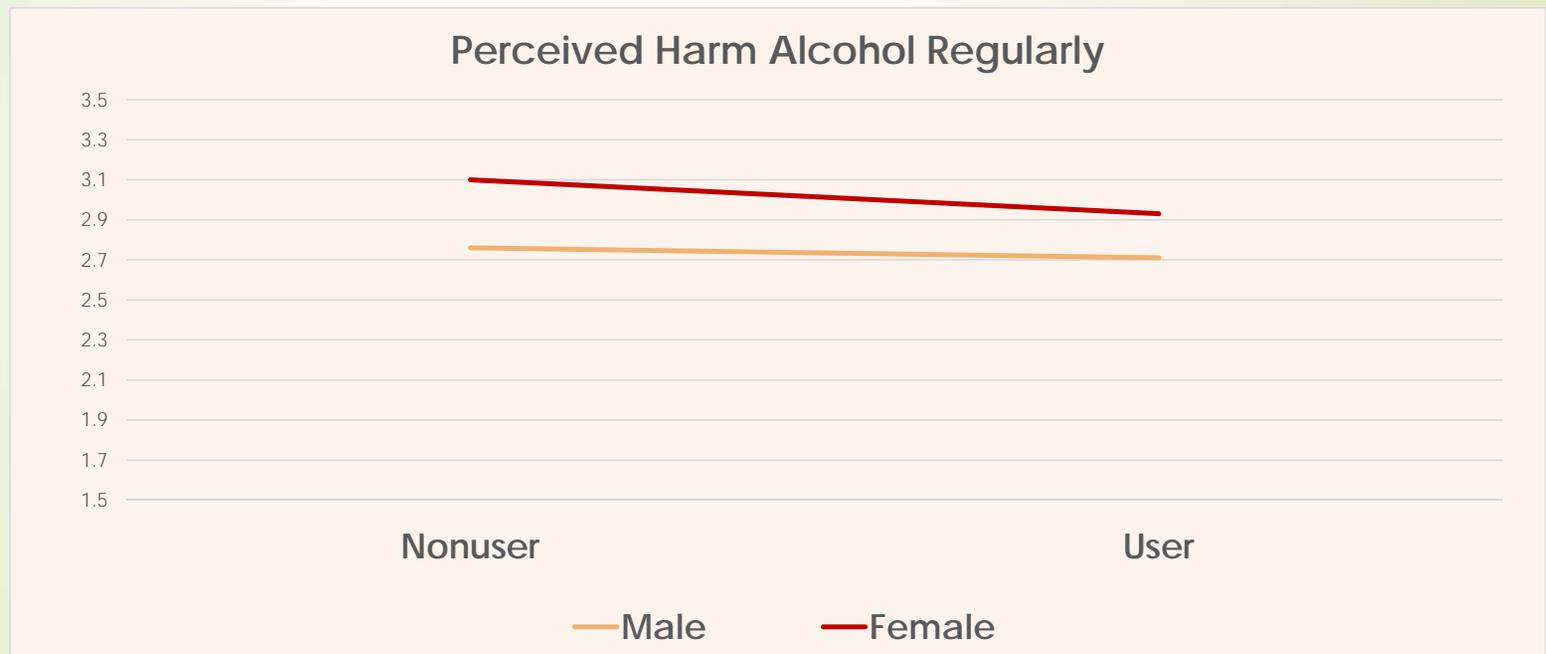


Perceived Harm of Regular Alcohol Use by User-Nonuser Status and Gender

Gender	User Status	Mean Perceived Harm Using Alcohol Regularly
Males	Nonuser	2.76
	User	2.71
Females	Nonuser	3.10
	User	2.94

No differences by user status or gender in perceived harm of using alcohol regularly

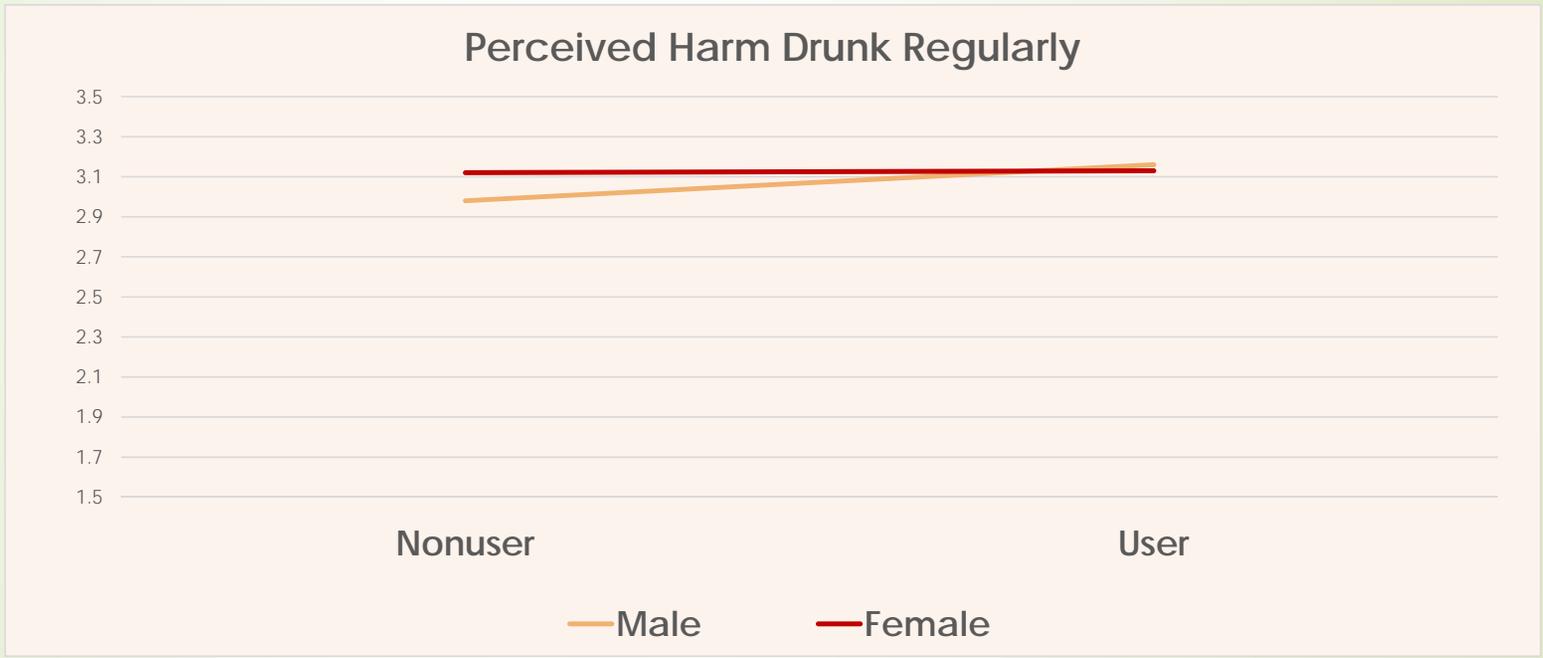
Perceived Harm of Regular Alcohol Use by User-Nonuser Status and Gender



Perceived Harm of Getting Drunk Regularly by User-Nonuser Status and Gender

Gender	User Status	Mean Perceived Harm Getting Drunk Regularly
Males	Nonuser	2.98
	User	3.16
Females	Nonuser	3.12
	User	3.13

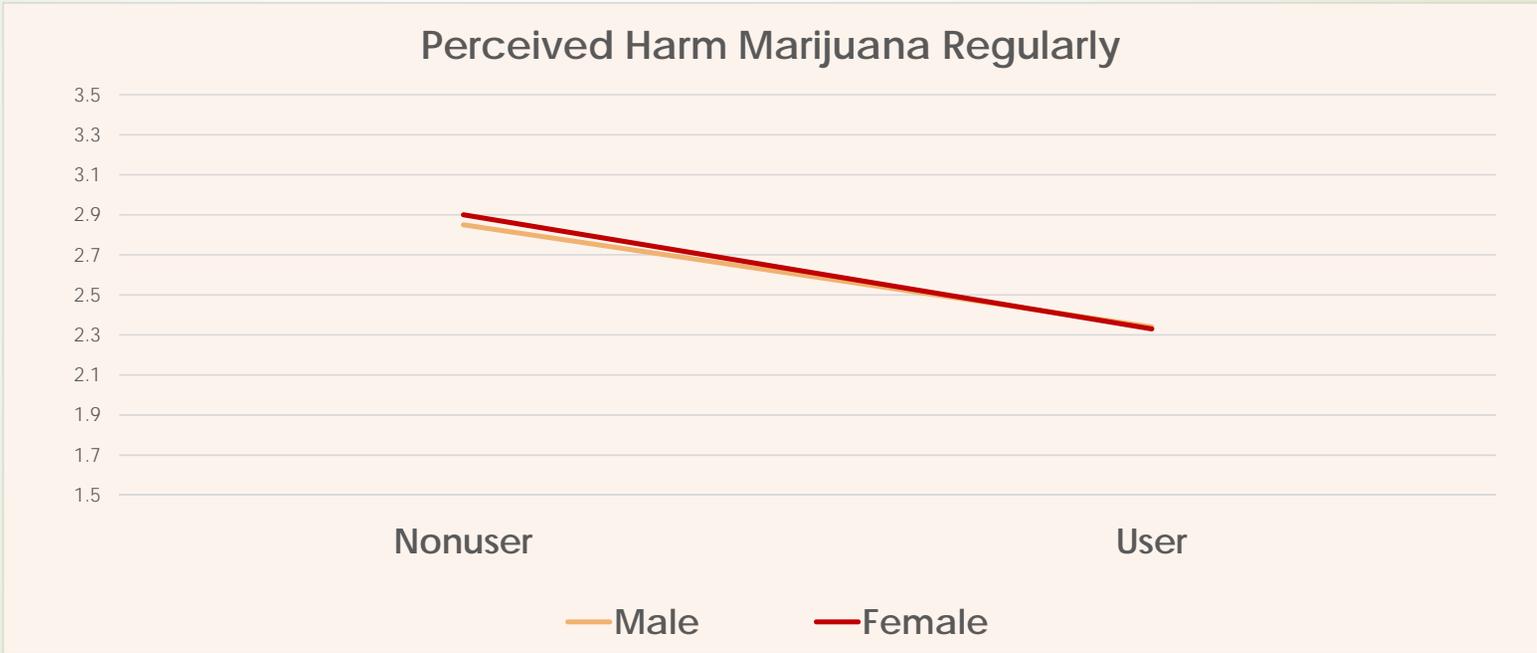
No differences by user status or gender in perceived harm of getting drunk regularly



Perceived Harm of Using Marijuana Regularly by User-Nonuser Status and Gender

Gender	User Status***	Mean Perceived Harm Using Marijuana Regularly
Males	Nonuser	2.85
	User	2.34
Females	Nonuser	2.90
	User	2.33
p < .001		

No differences by sex in perceived harm of using marijuana regularly; users perceived less harm than nonusers





Summary



- ▶ 2/3 of Navajo students have tried alcohol and marijuana by high school
- ▶ 1/4 of Navajo high school students have used alcohol and marijuana in the last month
- ▶ A substantial number of Navajo students do not use alcohol or marijuana
- ▶ Reasons for not using alcohol are similar across middle and high school students
- ▶ Female students who do not use alcohol are more likely to do so for Consequences Reasons
- ▶ Middle school students and female students are more likely to not use marijuana for Consequences Reasons



Summary (cont.)

- High school students rated using alcohol regularly and getting drunk more harmful than did middle school students
- Marijuana users rated regular marijuana use less harmful than nonusers
- No gender differences in perceived harm of regular alcohol use, regularly getting drunk, or regular marijuana use



Implications

- Emphasis on Consequences of regular alcohol use are likely to be more effective with female than male students and with middle school students
- High school students who use alcohol regularly are likely to begin viewing it more negatively than those who do not (this is not the case with marijuana)
- Utilizing high school students to influence middle school students may be an effective approach, especially for alcohol use prevention (but may be less effective for marijuana prevention)



Acknowledgements

- ▶ We wish to express our appreciation to:
 - ▶ The Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board
 - ▶ The Middle School and High School Principals
 - ▶ The Middle School and High School Students
 - ▶ The National Institute on Drug Abuse

- ▶ This research was support by NIDA Grant # R01DA0071
Awarded to Randall C. Swaim & Linda R. Stanley