SUBJECT: Youth Alcohol and Drug Use in Hamilton BOH07052 (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the report Youth Alcohol and Drug Use in Hamilton BOH07052 be received for information

(b) That the 2005 student drug use statistics item referred from the Board of Health on May 29, 2007 be identified as complete and removed from the Outstanding Business list.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to provide additional information about adolescent substance use in Hamilton. A previous report included results for the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN (Local Health Integration Network) area. Information specific to Hamilton has now been collected.
BACKGROUND:

At the Board of Health meeting on May 29, 2007, the Alcohol Drug and Gambling Services Program (Family Health Division) provided a program update. This update used the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUS) conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to provide an estimate of student alcohol and drug use in Hamilton. Staff were directed to report back with Hamilton specific information related to student drug use.

CAMH conducts the OSDUS of Ontario students every two years. Results are analyzed and rates of student alcohol and drug use behaviours reported by LHIN geographic areas. This analysis is limited as it provides an overview of youth alcohol and substance use by region rather than by specific community. Hamilton is included in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN.

To better understand the extent of student drug use in Hamilton, Public Health Services implemented the OSDUS in 2007, gathering data specific to Hamilton. The data have been analyzed and the results are being used to inform program design and delivery.

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

The HSDUS (Hamilton Student Drug Use and Health Survey) is a population survey of Hamilton students in grades 7 to 12. The survey questions used in the HSDHS were standardized questions from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUS) and were used to compare and identify epidemiological trends in student drug use, mental health (e.g., depression), physical activity, and risky behaviour (e.g., violence, gambling).

The primary purpose of this study was to provide reliable, current information about the health behaviours, attitudes and beliefs of Hamilton children and adolescents related to drug and alcohol use. Findings from the 2007 HSDUS will be used to set local health priorities and develop or adapt prevention programs that address the needs of youth in both middle and secondary school settings across the city of Hamilton.

Survey Sample

The overall sample consisted of 1,207 students in grades 7 to 12, from 29 schools in both the Public and Catholic school boards (15 secondary schools and 14 middle schools). Of the 1,207 students who completed the survey 52.8% of respondents were female, while 47.2% of respondents were male. These students represent approximately 3.5% of elementary students in grades 7 and 8, and 2.7% of secondary students. Implementation of the survey began in January 2007 and ended in June 2007. Surveys were distributed through each school by principals and teachers, and students were asked to inform their parents/guardians about the survey through an informed consent process. Participants were chosen according to a random selection of classes across grades 7 – 12 and participation was both voluntary and anonymous.
Prevalence in Hamilton, LHIN 4 and Ontario

The 2007 HSDUS dealt with 11 health behaviours and included questions about the use of 20 different substances. This report focuses on the prevalence of alcohol, other drugs and driving related behaviours. The following chart represents the prevalence of past year drug use and driving related behaviours of secondary students in grades 9 – 12 across Hamilton, LHIN 4 and Ontario.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Hamilton 2007 HSDUS</th>
<th>LHIN 4 Hamilton, Niagara Haldimand, Brant 2005 OSDUS</th>
<th>Ontario 2005 OSDUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of students</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>5794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of schools</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of students</td>
<td>*2.7</td>
<td>**0.3</td>
<td>*0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>72 *(68-75)</td>
<td>82 *(74-88)</td>
<td>73 *(70-76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis</td>
<td>38 *(34-41)</td>
<td>42 *(34-50)</td>
<td>36 *(34-38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger and Drug (Driving with someone who is under the influence of drugs)</td>
<td>27 *(24-30)</td>
<td>40 *(35-40)</td>
<td>28 *(25-31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis and Driving (Drivers in Gr. 10-12)</td>
<td>14 *(11-18)</td>
<td>33 *(27-40)</td>
<td>20 *(18-23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking and Driving (Drivers in Gr. 10-12)</td>
<td>12 *(9-16)</td>
<td>22 *(16-30)</td>
<td>14 *(12-16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallucinogens</td>
<td>10 *(8-12)</td>
<td>14 *(12-16)</td>
<td>9 *(8-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>9 *(7-12)</td>
<td>8 *(7-10)</td>
<td>6 *(5-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>8 *(6-10)</td>
<td>11 *(8-16)</td>
<td>6 *(5-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>7 *(5-9)</td>
<td>11 *(7-15)</td>
<td>6 *(5-7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Based on student population in both Public and Catholic school boards in grades 9 -12  
** Based on total population of school aged youth 14-18 residing in LHIN 4

**NOTE:**  Alcohol use is defined as drinking any alcohol during the past 12 months, excluding sips, but includes drinking at special events. Drug use is defined as any use of the drug within the last 12 months. Passenger and Drug refers to riding in a vehicle, at least once in the past 12 months, with a driver who had used drugs. Cannabis & Driving refers to driving within an hour of using cannabis (among only those in grades 10 to 12 with a valid driver’s licence). Drinking & Driving refers to driving within an hour of consuming 2 or more alcoholic drinks (among only those in grades 10 to 12 with a valid driver’s licence). Hallucinogen use refers to the use of Mescaline or Psilocybin (“magic mushrooms”) and excludes LSD and PCP.

Highlights

- Alcohol and cannabis use rates in Hamilton were similar to those reflected in the Ontario survey, however, were lower than those in LHIN 4.
- The percentage of Hamilton students who reported drinking and driving and the percentage of students who reported driving with someone under the influence...
of drugs were similar to those reflected in the Ontario survey, however, were lower than LHIN 4.

- The percentage of Hamilton students who reported driving under the influence of cannabis were lower than both those surveyed in the Ontario data and those measured in LHIN 4.

The results of the HSDUHS demonstrate the need for continued substance abuse prevention programming that target children and youth in multiple settings and focus on risks associated with underage drinking. The SAVIP (Substance Abuse Violence and Injury Prevention) Program in Public Health Services is committed to working collaboratively with schools, community organizations, parents, and youth themselves to increase the effectiveness of these programs. Further results of the survey will be disseminated in a series of focused reports which will highlight the status of child and adolescent health, including mental health across the city of Hamilton. Health Canada recommends that effective programs focus not only on reducing risk factors but also on increasing resiliency and building protective factors. Therefore, our prevention programs will be designed so that they are comprehensive in nature, addressing not only drug and alcohol use specifically, but encompassing a holistic approach to the well-being of Hamilton children and adolescents.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

None identified

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Results of the survey will inform program delivery. The survey was implemented using existing budget allocation.

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

None

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**

The project received ethics approval from McMaster University and consent from the CAMH to use their survey tool.

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

Community Well-Being is enhanced. X Yes □ No
Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. X Yes □ No

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. X Yes □ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? X Yes □ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? X Yes □ No