The favorable attitudes to drug use and antisocial behaviors risk factors: Data brief supplement[3]

April 2025

Examining data for attitudes toward specific substances or antisocial behaviors

In addition to examining the risk factor scales as a whole, it can be useful to examine attitude data toward specific substance use and antisocial behavior outcomes when specific problems have been prioritized through community level assessments (to better understand contributing factors, local conditions, etc.). As expected, the relationships between specific items and the related substance use and antisocial behavior outcomes are stronger than the relationships between the overall scales to specific outcomes. This is true because the relationship between specific items are more precise to the actual behaviors/outcomes than the overall scales which combine the items for several related behaviors. (The same way asking someone: "Do you like chocolate?" is more predictive of whether they eat chocolate regularly than asking them, "Do you like candy." Candy would also be predictive, but not as much since chocolate is just one type of candy) .

Table 1 presents the relationships between youth responses to the attitudes toward alcohol and marijuana use items and 30-day use of those substances. Alcohol use is much more prevalent among youth who espouse more favorable attitudes toward alcohol (less than 1% of youth who indicated *very wrong* used alcohol vs. 45.7% of those who indicated *not wrong at all*). In fact, compared to youth who said very wrong, even youth who indicated *wrong* were nearly 10 times more likely to have used alcohol (those responding *a little bit wrong* were 31 times more likely, and *not at all wrong* were 65 times more likely). Similar results are seen for attitudes toward marijuana use and 30-day marijuana use (also Table 1), as well as for attitudes toward picking a fight and the likelihood that youth had attacked someone with intent to harm in the past year (Table 2).

Table 1. Past 30-day alcohol and marijuana use in relation to youth attitudes about alcohol and marijuana use–Utah 2023 (SHARP)		
How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to drink beer, wine or hard liquor regularly?	**Percent indicating past 30-day alcohol use**	**Likelihood of using vs. those who indicated *"very wrong"***
Very wrong	.7%	
Wrong	6.8%	9.7 *times more likely*
A little bit wrong	21.8%	31.1 *times more likely*
Not at all wrong	45.7%	65.2 *times more likely*
How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke marijuana?	**Percent indicating past 30-day marijuana use**	**Likelihood of using vs. those who indicated *"very wrong"***
Very wrong	.6%	
Wrong	5.7%	9.5 *times more likely*
A little bit wrong	23.7%	39.5 *times more likely*
Not at all wrong	43.5%	72.5 *times more likely*

Table 2. Past year attacked someone to seriously hurt them in relation to youth attitudes about picking a fight with someone–Utah 2023 (SHARP)		
How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to pick a fight with someone?	Percent indicating attacking to harm someone in past year	Likelihood of attacking to harm vs. those who indicated *"very wrong"*
Very wrong	1.7%	
Wrong	3.1%	1.8 *times more likely*
A little bit wrong	9.9%	5.8 *times more likely*
Not at all wrong	30.3%	17.8 *times more likely*

Items measuring perceived parental attitudes toward (non-medical) prescription drug use and vaping were added to the SHARP after the creation of the original risk factor scales given that these substances have become priorities for prevention work in Utah. These items are not included in the parental attitudes favorable to drug use scale score, but may be helpful to examine when communities have identified either of these substances as a priority to be addressed. These items can be examined using the SHARP Webtool site (https://www.bach-harrison.com/utahsharpwebtool).

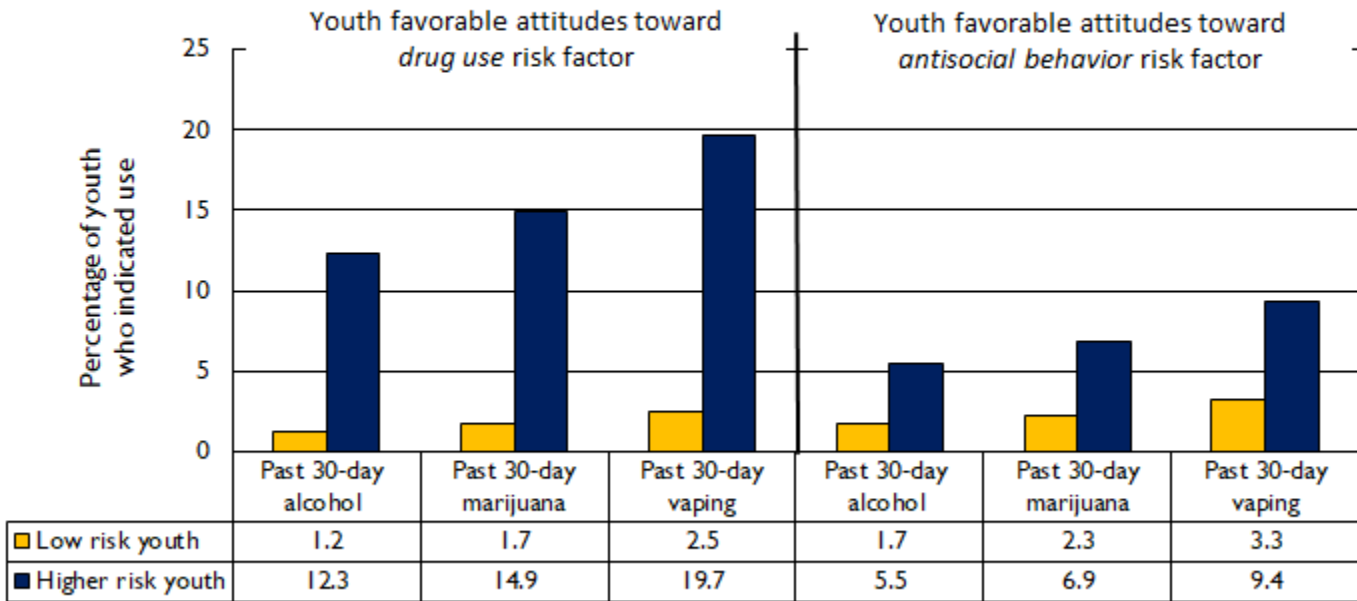| Additional *parent* favorable attitudes items on the SHARP: |
|---|
| How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: |
| - use prescription drugs not prescribed to you? |
| - use vape products such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, mods, or pod vapes like JUUL or Puff Bars? |

Comparing the favorable attitudes toward drug use and favorable attitudes toward antisocial behavior scales in predicting substance use

In Utah, the parent and youth favorable attitudes toward antisocial behaviors (FAT-ASB) risk factors are often elevated at the community level relative to the national norm, whereas risk levels for favorable attitudes toward drug use (FAT-DU) scales are typically below the national norm. Given the co-occurrence of substance use and other antisocial behaviors, both the FAT-DU and FAT-ASB scales are predictive of substance use outcomes in youth. However, the strength of the relationships between the FAT-DU scales and substance use behaviors are stronger than the relationships between the FAT-ASB scales and substance use, because the FAT-DU scales are more directly connected to substance use behaviors while the FAT-ASB scales are more directly connected to antisocial behaviors (please see the risk factor item lists in the main data brief for more detail).

Figure S1 compares the relationships between the *youth* FAT-DU and FAT-ASB scales and substance use behaviors. Clearly, both scales predict substance use; youth categorized as higher risk on both scales are much more likely to report 30-day use of alcohol, marijuana and vaping than low risk youth. With that said, the level of predictiveness is substantially stronger for the FAT-DU scale (vs. the FAT-ASB scale): Youth categorized as higher risk on the FAT-DU scale were 10.3 times more likely to report 30-day alcohol use, while higher risk youth on the FAT-ASB scale were 3.2 times more likely to use. For 30-day marijuana use, high risk FAT-DU youth were 8.8

times more likely to use vs. 3.0 times more likely for high risk FAT-ASB youth, and for vaping, high risk FAT-DU youth were 7.9 times more likely to use vs. 2.8 times more likely for high risk FAT-ASB youth.

Figure S1. Past 30-day alcohol, marijuana and vape use in relation to *youth* favorable attitudes toward drug use & antisocial behavior risk factor categorizations-Utah 2023 (SHARP)

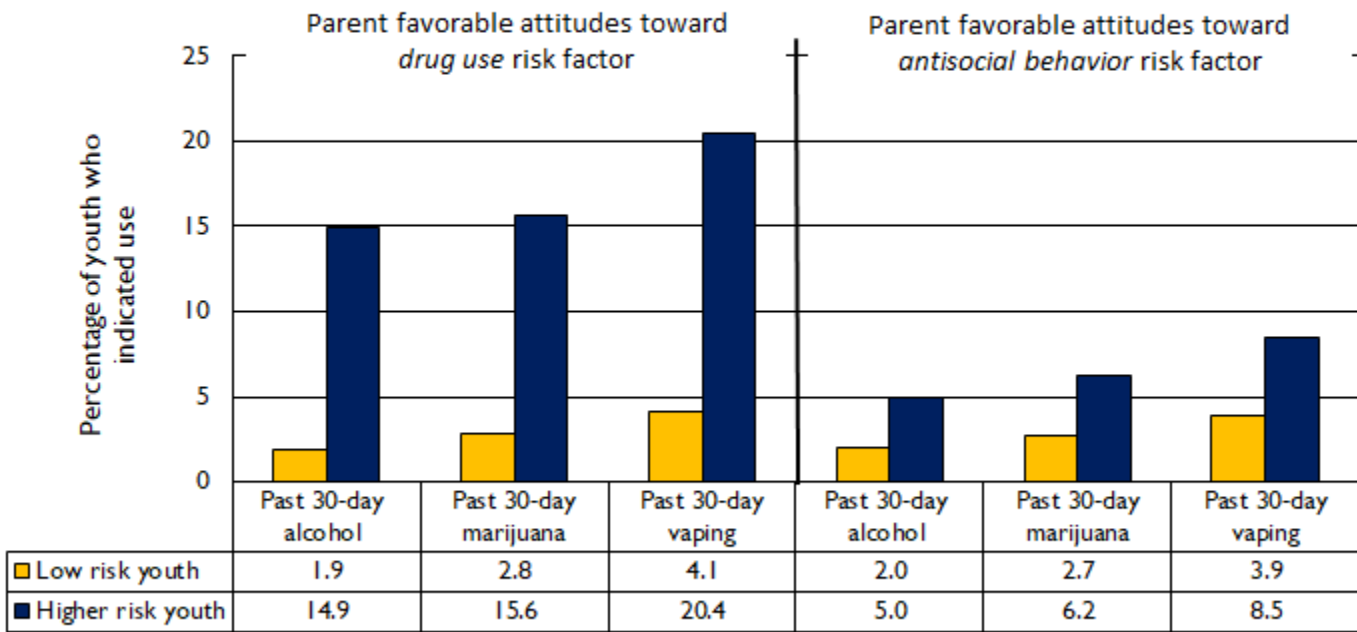|	Youth favorable attitudes toward *drug use* risk factor			Youth favorable attitudes toward *antisocial behavior* risk factor		
	Past 30-day alcohol	Past 30-day marijuana	Past 30-day vaping	Past 30-day alcohol	Past 30-day marijuana	Past 30-day vaping
Low risk youth	1.2	1.7	2.5	1.7	2.3	3.3
Higher risk youth	12.3	14.9	19.7	5.5	6.9	9.4

Comparisons of the relationships between the *parent* FAT-DU and FAT-ASB scales and substance use provide similar results (see Figure S2). Again, both scales predict substance use, with youth categorized as higher risk being much more likely to report 30-day use of alcohol, marijuana and vaping than low risk youth, but, the level of predictiveness is substantially stronger for the *parent* FAT-DU scale vs. the FAT-ASB scale. Youth categorized as higher risk on the *parent* FAT-DU scale were 7.8 times more likely to report 30-day alcohol use while higher risk youth on the *parent* FAT-ASB scale were 2.5 times more likely to use. For 30-day marijuana use, high risk youth on the *parent* FAT-DU scale were 5.6 times more likely to use vs. 2.3 times more likely for high risk *parent* FAT-ASB youth, and for vaping, high risk *parent* FAT-DU youth were 5.0 times more likely to use vs. 2.2 times more likely for high risk *parent* FAT-ASB youth.

Given the greater specificity of the FAT-ASB risk factor scales to antisocial behavior outcomes rather than substance use outcomes, it is important for communities who have prioritized the parent or youth FAT-ASB risk factor to carefully choose prevention strategies and interventions when targeting these risk factors when the primary intention is to impact substance use behaviors. Strategies that address attitudes toward antisocial behaviors broadly may be more likely to impact substance use compared to strategies that attempt to change attitudes about specific (non-substance use) antisocial behaviors such as fighting, vandalism, or shoplifting. For example, when targeting the *parent* FAT-ASB risk factor, an intervention for parents that builds skills to help

them effectively bond with their children and communicate their expectations and standards for behavior, is likely to reduce the likelihood of both antisocial behavior and substance use outcomes. Fortunately, many evidence-based interventions that have been shown to improve FAT-ASB utilize strategies that impact substance use outcomes, but it is important for preventionists and coalitions to do their due diligence during the selection process.

Figure S2. Past 30-day alcohol, marijuana and vape use in relation to *parent* favorable attitudes toward drug use & antisocial behavior risk factor categorizations-Utah 2023 (SHARP)

	Parent favorable attitudes toward *drug use* risk factor			Parent favorable attitudes toward *antisocial behavior* risk factor		
	Past 30-day alcohol	Past 30-day marijuana	Past 30-day vaping	Past 30-day alcohol	Past 30-day marijuana	Past 30-day vaping
☐ Low risk youth	1.9	2.8	4.1	2.0	2.7	3.9
■ Higher risk youth	14.9	15.6	20.4	5.0	6.2	8.5

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[3] This supplement is intended to be a companion to the April 2025 data brief spotlight on the favorable attitudes toward drug use and antisocial behaviors risk factor scales. It provides additional analyses and insights regarding these risk factors for advanced data users, but information in the main data brief provides important context for the content in the supplement.