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Teen drug abuse: Rising!

A study released on March 2 by The Partnership for a Drug Free America found that Alcohol and marijuana use among teens is on the rise, ending a decade-long decline.

The annual survey revealed that teens in grades 9 through 12 who reported drinking alcohol in the last month rose 11 percent last year, with 93 percent – roughly 6.5 million teens – reporting alcohol use. This is up from 35 percent, or about 5.8 million teen in 2008.

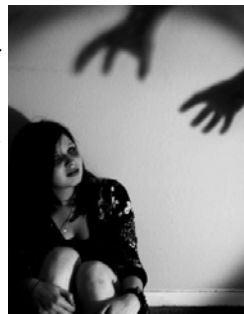
Teens who reported smoking marijuana in the last month increased to 25 percent, up from 19 percent. According to the study the measures of marijuana and alcohol use had been on a steady decline since 1998. But in 2009 that has brought concern amongst researchers. Sean Clarkin the director of strategy at The Partnership for Drug Free America states, "I'm a little worried that we may be seeing the leading edge of a trend here. Historically, you do see the increase of recreational

drugs before you see increases in some of the harder drugs."

The study also found that the common teen party drug Ecstasy is also on the rise. Six percent of teen surveyed said they have used ecstasy in the past month, compared to 4 percent in 2008/

Teens reported that they had been first introduced to drugs through their friends. A trend that is changing is when the study asked how teens field about doing drugs or friends who did drugs. It found a higher percentage of teens than in previous years agree that being high feels good, more teens reported having friends who usually get high at parties and fewer teens said they wouldn't want to hang around kids who smoked pot.

The abuse of prescription drugs and over-the-counter cough medicine remained stable from 2008 to 2009. In 2009, 1-7 teens reported abusing prescription pain reliever in the past year, and about 8 per-



cent of teens questioned reported over-the-counter cough medicine abuse in the past year.

Teen steroid and heroin use remained low at 5 percent for lifetime use.

Parents need to pay close attention to their children, talk to them about drugs, set rules and seek outside help, such as counselors, doctors, clergy and other resources.

The Partnership's "attitude tracking" study was sponsored by MetLife Foundation. Researchers surveyed 3,287 teens in grades 9 through 12. Data were collected from questionnaires that teens filled out anonymously from March to June 2009. The study has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.3 percentage points.

The New York-based Partnership is a nonprofit group working to reduce the use of illicit drugs.

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Gangs, moving into new market streams!

Identity theft is a growing crime all across America. The chance that you could be a victim of identity theft grow every day, but did you ever think that there would be a possibility that a street gang might be responsible for it?

Police in Broward County Florida had been conducting a year-long investigation in gun running and drug trafficking being conducted by street gangs. As this investigation began rounding up the over 87 gang members involved in the police investigation they discovered a large quantity of guns, drugs and identity theft instruments.

What was discovered according



to the United States Attorney involved in the investigation was over 302 firearms, 6,035 prescription pills, 4 kilos of cocaine, 7,762 ecstasy pills, 5 kilos of marijuana, \$5,000 in counterfeit cash and more than 300 names related to identify theft victims.

Why are street gangs turning to identity theft? Well, street gangs are constantly adapting to their environment. Prior convicted felons realize that it may be easier to make money stealing somebody's identity and creating credit cards than it is to going out

to rob the local 7-11. It becomes a way for the up and comer who may be technologically savvy get enough money from identity theft to fund a large drug purchase.

Where are gangs gathering the identities that they need, like their own lives moving fast, they turn to fast food restaurants as their primary source.

What is occurring is that at the fast food restaurants people using their credit cards to make small purchases are using card skimmers to secretly record the credit card numbers and then selling the for \$5 or \$10 per card number to bigger credit fraud syndicates.

The Mexican Drug Cartels: Part 3— The Failing of a State?

By Robert Tornabene



The growth and dramatic character of the violence, particularly the targeting of government and law enforcement officers and direct battles with police and military units have led some political analysts to speculate about the strength of the Mexican government, some actually using the title of a “failing” state.

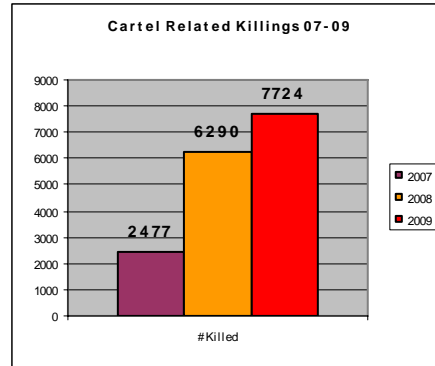
Of particular concern was a report released in December 2008 by the Joint Forces Command has indicated that because of the drug cartels ability to corrupts, distort and damage the region’s potential that the instability in Mexico, “represents a homeland security problem of immense proportions to the United States.” However, the Director of National Intelligence asserted to reports in an address in March 2009, “Mexico is in no danger of becoming a failed state.”

Although there is continued continuity within the Mexican government which provides education, health, security and other government services to millions of people, the instability brought by the violent activities of the Cartels may impact the Mexican tourism industry, further jeopardizing their economy.

Although the goal may not be to not to take over the Mexican state as a whole, but to “subvert it.” according to report released in May of 2009 by the Congressional Research Service. The report theorizes that the competition to control drug trafficking routes frequently puts the Mexican Drug Trafficking groups in battles with state security forces. Effective control of trafficking routes depends on corrupt government officials and law enforcement. With the estimated sums of money generated by drug sales in the United States to Mexico estimated between \$15 billion to \$25 billion annually the ability of the DTO’s to subvert, corrupt law enforcement and government officials is almost a certainty.

The level of violence caused because of the wars between rival gangs and the DTO’s that they support is staggering. From 2007-2009 was there were 16,491 Cartel related deaths. Because the DTO are taking on the army directly rather than avoiding confrontations has risen. Unofficial estimates place

the number employed by the major DTO’s up to or more than 100,000, which puts them roughly at parity with Mexican armed forces.



As conflicts continue both inter-cartel and intra-cartel the level of violence can continue to rise. Especially with the break up of the Sinaloa Federation and the Gulf Cartel as well as the transition of the Los Zetas from an enforcer group to a competing cartel signifies possibly a new rise in violence in coming months.

Violence is a tool of the drug trafficking business, the objectives of the use of that violence vary from one group to the next. The conflict over territory, punish betrayals and inflict revenge against government success to name a few. The violence that is being seen now may be used not to overthrow or bring down a government but rather to subvert a government. An intimidated government can deflect law enforcement initiatives and it allows the drug cartels to operate unhampered. The use of violence against the government may be an attempt to reestablish patterns of corruption that were prevalent in Mexico in the past.

Since 2008, the increase of kidnappings for money have risen significantly. In the past targets have been the wealthy and influential family members, but now even the middle class and poor have been asked to pay as little as \$500 in ransom. The effect on the Mexican government towards this newest trend has prompted demonstrations call for government action against the escalation of violence. This tactic, the kidnapping of family is a

trend that is starting to appear here in the United States, particularly in the Southern United States, wherever the Cartel’s may have ties are also potentially affected.

It has also been implicated that Mexico is sliding toward lawlessness that Columbia experienced, through drug-funded bribery and gun-barrel intimidation.

In a move that has many speculating that Mexican government is losing control on February 3, 2010, President Calderon called off primary elections in the northern state of Tamaulipas. In Chihuahua, the government is redeploying troops from the embattled city of Juarez to the countryside because of fears that the Cartels are cementing their control in smaller border towns. The reason because drug traffickers had infiltrated the election process. Calderon actually described the crackdown as a fight for territory and “the very authority of the state.”

In the past several months, public officials in a half dozen cities and towns have been gunned down, kidnapped. In the town of Tancitaro, seven police officers and a top town administrator were murdered in 2009.

In the town of Puerto Palomos, the police chief fled to the United States, asking for asylum, saying the Mexican official could not protect him. In October, the traffickers killed a town administrator there as well. A further indicator that this trend will seep across the U.S. border and effect the United States population.

In March, 2009, the financial magazine Forbes included Joaquin “Chapo” Guzman in its list of the worlds billionaires for the first time. Guzman is the head of the Sinaloa Cartel and his net worth is listed at \$1 billion. It is further estimated that Guzman’s Cartel brings in \$3.8 billion just to Sinaloa state alone and employees and indirectly or directly employs some 520,000 people which is one fifth of the 2.6 million population.

What is your opinion is Mexico a “Narco State” or a state near to failing. Send your opinion to gazette@openthegate.org. We would love to hear it.

Study Finds: Alcohol and Energy Drinks equal higher Intoxication Levels

A study conducted by the University of Florida Health Science Center recently released found that Energy drinks, favored by young people for a caffeine jolt, play a lead role in several popular alcoholic drinks. What the study found was that the combination of the alcohol and energy drinks create a dangerous mix.

College aged adults exiting bars, who consumed energy drinks mixed with alcohol had a threefold increased risk of leaving a bar highly intoxicated and were four times more likely to intend to drive after drinking than bar patrons who drank alcohol.

The study will be released in the April issue of the Journal of Addictive Behaviors.

Dennis Thombs, the study's lead research states, "Previous laboratory research suggests that when caffeine is mixed with alcohol it overcomes the sedating effects of alcohol and people may

perceive that they are less intoxicated than they really are." Thombs, an associate professor in the UF College of Public Health and Health Professionals' department of behavioral and community health, says, "This may lead people to drink more or make uninformed judgments about whether they are safe to drive."

Researchers believe that has high as 28 percent of college drinkers consume alcohol mixed with energy drinks in a typical month.

The study by the University of Florida is the first of its kind to evaluate the effects of alcohol mixed with energy drinks in an actual drinking environment, at night outside bars. Much of the research on college student alcohol consumption has been based on self-report questionnaires.



The study was conducted on over 800 college students exiting establishments in college bar districts between 10pm and 3am. Researchers tested participants breath and alcohol concentration levels and then conducted surveys regarding energy drink consumption and drinking behavior. Then participants received feedback on their intoxication levels and advice about driving risk.

Those participants who consumed energy drinks mixed with alcohol were three times more likely to be intoxicated than those who drank alcohol only. IN addition their average blood alcohol concentration was 0.109, well above legal limits of 0.08.

What the study found is that alcohol aggravates the degree of intoxication, which can lead to risky behaviors.

Source: newswise.com

Many Prostituted Juveniles Treated as Offenders, Not Victims

A new national study finds that nearly a third of the prostituted juveniles taken into custody by police are treated more as criminal offenders than as victims of pimps and customers who sexually abuse them. The study authors say this reflects controversy and confusion nationwide among criminal justice authorities about how to handle this growing problem.

"Increasingly, police are seeing the prostitution of juveniles as a form of child abuse and exploitation," said the study's lead author, Kimberly Mitchell, of the University of New Hampshire's Crimes against Children Research Center. "But in some communities, police just view it as an extension of adult prostitution, and treat these young victims as delinquents."

The study, "Conceptualizing Juvenile Prostitution as Child Maltreatment: Findings from the National Juvenile Prostitution Study," identified cases through a nationwide survey of law enforcement agencies and interviews with police who had dealt with specific cases of juvenile prostitution. It appears in the February issue of the Journal of Maltreatment.

According to the study, prostituted juve-

niles are more likely to be treated as victims by police when they are younger than 16, female, frightened, dirty, or identified as runaways. They are more likely to be treated as offenders when police encounter the youth directly through community patrols and undercover operations directed at controlling prostitution in general, as opposed to coming to the attention through a self-report or one made by a relative or community member.



The study also found that law enforcement in many communities is doing little to identify and deal with prostituted juveniles; although some agencies are addressing this problem directly through special task forces aimed at combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Mitchell said that the problem of prostituted

juveniles is complicated and varied, and requires much more coordinated set of interventions than it currently receives. Many of these youth live in dire circumstances. They are often seriously abused, and are alienated, isolated, substance abuse addicted, homeless and have prior criminal records.

"They need police working with child protection, mental health and medical authorities, all with specialized training in responding to enormous needs in this population," she said.

Created in 1998, the UNH Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC) works to combat crimes against children by providing high-quality research and statistics to the public, policy makers, law enforcement personnel, and other child welfare practitioners. CCRC is concerned with research about the nature of crimes including child abduction, homicide, rape, assault, and physical and sexual abuse as well as their impact.

Source: University of New Hampshire care of Newswise.com

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2010 Training Schedule

April 2010—No Training Scheduled

May 2010

May 27, Gang Awareness & Recognition, Elk Grove PD

June 2010

June 14-18, GATE Instructor Certification, Niles IL

August 2010

Date TBA, GATE Instructor Certification, Tampa FL

G.A.T.E. America Inc, is an organization that works daily to protect America's young people from violence. Our goals are to provide law enforcement, educators and parents with the appropriate training and resources to reduce gang activity in and around their communities. We achieve this through programs such as G.A.T.E., a school based gang education intervention/prevention program for grades 5th through 8th. The G.A.T.E. program has two new programs available GATE Kids for grades K-4 and RADICAL for teenagers.

Check out our new website, we have a new improved look, with easy navigation bars and the resources for parents, instructors and teachers.

WWW.OPENTHEGATE.ORG

PARENT TIPS

Talk to your teen about high risk behavior like involvement with **GANGS** and **DRUGS**. Let your child know that you don't want to see him or her hurt or arrested. Explain to your child that he or she should NOT:

- Use illicit drugs under any circumstances, and to do so will result in serious consequences.
- Associate with gang members.
- Attend parties or social events sponsored by gangs.
- Use hand signs, symbols or language that is meaningful to gangs.
- Intentionally wear clothing, including specific colors, which may have meaning to gangs in your area.

13 Ways Gangs Use the Justice System Against Us

By Tracy E. Barnhart

The following are actions gang members will use to get over on law enforcement and corrections officers while using the criminal justice system against us.

1. Use of discovery motions to find witnesses, victims, and informants to threaten and/or kill them.
2. Use of continuous delays in trial to remain in county jail to conduct criminal business or in an attempt to escape.
3. Use of court clothing exchanges to deliver drugs.
4. Use of jail telephones to find information, such as booking numbers or court dates, on enemy targets to kill them.
5. Use of special visits from gang member "witnesses" accompanied by an attorney, to avoid the screening process and pass drugs and messages.
6. Use of attorney privileges to avoid mail inspection by jail deputies and prison staff to pass important messages and order hits.
7. Use of witness subpoena power to bring gang members from state prisons to the county jail under false pretences in order to have meetings or to kill someone.
8. Use of child custody and support cases to subpoena gang members to the county jail, in a less obvious way, in order to have meetings or kill someone.
9. Causing an enemy to be placed on the court list and transported to a county where he is more vulnerable to attack.
10. The filing of spurious complaints, writs, and appeals to harass gang investigators and delay prosecution.
11. The use of perjuring witnesses or "Leslie White" type informants to confuse the presentation of a case and possibly cause a mistrial.
12. The use of unscrupulous bail bonds offices to obtain information on enemies or to bail out prison gang members. Using the proper status or unscrupulous attorneys and private investigators to facilitate all of the above.

About the Author—Tracy E. Barnhart

A Marine combat veteran from , Tracy completed the National Registry requirements as an Emergency Medical Technician. A former police officer for the City of Gallon, Ohio. Tracy is a graduate of the Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy. After three years on patrol he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant where he commanded a patrol shift for over 10 patrol officers under my supervision. Tracy left the City of Gallon and was hired as the Chief of Police for the City of Edison, Ohio. Just three years later he left that position to enter the realm of corrections where I am currently employed at the Marion Juvenile Correctional Facility and have been since its inception in 2000.



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