

2018

COLLEGE PRESCRIPTION DRUG STUDY

KEY FINDINGS: SORORITY AND FRATERNITY LIFE

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- 26.5% of students in SFL reported stimulant misuse, compared to 14.4% of non-SFL students
- Students in SFL with pain medication, sedative, and/or stimulant prescriptions were significantly more likely to have distributed their prescription drugs to other people
- While a majority of both SFL and non-SFL students that had misused began misusing while in college, SFL students are more likely to have started misusing while in college compared to their non-SFL peers

INTRODUCTION

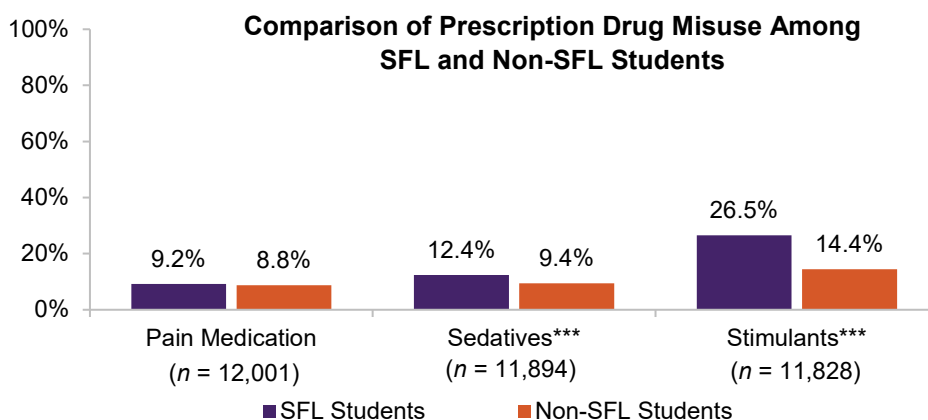
This report uses data from the 2018 administration of the College Prescription Drug Study (CPDS) to examine non-medical prescription drug use among college students. The CPDS surveyed students at 26 public and private, two- and four-year U.S. colleges and universities; 19,539 students completed the survey overall and 12,021 undergraduates completed the survey and responded to the Sorority and Fraternity Life (SFL) question. Of this sample, 2,237 (18.6%) students responded that they were a member of either a fraternity or a sorority. Students were not required to answer every question on the survey. This report summarizes differences between undergraduate students involved in SFL and the rest of the undergraduate population.

FINDINGS

Sorority and Fraternity Life and Prescription Drug Misuse

Among undergraduate students in SFL, 9.2% reported that they had ever used pain medications for non-medical reasons, compared to 8.8% of non-SFL students. In terms of sedative misuse, 12.4% of students in SFL reported ever using misusing, compared to 9.4% of non-SFL students. Among students in SFL, 26.5% reported ever using stimulants for non-

medical reasons, compared to 14.4% of non-SFL students. The differences between students involved in SFL and their peers on sedative and stimulant misuse were statistically significant, while differences in pain medication misuse was not.



Note. Sample sizes represented for each medication type are the combined samples of SFL and non-SFL students

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

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Differences in access to prescription drugs

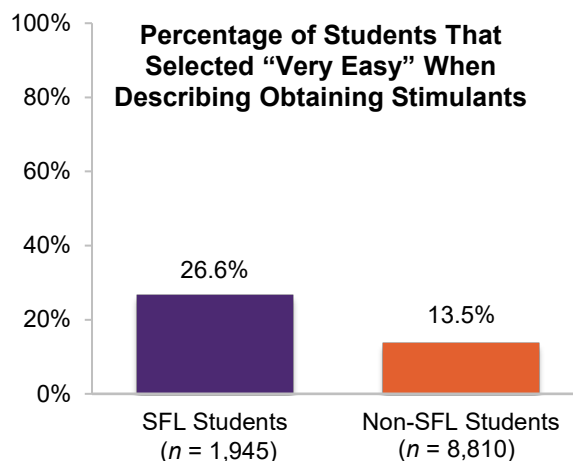
The CPDS asked questions relating to prescription drug access. A significantly higher percentage of undergraduate students involved in SFL reported diagnoses for ADHD (11.7% vs 8.9%) and similarly were significantly more likely to report having prescriptions for stimulants in the past 12 months (11.5% vs 7.1%). Among those that had prescriptions for pain medications, sedatives, and/or stimulants, students in SFL were significantly more likely to report that they had either sold or given their prescription drugs to people who were not prescribed them (22.0% vs 15.8%). These factors may foster an environment in which prescription drugs, particularly stimulants, are much easier to access for non-medical use. When asked how easy it is to obtain stimulants without a prescription, students involved in SFL were more likely to select “Very easy” (26.6% vs 13.5%), a statistically significant difference.

Starting Misuse

A majority of undergraduate students who misused started misusing while in college. However, students involved in SFL were more likely to have started misusing while in college than non-SFL students. This was true for all three categories of prescription drugs. For instance, out of the population of SFL students that reported misusing stimulants, 71.4% of them first started while in college (versus 64.1% for non-SFL students that reported misusing stimulants).

Where to obtain

Across the full sample, students were more likely to get prescription drugs from a friend than from anywhere else. Among SFL students who reported misusing stimulants, 83.2% get those stimulants from friends, compared to 75.8% of non-SFL students that reported misusing stimulants.



MORE INFORMATION

The College Prescription Drug Study (CPDS) is a multi-institutional survey of undergraduate, graduate and professional students. The purpose of the CPDS is to gain a more thorough understanding of the non-medical use of prescription drugs among college students. Results provide a better understanding of the current state of non-medical use of prescription drugs on college campuses, including information on the types of prescription drugs misused, attainment of drugs, reasons for use and consequences of use. During spring 2018, the CPDS was administered to random samples of students attending institutions across the United States via an online anonymous survey.