

## 2021 Methamphetamine Use by San Diego County Arrestees

November 2022

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## Notes

Please take into account the following factors when interpreting this information:

- Some variables were only answered by a small number of respondents. Caution should be used when generalizing these findings.
- When distributions are skewed, the median is the more appropriate measure of central tendency, rather than the mean.
- Due to COVID-19 and efforts to maintain social distancing and protect those being interviewed and those interviewing, the questions asked as part of this interview in 2020 were reduced.
- The 2021 data includes youth who were interviewed at either Juvenile Hall or one of the three Achievement Centers (Central, La Mesa, and Escondido). Achievement Center youth were included in the sample in 2021 because the number of youth booked into Juvenile Hall has decreased considerably. It is important to note that Achievement Center youth have not been adjudicated and Achievement Centers are an alternative to detention. Because of this, urine samples for drug testing were not obtained from Achievement Center youth.

## Initiation and current use

Total	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017	
Total	137		157		251		226		254	
<b>In the past year, have you used meth just before or while at work/school?</b>										
Yes	23%	30	N/A 2020		33%	81	35%	76	34%	86
No	20%	26	N/A 2020		13%	31	21%	46	21%	53
N/A	58%	77	N/A 2020		54%	131	44%	97	45%	115
<b>Why did you first start using meth?*</b>										
Get high	12%	16	27%	40	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Get more energy	5%	6	8%	12	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Lose weight	1%	1	3%	5	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Experiment	35%	46	49%	74	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Escape problems	20%	26	19%	29	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Stay awake	8%	11	13%	20	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Replace another drug	3%	4	5%	8	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Friends/peer use	41%	54	36%	54	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Improve/enhance sex	0%	0	1%	2	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Other	3%	4	5%	7	N/A		N/A		N/A	
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>		<b>150</b>		<b>N/A</b>		<b>N/A</b>		<b>N/A</b>	
<b>Why are you using meth now?*</b>										
Get high	21%	26	36%	50	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Get more energy	9%	11	19%	26	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Lose weight	2%	3	7%	10	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Escape problems	27%	33	35%	49	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Stay awake	15%	18	21%	30	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Replace another drug	7%	8	2%	3	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Friends/peer use	27%	33	17%	24	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Addicted	40%	49	33%	46	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Improve/enhance sex	2%	3	2%	3	N/A		N/A		N/A	
Other	3%	4	7%	10	N/A		N/A		N/A	
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>		<b>140</b>		<b>N/A</b>		<b>N/A</b>		<b>N/A</b>	
<b>How do you usually use meth?*</b>										
Snort	12%	16	N/A 2020		12%	31	15%	33	11%	27
Smoke alone	81%	111	N/A 2020		76%	191	68%	154	70%	179
Smoke with other drug	2%	2	N/A 2020		2%	5	3%	7	4%	11
Inject alone	6%	8	N/A 2020		8%	20	13%	29	13%	33
Inject with other drug	0%	0	N/A 2020		<1%	1	1%	3	1%	2
Eat/drink	2%	2	N/A 2020		1%	3	0%	0	1%	2
<b>How have you used meth in the past</b>										
Snort	44%	60	N/A 2020		40%	100	51%	115	50%	128
Smoke	94%	129	N/A 2020		91%	228	92%	208	92%	233
Inject	20%	27	N/A 2020		25%	63	30%	68	35%	89
Eat/drink	5%	7	N/A 2020		6%	14	3%	7	6%	15

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>How much meth do you typically use on a day you use meth? (Measurement unit of grams)</b>					
Mean (SD)	1.84 (1.38)	N/A 2020	1.21 (1.03)	1.27 (1.02)	1.54 (1.52)
Median	1.00	N/A 2020	1.00	1.00	1.00
Range	.10-7.00	N/A 2020	.02-4.00	.10-4.00	.04-7.08
<b>On a day you use meth, how many times do you use?</b>					
Mean (SD)	8.70 (15.19)	N/A 2020	5.07 (6.03)	4.61 (5.45)	5.30 (5.29)
Median	5.00	N/A 2020	3.00	3.00	3.00
Range	1-100	N/A 2020	1-50	1-50	1-30
<b>During the last month, what was the most days in a row (longest run) you used meth?</b>					
Mean (SD)	17.60 (12.37)	N/A 2020	16.51 (12.26)	15.69 (12.34)	14.52 (12.23)
Median	26.00	N/A 2020	15.00	14.00	7.00
Range	1-30	N/A 2020	1-30	1-30	1-30
*Percentages based on multiple responses.					

## Quality and availability

Total	2021 137		2020 157		2019 251		2018 226		2017 254	
<b>Compared to a year ago, is the quality of the meth you're using...</b>										
Worse	51%	61	52%	70	59%	135	49%	100	56%	130
Same	34%	40	15%	20	28%	64	33%	66	26%	60
Better	15%	18	33%	45	13%	29	18%	37	18%	41
<b>Compared to a year ago, is the price you're paying for meth...</b>										
Lower	52%	61	31%	43	53%	116	48%	98	47%	108
Same	27%	31	36%	50	33%	71	37%	75	38%	88
Higher	21%	25	34%	47	14%	31	15%	30	14%	33
<b>Where do you typically buy/get meth?</b>										
Indoors	38%	48	N/A 2020		41%	95	36%	75	44%	110
Outdoors	62%	77	N/A 2020		59%	136	64%	131	56%	138
<b>Do you get meth within San Diego</b>										
Yes	95%	128	N/A 2020		97%	237	96%	207	98%	240
No	5%	7	N/A 2020		3%	7	4%	8	2%	5
<b>(If yes) In what area of the County do you get it?</b>										
Central	39%	49	N/A 2020		38%	89	41%	85	33%	78
North City	8%	10	N/A 2020		7%	17	9%	19	14%	34
South Suburban	18%	22	N/A 2020		10%	23	11%	23	11%	26
East Suburban	17%	21	N/A 2020		24%	56	17%	36	21%	51
North County West	6%	7	N/A 2020		7%	17	5%	11	9%	21
North County East	6%	8	N/A 2020		12%	29	9%	19	8%	20
East	6%	8	N/A 2020		2%	5	6%	13	3%	8
<b>Do you have a main source for meth - one dealer you usually hook up with?</b>										
Yes	47%	63	N/A 2020		41%	101	46%	102	43%	107
No	53%	71	N/A 2020		59%	147	54%	119	57%	142
<b>How long have you used that person?</b>										
Mean (SD)	1,157.11 (1,429.64)		N/A 2020		1,370.20 (2,320.09)		1,233.05 (2,274.50)		953.39 (1,375.71)	
Median	730		N/A 2020		548		365		365	
Range	30-7,300		N/A 2020		14-14,600		14-12,045		14 -7,300	
<b>Do you get other drugs from that main</b>										
Yes	37%	23	N/A 2020		31%	28	32%	33	32%	34
No	63%	39	N/A 2020		69%	63	68%	69	68%	72
<b>What do you usually do if your main source isn't around?*</b>										
Buy from someone else	62%	37	N/A 2020		62%	56	52%	53	47%	50
Get it through a friend	13%	8	N/A 2020		8%	7	3%	3	5%	5
Use another drug	2%	1	N/A 2020		4%	4	2%	2	4%	4
Don't buy anything	23%	14	N/A 2020		27%	25	39%	40	34%	36
Source is always around	13%	8	N/A 2020		4%	4	5%	5	12%	13
Other	0%	0	N/A 2020		0%	0	0%	0	0%	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>		<b>N/A 2020</b>		<b>96</b>		<b>102</b>		<b>107</b>	

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Have you ever bought from someone you didn't know?</b>					
Yes	59%	N/A 2020	60%	58%	59%
No	41%	N/A 2020	40%	42%	41%
<b>In the past year, have you carried a gun or other weapon while you were getting meth?</b>					
Yes, gun	5%	N/A 2020	5%	4%	8%
Yes, other weapon	20%	N/A 2020	23%	22%	20%
Yes, both	8%	N/A 2020	5%	4%	8%
No	66%	N/A 2020	67%	70%	64%
<b>Compared to a year ago, would you say meth is more available, less available, or available about the same?</b>					
More	45%	N/A 2020	45%	44%	46%
Less	11%	N/A 2020	9%	10%	16%
About the same	44%	N/A 2020	47%	45%	38%

\*Percentages based on multiple responses.

## Distribution and production

Total	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017	
	137		157		251		226		254	
<b>Have you, yourself, sold meth or acted as a middleman in the last year?</b>										
Yes	39%	51	34%	52	38%	92	42%	93	48%	119
No	61%	80	66%	102	62%	153	58%	128	52%	131
<b>(Of those who sold) Compared to a year ago, would you say the demand for meth has increased, decreased, or stayed the same?</b>										
Increased	48%	24	67%	33	53%	46	56%	50	66%	74
Decreased	14%	7	6%	3	12%	10	9%	8	8%	9
Same	38%	19	27%	13	35%	30	35%	31	26%	29
<b>Have you ever cooked meth yourself, or helped someone else to cook it?</b>										
Yes	7%	9	N/A 2020		3%	7	5%	11	8%	20
No	93%	124	N/A 2020		97%	241	95%	214	92%	232
<b>(Of those who ever cooked) Have you cooked or helped cook in the past 12 months?</b>										
Yes	4	44%	N/A 2020		29%	2	0%	0	15%	3
No	5	56%	N/A 2020		71%	5	100%	11	85%	17
<b>(Of those who cooked past year) What did you do?*</b>										
Cook meth	N/A		N/A 2020		50%	1	N/A		100%	3
Obtain chemicals	N/A		N/A 2020		50%	1	N/A		100%	3
Find cooking location	N/A		N/A 2020		0%	0	N/A		67%	2
Get equipment to cook meth	N/A		N/A 2020		50%	1	N/A		67%	2
Cut/package meth	N/A		N/A 2020		100%	2	N/A		67%	2
Other	N/A		N/A 2020		0%	0	N/A		0%	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>		<b>N/A 2020</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>N/A</b>		<b>3</b>	

\*Percentages based on multiple responses.

## Other

	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017	
Total	137		157		251		226		254	
<b>During the past six months, how many sex partners did you have?</b>										
None	29%	35	N/A 2020		18%	40	16%	36	16%	38
One	36%	43	N/A 2020		50%	114	54%	120	48%	116
More than one	35%	41	N/A 2020		32%	73	30%	67	37%	89
<b>In the past six months, how often did you have sex while high on meth (of those with a partner during this time)?</b>										
Never	35%	29	N/A 2020		12%	22	19%	35	11%	22
Once in a while	28%	23	N/A 2020		36%	68	29%	54	37%	76
Fairly often	12%	10	N/A 2020		25%	47	24%	44	26%	54
Very often	25%	21	N/A 2020		27%	50	28%	51	26%	53
<b>In the past 6 months, how often did you exchange sex for meth or for money to buy meth (of those with a partner during this time)?</b>										
Never	82%	69	N/A 2020		88%	168	92%	170	85%	175
Once in a while	16%	13	N/A 2020		5%	9	6%	12	11%	22
Fairly often	2%	2	N/A 2020		3%	6	1%	2	1%	3
Very often	0%	0	N/A 2020		4%	7	1%	1	2%	5
<b>In the past six months, how often did you engage in a sexual practice you usually wouldn't do if you weren't high on meth (of those who had sex during this time)?</b>										
Never	66%	55	N/A 2020		69%	132	77%	141	75%	152
Once in a while	23%	19	N/A 2020		18%	35	17%	32	17%	34
Fairly often	5%	4	N/A 2020		5%	9	3%	5	6%	12
Very often	5%	4	N/A 2020		5%	10	1%	2	3%	6
Don't know	2%	2	N/A 2020		2%	4	2%	4	1%	1
<b>In the past six months, how often did you worry that your sexual behavior may put you at risk for getting HIV/STDs (of those who had sex during this time)?</b>										
Never	57%	48	N/A 2020		67%	127	74%	139	77%	158
Once in a while	20%	17	N/A 2020		20%	38	16%	30	11%	23
Fairly often	13%	11	N/A 2020		7%	14	5%	10	4%	9
Very often	10%	8	N/A 2020		6%	11	4%	8	7%	14