



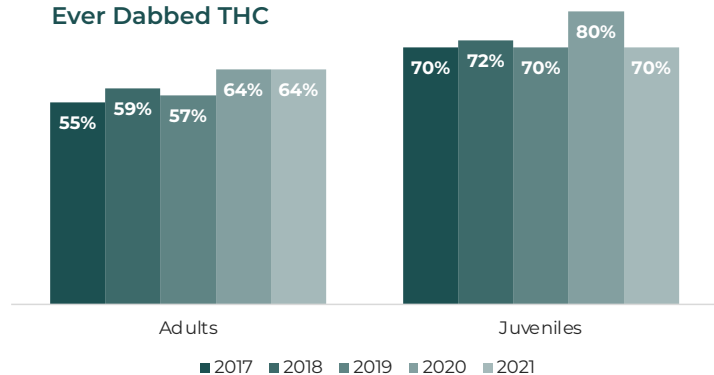
MARIJUANA USE AMONG SAN DIEGO ARRESTEES: FIVE YEARS OF DATA POST-PROPOSITION 64

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 is to identify drug use trends among the adult and juvenile offender populations to develop appropriate strategies for the prevention of drug abuse. In 2016, with the passage of Proposition 64 (which legalized the recreational use of marijuana in California for individuals 21 years of age and older), a marijuana addendum was added to the SAM questionnaires. These additional questions included topics such as frequency of usage, driving under the influence, and perceived harms and benefits among others. This CJ Flash highlights results from 2021, as well as comparisons to 2017 through 2020 when noteworthy.¹

Highlight 1

Dabs are concentrated doses of cannabis made by extracting tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) using a solvent. The result is a sticky oil that is heated on a hot surface (such as a nail) and inhaled. In 2021, nearly three-fourths (70%) of juvenile respondents and nearly two-thirds (64%) of adult respondents reported having ever dabbed THC. The use of dabbing is a concern considering the intake of a higher concentration of the drug, how quickly the high can happen, as well as the risk of explosions during extraction.

Figure 1
Ever Dabbed THC

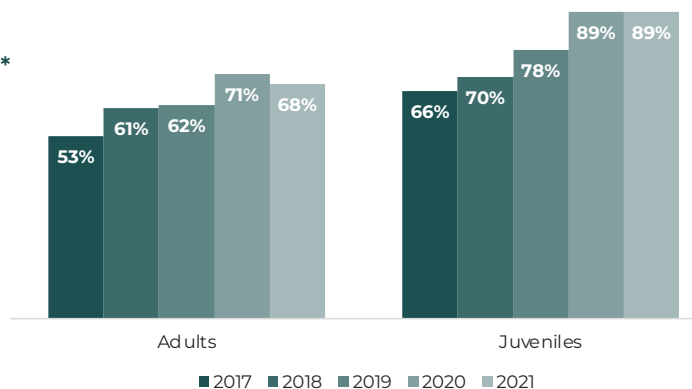


Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

Highlight 2

Almost nine in ten (89%) juveniles reported ever vaping THC in 2021, significantly more than adults (68%). These percentages were similar to those reported in the previous year. In 2019, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued warnings related to vaping any products that contain THC.

Figure 2
Ever Vaped THC*



*Significant at $p < .05$
Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

¹In 2021, the marijuana addendum was completed with 232 individuals (195 adults and 37 juveniles), in 2020 with 229 individuals (194 adults and 35 juveniles), in 2019 with 357 individuals (283 adults and 74 juveniles), in 2018 with 366 individuals (277 adults and 89 juveniles), and in 2017 with 378 individuals (301 adults and 77 juveniles). The first full year of the additional marijuana questions was 2017. Additionally, because the number of youths booked into Juvenile Hall has considerably decreased in recent years, additional youths were interviewed at the San Diego Achievement Centers in 2021. More information about the SAM program is available at sandag.org/cj.

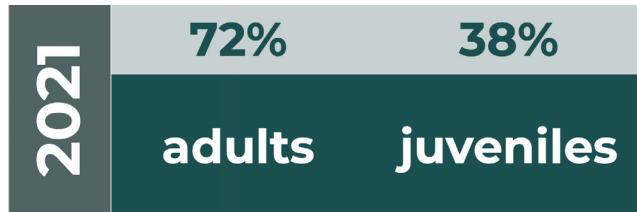


Highlight 3

Nearly three-fourths (72%) of adults and 38% of juveniles in 2021 said they think the potency of marijuana has increased since they started using it. Adults were significantly more likely to report marijuana has gotten stronger over time, which is not surprising considering they have most likely been using it for a longer period of time.

Figure 3

Think the potency of marijuana has increased since they started using it*

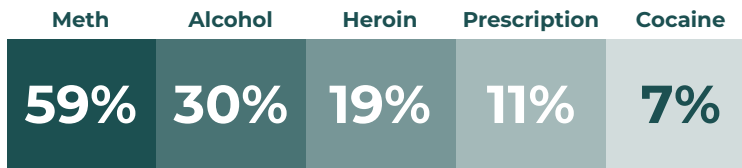


*Significant at $p < .05$
Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

Highlight 4

Around one in eight respondents (12%) said they use marijuana with another drug, most often meth (59%). Compared to 2020, where 8% of respondents reported using crack with marijuana, none of the respondents in 2021 reported combining these two substances.

Figure 4

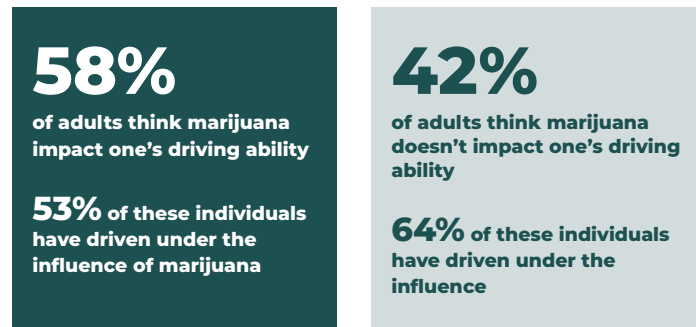


Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

Highlight 5

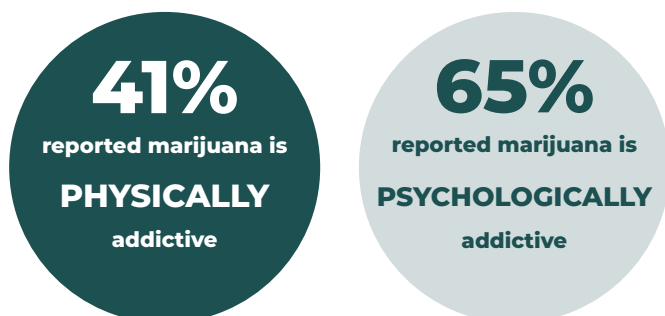
In 2021, more than half (58%) of adult respondents thought marijuana could impact someone's driving ability and 42% thought it did not. Of the adults who thought marijuana could impact one's driving under the influence, 53% reported ever reported doing so. Of those who thought it did not impact one's driving, 64% had driven under the influence.

Figure 5



Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

Figure 6



Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

Highlight 6

Around 2 in 5 (41%) of respondents reported they thought marijuana was physically addictive and almost two-thirds (65%) reported it was psychologically addictive. Both responses have experienced increases since 2019 (30% and 57%, respectively).²

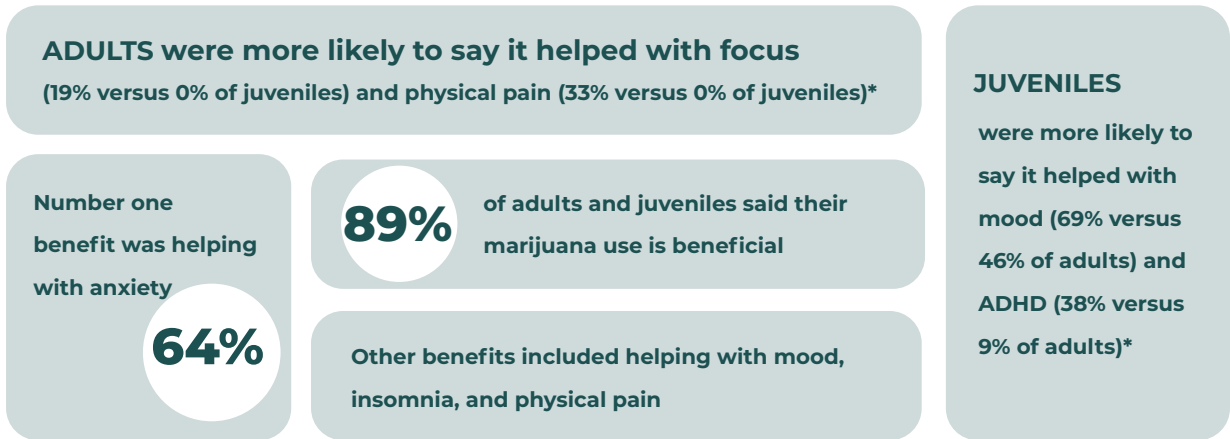
² In 2020, an abbreviated version of the marijuana addendum was administered. As such, several items are not available for comparison for the previous year.



Highlight 7

Nearly nine in ten (89%) respondents reported their marijuana use was beneficial to them. Helping with anxiety was cited as the top benefit (64%), followed by helping with mood (50%), insomnia (32%), and physical pain (27%). Of those who reported benefits, juveniles were more likely to report it helped with mood and ADHD and adults were more likely to report it helped with focus and physical pain.

Figure 7



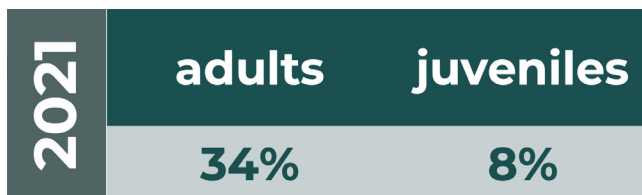
*Significant at $p < .05$
Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

Highlight 8

Just under one-third (30%) of respondents reported they had grown or helped someone else grow marijuana plants in the past year. This is a larger percentage than the 22% of respondents in 2019. Adults were significantly more likely to report growing or helping someone else grow marijuana in the past year.

Figure 8

Have grown or helped someone grow marijuana in the past year*



*Significant at $p < .05$
Sources: SANDAG, 2022.

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