

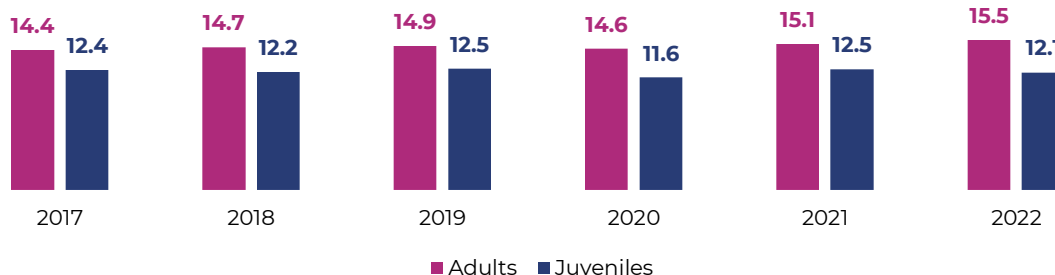
## MARIJUANA USE AMONG SAN DIEGO ARRESTEES: SIX YEARS OF DATA POST-PROPOSITION 64

As part of SANDAG’s Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) project, SANDAG staff conduct interviews with a sample of adults and juveniles arrested and booked into San Diego County detention facilities. The purpose of the survey effort is to identify drug use trends among the adult and juvenile offender populations and to develop appropriate strategies for the prevention of drug abuse. After the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016, which legalized the recreational use of marijuana in California for individuals 21 years of age and older, SANDAG has been monitoring its use among arrestees. This CJ Flash highlights results on this issue from 2022, as well as comparisons to previous years when noteworthy.<sup>1</sup>

### Highlight 1

In 2022, nine out of ten (90%) participants responded that they had ever tried marijuana, a 1% increase from the previous year. Over the past six years, the consistent trend has shown that adults tend to begin using marijuana for the first time at an older age (15.5 years) compared to juveniles (12.1 years).

#### Age of first marijuana use



Source: SANDAG, 2023

### Highlight 2

Out of surveyed adults, marijuana was most likely to be reported as “very easy” to obtain (74%). For those who reported more than one way of obtaining it, the most common were recreational dispensaries (97%), the street (73%), or delivered from a dispensary (62%). Those who preferred buying it on the street most often noted it was because it was easier, they did not have to pay tax, and they had a personal connection with the dealer.

#### Illegal purchase of marijuana

# 73%

Still buy marijuana  
from the streets

Source: SANDAG, 2023

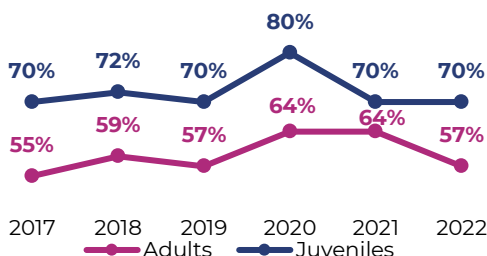
### Highlight 3

In 2022, three out of five (60%) participants reported having ever dabbled (heating and inhaling an oil with concentrated doses of cannabis) THC. Additionally, 72% reported ever

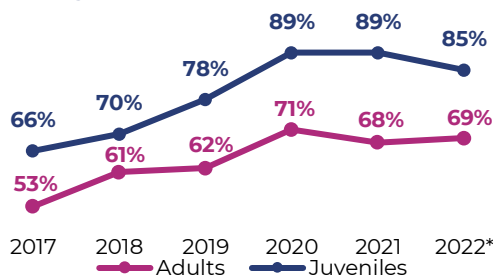
<sup>1</sup> In 2022 the marijuana addendum was completed with 217 individuals (171 adults and 46 juveniles). More information about the SAM program is available at [sandag.org/cj](http://sandag.org/cj).

vaping THC: juveniles being significantly more likely than adults to have ever vaped THC (85% and 69%, respectively). These methods of marijuana use are of concern due to their high concentrations of THC and their potential health risks. In the past year, two-thirds (66%) of adults and 45% of juveniles reported they thought that the potency of marijuana had increased since they first started using it.

Percentage of individuals who report ever dabbing THC



Percentage of individuals who report ever vaping THC



\*Significant at  $p < .05$   
Source: SANADAG, 2023

#### Highlight 4

Survey respondents had mixed views on the potential benefits and harms of marijuana use. Over eight in ten (82%) respondents cited that their marijuana use was beneficial to them; out of those who reported benefits, helping with anxiety was cited as the top benefit (52%), followed by improving mood (44%), relieving physical pain (21%), and insomnia (18%). In contrast, over two in five (44%) reported that marijuana was physically addictive and over two-thirds (67%) reported it was psychologically addictive. This marks two years of consecutive increases for both categories.

#### Perceived benefits of marijuana

- Over eight in ten (82%) said their marijuana use is beneficial
- Number one benefit was helping with anxiety (52%)
- Other benefits included helping with mood, physical pain, and insomnia
- Juveniles were more likely to say it helped with mood (59% versus 40% of adults) and ADHD (48% versus 5% of adults)\*

#### Perceived marijuana addictiveness\*

- 44% Physically addictive
- 67% Psychologically addictive

\*Significant at  $p < .05$   
Source: SANDAG, 2023

#### Highlight 5

Almost six in ten (57%) adult respondents thought that marijuana could impair one's driving ability. Of them, more than half (54%) reported ever driving under the influence of marijuana.

#### Marijuana and driving

Source: SANDAG, 2023

- 57% of adults think marijuana impacts one's driving ability
- 54% of these individuals have driven under the influence

