

# 'Use Of Marijuana More Widespread Than Parents Imagine'

By ED WENDOVER

In the youthful never-ending search for something new, something different, drug abuse among suburban youth has become a common-place occurrence.

Educators and police officials in Observerland agree that middle-class suburban parents have no idea how widespread the use and availability of drugs and narcotics are among their teenage children.

In January, 1968, Don Grabowski, Thurston High School attendance director, and Cpl. O. Gallagher of the Redford Township Police Department concluded a four-month study of drug and narcotic use among Thurston students. They then sent a letter advising local officials of their findings and recommendations.

"The use of marijuana is far more widespread than people imagine. In addition to marijuana, we discovered students have experimented with LSD and 'speed' pills," Grabowski and Gallagher said in their letter.

Farmington Police Chief Robert Deadman told the Observer Newspapers that "marijuana has gotten down into the junior high school level and LSD is becoming common in the high schools."

John N. Mitchell, United States attorney general, recently testified before a congressional subcommittee that "our young people are, in frighteningly increasing numbers, turning to marijuana, hard narcotics and other dangerous drugs as a way of life."

Perhaps because of their close association with students, educators are becoming aware that the narcotics problem among teenagers is growing.

Schools in two Observerland communities have conducted surveys to determine just how large a problem narcotics is among their students.

On May 7, a total of 1,851 Redford Union High School students participated in a survey of their opinions and experiences on several topics including alcohol, politics, smoking and narcotics. Their answers, which were kept confidential, indicated that:

- One of every five had illegally taken drugs.

## Redford Union High Survey—May 1969

Have you ever taken drugs?	ALL	MALE	FEMALE
YES	320 12%	78 12%	22 8%
NO	1394 80.9%	282 78%	271 92%
Do you presently use drugs?			
YES	146 8.7%	25 9%	14 5%
NO	1521 90.8%	244 91%	254 94%
Can you easily obtain drugs?			
YES	167 55%	159 22%	22 8%
NO	896 49.5%	201 45%	203 76%

(\*No Answers on the questions are not computed)

- One out of 10 presently use narcotics.
- Fifty per cent of the RU High School students find drugs and narcotics easily available.

Last June, 550 students, drawn as a random sample from the Livonia high schools' population, completed a survey on drug usage. Results of these questionnaires showed that:

- Twenty-three per cent had experimented with illegal narcotics.
- One out of 10 presently uses narcotics.
- More than three-quarters of the students find narcotics are easy to get.

Another indication that teenagers' abuse of narcotics and drugs has become a large problem is the police departments' statistical evidence in annual reports.

The great increase in narcotics complaints and arrests include many juvenile cases, say Observerland police officials.

According to the U.S. Justice Department, narcotic and marijuana arrests have increased 16 times over the past 10 years.

While youths under 21 accounted for 41.1 per cent of the 1958 drug and narcotic arrest total, last year they comprised 56.5 per cent of the 162,177 marijuana and narcotic arrests.

Observerland police reports indicate that in the last three years, narcotics arrests have at least tripled in every community. Livonia police, who recorded three drug arrests in 1966, made 166 last year, an increase of 5,300 per cent.

In Livonia and Redford, much of this increase in arrests can be attributed to the formation of special narcotics and investigation bureaus. In the City of Farmington, Farmington Township, Garden City, Plymouth and Westland, narcotic arrests have increased largely because of a greater emphasis on investigation and on narcotics training for regular police officers.

"The problem for our department began in 1963 with the glue-sniffing fad," Deadman told Observer Newspapers. "Everything has grown since then, and that's passe now."

When, in 1965, a Northville youth's home LSD laboratory blew up, suburbia entered the big time in narcotics.

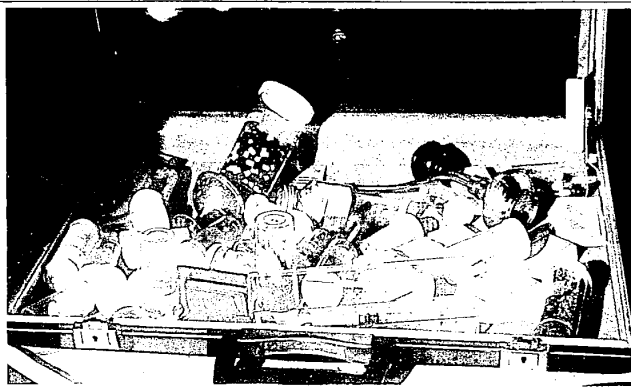
Prom then on the problem surfaced so fast that law enforcement officials were left dazed while more and more parents were becoming indirectly affected without even knowing it.

Now, a more serious indication of booming Observerland teenage drug use has come to light.

Physical side effects -- overdoses, addiction and perhaps even death in the recent case of a 20-year-old Plymouth man -- are coming to light through hospital and police reports.

Ken Smith, Redford Union High School government teacher, told how physical side effects from drug experimentation can strike unsuspecting youths.

"For a majority of young people, the encounter with drugs appears as a one-time or once-in-a-while event. But some authorities say such experimentation can amount to drug



TEENAGE 'KICKS'—A police officer shows an assortment of drugs and narcotics confiscated from teenagers. (Observer photo by Dennis Pajot)

roulette. Some young people, particularly susceptible to various drugs, can become dependent, and get hurt from what they intended as a rather innocent adventure," Smith asserted.

As arrests and other indications of teenage drug abuse grew, a few parents were thrust into a realization of what their children were doing; they became enraged and attacked community government officials and local police forces. "Why haven't you done something to protect our children from this menace?" they asked.

Many government and police officials lay the blame for the growing drug menace on the inability of police to clamp down on narcotics peddlers rather than on youthful drug experimenters.

Mafia and some less sophisticated syndicates' control of illicit drug traffic hampers police investigation by circumventing direct contact between buyer and wholesale seller.

"Pigeon drops" keep secret the identity of the "pusher," even if his teenage customer is apprehended and questioned about his source by police.

In addition, one Observerland police officer said, the courts have added to the drug problem by handcuffing the police.

"We can't get anywhere if, every time we prosecute a case, it's thrown out on some technicality," he complained.

The extent of illegal narcotics traffic poses an unsurmountable obstacle for law enforcers. It is impossible for police in Redford, Westland, Livonia and Garden City to search all vehicles coming into their communities from Detroit. It's equally as difficult for Plymouth and Farmington area police to

detect supply routes from Ann Arbor to their communities.

Three factors are apparently responsible for the extent of the fad that fuels this narcotics smuggling into suburbia.

First, suburban teenagers have easy access to the money needed to enjoy the expensive drug habit.

Second, most suburban parents naively believe that their middle and upper-middle class standing protects their children from narcotics. "My Johnny wouldn't think of anything like that..."

Finally, in an imitation of their status-conscious parents, suburban teens strive to produce a bigger and better kick than anyone else can. This "keeping up with the Joneses" effect draws the youths deeper into the narcotics fad.

Most Observerland parents do not realize that illegal narcotics are openly accessible to their children.

Some farsighted community and police officials realize that they cannot wait any longer for parents to recognize and act against the drug danger. Several communities have initiated programs, emphasizing meth-

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## Livonia High School Survey — May 1969

Have you ever experimented with drugs?

YES	122 23%	How often have you taken drugs within the last year?	
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ONCE	43 35%
2-5 TIMES	44 36%
REGULARLY	35 29%

NO 421 77% Do you think you might take drugs in the future?

YES	18 4%
NO	340 80%
MAYBE	63 16%

Which drugs have you used?

	One-Time Users	Two-Five Time Users	Regular Users
Marijuana	36 84%	37 84%	34 94%
LSD	5 11%	5 11%	12 33%
SIP	6 17%	6 17%	6 17%
THC	15 42%	15 42%	15 42%
Cough Syrup (in large amounts)	4 9%	7 16%	33 33%
Glue Sniffing	9 20%	9 20%	9 25%

(We later discovered he died of a heart attack.)

But the party was clearly over.

MOST OF the youths had cut through yards onto other streets and had walked home. The few who returned were too shaken to stay, and drove home.

Rick went down the basement and collected the marijuana hastily left by his "customers."

He showed me what looked like an ounce of "grass" which he beamed about. "I'll sell it back to them at the next party," he laughed.

As I drove home from the party down the quiet streets, past the police station, I wondered how many other teenagers in this same community were at other "tea parties," and I wondered how many parents even suspected what their children were up to.

## Upstairs, Downstairs

# Visit To A Teen 'Tea Party'

EDITOR'S NOTE: A summer intern at the Observer Newspapers, Ed Wendover is mature enough to report responsibly, young enough to talk to teenagers, and trustworthy enough to keep a confidence. He attended a party of which high school students smoked marijuana.

By ED WENDOVER

"If my folks knew what I was doing, they'd be," chuckled the 15-year-old girl sitting next to me.

She was lighting a "joint" which she had rolled with all the adeptness of a cowboy rolling his own cigar.

There were nearly two dozen youths gathered for the "tea party" in the Observerland home of a high school senior whose parents were on vacation.

RICK, A HIGH SCHOOL "hippy" who was twice sent home

from school last year for having his hair too long, had brought three ounces of marijuana ("tea"), and he was selling tablespoons full to the others. Almost everyone bought some, and, putting out cigarette papers, began rolling "joints."

One girl, who brought her 14-year-old sister along to watch, had three capsules of 90 per cent mescaline and 10 per cent STP. She sold two of them, and everyone stopped for a moment to watch the three of them make a production out of taking the "caps."

Incense and candles burned everywhere, and a Sweetwater album blared on the stereo.

"THE SON of a prominent local doctor offered me a drag on his 'weed,'" When I declined he replied, "Go ahead—my father paid for it."

Surprised that my doctor fees were going towards marijuana,

I asked if his father knew he had bought the "stuff."

"Heck no. I just asked him for 10 bucks. He probably thinks I'm out with my buddies having a couple of beers in the park," he said.

Discussion turned to recent government and police crackdown techniques that were turning teenage marijuana feasting into fasting.

"I was lucky to be able to get this stuff," Rick told me. "I paid \$50 for it."

In times of normal supply, he explained, "grass" of better quality than what he had purchased would cost \$10 an ounce. Now the scarcity was driving prices upward.

A GIRL, who was a cheerleader at a high school in Detroit and was dating an Observerland youth, said that the police dog patrols in the airport

had just about dried Detroit up.

"Sometimes you can get hashish, but mostly you have to 'drop' if you want to get any 'highs' in Detroit," she complained.

Several youths were missing from the group in the basement rec room, and I wandered upstairs to see what was happening.

On the top step, one couple sat lightly necking and fondling each other, oblivious to the traffic on the stairs.

Out back beyond the patio a youth who had taken the mescaline was lying on the lawn with his head in the lap of a girl; she was puffing a "joint."

IN THE LIVING room a boy and two girls were peacefully sleeping on the carpeting. "They're spaced," a girl in the hall explained.

Back downstairs, the smoky room smelled of marijuana in

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