

Marijuana top drug choice for U.S. teens

by UPI

ANN ARBOR, Mich. -- Marijuana remains the drug of choice for U.S. teens but prescription painkiller abuse is on the rise, an annual University of Michigan survey found. Overall, drug use was down among the 48,025 students in eighth, 10th and 12th grades in 403 public and private schools polled, USA Today quoted the report as saying. Marijuana use was reported by 1-in-10 eighth graders, 1-in-4 10th graders and nearly 1-in-3 12th graders, although the use of prescription painkillers such as OxyContin and Vicodin increased 30 percent overall since 2002, researchers said. That made the morphine-mimicking drugs the second-most used after marijuana. OxyContin use rose slightly among high school seniors to 5.2 percent, from 4.3 percent in 2006, while Vicodin use was stable at 1-in-10 high school seniors reporting its use. Tuesday morning in Washington, U.S. President George Bush met with anti-drug activists, community leaders, law enforcement officers and students to review the report. A White House release said that since Bush took office in 2001 use of illicit drugs dropped approximately 24 percent and steroid use dropped by approximately one-third.

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