

How old are Kansas kids when they start using substances?

13

Of nearly 71,000 kids who took the KCTC Student Survey in 2021, the average age most kids reported they started using substances was 13.

Why does this matter?

Using substances in their early teens, kids increase their risk for substance use problems during adolescence and adulthood.

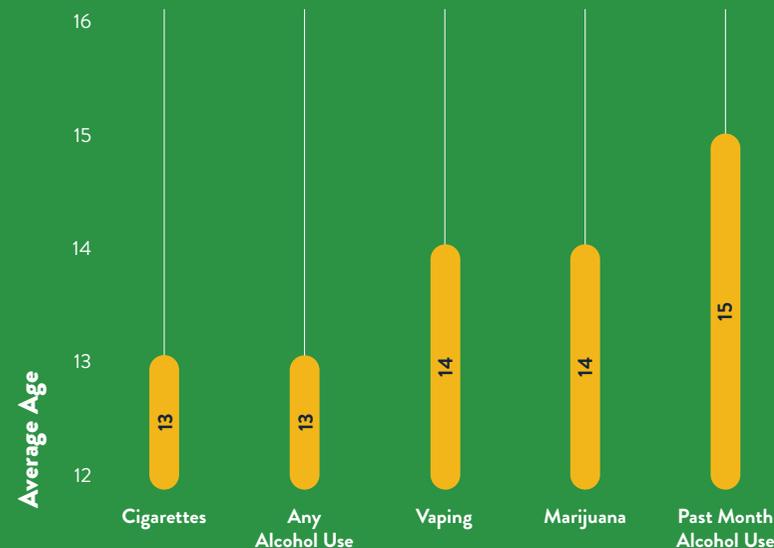
Over the past 25 years, survey results indicate the average age when Kansas kids first used substances has remained consistent at age 13.

One trend that has changed over that time is the percentage of kids who reported they have NEVER used substances in their lifetime. In 1995, 36% of students surveyed said they had NEVER used compared to 74% in 2021.

74%

36%

Average Age of First Substance Use Reported by Kansas Kids Surveyed in 2021



What can we do?

Continue the conversation! Kids model their own behavior on parents' actions, expectations, and attitudes. To learn more about how to talk with your kids about alcohol and other drug use, check out this online resource:



[Talk They Hear You](#)



Visit KCTCdata.org to learn more.

*The Kansas Communities That Care (KCTC) Student Survey is administered annually to 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders across the state. | *Schools may participate at no cost. | *The survey is supported by the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services Behavioral Health Services.