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TEENS, DRINKING, DRUGS and SEX

New research shows alcohol/drug consumption influences teen sexual behaviour

January 19, 2010 (Ottawa) – A new study released today by the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada reveals that how often teens drink may indicate how likely they are to be sexually active, among other findings.

The study uses data from Statistics Canada's *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth* to draw correlations between drug use, drunkenness, time spent with a boyfriend or girlfriend and teen decisions about sexual activity.

Some of the top findings include:

- Teen girls who smoke marijuana are much more likely to be sexually active
- Getting drunk more often correlates with an increased likelihood of sexual activity
- Strong associations exist between attempted suicide and sexual activity among teen girls

The study researcher, Peter Jon Mitchell, indicates the findings underscore what parents may know intuitively to be true. "Teens who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour," says Mitchell. "This study reveals a 'risk profile' that may help parents as they nurture their teens through to adulthood. And it becomes all the more critical when we consider the correlation between attempting suicide and sexual activity, particularly among girls."

The study *Rated PG, Part II: How drugs, alcohol and other factors influence teen sexual activity*—can be read in full in English, [here](#). Part I, *Rated PG: How parental influence impacts teen sexual activity* is available [here](#).

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