

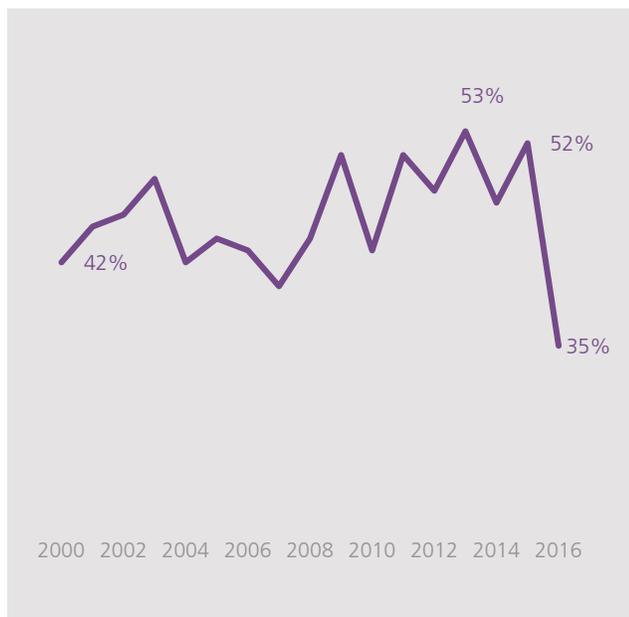
Recent Trends in Marijuana Use Among San Diego County Arrestees

With California voters passing a ballot initiative in November 2016 to legalize the recreational use of marijuana, local public safety and public health entities have looked to states such as Colorado and Washington, the earliest to pass similar measures, for possible lessons learned. To help inform this discussion and provide additional baselines prior to legalization, this CJ Flash summarizes recent data from adult and juvenile arrestees compiled through the Substance Abuse Monitoring program regarding use and perceptions of the drug. More information from the full reports can be found at sandag.org/cj.

Highlight 1

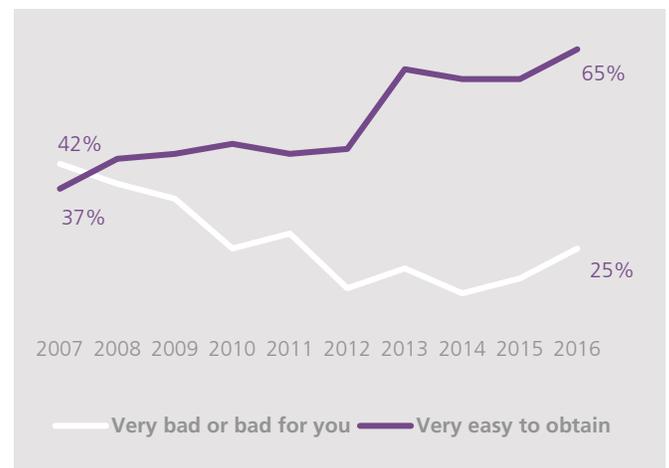
In 2016, the percent of youth positive for marijuana was at a 17-year low, dropping from 52 percent in 2015 to 35 percent in 2016. With a focus on booking fewer youth in Juvenile Hall, this could reflect changes in the population of detained youth. However, this drop is consistent with data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health¹, which recently showed adolescent use of marijuana in the past month was at its lowest rate in 20 years.

Percent of juveniles positive for marijuana



Highlight 2

Even though the percentage of youth testing positive decreased in 2016, more youth than ever are reporting it is “very easy” to obtain and fewer are reporting that using it could be “extremely bad” or “very bad” for someone.



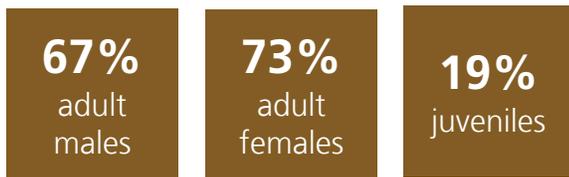
- 68%** arrestees say the potency of the marijuana they use has gone up since they started using
- 56%** think it is psychologically addictive
- 30%** think it is physically addictive

¹ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (HHS Publication No. SMA 16-4984, NSDUH Series H-51). Retrieved from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/>

Highlight 3

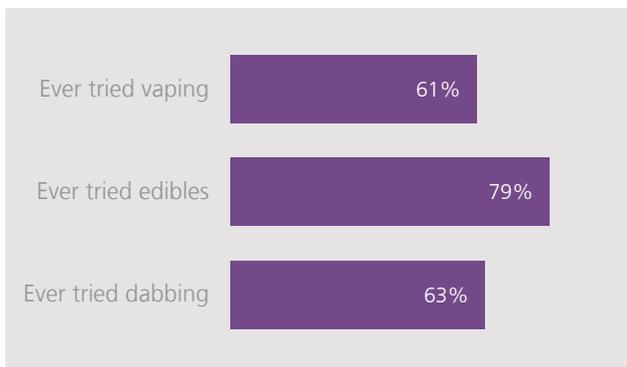
Most adults who were positive for marijuana were positive for another illicit substance as well (e.g., cocaine/crack, opiates, meth, or PCP). However, juveniles were more likely to only be positive for marijuana.

Percent of those positive for marijuana positive for at least one other drug



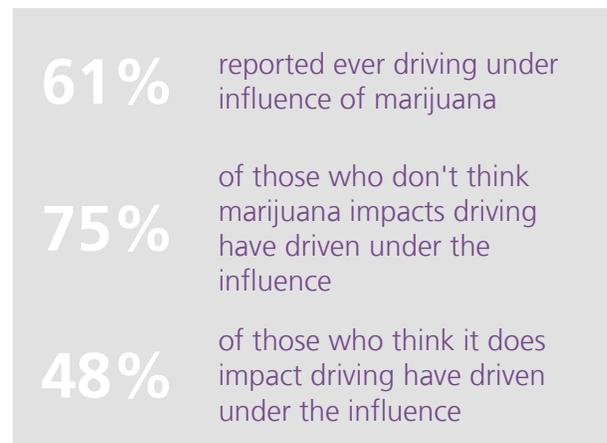
Highlight 4

In addition to smoking, those who used marijuana in the past year also often reported that they have dabbled, drank or ate the drug (in baked goods, candies), and vaped it.² These alternative methods of use are a concern because of the higher concentration of the drug that can be consumed and how quick the high can happen – factors which resulted in an increase in emergency room visits. The process to extract the THC for dabbing has also been linked to explosions.



Highlight 5

Because less is known regarding how THC may affect individuals differently, being able to test drivers for use who are suspected of driving under the influence is something that is being studied. Just under two-thirds (61%) of arrestees who had used marijuana in the past year said they had ever driven after consuming marijuana, and this included even those who also answered a question affirmatively that they thought marijuana use did impair one's driving skills.



² For dabbing, a highly concentrated extract of marijuana (e.g., shatter, wax, butane hash oil) is dabbed on a heated surface and the vapor is inhaled. For vaping, vapors (rather than smoke) are also inhaled, but a portable vaporizing device is used and dried herbs are heated, rather than a concentrated substance.