

SAN DIEGO ARRESTEES LESS LIKELY TO USE MARIJUANA AND COCAINE, BUT MORE LIKELY TO USE METHAMPHETAMINE

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) recently released its 2008 Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM II) program report on drug trends among a few select communities across the nation¹. ADAM II is a continuation of the original ADAM project, which was funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to collect and analyze drug use data among arrestees in 35 sites across the nation. NIJ terminated the program in 2003 and ONDCP revived a scaled-down version in 2006, concentrating on male arrestees and implementing data collection in ten sites throughout the nation. Although San Diego County is not one of the new ADAM II sites, through the generosity and foresight of local funders², it was the only ADAM site to maintain the project uninterrupted since 2003, renaming it the Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program and expanding the scope to include issues of local concern. Because SAM continues to implement the same rigorous data collection methodology as ADAM, results from San Diego can be compared to the ADAM II sites. This is one of the first opportunities since the termination of ADAM to examine San Diego in relation to other major metropolitan areas.

In comparison to the other ten sites, San Diego had the second lowest percentage of offenders testing positive for at least one drug (57%), with the low being 49 percent in Washington, D.C. and the high 87 percent in Chicago (Table 1). In terms of specific drugs, San Diego had the lowest or one of the lowest recent usage rates for cocaine and marijuana, and the percent positive for heroin was somewhere in the middle compared to other jurisdictions. Not surprisingly, although meth use has continued to spread across the country, usage remained the highest in western parts of the United States, with San Diego having the second highest rate, following Sacramento.

Table 1
MALE ARRESTEES IN SAN DIEGO DIFFER IN DRUG USAGE COMPARED TO ADAM II SITES

	Any Drug	Marijuana	Meth	Cocaine	Opiates
Atlanta, GA	60%	32%	.4	41%	2%
Charlotte, NC	69%	51%	.5%	30%	1%
Chicago, IL	87%	49%	.4%	44%	29%
Denver, CO	68%	42%	3%	33%	4%
Indianapolis, IN	64%	46%	2%	21%	5%
Minneapolis, MN	65%	48%	2%	23%	6%
New York, NY	69%	42%	.1%	30%	7%
Portland, OR	64%	41%	15%	21%	8%
Sacramento, CA	78%	47%	35%	17%	4%
Washington, D.C.	49%	31%	2%	27%	12%
San Diego, CA	57%	36%	20%	8%	7%

SOURCES: ONDCP ADAM II 2008 Annual Report; SANDAG SAM 2008 data

To learn more about SAM, visit SANDAG's Web site at www.sandag.org/cj.

¹ Office of National Drug Control Policy (2009). ADAM II 2008 Annual Report. Washington, D.C.: Author.

² SAM is currently funded by California Border Alliance Group (CBAG), County of San Diego Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS), the District Attorney's Office, and the Public Safety Group.