

SANDAG

CJAGGREGATE

Research findings from
the Criminal Justice
Clearinghouse

2022 Methamphetamine Use by San Diego County Arrestees

September 2023

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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 and 2022 data include 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 and 2022 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.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2022

Free Language Assistance | Ayuda gratuita con el idioma | Libreng Tulong sa Wika | Hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí | 免费语言协助 | 免費語言協助
مساعدة لغوية مجانية | 무료 언어 지원 | کمک زبان رایگان | 無料の言語支援 | Бесплатная языковая помощь | Assistència lingüística gratuita | मुफ्त भाषा सहायता
Assistance linguistique gratuite | ជំនួយភាសាឥតគិតថ្លៃ | ఉచిత భాషా సహాయం | ການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາພຣີ | Kaalmada Luqadda ee Bilaashka ah
Безкоштовна мовна допомога | [SANDAG.org/LanguageAssistance](https://www.sandag.org/LanguageAssistance) | 619.699.1900



Initiation and current use

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
Total	112		137		157		251		226	
In the past year, have you used meth just before or while at work/school?										
Yes	36%	40	23%	30	N/A 2020		33%	81	35%	76
No	22%	25	20%	26	N/A 2020		13%	31	21%	46
N/A	42%	47	58%	77	N/A 2020		54%	131	44%	97
Why did you first start using meth?*										
Get high	14%	13	12%	16	27%	40	N/A		N/A	
Get more energy	14%	13	5%	6	8%	12	N/A		N/A	
Lose weight	0%	0	1%	1	3%	5	N/A		N/A	
Experiment	33%	32	35%	46	49%	74	N/A		N/A	
Escape problems	15%	14	20%	26	19%	29	N/A		N/A	
Stay awake	14%	13	8%	11	13%	20	N/A		N/A	
Replace another drug	4%	4	3%	4	5%	8	N/A		N/A	
Friends/peer use	30%	29	41%	54	36%	54	N/A		N/A	
Improve/enhance sex	0%	0	0%	0	1%	2	N/A		N/A	
Other	3%	3	3%	4	5%	7	N/A		N/A	
Total	112		132		150		N/A		N/A	
Why are you using meth now?*										
Get high	15%	13	21%	26	36%	50	N/A		N/A	
Get more energy	19%	16	9%	11	19%	26	N/A		N/A	
Lose weight	0%	0	2%	3	7%	10	N/A		N/A	
Escape problems	26%	24	27%	33	35%	49	N/A		N/A	
Stay awake	20%	18	15%	18	21%	30	N/A		N/A	
Replace another drug	3%	3	7%	8	2%	3	N/A		N/A	
Friends/peer use	11%	10	27%	33	17%	24	N/A		N/A	
Addicted	48%	41	40%	49	33%	46	N/A		N/A	
Improve/enhance sex	1%	1	2%	3	2%	3	N/A		N/A	
Other	5%	6	3%	4	7%	10	N/A		N/A	
Total	112		124		140		N/A		N/A	

Initiation and current use

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2022

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
Total	112		137		157		251		226	
How do you usually use meth?										
Snort	13%	14	12%	16	N/A 2020		12%	31	15%	33
Smoke alone	72%	80	81%	111	N/A 2020		76%	191	68%	154
Smoke with other drug	3%	3	2%	2	N/A 2020		2%	5	3%	7
Inject alone	12%	13	6%	8	N/A 2020		8%	20	13%	29
Inject with other drug	1%	1	0%	0	N/A 2020		<1%	1	1%	3
Eat/drink	0%	0	2%	2	N/A 2020		1%	3	0%	0
How have you used meth in the past year?*										
Snort	37%	41	44%	60	N/A 2020		40%	100	51%	115
Smoke	84%	94	94%	129	N/A 2020		91%	228	92%	208
Inject	31%	35	20%	27	N/A 2020		25%	63	30%	68
Eat/drink	2%	2	5%	7	N/A 2020		6%	14	3%	7
How much meth do you typically use on a day you use meth? (Measurement unit of grams)										
Mean (SD)	1.71 (1.82)		1.84 (1.38)		N/A 2020		1.21 (1.03)		1.27 (1.02)	
Median	1.00		1.00		N/A 2020		1.00		1.00	
Range	.20-7.00		.10-7.00		N/A 2020		.02-4.00		.10-4.00	
On a day you use meth, how many times do you use?										
Mean (SD)	4.72 (3.42)		8.70 (15.19)		N/A 2020		5.07 (6.03)		4.61 (5.45)	
Median	4.00		5.00		N/A 2020		3.00		3.00	
Range	1.00-15.00		1-100		N/A 2020		1-50		1-50	
During the last month, what was the most days in a row (longest run) you used meth?										
Mean (SD)	16.82 (12.58)		17.60 (12.37)		N/A 2020		16.51 (12.26)		15.69 (12.34)	
Median	17.00		26.00		N/A 2020		15.00		14.00	
Range	1.00-30.00		1-30		N/A 2020		1-30		1-30	

*Percentages based on multiple responses

Quality and availability

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
Total	112		137		157		251		226	
Compared to a year ago, is the quality of the meth you're using...										
Worse	49%	49	51%	61	52%	70	59%	135	49%	100
Same	33%	33	34%	40	15%	20	28%	64	33%	66
Better	18%	18	15%	18	33%	45	13%	29	18%	37
Compared to a year ago, is the price you're paying for meth...										
Lower	40%	38	52%	61	31%	43	53%	116	48%	98
Same	50%	47	27%	31	36%	50	33%	71	37%	75
Higher	10%	9	21%	25	34%	47	14%	31	15%	30
Where do you typically buy/get meth?										
Indoors	49%	49	38%	48	N/A 2020		41%	95	36%	75
Outdoors	51%	50	62%	77	N/A 2020		59%	136	64%	131
Do you get meth within San Diego County?										
Yes	94%	97	95%	128	N/A 2020		97%	237	96%	207
No	6%	6	5%	7	N/A 2020		3%	7	4%	8
(If yes) In what area of the County do you get it?										
Central	40%	39	39%	49	N/A 2020		38%	89	41%	85
North City	9%	9	8%	10	N/A 2020		7%	17	9%	19
South Suburban	13%	13	18%	22	N/A 2020		10%	23	11%	23
East Suburban	21%	20	17%	21	N/A 2020		24%	56	17%	36
North County West	6%	6	6%	7	N/A 2020		7%	17	5%	11
North County East	7%	7	6%	8	N/A 2020		12%	29	9%	19
East	3%	3	6%	8	N/A 2020		2%	5	6%	13
Do you have a main source for meth - one dealer you usually hook up with?										
Yes	40%	42	47%	63	N/A 2020		41%	101	46%	102
No	60%	63	53%	71	N/A 2020		59%	147	54%	119
How long have you used that person? (Days)										
Mean (SD)	1,094.19 (1,420.08)		1,157.11 (1429.64)		N/A 2020		1,370.20 (2,320.09)		1,233.05 (2,274.50)	
Median	365.00		730.00		N/A 2020		548.00		365.00	
Range	30.00-5,475.00		30.00-7,300.00		N/A 2020		14-14,600		14-12,045	

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
Total	112		137		157		251		226	
Do you get other drugs from that main source?										
Yes	24%	10	37%	23	N/A 2020	31%	28	32%	33	
No	76%	31	63%	39	N/A 2020	69%	63	68%	69	
What do you usually do if your main source isn't around?*										
Buy from someone else	39%	16	62%	37	N/A 2020	62%	56	52%	53	
Get it through a friend	10%	4	13%	8	N/A 2020	8%	7	3%	3	
Use another drug	2%	1	2%	1	N/A 2020	4%	4	2%	2	
Don't buy anything	34%	14	23%	14	N/A 2020	27%	25	39%	40	
Source is always around	17%	7	13%	8	N/A 2020	4%	4	5%	5	
Other	0%	0	0%	0	N/A 2020	0%	0	0%	0	
Total	41		60		N/A 2020		96		102	
Have you ever bought from someone you didn't know?										
Yes	64%	70	59%	79	N/A 2020	60%	150	58%	130	
No	36%	39	41%	54	N/A 2020	40%	98	42%	95	
In the past year, have you carried a gun or other weapon while you were getting meth?										
Yes, gun	6%	6	5%	7	N/A 2020	5%	13	4%	10	
Yes, other weapon	19%	21	20%	27	N/A 2020	23%	56	22%	50	
Yes, both	11%	12	8%	11	N/A 2020	5%	13	4%	8	
No	64%	69	66%	88	N/A 2020	67%	165	70%	155	
Compared to a year ago, would you say meth is more available, less available, or available about the same?										
More	41%	41	45%	56	N/A 2020	45%	104	44%	93	
Less	11%	11	11%	14	N/A 2020	9%	20	10%	22	
About the same	47%	47	44%	55	N/A 2020	47%	108	45%	96	

* Percentages based on multiple responses

Distribution and production

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
Total	112		137		157		251		226	
Have you, yourself, sold meth or acted as a middleman in the last year?										
Yes	28%	30	39%	51	34%	52	38%	92	42%	93
No	72%	79	61%	80	66%	102	62%	153	58%	128
(Of those who sold) Compared to a year ago, would you say the demand for meth has increased, decreased, or stayed the same?										
Increased	33%	10	48%	24	67%	33	53%	46	56%	50
Decreased	7%	2	14%	7	6%	3	12%	10	9%	8
Same	60%	18	38%	19	27%	13	35%	30	35%	31
Have you ever cooked meth yourself, or helped someone else to cook it?										
Yes	8%	9	7%	9	N/A 2020		3%	7	5%	11
No	92%	101	93%	124	N/A 2020		97%	241	95%	214
(Of those who ever cooked) Have you cooked or helped cook in the past 12 months?										
Yes	11%	1	44%	4	N/A 2020		29%	2	0	0
No	89%	8	56%	5	N/A 2020		71%	5	100%	11
(Of those who cooked past year) What did you do?*										
Cook meth	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		50%	1	N/A	
Obtain chemicals	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		50%	1	N/A	
Find cooking location	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		0%	0	N/A	
Get equipment to cook meth	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		50%	1	N/A	
Cut/package meth	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		100%	2	N/A	
Other	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		0%	0	N/A	
Total	N/A		N/A		N/A 2020		2		N/A	

* Percentages based on multiple responses

Other

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
Total	112		137		157		251		226	
During the past six months, how many sex partners did you have?										
None	24%	24	29%	35	N/A 2020		18%	40	16%	36
One	42%	43	36%	43	N/A 2020		50%	114	54%	120
More than one	34%	35	35%	41	N/A 2020		32%	73	30%	67
In the past six months, how often did you have sex while high on meth (of those with a partner during this time)?										
Never	12%	9	35%	29	N/A 2020		12%	22	19%	35
Once in a while	39%	30	28%	23	N/A 2020		36%	68	29%	54
Fairly often	21%	16	12%	10	N/A 2020		25%	47	24%	44
Very often	29%	22	25%	21	N/A 2020		27%	50	28%	51
In the past six months, how often did you exchange sex for meth or for money to buy meth (of those with a partner during this time)?										
Never	96%	75	82%	69	N/A 2020		88%	168	92%	170
Once in a while	4%	3	16%	13	N/A 2020		5%	9	6%	12
Fairly often	0%	0	2%	2	N/A 2020		3%	6	1%	2
Very often	0%	0	0%	0	N/A 2020		4%	7	1%	1
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)?										
Never	82%	64	66%	55	N/A 2020		69%	132	77%	141
Once in a while	14%	11	23%	19	N/A 2020		18%	35	17%	32
Fairly often	4%	3	5%	4	N/A 2020		5%	9	3%	5
Very often	0%	0	5%	4	N/A 2020		5%	10	1%	2
Don't know	0%	0	2%	2	N/A 2020		2%	4	2%	4
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)?										
Never	73%	57	57%	48	N/A 2020		67%	127	74%	139
Once in a while	8%	6	20%	17	N/A 2020		20%	38	16%	30
Fairly often	6%	5	13%	11	N/A 2020		7%	14	5%	10
Very often	13%	10	10%	8	N/A 2020		6%	11	4%	8