



# 2015 Adult Arrestee Drug Use in the San Diego Region

November 2016

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# 2015 ADULT ARRESTEE DRUG USE IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION

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## BULLETIN HIGHLIGHTS

- Seventy-six percent (76%) of adult males booked into a local detention facility in San Diego County in 2015 tested positive for an illicit substance – a jump of 8 percent from 2014 and the highest percent in the past 16 years. For females, just over two-thirds (69%) tested positive in 2015, the same percent as in 2014.
- Fifty-two percent (52%) of male arrestees tested positive for marijuana in 2015 – a 7 percent increase from 2014 and a 16-year high. About one in four (24%) arrestees reported having a medical marijuana card.
- While the percent of females that tested positive for meth decreased slightly from 2014 (53%) to 2015 (52%), there was a large jump in the percentage of males positive for meth over the past year, from 40 percent to 48 percent in 2015, also a 16-year high.
- The recent increase in the percent of arrestees testing positive for opiates did not continue in 2015, with fewer females positive (15% in 2014 to 10% in 2015) and no change for males (13% both years). However, arrestees between 18 and 24 were still most likely to test positive for opiates, compared to older arrestees, the group that historically was most likely to test positive.
- Arrestees with a high charge that was drug-related, property-related, or related to any other type of offense that was not violent were more likely to test positive for drugs (78% to 80%) than those booked for a violent offense (61%).
- Around half (51%) of those previously convicted of a felony reported they had committed crimes, most often property crime, to support their drug habit.
- Sixty-three percent (63%) of the arrestees interviewed have been homeless, 57 percent are currently unemployed, and 32 percent have a mental health diagnosis, demonstrating the level of underlying needs and risk for reentry of this population.

## WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED THROUGH THESE INTERVIEWS?

- Positive drug rates for any and multiple drugs (page 5)
- Positive rates for marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine, and opiates over time (page 6)
- Self-reported initiation patterns of drug use (page 8)
- Drug market dynamics (page 9)
- Prescription drug abuse (page 10)
- Binge drinking (page 12)
- Risk factors to recidivate (page 13)
- Possible effects of substance use on the community (page 18)

## BACKGROUND

This SANDAG CJ Bulletin is one in a series<sup>1</sup> highlighting findings from data collected as part of the San Diego County Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program. Since 2004, when federal funding for the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program was suspended, San Diego has been the only site to continue this project uninterrupted. With funding from the SANDAG Criminal Justice Clearinghouse, these data have been reported on an annual basis, providing useful information to policy makers, as well as law enforcement, prevention, and treatment professionals regarding drug use trends over time. In 2015, this data collection effort was generously supported by the San Diego-Imperial HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area), County of San Diego Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS), the District Attorney's Office, and the Public Safety Group. Their support, as well as the cooperation of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, is gratefully acknowledged.

As part of this project, arrestees are approached (using a random sampling method) within 48 hours of their arrest and booking into jail. If the arrestee is available and willing to participate in a confidential interview, s/he is asked a series of questions related to her/his drug use history and to provide a urine sample for drug testing. In 2015, 469 male arrestees were interviewed at the Vista and Central Jails and 172 female arrestees at Las Colinas. Of these 641 arrestees, 617 completed the interview and also provided a valid urine sample for analysis.

### WHAT WERE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARRESTEES INTERVIEWED?

- Of the 617 arrestees with completed interviews, 455 (74%) were male and 162 (26%) were female.
- Forty-three percent (43%) were White, 32 percent Hispanic, 19 percent Black, and 5 percent "other". Five percent of the interviews were conducted in Spanish.

- Twenty-two percent (22%) were under the age of 25, 46 percent between 25 and 39, and 31 percent 40 and older. The average age was 35.0 (range 18 to 74).
- Almost two-thirds (63%) were single, 24 percent divorced/separated/widowed, and 13 percent married.
- Just over one-third (34%) were booked for a highest charge that was a drug offense, 25 percent for an "other" offense, 23 percent for a violent offense, and 19 percent for a property offense.
- Nine percent were estimated to be in custody because of realignment, either because they were identified as being flash incarcerated (being booked into jail for a technical violation while under probation supervision) or identifying as a post-release community supervision offender.
- Twenty-nine percent (29%) reported living in the Central Major Statistical Area (MSA) of the County, 21 percent in East Suburban, 14 percent in South Suburban, 10 percent in North City, 10 percent in North County East, 7 percent in North County West, 6 percent out of the County, and 3 percent in East County.

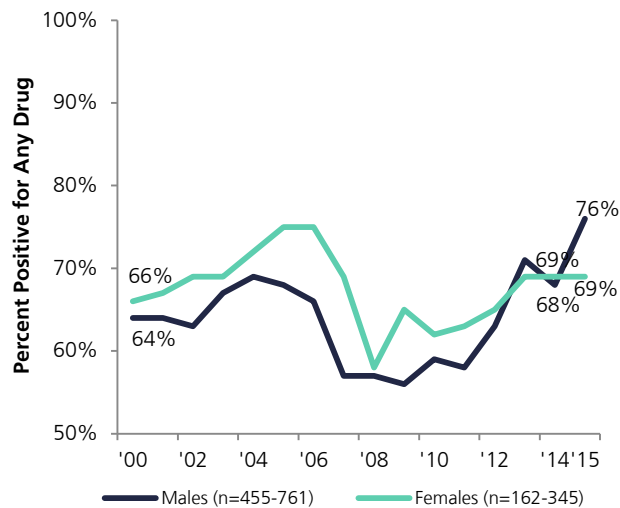
### HOW HAS TESTING POSITIVE FOR ANY DRUG CHANGED OVER TIME FOR MALE AND FEMALE ARRESTEES?

- In 2015, 76 percent of male arrestees and 69 percent of female arrestees tested positive for an illicit drug, which includes marijuana, methamphetamine (meth), cocaine, opiates, and PCP (Figure 1).
- The 2015 male positive rate of 76 percent was the highest since 2000 and a jump of 7 percent from 2014. The previous high was 71 percent in 2013. The 2015 female positive rate of 69 percent was the same as 2014. For females, the high was 75 percent in both 2005 and 2006.
- For every year but 2013 and 2015, females have tested positive at a higher rate than males.

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<sup>1</sup> Two other publications highlighting findings from juvenile interviews and a methamphetamine addendum complete the 2016 report series.

**Figure 1**  
**THREE-QUARTERS OF MALE AND TWO-THIRDS**  
**OF FEMALE ARRESTEES TESTED POSITIVE FOR**  
**DRUGS IN 2015**



NOTE: Prior to 2013 and again in 2015, percent positive was based on marijuana, meth, cocaine, opiates, and PCP. In 2013 and 2014, the PCP test was replaced with a test for alcohol.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

### HOW MANY ARRESTEES ARE POLY-DRUG USERS?

- Thirty-eight percent (38%) of male and 23 percent of female arrestees tested positive for more than one drug in 2015 (Figure 2). Of those who tested positive for multiple substances, 85 percent tested positive for two and 15 percent tested positive for three or more.
- Of those who tested positive for multiple substances, 87 percent were positive for meth, 83 percent marijuana, 30 percent opiates, and 15 percent cocaine.

**Figure 2**  
**MALES MORE LIKELY TO TEST POSITIVE FOR**  
**MULTIPLE DRUGS IN 2015, COMPARED TO**  
**FEMALES**



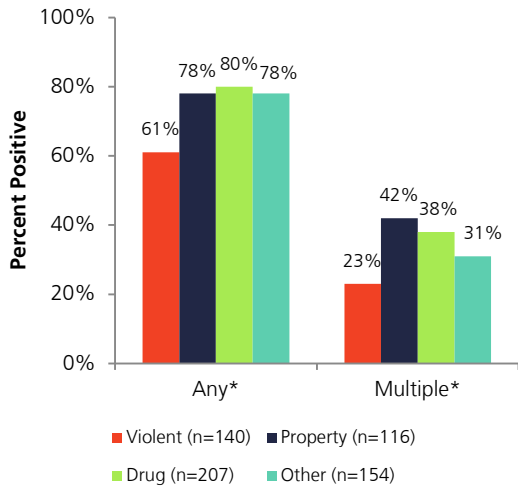
NOTE: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

### HOW DOES TESTING POSITIVE VARY BY THE ARRESTEE'S HIGHEST BOOKING CHARGE?

- While the majority of arrestees tested positive for at least one drug, regardless of highest booking charge, there were significant differences, with those arrested for a drug, property, or other offense more likely to test positive for any drug and multiple drugs, compared to those arrested for a violent offense. Over three-quarters of drug, property, and other offenders tested positive for any drug and around one in three or more tested positive for multiple drugs (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**  
**MAJORITY OF ARRESTEES TEST POSITIVE FOR DRUGS REGARDLESS OF HIGHEST CHARGE**



\* Significant difference at  $p < .05$ .

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

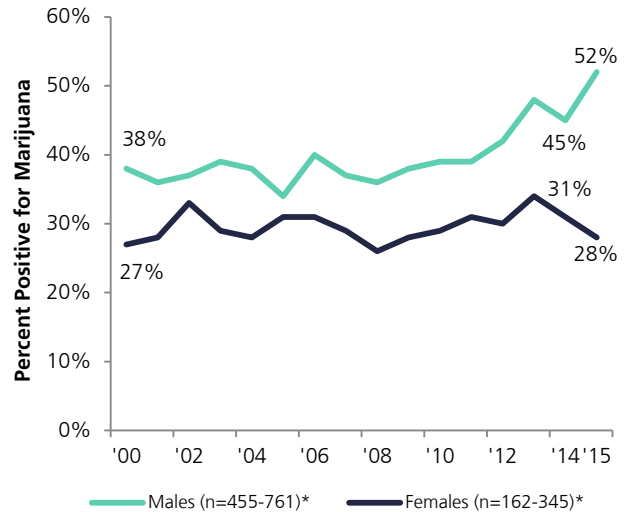
**TAKE AWAY**

Regardless of why someone is booked into jail, substance use is an issue for many arrestees, with three-fourths positive for at least one drug overall, and about one in three current poly-drug users. Among poly-drug users, meth and marijuana were used more than any other drug combination.

**HOW HAVE POSITIVE RATES BY DRUG TYPE CHANGED OVER TIME?**

- The percent of male arrestees positive for **marijuana** was up from 2014 (from 45% to 52%). This rate was the highest in the past 16 years. In 2015, males were significantly more likely to test positive for marijuana, compared to females (Figure 4).
- For female arrestees, the percent positive for marijuana declined for a second year (from 31% to 28%) (Figure 4).

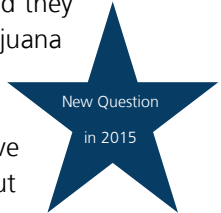
**Figure 4**  
**MARIJUANA USE AT 16-YEAR HIGH FOR ADULT MALES**



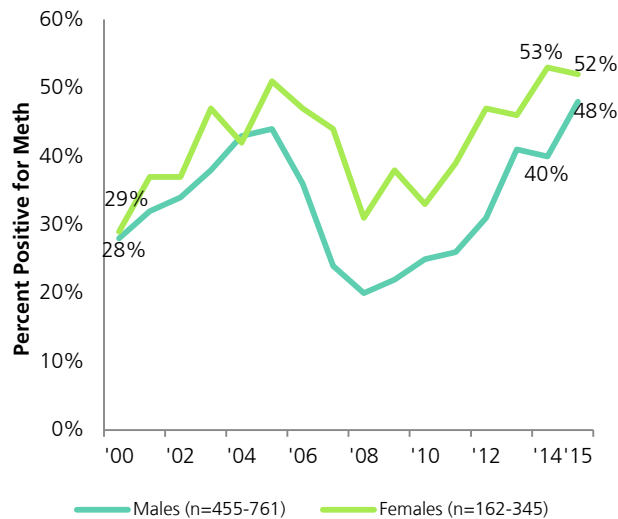
\*Significant difference at  $p < .05$ .

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- Arrestees under the age of 25 were significantly more likely to test positive for marijuana (58%), compared to those between 25 and 39 (46%) and 40 years of age and older (36%). In addition, arrestees who identified as Black were significantly more likely to test positive (58%), compared to those who identified as White (44%) and Hispanic (40%).
- One in four (24%) arrestees reported they had ever obtained a medical marijuana card, including 26 percent of male and 17 percent of female arrestees. Of those who did not have one, 43 percent had thought about getting one.
- For **meth**, the percent of males that tested positive was up eight percent over the past year (to 48% in 2015) – also the highest rate in the past 16 years (Figure 5).
- For females, 52 percent were positive in 2015, a one percent decrease from 2014.



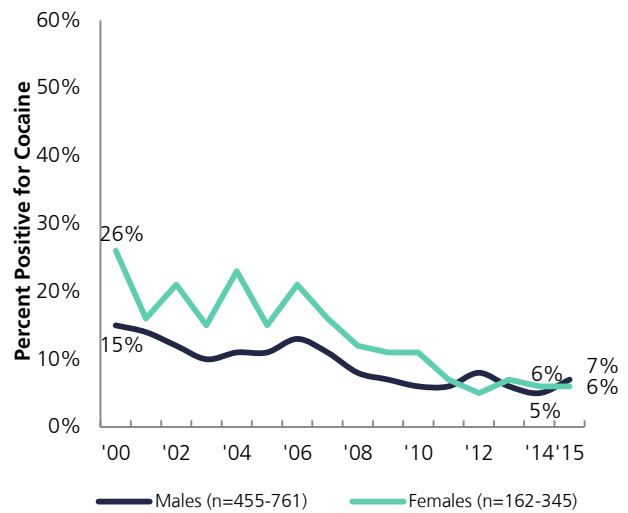
**Figure 5**  
**METH POSITIVE RATES AT 16-YEAR**  
**HIGH FOR MALES IN 2015**



SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- Arrestees who identified as White were significantly more likely to test positive for meth (56%), compared to 43 percent of those who identified as Black and 41 percent who identified as Hispanic. There were also significant differences in use by age, with arrestees between 25 and 39 most likely to test positive for meth (56%), compared to those under 25 (35%) and 40 and older (49%).
- The percent of arrestees positive for **cocaine** has dropped considerably since 2000, with seven percent of males and six percent of females positive in 2015, around the same rates as 2014 (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**  
**COCAINE POSITIVE RATES STAYED ABOUT**  
**THE SAME IN 2015 AFTER FAIRLY**  
**CONSISTENT DECLINES**

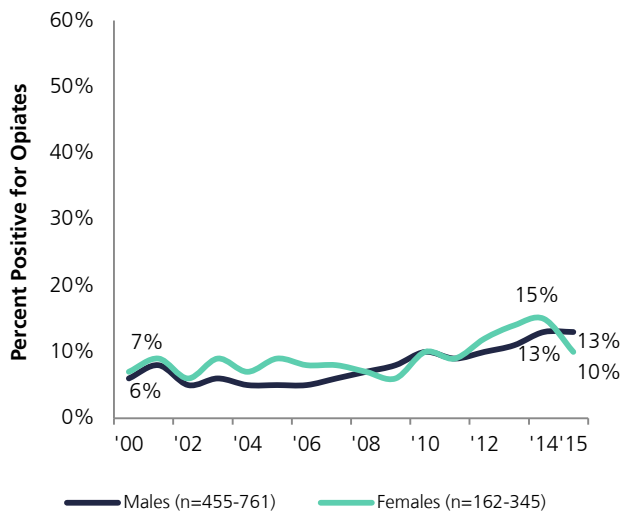


SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- There was also a significant ethnic difference in cocaine use among the arrestees, with 13 percent of Black arrestees positive, compared to 7 percent of Hispanic and 4 percent of White arrestees.
- For **opiates**<sup>2</sup>, there were no increases in recent use for either gender. For males, the positive rate stayed steady at 13 percent and for females it declined from 15 percent in 2014 to 10 percent in 2015 (Figure 7).

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that a positive opiate drug test could indicate use of opiates other than heroin, including morphine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, and Codeine.

**Figure 7**  
**PERCENT OF ARRESTEES POSITIVE FOR OPIATES DID NOT INCREASE IN 2015**



SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- Among the arrestees, those that identified as White were most likely to test positive for opiates (18%), compared to 10 percent of Hispanics and 3 percent of Blacks. Arrestees under 25 were also most likely to test positive for opiates (18%), compared to those 25 to 39 (12%) and those 40 and older (8%).

**TAKE AWAY**

*The percentages of adult male arrestees booked into local jails in 2015 with recent marijuana and meth use were at 16-year highs in 2015. While opiate use did not increase from 2014, it is disproportionately being used by arrestees under the age of 25, contrary to earlier use trends in which older arrestees were more likely to test positive. There were also ethnic differences in recent drug use by drug type, which may have implications for providing culturally competent treatment options for addicted arrestees.*

**HOW DOES HISTORY OF DRUG USE VARY BY DRUG TYPE?**

- Marijuana is the drug most commonly tried by arrestees (88%) and was also tried at the earliest age (14.2). Those who used it in the past month used it an average of 16.0 days (Table 1).
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of the arrestees reported trying meth and it was also reported by the highest percent (73%) as having been used in the last year. Like marijuana, meth users reported using an average of 16.0 out of the past 30 days (Table 1).
- Almost one in three (30%) arrestees reported having ever tried heroin and it was the most frequently used drug of those who used in the last year (18.4 days in the past 30) (Table 1).
- A greater proportion of arrestees had ever tried cocaine (49%), compared to crack (26%). However, current crack users used more days per month than the current cocaine users (10.1 versus 3.7) (Table 1).

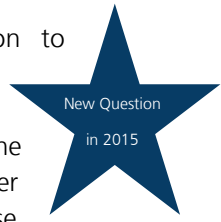
**Table 1**  
**SELF-REPORTED DRUG USE HISTORY VARIES BY DRUG**

How Many Have Ever Tried?	What Was the Average Age at First Use?	Of Those Who've Tried It, How Many Used in the Last Year?	Of Those Who Used in the Past Month, How Many Days Did They Use On Average?
Marijuana 88%	Marijuana 14.2	Marijuana 70%	Marijuana 16.0
Meth 63%	Meth 20.8	Meth 73%	Meth 16.0
Crack 26%	Crack 21.7	Crack 17%	Crack 10.1
Cocaine 49%	Cocaine 18.9	Cocaine 24%	Cocaine 3.7
Heroin 30%	Heroin 22.5	Heroin 48%	Heroin 18.4

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015



- Some interesting differences in drug use history by gender included males being more likely to have ever tried marijuana (90%), trying it at an earlier age (14.0), and using it more frequently in the past 30 days (16.9 days), compared to females (81%, 14.8, and 12.9 days, respectively). In addition, while males were significantly more likely to report ever having tried cocaine (52% versus 41%), females were more likely to have used it in the past 12 months (35% versus 21%).
- In addition to these five street drugs, over half (56%) of the arrestees reported having ever tried other illicit substances, including ecstasy (31%), hallucinogens (29%), LSD (27%), spice (24%), PCP (16%), inhalants (14%), GHB (10%), and ketamine (10%) (Figure 8). Males were significantly more likely to report trying other drugs than females (59% versus 46%).
- When those who had ever used an illegal substance were asked if they had used it in the past 12 months, spice (43%), GHB (35%), and ecstasy (32%) users were most likely to respond affirmatively (Figure 8).

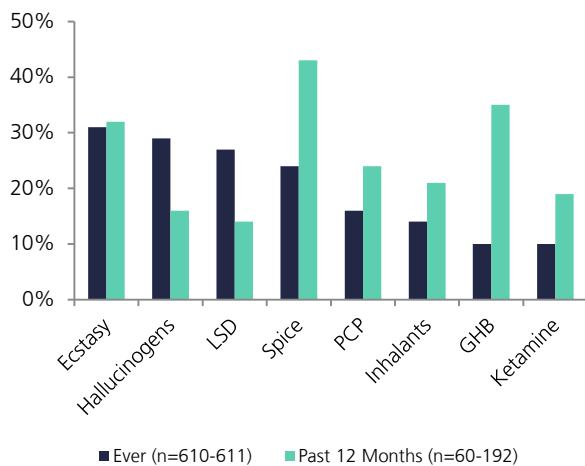


- Due to the increased attention to combatting synthetic drug use in San Diego County, new questions were added to the instrument in 2015 to better understand why individuals use spice. Specifically, 62 percent of those who ever used spice said that they use it as an alternative to marijuana and 38 percent said they use it to avoid testing positive on a drug test. In addition, an arrestee's age was a significant predictor of having ever used spice, as well as using it to avoid testing positive for a drug, with those under 25 most likely (36% ever used and 57% to avoid testing positive), compared to those 25 to 39 (26% and 27%, respectively) and 40 years of age and older (13% and 24%, respectively).

**TAKE AWAY**

*Among arrestees, drug use history and current use varies by drug. Marijuana users reported using almost every other day, as did meth users, and almost two-thirds of those who had ever tried these two drugs, and also heroin, reported using it in the last year.*

**Figure 8**  
**PERCENT OF ARRESTEES WHO HAVE TRIED OTHER ILLICIT DRUGS EVER AND IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**



NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

**HOW DO DRUG MARKET DYNAMICS VARY FOR EACH DRUG TYPE, ACCORDING TO ARRESTEES?**

As Table 2 shows:

- Almost two-thirds (65%) said that it was “very easy” to get **marijuana** in 2015 – the highest percentage for any drug.
- Around three-quarters (76%) purchased marijuana in the same MSA in which they live – a higher percentage than any other drug – suggesting users have to travel the shortest distance to get it. Of those who had to travel outside their MSA (76 individuals), the greatest percentage lived in the East Suburban part of the County (32%) and the greatest percentage traveled to the Central MSA to get the drug (36%) (not shown).

- Sixty percent (60%) of those interviewed said they paid cash for the marijuana they obtained; 70 percent said they got it in other non-cash ways.
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) said it was “very easy” to get **meth** in 2015 – making it the second most available drug in the region according to arrestees.
- Fifty-three percent (53%) of arrestees who obtained meth got it in the same MSA in which they lived. Of the 110 arrestees who traveled outside their MSA for meth, the greatest percentage reported living in the East Suburban part of the County (45%) and the MSA that was most frequently traveled to obtain meth was the Southern MSA (34%) (not shown).
- Thirty-seven percent (37%) said **heroin** was “very easy” to get and users were most likely to report paying cash to obtain the drug (71%).
- Around one in three (35%) said that it was “very easy” to obtain **cocaine**.
- Cocaine users were least likely to say they obtained it by non-cash means (29%), compared to other drugs.
- Half (50%) of those who obtained **crack** said it was “very easy” to do so but they were also least likely to say they obtained it in the MSA where they live (41%).

- Thirteen percent (13%) of arrestees reported traveling to Mexico for drugs. When these 78 arrestees described what they obtained, 40 percent said marijuana, 35 percent meth, 24 percent heroin, 18 percent prescription drugs, 6 percent cocaine, 1 percent crack, and 1 percent steroids.
- In addition, 16 percent reported they had ever been approached to transport, smuggle, conceal or participate in bringing drugs over the border. Arrestees who identified as White (20%) and Hispanic (17%) were most likely to report this had happened, compared to 9 percent of Black arrestees.
- Fifty-three percent (53%) of those who said they were approached also reported they had crossed the border to obtain drugs, versus 5 percent of those who said they had not been approached.

### TAKE AWAY

*Consistent with use data, marijuana was the most available drug in the region in 2015, followed by meth. Heroin and cocaine were least available. Arrestees were willing to travel around the region to obtain drugs, and about one in ten crossed the border to Mexico to obtain them. A number of these individuals participated in various risky or illegal activities to obtain drugs without paying cash for them.*

**Table 2**  
**ILLICIT DRUG AVAILABILITY VARIES BY TYPE**

	Marijuana	Meth	Heroin	Cocaine	Crack
Very easy to obtain	65%	58%	37%	35%	50%
Got in same MSA where live	76%	53%	73%	74%	41%
Got with cash	60%	63%	71%	69%	72%
Got with non-cash ways	70%	69%	53%	29%	50%
Got at a residence	33%	56%	56%	56%	41%
Got at a public building	9%	4%	7%	9%	0%
Got outside	37%	37%	37%	30%	59%

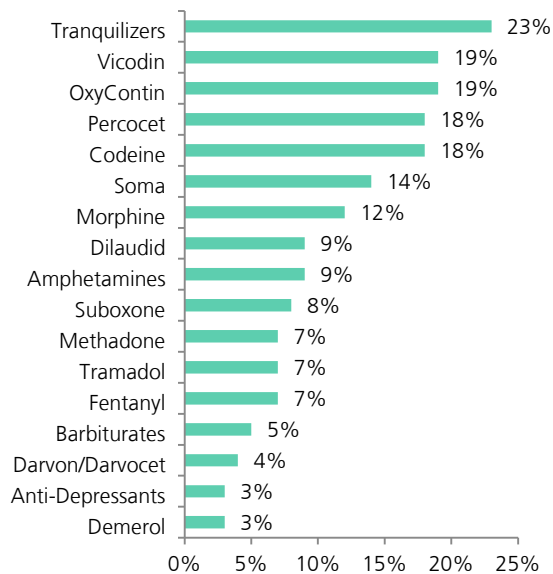
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

### WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE BY THE ARRESTEE POPULATION?

- In 2015, 44 percent of arrestees (46% of males and 36% of females) reported they had ever abused prescription drugs, with the most commonly abused including tranquilizers, Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, and Codeine (Figure 9).
- When those who had ever abused a prescription drug were asked if they had abused it in the past year as well, the top four drugs currently being abused included tranquilizers (39%), Suboxone (33%), Fentanyl (33%), and OxyContin (26%).

Suboxone and Tramadol new in 2015

**Figure 9**  
**TRANQUILIZERS, VICODIN, AND OXYCONTIN**  
**AMONG MOST COMMONLY ABUSED**  
**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**



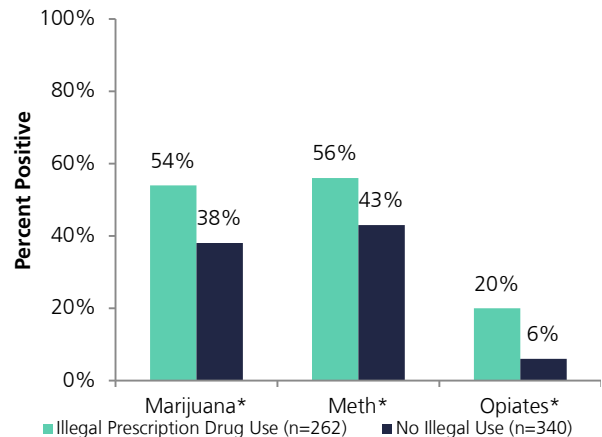
**TOTAL = 607-611**

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- Additional analyses revealed that White arrestees were significantly more likely to report abusing prescription drugs (56%), compared to arrestees of other ethnic groups (28% to 41%), as were those who were younger (under 25, 52%), compared to those who were older (35% to 45%). Additionally, arrestees who abused prescription drugs were significantly more likely to test positive for marijuana, meth, and opiates (Figure 10).

**Figure 10**  
**ILLEGAL USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**  
**ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER CURRENT DRUG USE**

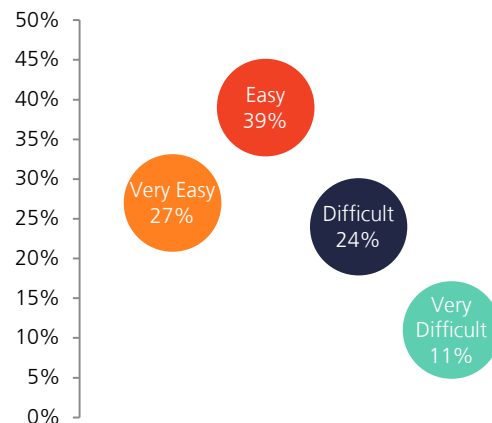


\*Significant at  $p < .05$ .

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- Twenty-three percent (23%) of heroin users said they were hooked on prescription opiates before they began using the street drug and of these, 46 percent said they began to use heroin as a substitute for prescription opiates. When asked which opiate they were addicted to, 63 percent said OxyContin, 38 percent Vicodin, and 33 percent Percocet.
- When asked how difficult it was to obtain prescription drugs illegally, two-thirds said it was "very easy" or "easy" and the rest said it was "difficult" or "very difficult" (Figure 11).

**Figure 11**  
**MOST ARRESTEES SAY PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**  
**ARE EASY TO GET**



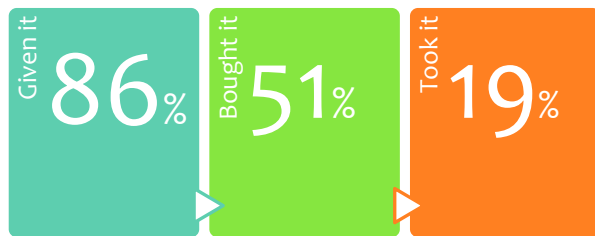
**TOTAL = 261**

NOTE: Percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- When asked to describe how they had obtained the prescription drugs, the most common ways included that they were given it (most often from a friend), they bought it from someone illegally, or they took it from someone (most often a family member) (Figure 12). In addition, eight percent reported that they had “doctor shopped,” 71 percent of whom were successful in doing so.

**Figure 12**  
**MOST COMMON WAYS TO GET PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ILLEGALLY**



SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

**TAKE AWAY**

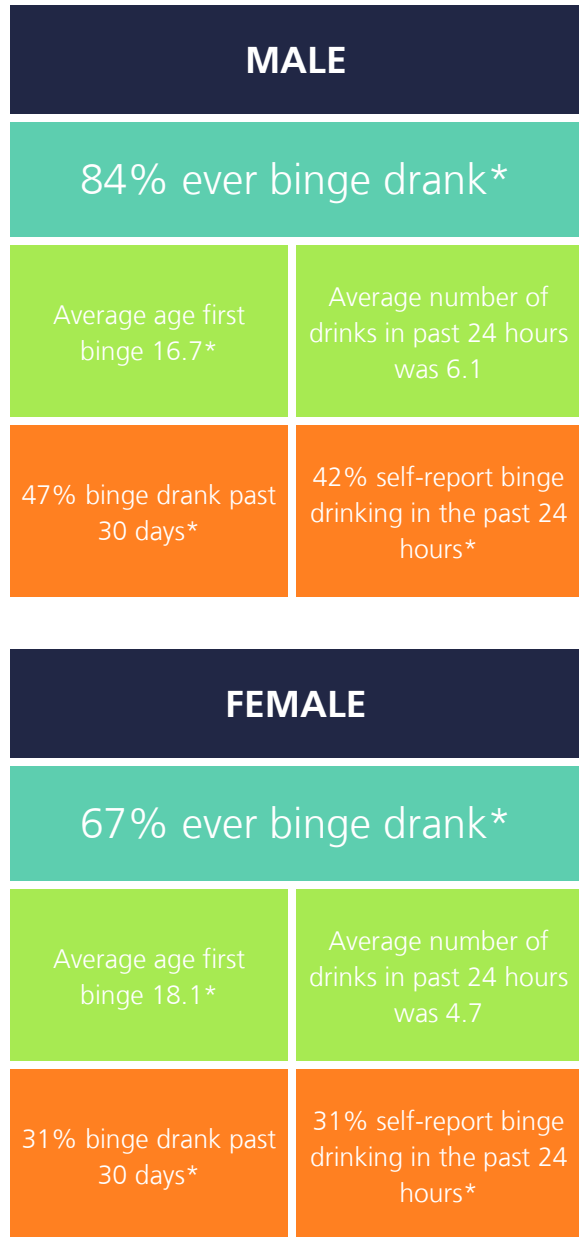
*In addition to using illicit drugs, a number of arrestees have a history of abusing prescription drugs, particularly Whites and those later addicted to heroin. Those who obtained prescription drugs were less likely to say they were “very easy” to obtain, compared to street drugs and while few of these individuals doctor shopped, those who did were mostly successful. More common ways of obtaining prescription drugs included being given it by a friend, buying it, or taking it from another person, most often a family member.*

**WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ARRESTEE’S USE OF ALCOHOL?**

- The majority of both male and female arrestees reported at least one prior binge drinking episode (defined as five drinks or more), with males significantly more likely to do so than females (84% versus 67%) (Figure 13).

- Male arrestees were also significantly more likely to report binge drinking in the past 30 days and past 24 hours (Figures 13).

**Figure 13**  
**MALE AND FEMALE ARRESTEE ALCOHOL USE HISTORY**



Males = 184-452 Females = 50-162

\* Significant at  $p < .05$

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

- There was no significant difference in positive drug test results by whether or not an individual reported binge drinking in the past month, with the exception that those who had were less likely to test positive for meth (41%), compared to those who had not binge drank (55%).

### TAKE AWAY

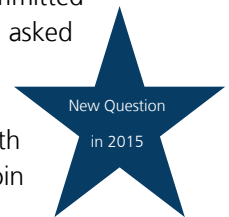
*Alcohol remains the drug of choice for many adults in the justice system, with more than four in five males and over two-thirds of females reporting ever binge drinking.*

## WHAT OTHER UNDERLYING FACTORS OR NEEDS DO THESE ARRESTEES HAVE THAT CAN SHED LIGHT ON THE RISK TO RECIDIVATE?

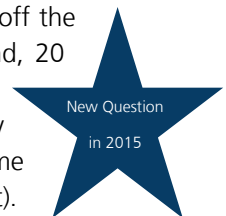
### Lengthy System Involvement

- Around four in every five arrestees (83%) reported having a previous arrest. The median number of prior arrests was 6.0.
- On average, males were 21.1 at their first arrest as an adult, compared to 23.9 for females. Sixty-three percent (63%) of those under the age of 25 reported a prior arrest, compared to 89 percent of those 25 to 39 and 88 percent of those 40 and older.
- Over three-quarters (78%) reported previously serving time in jail (80% of males and 72% of females) and 30 percent serving time in prison (37% of males and 12% of females). Of those who had served time in prison, 89 percent said they had also been on parole – 27 percent who still were.
- More than four in five (82%) of those with a prior arrest reported they had previously been on probation, 62 percent of whom said they were currently on probation.
- Almost one in five (17%) of those with a previous arrest said they had ever been flash incarcerated, which is a sanction option for post-release community supervision offenders. Of these, four percent said that someone had asked them to bring something illicit into the detention facility when they were flashed.

- Almost half (45%) reported being arrested as a juvenile, including 50 percent of males and 31 percent of females. When asked what their first arrest as a juvenile was for, 52 percent said a property crime, 17 percent a status offense, 16 percent a violent crime, 15 percent a drug-related crime, 7 percent a weapons offense, and 5 percent some other type of offense.
- Over two in five (42%) reported they had been involved in selling drugs and of these, 46 percent said they had done so in the past year.
- About one in three (35%) arrestees reported they have committed crime to support a drug habit, but this percentage was even higher for those who said they had previously been convicted of a felony – 51 percent. Of those who admitted to doing so, 90 percent said they committed property crime and when asked what drug they were ever under the influence of, the most common was meth (70%), followed by heroin (31%), and marijuana (23%).



- Almost one in three (31%) arrestees reported ever carrying a gun, with males significantly more likely to do so than females (38% versus 12%). When asked how easy it was to obtain the gun, 49 percent said “very easy”, 34 percent “easy”, 14 percent “difficult”, and 3 percent “very difficult”. When asked how they obtained it, 34 percent said they bought it off the street, 30 percent from a friend, 20 percent from a store or gun shop, 13 percent from a family member, and 15 percent some other way (e.g., stole it, found it).



### Who is Most Likely to Report Prior Involvement in Selling Drugs?

- **Males** are more likely than females (46% versus 30%). Arrestees between **25 and 39** (47%) are more likely than those under 25 (33%) or 40 and older (39%).
- Arrestees who identify as **Black** (55%) are more likely than those who identify as White (47%) or Hispanic (27%).
- Those currently arrested for an “**other**” type of charge (50%) or a **drug** charge (47%) are more likely – but 1 in 3 of those with a violent offense (33%) and property offense (32%) still report involvement.

### Proposition 47

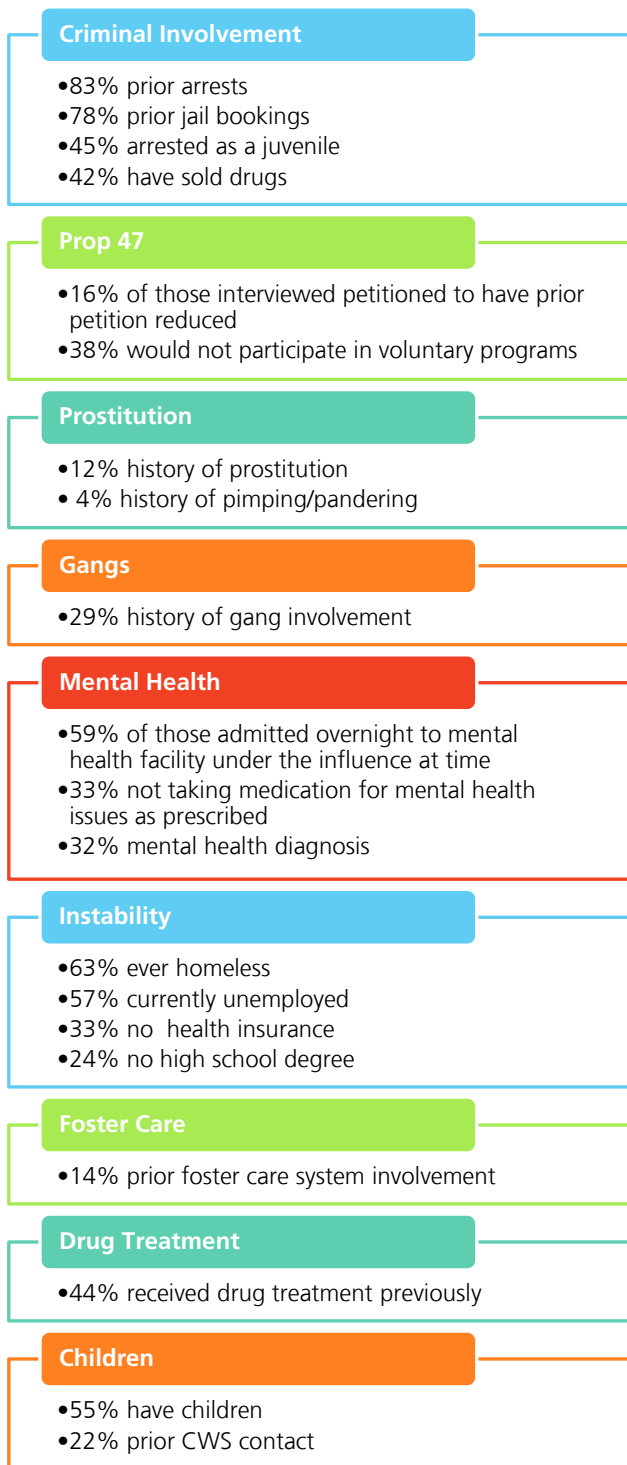
- In 2014, California voters passed Proposition 47 (Prop 47) which reduced certain property and drug-related felonies to misdemeanors. In 2015, 57 percent of the arrestees said they had heard of Prop 47, including 72 percent of those ever convicted of a felony and 45 percent of those who had not.
- Of those who had ever heard of it, 29 percent said that they or their attorney had petitioned to have a prior offense reduced. Of these 98 individuals (16% of the 617 in this study), 34 percent were currently in custody for a most serious crime that was a drug-related offense, 31 percent for an “other” offense, 28 percent for a property offense, and 8 percent for a violent offense.
- When asked if they would complete mandated programs such as drug treatment if they did not have to (because of legislative changes), 38 percent said they would not, including 42 percent of males and 29 percent of females.



### Exchanging Sex/Pimping/Pandering

- Twelve percent (12%) of those interviewed said they had ever exchanged sex for money, drugs, or other things, including 10 percent of the males and 18 percent of the females. There were also statistically significant differences in the responses by age (with 6% of those 18 to 24, 13% of those 25-39, and 15% of those 40 and older saying yes) and ethnicity (15% of Whites, 18% of Blacks, and 6% of Hispanics).
- When asked the first age they exchanged sex for something else, the mean was 21.5 (range 10 to 42).
- Twenty-two percent (22%) of those who reported ever exchanging sex for something said they had done so in the last 30 days.
- Four percent reported being involved in pimping or pandering activities. This included 16 males (7 who said they had exchanged sex themselves and 9 who had not) and 7 females (6 who had exchanged sex themselves and 1 who had not).

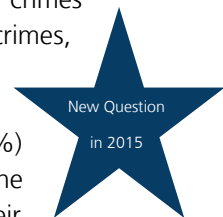
**Figure 14**  
**ARRESTEE RISK IN DIFFERENT AREAS**



SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2015

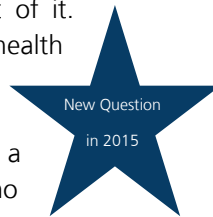
## Gang Involvement

- Twenty-nine percent (29%) reported some type of gang involvement – including 33 percent of males and 19 percent of females. Self-reported gang involvement also varied by race, with 20 percent of White arrestees reporting it, compared to 47 percent of Black and 31 percent of Hispanic arrestees. Younger arrestees were also more likely to report involvement, with 18 percent of those 40 and older reporting any, compared to 34 percent of both those under 25 and those 25 to 39. When asked how old they were when they started hanging out with the gang, the mean age was 14.7 years (range 3 to 43).
- Of the 178 adult arrestees who reported any type of gang involvement, 71 percent said they had this contact within the past five years. When asked their current status with the gang, 38 percent of these individuals said they currently hang out and were never a member, 25 percent used to hang out but don't anymore, 17 percent were currently a member, 11 percent used to be a member but aren't now, and 8 percent used to be a member but just hang out now.
- Of the 73 individuals who reported they committed crimes with their gang, 77 percent said they committed property crimes together, 56 percent drug crimes, 49 percent violent crimes, and 25 percent weapons crimes. Thirteen percent (13%) of those with any contact in the previous five years also said their gang had worked with another gang to organize prostitution.
- Those who reported a previous gang affiliation were significantly more likely to report having been arrested as a juvenile (68% versus 35%), to have been involved in drug distribution (75% versus 28%), and to have carried a gun previously (55% versus 21%).



## Mental Health Issues

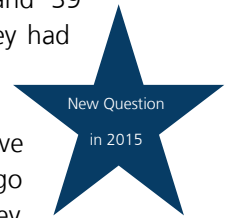
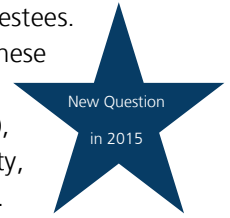
- Thirty-two percent (32%) of the arrestees reported they had ever been diagnosed with a mental or psychiatric disorder and 23 percent reported they had previously stayed at least overnight for mental health treatment at a hospital or other facility. Female arrestees were significantly more likely to report having a diagnosis (45%), compared to males (27%).
- Of those who had ever been admitted to a facility for at least an overnight stay, the median number of stays was 2.0 (range 1 to 100) and the mean age for the first stay was 23.5 (range 7 to 58).
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) said they had been under the influence of alcohol or other drugs at the time they were admitted, supporting the need for dual diagnosis treatment options.
- Almost all (90%) of those who had ever been diagnosed had also been prescribed medication for the disorder. However, only 46 percent said they were currently prescribed the medication and of these, 33 percent said they were not taking them.
- Twenty-four percent (24%) of females and 15 percent of males (17% overall) reported they had ever tried to commit suicide. In addition, 28 percent (38% of females and 25% of males) said they had seriously thought of it. Those who reported a mental health diagnosis were more likely to say they had tried to commit suicide (43% versus 5% without a diagnosis), as were those who tested positive for marijuana (21% versus 14%).



## Unemployment and Housing Issues

- Forty-three percent (43%) were employed full- or part-time and 57 percent were not. Seventeen percent (17%) reported they had lost their job in the past year. Females were significantly more likely to report being unemployed than males (70% versus 53%).
- Around one in five (24%) did not have a high school degree or equivalent.
- One-third (33%) did not have health insurance.

- Seven percent reported previously serving in the military, including nine percent of male arrestees and three percent of female arrestees. Ninety-three percent (93%) of these individuals said they were discharged (71% honorably), 5 percent were still on active duty, and 2 percent were in the reserves.
- Around three in five (63%) reported ever being homeless and more than one in five (24%) described themselves as currently homeless.
- When arrestees who had served time in prison were asked what the biggest challenge to successful reentry from incarceration was, the two most common answers were employment (33%) and housing (25%).
- About half (52%) of those interviewed reported they were not born in San Diego County, with those 40 and older least likely to have been born here (29%), compared to those under 25 (68%) and between the ages of 25 and 39 (52%). When asked how long they had lived in San Diego County, 6 percent said they moved here in 2015, 17 percent in the past five years, and 77 percent five years ago or longer. When asked why they moved here, 45 percent cited family, 18 percent work, 11 percent something they liked about San Diego, 10 percent they moved for other people, 8 percent an opportunity, and 4 percent said they were trying to escape something somewhere else.



## Prior Foster Care Involvement

- Overall, 14 percent of the arrestees reported they had been in the foster care system as a child and almost half (45%) of these individuals reported aging out of the system. While there was no difference between males and females of ever being in foster care, males were more likely to report aging out of the system (53%) than females (25%).



## Drug Treatment Needs

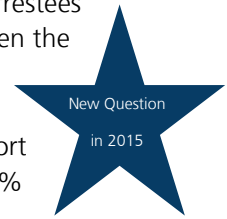
- Overall, 44 percent of the arrestees said they had received drug treatment in the past, but 36 percent of these individuals said the most recent time was not successful. The median number of prior treatment events was 2.0 (range 1 to 20).
- Older arrestees were more likely to report having received treatment, compared to younger ones (32% of those under 25, 46% of those 25 to 39, and 49% of those 40 years of age and older). Individuals who reported having a prior arrest (51% versus 10%) and previous contact with Child Welfare Services (CWS) (54% versus 38%), were also more likely to have received treatment.
- For 62 percent of those who had received treatment, the last episode was court-ordered (as opposed to voluntary).
- There was no significant difference between court-ordered treatment being successful (59%), compared to voluntary (71%).
- Four in five (80%) of the arrestees reported that every time they had sought drug treatment, it had been available.

## Dependent Children

- Fifty-five percent (55%) of arrestees reported having children, including 52 percent of males and 66 percent of females.
- Twenty-four percent (24%) reported they currently live with a child, whether or not it was their own.
- Three percent of the female arrestees said they were currently pregnant.
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of female arrestees and 16 percent of males reported prior CWS contact (22% overall). Twenty-two percent (22%) of these individuals said their case was still open.

## Unreported Victimization

- About one in three (31%) arrestees reported they had previously been the victim of a crime they did not report to police. Females were significantly more likely to report victimization than males (38% versus 29%).
- When asked to describe what type of crime they were the victim of, the most common responses were assault (35%), some type of larceny/theft (20%), domestic violence (19%), or rape or some other type of sexual abuse (18%).
- When asked to explain why they did not report the crime to police, the most common answer (32%) was they handle things themselves and don't rely on law enforcement, followed by they were scared to (15%), they don't think it will help (14%), it was too risky given their own involvement in the system (14%), they knew the person and didn't want to get them into trouble (11%), or they just wanted to forget about it (11%).



### TAKE AWAY

*Many of the arrestees booked into local jails have a lengthy history of justice system involvement, drug and mental health treatment needs, employment and housing challenges, prior foster system involvement, and children who are dependent on them. Understanding and documenting these underlying risk factors is important in ensuring that individuals can be assisted as they reenter the community from incarceration.*

### This or That...

Given some of the recent changes in the criminal justice system, three new questions were added to the SAM interview in 2015 asking arrestees their preference on three things.

If given a choice, would you rather...

#### 1. Serve your entire sentence in custody or a portion in custody and a portion under community supervision?

- 20% all in custody, 69% split custody and community, and 11% wouldn't care.
- Why all custody? #1 answer – "No papers"
- Why split? #1 answer – "Don't like jail"
- Those who have previously been on probation would prefer just time in custody.

#### 2. Be under probation or parole supervision?

- 32% probation, 35% parole, 33% wouldn't care.
- Why probation? #1 answer – "Easier"
- Why parole? #1 answer – "Less likely to get violated"
- Those who have been on probation, been on parole, been convicted of a felony, and report gang involvement prefer parole.

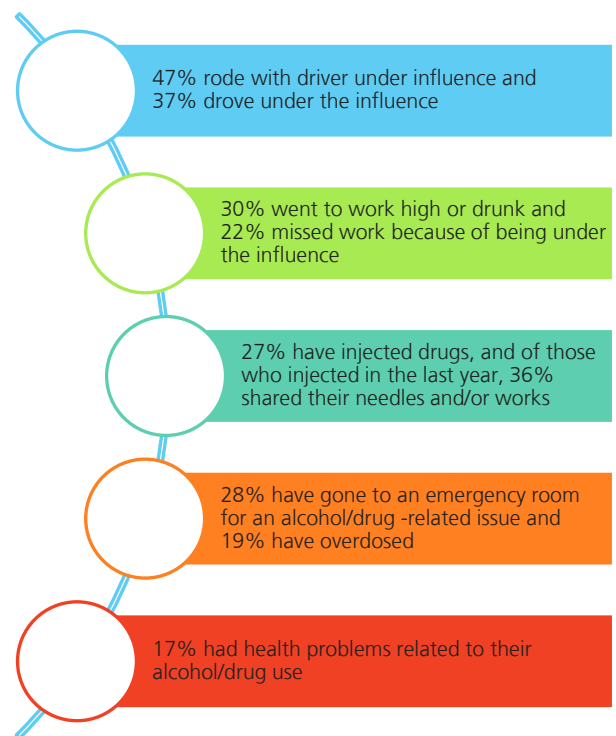
#### 3. Serve time in state prison or local jail?

- 42% prison, 31% jail, 27% wouldn't care.
- Why prison: #1 answer – "Better conditions"
- Why jail: #1 answer: "Prison too scary"
- Those who have been on probation, been to prison, been convicted of a felony, and report gang involvement preferred prison.

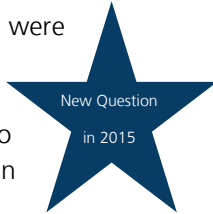
## WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE WAYS THE BEHAVIOR OF THIS POPULATION INDIRECTLY AFFECTS OTHERS IN OUR COMMUNITY?

- Criminal and other risky behavior of arrestees can affect others in the community – either through the risk of being on the road with an impaired driver in another vehicle, interacting with someone at work or school under the influence, coming into contact with a used syringe, providing medical treatment to the uninsured, or as an employer, when someone misses work due to alcohol or other drug use. Figure 15 shows how addressing underlying addiction can have cost-benefit for the community overall.

**Figure 15**  
**RISKY BEHAVIORS THAT HAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ARRESTEES AND POSSIBLY OTHERS AROUND THEM**



- Because more adults are still arrested for driving under the influence than any other crime, additional questions related to this behavior were added to the instrument in 2015. Overall, about one in three (34%) arrestees reported they had ever been arrested for driving under the influence, with those who were 40 years of age or older more likely to report this happening (45%), compared to those who were under 25 (15%) or between 25 and 39 (35%).
- Sixty-three percent (63%) reported they had been arrested just once for driving under the influence, and 39 percent more than once. The range was one to eleven previous arrests.
- When asked what they had consumed when they drove under the influence most recently, 73 percent said alcohol, 12 percent drugs, and 15 percent both alcohol and drugs. When the 54 individuals who had used drugs were asked which type of drug, 43 percent said meth, 39 percent marijuana, 26 percent some other type of drug (e.g., prescription), 11 heroin, 6 percent powder cocaine, and 2 percent crack.



### Alcohol Versus Drugs

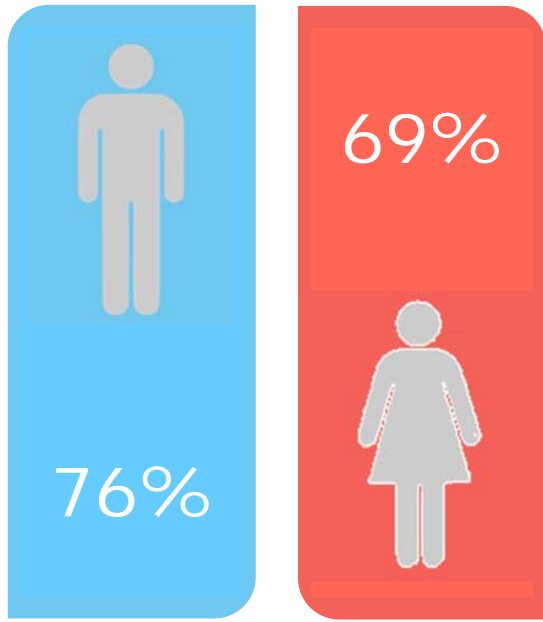
*Which is more common among arrestees – alcohol or other drug use that preceded one of the following risky behaviors according to arrestees?*

In the past 12 months...	Alcohol	Drugs
Health Problem	8%	12%
Drive Under Influence	21%	27%
Ride Under Influence	33%	38%
Sexual Acts Under Influence	35%	45%
Domestic Violence	3%	8%

### TAKE AWAY

*The risk taking behaviors that are associated with the alcohol and other drug use of the arrestee population have a direct impact on their lives, as well as others in the community potentially, through going to work or driving under the influence, engaging in drug use behaviors that could put the community and first responders at risk, and requiring medical treatment for issues that may not have occurred if not for the substance abuse.*

# SUMMARY OF 2015 ADULT SUBSTANCE ABUSE MONITORING (SAM) STATISTICS



## MALE

**52%** tested positive for marijuana

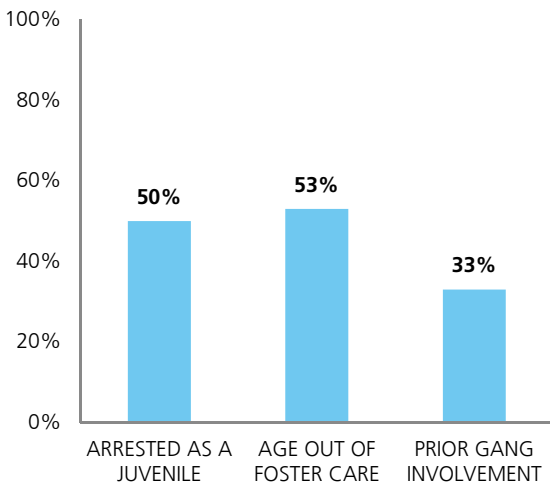
**48%** tested positive for meth

## FEMALE

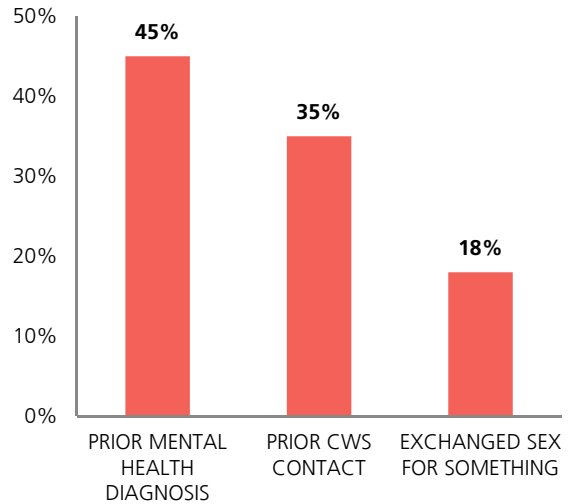
**28%** tested positive for marijuana

**52%** tested positive for meth

## MALE



## FEMALE



## MALE

**46%** ABUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

**38%** CARRIED A GUN

**53%** UNEMPLOYED AND LOOKING FOR WORK

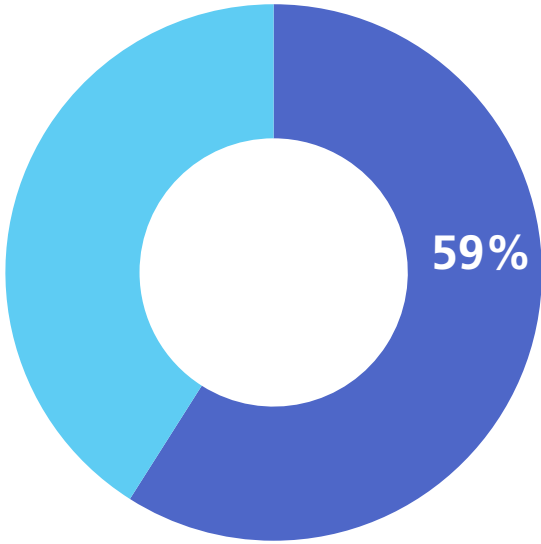
## FEMALE

**36%**

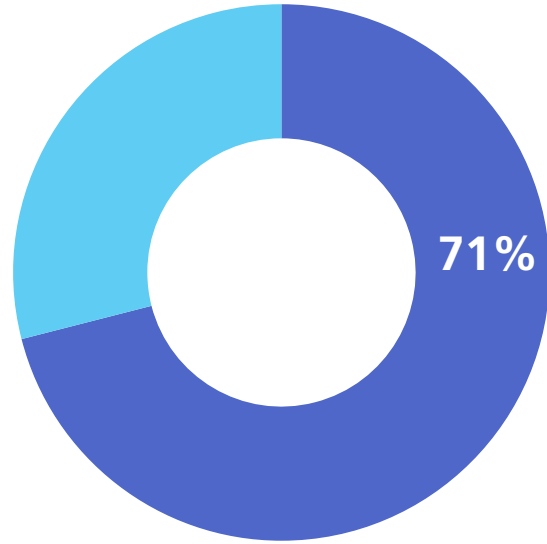
**12%**

**70%**

## SUMMARY OF 2015 ADULT SUBSTANCE ABUSE MONITORING (SAM) STATISTICS



**Court-ordered treatment successful**



**Voluntary treatment successful**

