

> Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) in Western Australia: Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug Survey 2011

Downward trend in use over the past decade

In 2011, around 1 in 20 (5.2%) Western Australian school students had ever tried ATS (as shown in Figure 1). This is a significant decline from more than 3 in 20 (16.5%) students in 2002.

This downward trend since 2002 can also be seen across all other frequencies of use, with significant declines in use in the past year (4.1% compared to 13.1%), past month (2.1% compared to 7.3%) and past week (1.3% compared to 4.7%).

Significant differences since 2008

Lifetime use of ATS declined by 3.2% in 2011 compared to 2008. Use in the past year, month and week also declined by 2.7%, 1.7% and 1.2% respectively.

Further analysis of these changes indicated that these differences were statistically significant.

Where do the data come from?

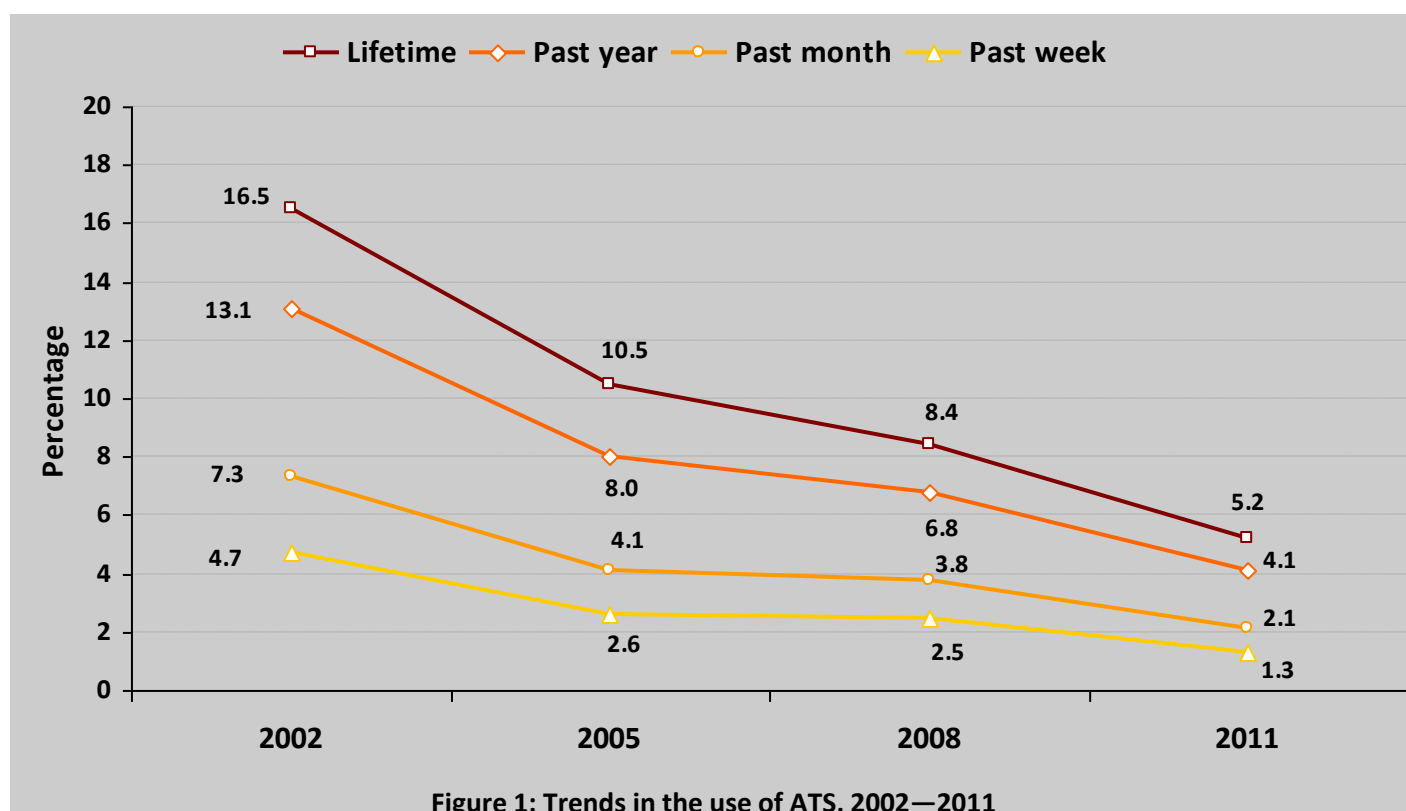
Every 3 years, school students in Western Australia are surveyed to find out about their drug use in the Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug Survey.

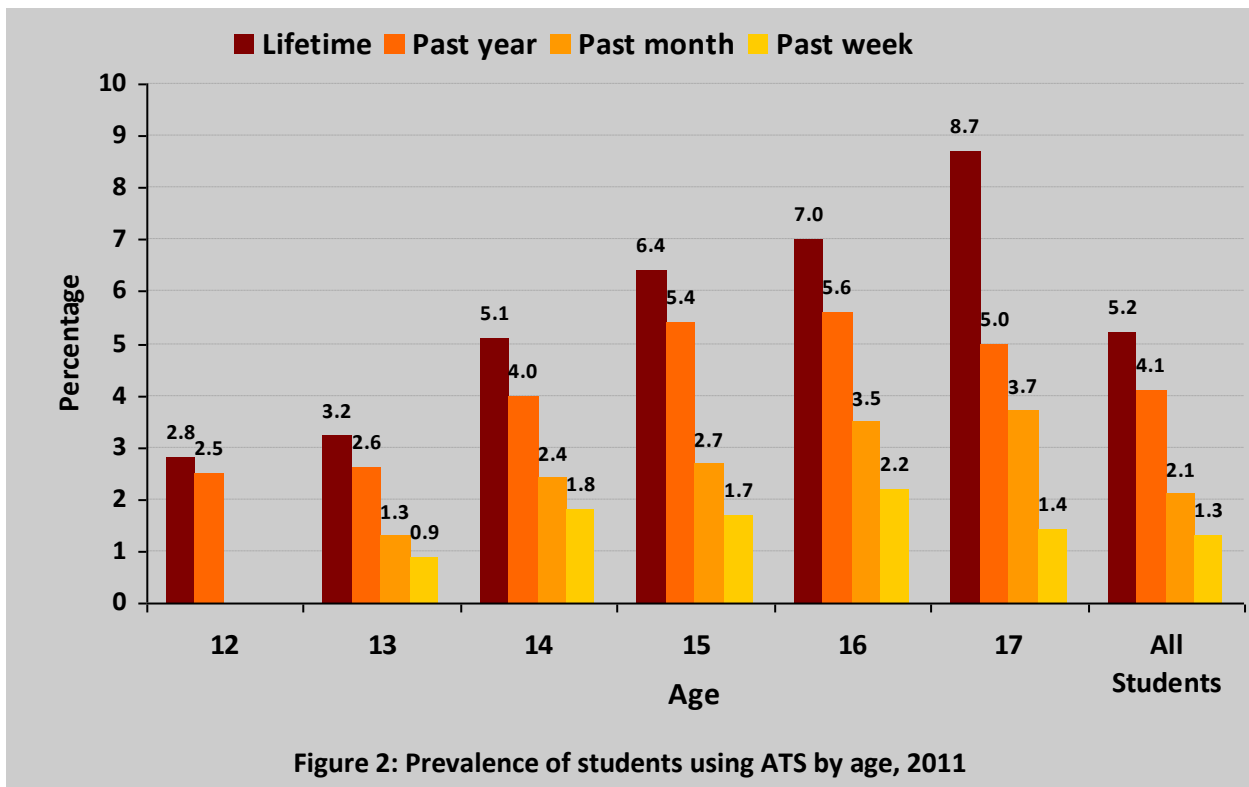
They are asked about how often they consume alcohol, tobacco, other illicit and licit drugs. They are also asked about how much they use, how they use and their attitudes to alcohol and other drug use.

This survey has been collected since 1984, with additional ATS related questions added since 2002.

The most recent survey included 3,771 young people aged from 12 to 17 years from randomly selected government, Catholic and independent schools across the State.

More information on these surveys is available at: www.dao.wa.gov.au.





Use increases with age

Lifetime and past month use generally increases with age. Past year use increases across each age, but drops among 17 year olds. Past week use fluctuates with age (Figure 2).

Use is higher for older males

Males typically use ATS more than females across all frequencies of use, except among the younger age groups i.e. 12 and 13 year-olds (Table 1).

Table 1: Prevalence of ATS use by age and gender, 2011.

	12 yrs	13 yrs	14 yrs	15 yrs	16 yrs	17 yrs	All Students
Used in lifetime %							
Males	0.7	2.9	5.7	6.6	9.7	11.0	5.5
Females	5.0	3.5	4.5	6.2	4.4	6.3	4.9
Persons	2.8	3.2	5.1	6.4	7.0	8.7	5.2
Used last year %							
Males	0.2	2.4	4.1	5.2	7.9	7.4	4.1
Females	5.0	2.9	3.9	5.6	3.3	2.6	4.0
Persons	2.5	2.6	4.0	5.4	5.6	5.0	4.1
Used last month %							
Males	0.0	0.8	2.6	2.8	4.5	5.6	2.4
Females	0.0	1.8	2.2	2.6	2.4	1.8	1.8
Persons	0.0	1.3	2.4	2.7	3.5	3.7	2.1
Used last week %							
Males	0.0	0.6	1.7	1.8	3.1	1.0	1.3
Females	0.0	1.3	1.8	1.6	1.2	1.8	1.2
Persons	0.0	0.9	1.8	1.7	2.2	1.4	1.3

Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are a large group of psycho-stimulant substances related to the parent compound amphetamine. For the purposes of this bulletin ATS include amphetamines, ecstasy and dexamphetamine.