USING DATA RIGHT

Eight lessons for accurate, believable social norms campaigns.

The Eight Lessons

1. Check the time frame
Past month and past year aren't the same. Don't compare them (see Cocaine).

2. Know what was measured
"Any vaping" isn't "nicotine vaping," and combined items blend drugs (see Nicotine, Hallucinogens).

3. Counts aren't rates
Deaths per 100,000 people and total deaths tell different stories (see Fentanyl).

4. Watch for wording changes
New examples in a question can shift results (see Inhalants, Seltzers).

5. Say tiny numbers plainly
0.2% is about 1 in 500. Small shifts can happen by chance (see Meth).

6. "Significant" isn't "large"
A real increase can still be under 1 in 100 (see Inhalants).

7. Norms need a majority
If most people do the risky thing, use another strategy (see Mobility Safety).

8. Use the newest numbers
Old statistics keep circulating long after they're updated (see Fentanyl).

QUICK CONVERSIONS

1 in 1,000
= 0.1%

1 in 500
= 0.2%

1 in 100
= 1%

1 in 8
≈ 12.5%

1 in 4
= 25%

9 in 10
= 90%

Before You Post: Five Questions

- **Is it local?** School data beats county, county beats state, state beats national.
- **Is it current?** Use the newest survey, and name the source and year on the message.
- **Does it match my audience?** Use the grade levels you're trying to reach.
- **Is the healthy behavior the majority?** If not, don't build a norms message around it.
- **Would a skeptical classmate believe it?** Test it with peers before you post.

Where to Find Data

- **Your school's Indiana Youth Survey report** (ask a counselor).
- **Your county's LCC,** inys.indiana.edu and the Indiana Department of Health.

Words That Work

- "Most," "the majority" and "more than 9 in 10"
- "In the past month" or "in the past year"
- "Indiana students" or "nationally"
- "According to the 2026 Indiana Youth Survey"

Sources: Indiana SADD Fact Sheet Series; 2026 Indiana Youth Survey; Monitoring the Future; Indiana YRBS; Indiana Department of Health.