



2007 Adult Arrestee Drug Use in the San Diego Region

August 2008

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2007 ADULT ARRESTEE DRUG USE IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION

FAST FACTS

- In 2007, 69 percent of female and 57 percent of male arrestees booked into jail in San Diego County tested positive for an illegal drug.
- Fewer arrestees tested positive for drugs in 2007, compared to prior years, with the greatest decrease seen in use of meth by males.
- Half of meth users reported an inability to obtain the drug in the past 30 days, a considerable increase from prior years.
- In addition to recent drug use varying by gender, it also varied with the arrestee's age, ethnicity, employment status, and prior justice system contact.
- Market dynamics reported by arrestees varied by drug type. Marijuana users were most likely to get the drug for free, cocaine users were most likely to travel further to obtain the drug, crack users obtained it with the greatest frequency, and heroin users were most likely to have a regular source.
- One in three of those interviewed reported current or prior gang involvement, with no difference by gender.
- Over one-third of arrestees reported receiving drug treatment previously, but only around half successfully completed it.
- Half of the arrestees had a prior history of homelessness and one-fifth had mental health issues.
- One in four arrestees reported previous visits to the emergency room for a reason related to their alcohol or other drug use. Only one in three currently had health insurance.

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Project Overview

This SANDAG CJ Bulletin is the second in a series¹ highlighting findings from data collected as part of the 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 SANDAG's 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 2007, this data collection effort was generously supported by the California Border Alliance Group (CBAG), 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 survey, 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 2007, 517 male arrestees were selected to be interviewed at the Vista and Central Jails and 280 female arrestees were selected at Las Colinas. Seven hundred sixty-four (764) of these 797 arrestees completed the interview and also provided a valid urine sample for analysis.

This research bulletin includes updated information regarding self-reported drug use, the results of urinalysis trends since 2000, factors related to drug use, drug market dynamics, prior justice system contact, participation in other risky behaviors, and prior receipt of drug and/or mental health treatment.

New in 2007

On an annual basis, the SAM interview instrument is reviewed by SANDAG staff and members of the project's Local Coordinating Council (LCC) to determine if emerging issues (either locally or at the state or national level) suggest the need for additional questions in specific topic areas. As such, the following topics/questions were added in 2007, with the results described in the following pages:

- crossing the U.S./Mexican border for illegal drugs (p. 18);
- prior hospital visits related to alcohol or other drug use (p. 20);
- justice system contact as a juvenile (p. 21);
- exchanging sexual acts for money or drugs (p. 21);
- prior and current gang involvement (p. 22);
- being offered drug treatment as a sentencing alternative (p. 24); and
- any prior history of homelessness (p. 26).

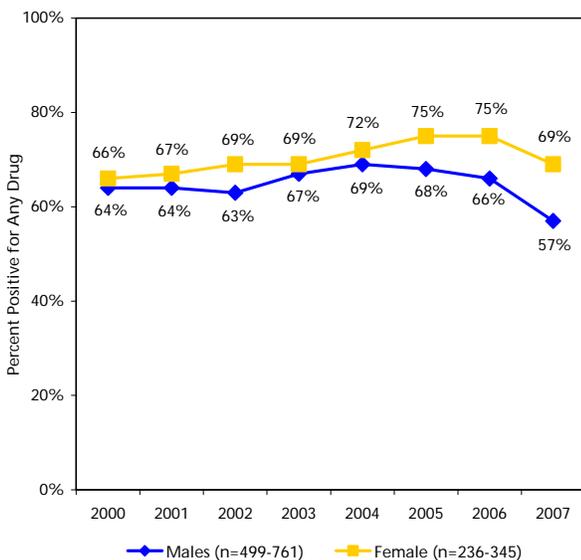
¹ The first bulletin, summarizing results of juvenile interviews, was released in June 2008. The third bulletin, with information from a methamphetamine addendum, will be released in September 2008.

URINALYSIS RESULTS FOR ANY AND MULTIPLE DRUGS

Any Drug

In 2007, 61 percent of San Diego adult arrestees tested positive for at least one type of drug [marijuana, cocaine, PCP², heroin, or methamphetamine (meth)] (not shown). As opposed to the general population in which males are more likely to be current drug users³, female arrestees interviewed as part of SAM have historically tested positive at a higher rate than males (Figure 1). In 2007, 69 percent of females and 57 percent of males were positive for any drug, a significant difference (and the greatest to date between the two genders). For males, this 2007 positive rate was the lowest in the past seven years. For females, this was the first decrease documented over the same time period (6% since 2006).

Figure 1
FEWER ARRESTEES POSITIVE FOR ANY DRUG IN 2007



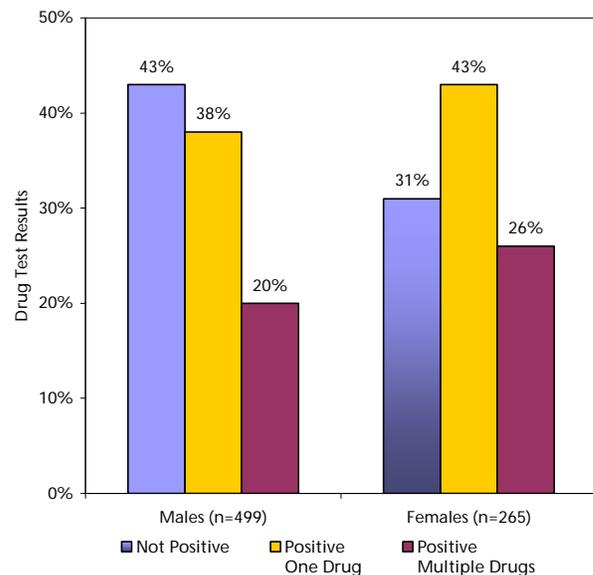
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Multiple Drugs

As Figure 2 shows, most individuals who tested positive for any drug in 2007 only tested positive for one. However, one-fifth of males (20%) and around one-quarter of females (26%) did test positive for multiple substances. Of these 166 individuals,

- 90 percent tested positive for two substances and 10 percent for three substances;
- 81 percent tested positive for marijuana and at least one other substance; and
- the most common combination of drugs was marijuana and methamphetamine (meth) (52%) (not shown).

Figure 2
DRUG USING ARRESTEES MORE LIKELY TO TEST POSITIVE FOR ONLY ONE SUBSTANCE



NOTE: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

² In 2007, one percent of both males and females tested positive for PCP.

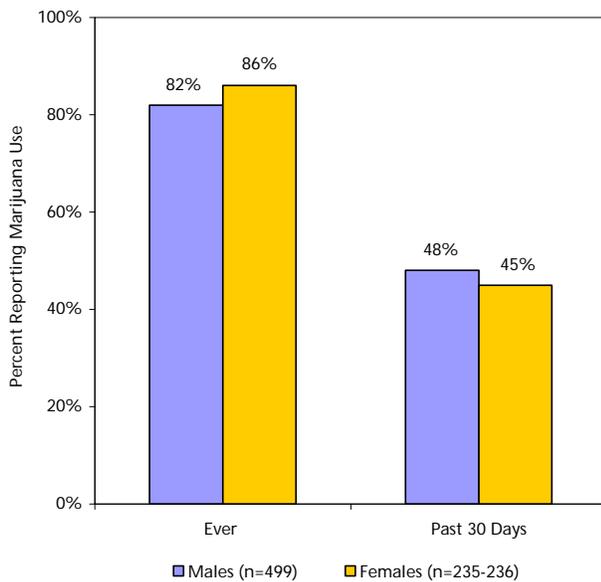
³ SAMHSA (2007). Results from the 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (DHHS Publication No. SMA-07-4293). Rockville, MD: Author.

MARIJUANA

According to findings from the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)³, marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the U.S., with 14.8 million individuals reporting past month use (equating to 6% of the population ages 12 and older). For the population interviewed here, marijuana was also the most commonly used drug, with approximately four in every five arrestees (82% of males and 86% of females) reporting having used marijuana some time in their life and 48 percent of males and 45 percent of females reporting they used marijuana in the past 30 days (Figure 3)⁴.

Over the past seven years, the percentage of male arrestees testing positive for marijuana has ranged from a low of 34 percent (in 2005) to a high of 40 percent (in 2006) (Figure 4). In 2007, this rate dropped slightly to 37 percent. During the same time period, females were consistently (and significantly in 2007) less likely than their male counterparts to test positive for marijuana, despite similar self-reported use patterns, with around one in three or fewer (27% to 33%) testing positive during any given year.

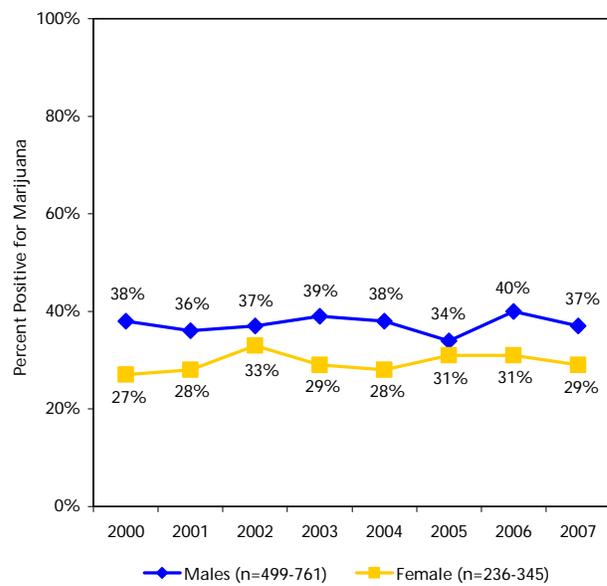
Figure 3
MARIJUANA MOST COMMONLY USED ILLICIT DRUG BY ARRESTEES



NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Figure 4
MARIJUANA USE DOWN SLIGHTLY OVER ONE-YEAR PERIOD



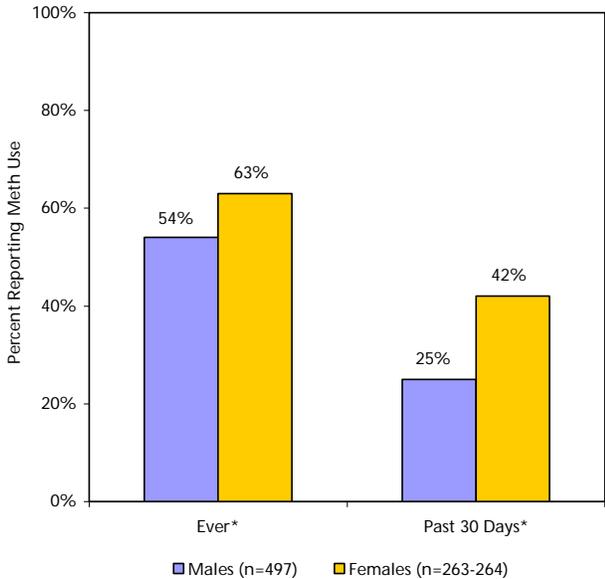
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

⁴ Six percent of those who said they had not used marijuana in the past 30 days actually tested positive for it.

METHAMPHETAMINE

In 2007, 54 percent of male and 63 percent of female arrestees reported they had used meth at least once in their lifetime, making it the most commonly tried illicit drug after marijuana by San Diego County arrestees (Figure 5). In addition, 25 percent of males and 42 percent of females reported meth use in the past 30 days⁵. Females were significantly more likely to report ever trying meth, as well as using it in the previous 30 days. Three-quarters (75%) of these users reported their primary mode of administration was smoking, which has been shown to be associated with more timely toxic effects. Other methods of administration included snorting (13%), injecting (10%) and eating (1%) (not shown).

Figure 5
MORE THAN HALF OF ALL ARRESTEES
HAVE TRIED METH PREVIOUSLY



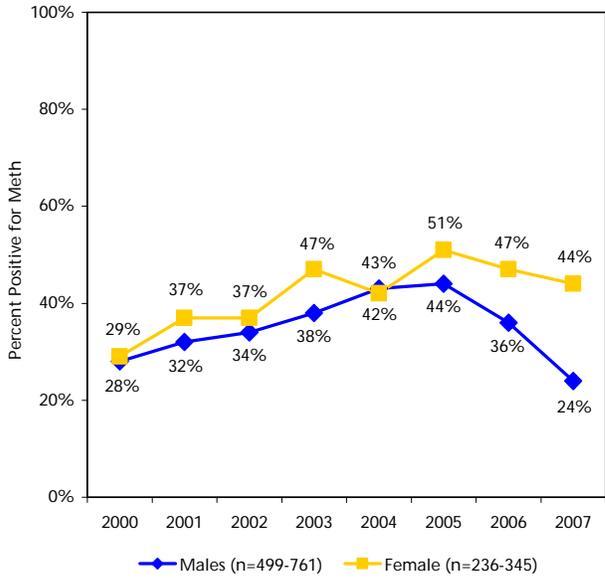
*Significant at $p < .05$.

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

For males, the one-year decrease (12%) between 2006 and 2007 in percent positive for meth was the largest one-year decrease since 2000. For females, the smaller decrease of three percent (from 47% in 2006 to 44% in 2007) represented the second consecutive decrease, but was much smaller in comparison to males (Figure 6).

Figure 6
METH USE FOR BOTH MALES AND
FEMALES DOWN AGAIN IN 2007



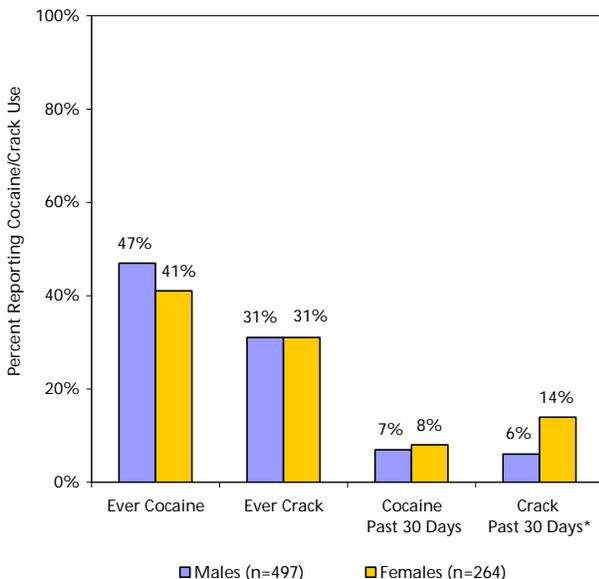
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

⁵ Ten percent of those who said they had not used meth in the past 30 days actually tested positive for it.

COCAINE/CRACK

As shown in Figure 7, slightly more males and females reported having tried cocaine in powder form (47% and 41%, respectively), compared to the rock form or crack (31% each). While there was no gender difference in those reporting recent cocaine use, females were significantly more likely to report having used crack during the past 30 days, compared to males (14% compared to 6%)⁶.

Figure 7
MORE ARRESTEES REPORT EVER USING COCAINE, BUT RECENT CRACK USE MORE COMMON



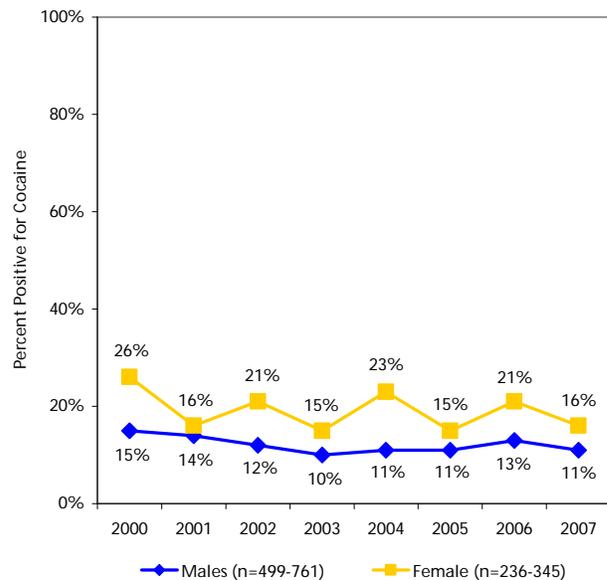
*Significant at $p < .05$.

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Figure 8 shows that females have consistently tested positive at a higher rate for cocaine, compared to males. In 2007, 16 percent of female arrestees tested positive for cocaine, compared to 11 percent for males.

Figure 8
MORE FEMALES THAN MALES TEST POSITIVE FOR COCAINE

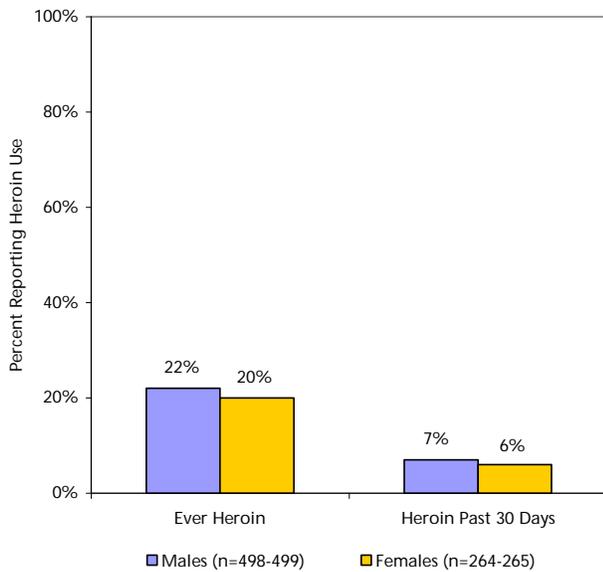


SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

⁶ Five percent of those who said they had not used powder cocaine or crack in the past 30 days actually tested positive for it.

About one in five arrestees (22% of males and 20% of females) reported they had used heroin at some time in their life and seven percent and six percent, respectively, had used it in the last 30 days, the lowest figures of the illicit drug categories besides PCP (Figure 9)⁷. There was no significant difference in use patterns by gender.

Figure 9
HEROIN IS ONE OF THE LEAST COMMONLY USED DRUGS AMONG ARRESTEES

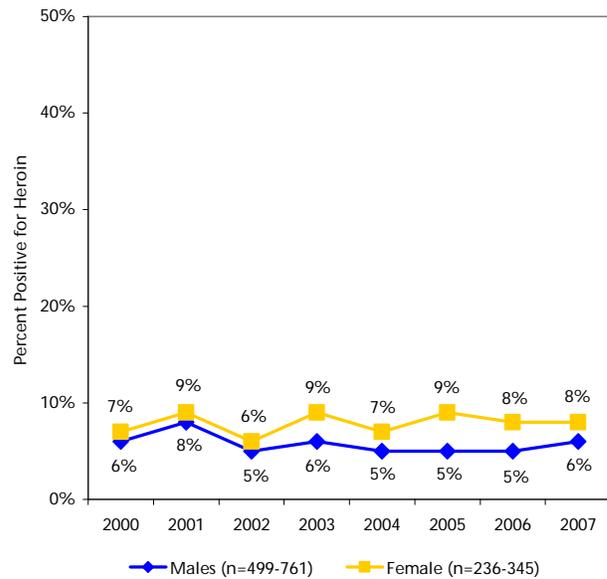


NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

As Figure 10 shows, the proportion of positive tests for heroin remained fairly stable over the past seven years, with females only slightly more likely to test positive than males in any given year (8% of females in 2007 compared to 6% of males).

Figure 10
LESS THAN ONE IN TEN ARRESTEES TESTED POSITIVE FOR HEROIN



SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

⁷ Four percent of those who said they had not used heroin in the past 30 days actually tested positive for it.

OTHER DRUGS

As part of the interview, questions regarding lifetime illegal use of prescription drugs, as well as other less common substances that are not available legally in the U.S., are also asked. Around half (53%) of the arrestees reported using some other type of drug illegally, with 40 percent reporting ever having used a prescription drug illegally and 42 percent using other illicit drugs (Table 1).

Table 1
ARRESTEES HAVE ALSO EXPERIMENTED
WITH OTHER TYPES OF DRUGS

Any Other Drug	53%
Prescription Drug Illegally	40%
Tranquilizers	25%
Painkillers	24%
OxyContin	12%
Amphetamines	8%
Morphine	8%
Darvon/Darvocet	7%
Barbiturates	6%
Methadone	5%
Anti-depressants	4%
Demerol/Fentanyl	4%
Other Illicit Drugs	42%
Peyote/Mescaline/Mushrooms	25%
Ecstasy	22%
LSD	21%
PCP	13%
Inhalants	13%
Ketamine/Special K	6%
GHB/G	6%
TOTAL	760-762

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

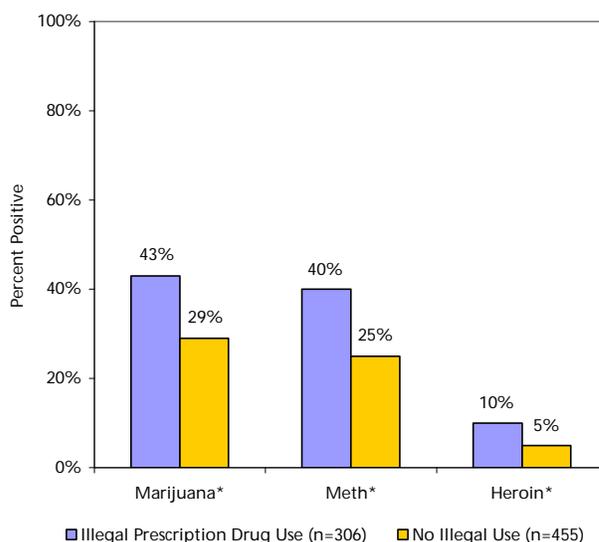
Tranquilizers (25%) and painkillers (24%) were among the types of prescription drugs most frequently used without a doctor's authorization, and peyote/mescaline/mushrooms (25%), ecstasy (22%), and LSD (21%) were the most commonly used other illicit drugs. Additional analyses revealed that White arrestees and arrestees of other ethnicities were significantly more likely to

have used both prescription and other drugs illegally, compared to Black and Hispanic arrestees (not shown).

Those who reported ever using a prescription drug illegally were also asked if they had used the substance in the past 12 months. Those who had ever reported using OxyContin were most likely to report using it in the past year (48%), followed by those who had abused tranquilizers (32%), barbiturates (28%), and painkillers (27%). The most common other illicit drugs used in the past year (by those who had ever used the substance) were ecstasy (46% of those who had ever used the drug) and GHB/G (46%) (not shown).

To determine how a history of abusing prescription drugs was related to illegal drug use, additional analyses were completed. As Figure 11 shows, arrestees who previously reported using prescription drugs illegally were significantly more likely to be current illicit drug users. Specifically, these individuals were more likely to test positive for marijuana (43% versus 29%), meth (40% versus 25%), and heroin (10% versus 5%).

Figure 11
ILLEGAL USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS
ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER CURRENT DRUG USE



*Significant at $p < .05$.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

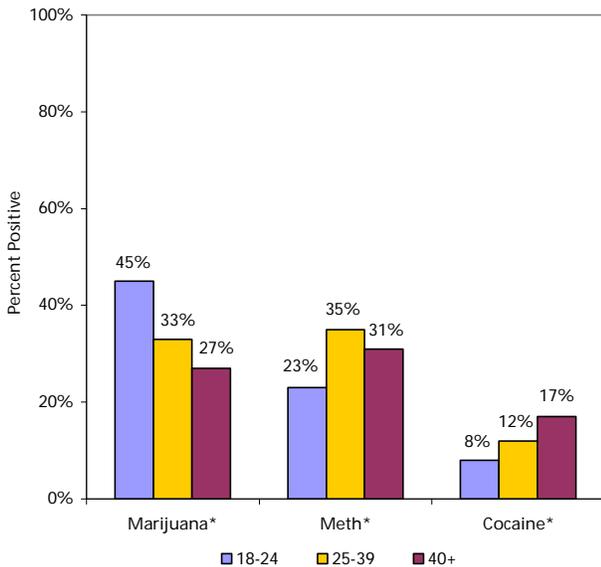
PREDICTORS OF CURRENT DRUG USE

To better understand what factors were related to current drug use among the arrestee population, additional analyses were conducted. The following describes how drug testing results varied by arrestee characteristic.

Current Age

As Figure 12 shows, arrestees between the ages of 18 and 24 were significantly more likely to test positive for marijuana, those between 25 and 39 were more likely to test positive for meth, and those who were 40 years of age and older were more likely to test positive for cocaine, compared to the other age groups. In contrast, self-report information from the NSDUH suggests that, among the general population, drug use increases with age among young people, peaking among 18 to 20 year olds, and then generally declining³.

Figure 12
POSITIVE DRUG TEST RESULTS
VARY BY ARRESTEE AGE



TOTAL = 764

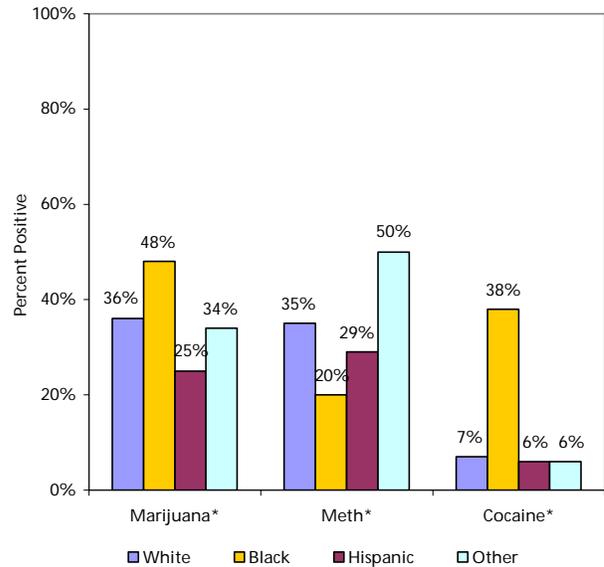
*Significant at $p < .05$.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Ethnicity

As Figure 13 shows, arrestee ethnicity also was a significant predictor of having a positive drug test result for marijuana, cocaine, and meth. Specifically, individuals who identified as Black were significantly more likely to test positive for marijuana and cocaine and less likely to test positive for meth, compared to other ethnic groups.

Figure 13
POSITIVE DRUG TEST RESULTS
VARY BY ARRESTEE ETHNICITY



TOTAL = 764

*Significant at $p < .05$.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

PREDICTORS OF CURRENT DRUG USE (CONT.)

Current Employment Status

Analyses also revealed that individuals who were currently unemployed were significantly more likely to test positive for meth (35% versus 27%). However, there was no difference in positive rates for marijuana, cocaine, or heroin. Among the national household population, while most drug users are employed (75%), 19 percent of the unemployed report current drug use, compared to 9 percent of those who were employed³ (not shown).

Previous Arrest History

More than four in every five individuals interviewed (82%) reported they had been arrested previously. Being arrested in the past was significantly related to testing positive for meth (35% versus 13%), heroin (8% versus 2%), and multiple drugs (25% versus 9%) (not shown).

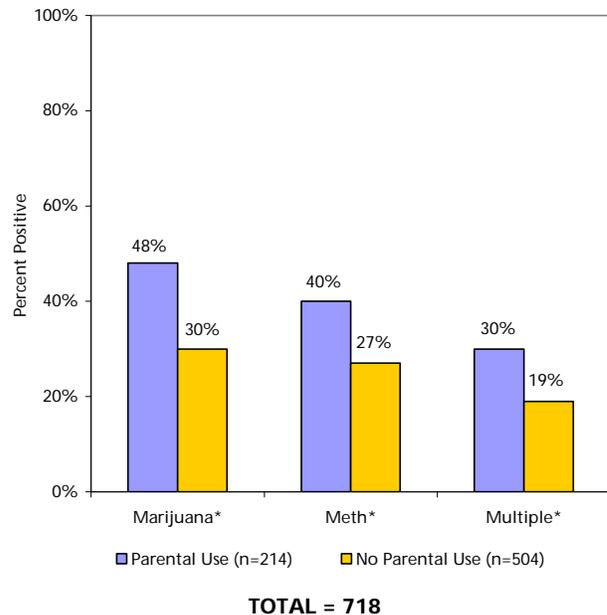
Prior Time Spent in Prison

One-quarter (25%) of those interviewed reported previously serving time in prison (30% of males and 14% of females, which was a significant difference). This group of individuals had a different recent drug use history, compared to the larger group of individuals with prior arrests (with the exception that both were more likely to test positive for multiple drugs). Specifically, these parolees (or former parolees) were significantly more likely to test positive for cocaine (19% versus 10% of those who had not served time) and heroin (12% versus 5%) rather than meth. This difference could be related to age and ethnicity, since individuals over 40 and individuals who described themselves as Black were significantly more likely to have served time in prison (42% of those 40 and older, compared to 4% of 18 to 24 and 25% of 25 to 30 year olds; and 38% of Blacks, compared to 21% to 22% for other racial groups), as well as to have different patterns of drug use as previously described (not shown).

Parental Drug Use

Almost one-third (30%) of the arrestees reported that they knew that at least one of their parents had previously used illegal drugs (37% of females compared to 26% of males, a significant difference) (not shown). Having a parent who used illegal drugs was a significant predictor of current marijuana and meth use, as well as use of multiple substances (Figure 14). This relationship between parental drug use and risk-taking behaviors by children, which was previously reported with juvenile data, reiterates the special need for intervention in the lives of drug abusers with children.

Figure 14
POSITIVE DRUG TEST RESULTS
VARY BY ARRESTEE KNOWLEDGE
OF PARENTAL DRUG USE



*Significant at $p < .05$.

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

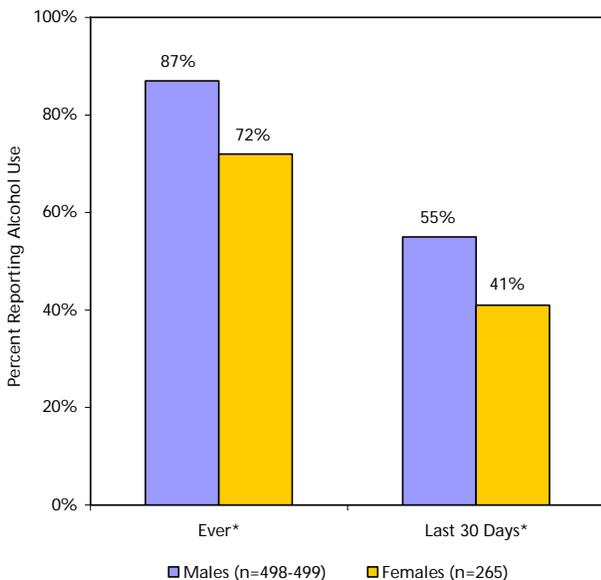
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO USE

Alcohol

Arrestees are also asked whether they ever have had five or more drinks of alcohol in one day (i.e., binge drinking) and if they have done so in the past 30 days. Figure 15 shows the percent of arrestees in 2007 who responded affirmatively to these questions. Males were significantly more likely than females to report ever having consumed five or more alcoholic drinks (87% versus 72%) and also to report doing so in the last 30 days (55% versus 41%). Males reported using alcohol in the last 30 days more often than any other substance.

Figure 15
MALE ARRESTEES MORE LIKELY
TO REPORT CONSUMING FIVE OR MORE
DRINKS PREVIOUSLY



*Significant at $p < .05$.

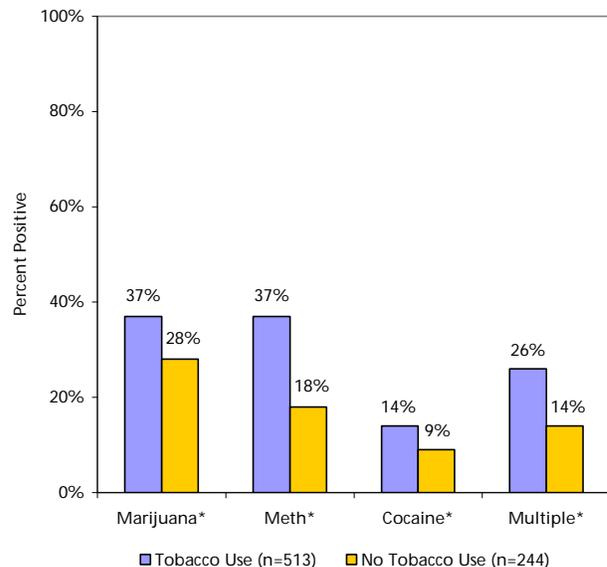
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Tobacco

Approximately two-thirds (68%) of arrestees reported that they currently use tobacco in some form (65% of males and 73% of females). While recent/current use of tobacco products was not significantly related to an arrestee's gender or age, it was related to ethnicity. Specifically, Whites (74%) and individuals of other ethnicities (78%) reported using tobacco significantly more often than Blacks (68%) and Hispanics (59%) (not shown).

Consistent with national survey data³, individuals who reported currently using tobacco were significantly more likely to currently use illicit drugs. As Figure 16 shows, tobacco users were more likely to test positive for marijuana (37%), meth (37%), and cocaine (14%), as well as multiple drugs (26%), compared to those who did not use tobacco (28%, 18%, 9%, and 14%, respectively).

Figure 16
POSITIVE DRUG TEST RESULTS VARY
BY CURRENT TOBACCO USE



*Significant at $p < .05$.

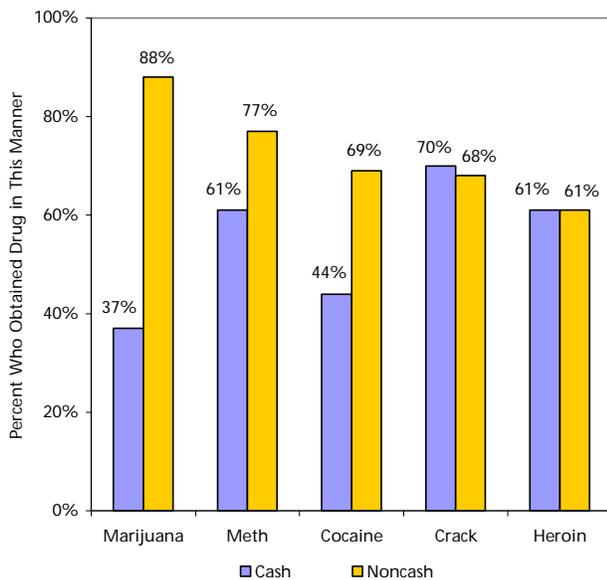
SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

DRUG MARKET DYNAMICS

Types of Transactions

Arrestees who reported they obtained drugs (either by paying cash or getting them for free) in the past 30 days were asked a series of questions regarding the details of these transactions⁸. As Figure 17 shows, respondents were least likely to report paying cash for marijuana (37%, compared to 44% to 70% for other drugs) and most likely to report getting it through a noncash transaction (88%, compared to 61% to 77%). In comparison, individuals who obtained crack and heroin were equally (or almost equally) likely to pay cash or obtain it through noncash means.

Figure 17
ARRESTEES OBTAIN DIFFERENT DRUGS
IN DIFFERENT WAYS



TOTAL = 57 - 369

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

⁸ Ninety-six percent (96%) of those who reported obtaining meth also reported using it in the past 30 days, compared to 93 percent for marijuana, 88 percent for heroin, 86 percent for crack, and 84 percent for cocaine.

Location and Frequency of Cash Transactions

Individuals who paid cash for drugs reported obtaining the substances from Major Statistical Areas (MSA)⁹ across the region. Figures 18 and 19 present the two areas reported by the greatest number of individuals when asked where they most recently purchased the drug, as well as the percent of arrestees who purchased drugs in the same MSA in which they lived.

As these figures show:

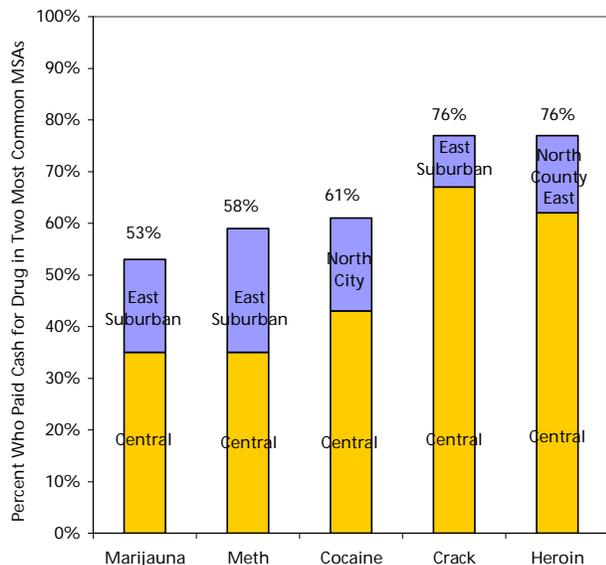
- the Central MSA¹⁰ was the most common area for each of the five groups, but more so for crack (67%) and heroin (62%), compared to the other three drugs (35% to 43%);
- heroin and crack distribution appeared more concentrated in the two areas shown in Figure 18, accounting for 76 percent of recent transactions, compared to 53 percent to 61 percent for the other three drugs;
- individuals purchasing cocaine were more likely than other drug buyers to report traveling outside the MSA in which they lived to purchase the drug (54%, versus 27% to 42% for other substances).

⁹MSAs are groups of subregional areas (SRAs) which, in turn, are groups of census tracts. The seven MSAs encompass the entire San Diego region, with boundaries remaining static over time. A map of these MSAs is included at the end of this bulletin.

¹⁰ For comparison purposes, 34 percent of arrestees reported living in the Central MSA, 22 percent in East Suburban, 11 percent in South Suburban, 9 percent in North City, 8 percent in North County East, 7 percent out of County, 6 percent in North County West, and 2 percent in East County.

DRUG MARKET DYNAMICS (CONT.)

Figure 18
MOST ARRESTEES REPORT BUYING DRUGS IN THE CENTRAL MSA

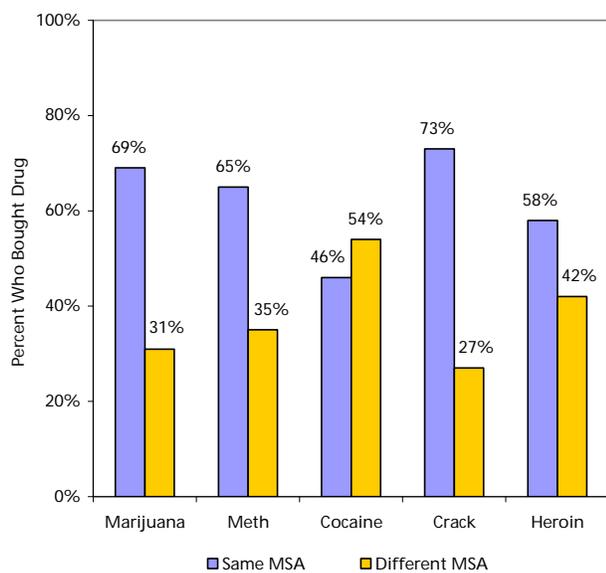


TOTAL = 28 - 142

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Figure 19
MOST INDIVIDUALS BUY DRUGS IN THE MSA IN WHICH THEY LIVE



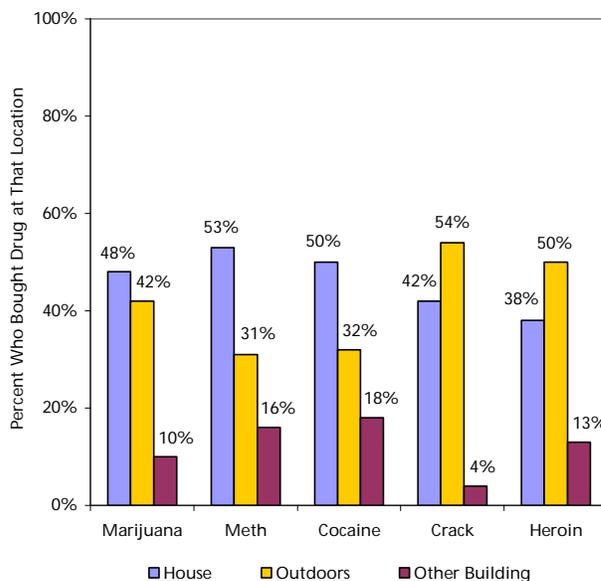
TOTAL = 28 - 142

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Buyers also varied in terms of what type of place they reported the most recent drug purchase took place. As Figure 20 shows, individuals buying meth and cocaine were more likely to make the purchase indoors at a house or apartment (53% and 50%, respectively, compared to 38% and 42% for heroin and crack). Crack and heroin users, on the other hand, were more likely to make the purchase on a street or other outdoor area (54% and 50%, respectively). Marijuana buyers were almost equally likely to report buying the drug at a private residence or outdoors.

Figure 20
CRACK AND HEROIN USERS MORE LIKELY TO PURCHASE DRUGS OUTDOORS



TOTAL = 28 - 142

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

DRUG MARKET DYNAMICS (CONT.)

Drug purchasers were also asked questions related to whether they made multiple purchases in the same day, as well as multiple purchases in the same week. Specifically, arrestees were asked to remember the last time they purchased a drug and to note how many times they made a purchase in the same day. As Table 2 shows, almost half of crack users (46%) said they had made more than one purchase in the same day, compared to 31 percent for heroin, 18 percent for cocaine, and 18 percent for meth. Individuals purchasing marijuana were least likely to report buying the drug more than once on the same day (6%). Heroin users reported buying the greatest number of times per week, on average (4.1), while individuals purchasing marijuana did so least frequently (2.3).

Table 2

CRACK USERS MOST LIKELY TO MAKE MULTIPLE PURCHASES PER DAY AND HEROIN USERS PURCHASE MOST TIMES IN A WEEK

	Bought More Than Once/Day	Mean Number of Days Purchased in Last Seven
Marijuana	6%	2.3
Meth	18%	2.9
Cocaine	18%	3.5
Crack	46%	3.6
Heroin	31%	4.1
TOTAL	28 - 154	

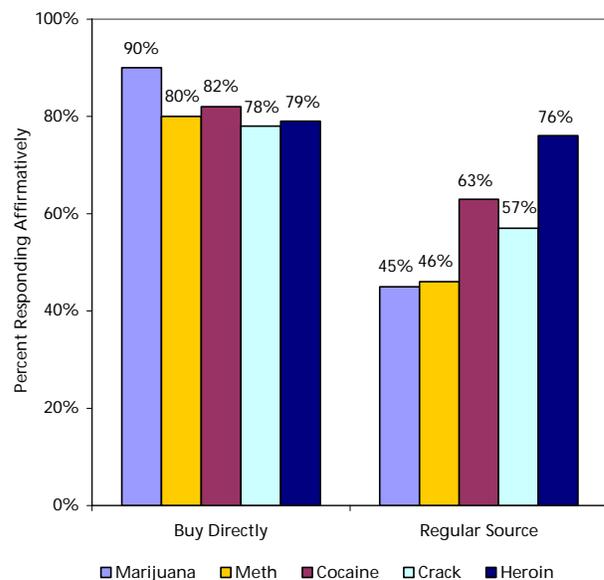
NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Ease and Reliability of Cash Transactions

When asked from whom they obtained the drug, most arrestees (more than three-quarters) reported they bought it directly themselves, rather than having someone else purchase it for them. However, there was some variability, with marijuana users most likely to report they bought the drug directly (90%) (Figure 21). In terms of having a regular source (as opposed to an occasional source or new source), there was a greater amount of variability across the drugs. Specifically, more than three-quarters (76%) of heroin users reported a regular source, which may be related to their willingness to travel further to obtain the drug, as shown in Figure 20, compared to only 45 percent of those obtaining marijuana and 46 percent obtaining meth.

**Figure 21
HEROIN USERS LEAST LIKELY TO BUY DRUG DIRECTLY BUT MOST LIKELY TO HAVE REGULAR SOURCE**



TOTAL = 27 - 150

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

DRUG MARKET DYNAMICS (CONT.)

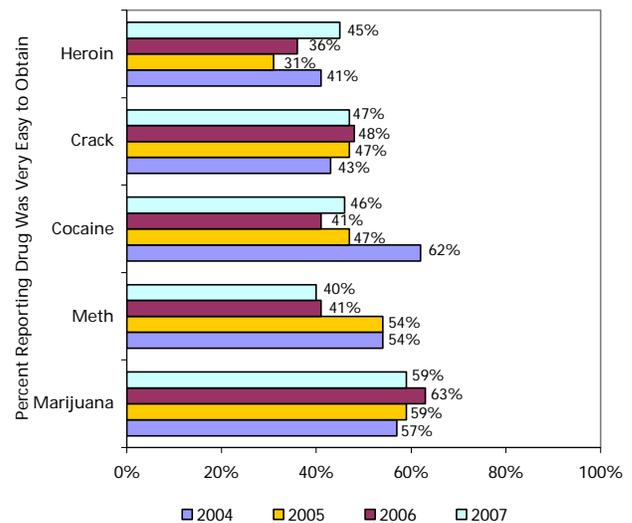
Arrestees were also asked how many individuals they had purchased a given drug from in the past seven days. This answer is partly a function of how frequently they purchased the substance (Table 2), as well as if they had a regular source (Figure 21). Cocaine users were least likely to say they used more than one source (17%), followed by marijuana users (20%), heroin users (24%), and meth users (33%). Individuals purchasing crack were most likely to report using more than one source in the most recent week (59%) (not shown).

In another set of questions, arrestees were asked “how easy is it usually” to obtain a particular substance, as well as if “there was a time in the past 30 days when you tried to buy the drug but you were unable to.” As Figure 22 shows, in 2007, marijuana users were most likely to say the drug was “very easy” to obtain (59%), and meth users were *least* likely to do so (40%). Over the past four years, the percent of individuals reporting meth and cocaine were easy to obtain has declined (from 54% to 40% and 62% to 46%, respectively), compared to other drugs.

In terms of how often these arrestees reported they were unable to buy one of these substances in the past 30 days, heroin users were least likely to report this was an issue, even though there was an increase from 2006 (Figure 23). Since 2004, a greater percentage of meth buyers reported there was a time they were unable to obtain the substance they wanted (50% in 2007, versus 31% in 2004).

When further queried if they bought another drug when the one they intended to purchase was unavailable, meth users were *least* likely to respond affirmatively (26% of 62 individuals), while heroin and cocaine users were most likely to do so (50% of 4 and 44% of 9 individuals) (compared to 32% of 47 marijuana users and 51% of 22 crack users) (not shown).

Figure 22
ARRESTEES LESS LIKELY TO REPORT COCAINE AND METH WERE VERY EASY TO OBTAIN

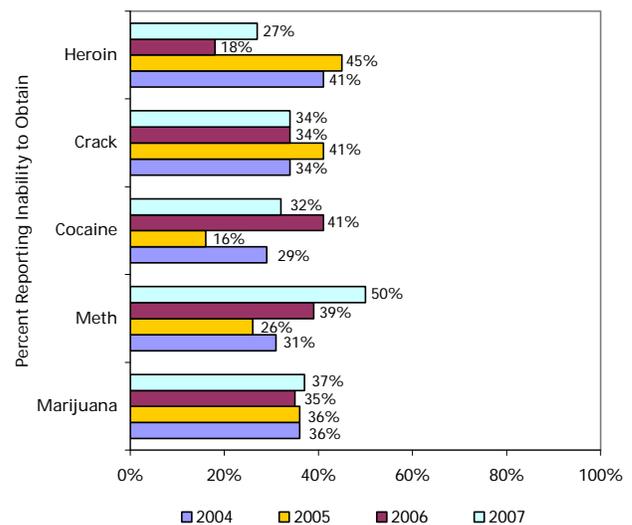


TOTAL = 28 - 149

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Figure 23
METH USERS MORE LIKELY TO REPORT THEY WERE UNABLE TO OBTAIN THE DRUG THAN IN PRIOR YEARS



TOTAL = 28 - 149

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM PROGRAM, 2007

DRUG MARKET DYNAMICS (CONT.)

Crossing the U.S. Border for Drugs

In a new set of questions, adult arrestees were asked if they had ever crossed the U.S./Mexican border to obtain drugs. Thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents indicated they had, with those identifying with other ethnicities significantly more likely (22%) to do so than Whites (16%), Hispanics (13%), and Blacks (6%). On average, these 101 individuals first crossed the border at 23.9 years of age (range 10 to 57) and did so to obtain marijuana (45%), meth (32%), heroin (17%), cocaine (14%), crack (3%), steroids (2%), or ecstasy (1%). Twenty-four percent (24%) reported crossing for other drugs, which primarily included prescription drugs (not shown).

Age of First Drug Use

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the younger an individual starts using “gateway drugs” (such as alcohol and marijuana), the greater the probability s/he will continue with other illicit drug use in her/his lifetime¹¹. As Table 3 shows, male arrestees were significantly younger, on average, at the time they first tried marijuana (14.4 years old), compared to female arrestees (15.0 years old), as well as powder cocaine (19.1 versus 19.9). Alcohol use (five drinks or more) began around the age of 17 on average for both genders, and other illicit drug use began after these individuals had passed their teen years, on average. Additional analyses revealed that experimenting with alcohol at a younger age (13 and younger) was significantly related to having a previous mental health diagnosis, being in jail previously, and using meth. In addition, early use of marijuana was significantly related to being less likely to have a high school degree, using meth, being in jail previously, and testing positive for multiple drugs (not shown).

Table 3

MALE ARRESTEES YOUNGER ON AVERAGE AT TIME OF FIRST SUBSTANCE USE

	Male	Female
Alcohol	17.1	17.1
Marijuana*	14.4	15.0
Powder Cocaine*	19.1	19.9
Rock/Crack Cocaine	23.0	23.9
Heroin	22.2	22.3
Meth	21.0	20.4
TOTAL	109-434	52-226

*Significant at $p < .05$.

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Injection Drug Use

In 2007, around one in five (21%) arrestees reported having ever injected drugs and of these individuals, just over half (56%) reported injecting in the past 12 months. Of these 90 individuals, 76 percent had injected meth, 40 percent heroin, and 20 percent cocaine. A follow-up question pertained to whether or not these individuals had shared their needles or works, with 37 percent responding affirmatively (not shown).

Participation in Risky Behaviors

Arrestees were asked about a variety of risky behaviors in which they participated after consuming alcohol or other drugs in the past year. Table 4 shows the percent of arrestees reporting they engaged at least once in each particular risky behavior. The most common risks, reported by around half (48%), included riding in a vehicle with a driver who had been drinking or using drugs, participating in sexual acts while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs (48%), or driving a car themselves while under the influence (46%).

Table 4

ARRESTEES REPORT RISKY BEHAVIORS OR EFFECTS OF USING AFTER SUBSTANCE USE

Rode with a driver under the influence	48%
Participated in sex acts	48%
Drove a car	46%
Went to work	26%
Missed work	21%
Health problems	14%
Family violence perpetrator	8%
TOTAL	580-759

NOTE: Cases that were not applicable or with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

¹¹ SAMHSA (2004). Initiation of Marijuana Use: Trends, Patterns, and Implications. Rockville, MD: Author.

OTHER RISKS (CONT.)

Additional analyses revealed some age differences for these self-reported behaviors worth noting. Specifically,

- arrestees between 18 and 24 were significantly more likely to report they had driven a vehicle after using alcohol/drugs (51%) or ridden with someone else who had (58%), compared to those between the ages of 25 and 39 (48% and 47%) and those 40 years of age and older (38% and 42%);
- arrestees between 18 and 24 were significantly more likely to report participating in sexual acts after consuming alcohol/drugs (53%), compared to those 25 to 39 (49%) and 40 and older (41%); and
- arrestees 40 and older were significantly more likely to report an alcohol/drug-related health problem (19%), compared to younger arrestees (9% of those 18 to 24 and 13% of those 25 to 39) (not shown).

Overdoses and Hospitalizations

More than one in ten (13%) of the arrestees reported they had overdosed at least once in the past. When asked what they had overdosed on, 33 percent said heroin, 20 percent meth, 10 percent cocaine, 8 percent crack, and 43 percent some other drug or drug combination (not shown).

In another new set of questions, arrestees were asked if they ever had to go to the emergency room for anything that was related to alcohol or other drug use. Overall, almost one-quarter (24%) reported they had been admitted, with significant variance by age (those 40 and older were more likely to report this type of visit, compared to those 39 and younger) and ethnicity (Whites were significantly more likely than other ethnic groups). When asked to describe in more detail the reason for this visit, the most common responses included an overdose (24%), other medical issue (such as difficulty breathing or high heart rate) (14%), physical injury (13%), and car accident (12%) (not shown).

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Previous Contact

The majority of the individuals interviewed as part of this project reported that this was not their first adult arrest (82%) and most had also spent time previously in jail (74%). In addition, just over one in three (36%) reported they had also been arrested as a juvenile (with males significantly more likely to report juvenile justice system contact than females, 40% versus 28%) (not shown).

When asked how many prior adult arrests they had, the median was 4.0 (range 1 to 200), and the mean age at the time of their first adult arrest was 22.2 for males and 25.6 for females, also a significant difference. In terms of their current highest offense, there was again a significant difference by gender, with males more likely to be arrested for a violent offense (21% versus 15%) and other offenses¹² (28% versus 21%), while females were more likely to be arrested for a property offense (23% versus 19%) or a drug offense (41% versus 31%) (not shown).

Prior Criminal Activity

Arrestees were also asked if they had committed any type of property crime in the past year, whether or not it had come to the attention of law enforcement. Two-thirds (66%) of the respondents said they had (not shown). As Table 5 shows, shoplifting was the most commonly reported offense by both males and females. However, males were significantly more likely to report acts of vandalism and burglary and females were more likely to report committing identity theft. Not shown in the table, the frequency of these self-reported offenses was also related to current drug use, with those who tested positive for marijuana more likely to report acts of vandalism and those positive for meth more likely to report they had committed forgery, motor vehicle theft, and identity theft (not shown).

Table 5

ARRESTEES REPORT OTHER ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR THAT MAY NOT HAVE COME TO ATTENTION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

	Males	Females
Shoplifting	81%	80%
Vandalism*	49%	34%
Burglary*	35%	19%
Motor vehicle theft	38%	21%
Forgery	26%	31%
Identity theft*	13%	20%
TOTAL	332	173

*Significant at $p < .05$.

NOTE: Percentages based upon multiple responses.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

In a new set of questions added in 2007, arrestees were asked whether they had ever traded sex for money or been involved in any pimping or pandering activity. Overall, one in ten (10%) of the arrestees said they had ever exchanged sex for something else (starting on average at 23 years of age, with a range of 8 to 46), and 6 percent had ever engaged in pimping/pandering. Females were significantly more likely to report exchanging sex for money (18%), compared to males (6%). Other predictors of ever engaging in these sexual acts included ethnicity (with Black and other ethnicities significantly more likely to report this type of exchange at 16% each, compared to 11% of White and 6% of Hispanic arrestees) and recent drug of choice (those who tested positive for cocaine were significantly more likely to have ever exchanged sex for money at 22%, compared to those who had not 9%). About one in three (36%) of the individuals who had ever exchanged sex for money reported doing so in the past 30 days (not shown).

¹² The most common other offenses included disturbing the peace, flight or escape, obstruction of justice, and parole/probation violation.

CRIMINAL HISTORY (CONT.)

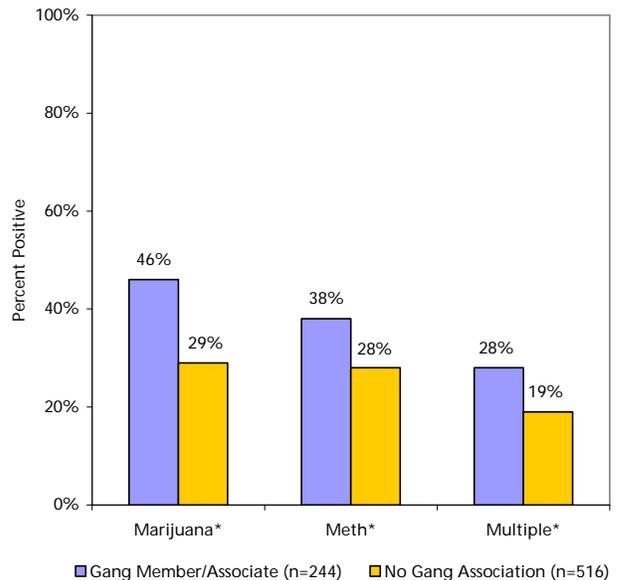
Gang Association

Also in 2007, questions were posed for the first time to adult arrestees regarding membership or association with gangs. Overall, almost one in three (32%) of the arrestees reported they had ever been in a gang or associated with one. Of these individuals, about one in three (34%) reported they still associate with gang members (not shown). While there was no difference by gender, there was by age and ethnicity. Specifically,

- individuals 40 years of age and older were less likely to report this association (21%), compared to those 18 to 24 (40%) and 25 to 39 (35%); and
- individuals who identified as representing other ethnicities were most likely to report the association (53%), compared to 39 percent of Blacks, 37 percent of Hispanics, and 22 percent of Whites (not shown).

As Figure 24 shows, arrestees who reported some gang relationship were also more likely to be current drug users, with a significantly greater proportion testing positive for marijuana, meth, and multiple drugs.

Figure 24
INDIVIDUALS WITH GANG TIES MORE LIKELY TO TEST POSITIVE FOR DRUGS



*Significant at $p < .05$.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Reentry Issues

With the recent increase in numbers of individuals returning from jail and prison, more attention is being paid at the local and national level to the issue of how well ex-offenders readjust to life not behind bars. For example, in California, the felony institution population increased 245 percent between 1985 and 2005, with most of these individuals released at some point and placed under parole supervision¹³.

¹³ California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (2006). *California Prisoners and Parolees, 2005*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

CRIMINAL HISTORY (CONT).

Among those interviewed for this study, just over half (57%) reported that they had a prior felony conviction, and 25 percent (30% of males and 14% of females, a significant difference) reported that they had served time in prison. When asked to describe the biggest problem ex-offenders face when returning home, the two most common answers included employment (37%) and housing (32%). However, only 41 percent reported receiving any type of in-custody program related to reentry and only 24 percent reported receiving anything post-release¹⁴ (48% received one or both) (not shown).

When the 87 individuals who received any service(s) were asked to describe them, the most common were substance abuse treatment and employment assistance (59% each), followed by housing assistance (28%), and basic necessities (21%). Less than one in five reported receiving anger management (18%), assistance reunifying with children (17%), mental health care (16%), transportation assistance (9%), medical health care (9%), or assistance reunifying with a spouse (9%) (not shown).

¹⁴ Females were significantly more likely to report receiving out-of-custody programming (42%), compared to males (20%).

Drug Treatment

Overall, just over one in three (37%) arrestees reported they had received alcohol or other drug treatment in the past. For almost two-thirds (65%) of these individuals, treatment had been court-ordered and the median number of times arrestees had entered a drug treatment program was 1.0 (range 1 to 40). Forty-two percent (42%) of the individuals who tested positive for any drug had received drug treatment previously and 70 percent of those who had previously received treatment were positive for any drug, supporting the view that relapse is a part of recovery. Several other factors were also predictive of receiving drug treatment, including gender, age, ethnicity, prior CPS referral, and previously being arrested. Specifically,

- females were more likely to receive treatment than males (43% versus 34%);
- older individuals were more likely than younger ones (46% of those 40 and older, compared to 30% of those 18 to 24 and 35% of those 25 to 39);
- arrestees identifying as Hispanic were less likely (26%) than other ethnic groups (46% of Whites, 41% of other ethnicities, and 38% Blacks);
- arrestees who had ever had a CPS case were more likely (49%) than those who had not (34%); and
- those who reported previously being arrested were more likely than those experiencing their first arrest (42% versus 13%) (not shown).

Of 275 individuals who had ever received drug treatment, around half (54%) reported they had successfully completed the program¹⁵. When asked why they had not completed the program,

the most common response was that they wanted to use again and were not ready to be clean, with others noting the program was too strict, they were kicked out, or it was too long (not shown).

Almost one in five (17%) arrestees reported that they had previously sought treatment, but it was unavailable [with females (21%) significantly more likely to report this occurring than males (14%)]. Of these 124 individuals, 35 percent had *not* been in treatment previously. The most commonly reported type of treatment that was unavailable was in-patient (63%) (not shown).

In 2007, questions were added regarding whether the individual had ever been offered drug treatment as a condition of probation or parole or as a sentencing alternative. Overall, over one-third (35%) of those interviewed said they had. Females (41%) were significantly more likely than males to have been offered this option (32%) and there was also variance by age [with those 40 and older more likely to report receiving this option (42%), compared to those 18 to 24 (28%) and 25 to 39 (35%)]. In addition, Hispanics were significantly less likely than all other ethnic groups (23% versus 41% to 45% for Whites, Blacks, and other ethnicities) to receive this treatment option. When asked for more specifics regarding what had been offered, 39 percent said Proposition 36 (which allows first-time non-violent offenders to receive treatment as an alternative to jail time), 29 percent PC 1000 (which allows first time drug offenders to plead guilty and attend weekly class for four months, rather than serving time in jail), and 17 percent had been offered drug court (a specialty court for drug-addicted offenders). In addition, 29 percent described the option as other, which most typically included attending some type of treatment program as a condition of probation or parole (not shown).

¹⁵ If a respondent reported more than one treatment episode, s/he was asked about the most recent.

TREATMENT (CONT.)

Mental Health Treatment

Around one in five (23%) of the arrestees reported they had previously been diagnosed with a mental or psychiatric disorder and about one in five (17%) reported that they had previously stayed over night for mental health treatment at a hospital or other facility. On average, these individuals had been admitted for an overnight stay 2.0 times (median due to skewed distribution, range 1 to 200) and the mean age of their first admittance was 23.6 (range 6 to 51) (not shown).

Of the 176 individuals who had previously been diagnosed with a mental health issue, almost all (94%) reported they had been prescribed medication for their illness. However, only half (55%) said they were still being prescribed this medication and of these 91 individuals, almost half (47%) said they were currently not taking it. When asked for the primary reason for not taking their medication, the most common responses included that they didn't like the side effects, they had run out of it or lost it, it interfered with their other drug use, they could not afford to pay for it, or they didn't think they needed it or it was not helping them (not shown).

Additional analyses revealed that a number of arrestee characteristics were associated with being diagnosed with a mental health issue (Table 6), as well as staying 24 hours or longer in a mental health facility¹⁶ (not shown). That is, individuals who reported having a diagnosis were significantly more likely to have a history of drug use and prior justice and social service system contact, parent(s) who used drugs, and received drug treatment. This last association - between having a diagnosis, receiving mental health treatment, and receiving drug treatment - is consistent with the fact that almost two-thirds (64%) of those with an overnight stay reported

they had previously been under the influence of alcohol or other drugs when admitted for mental health treatment. This supports the view that addressing the needs of dual diagnosis clients (those with mental health and drug treatment needs) is a key issue for the criminal justice system.

Table 6
INDIVIDUALS WITH DRUG USE
HISTORIES MORE LIKELY TO REPORT
HAVING A MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS

	Mental Health Diagnosis	No Diagnosis
Positive any drug*	68%	59%
Positive heroin*	11%	6%
Other previous illicit drug use*	68%	48%
Previous arrests*	91%	79%
Previous CPS case*	29%	16%
Parental drug use*	45%	25%
Previous drug treatment*	62%	29%
TOTAL	108-176	344-587

*Significant at $p < .05$.

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included.

SOURCE: SANDAG SAM Program, 2007

Additionally, there were a number of significant gender differences in regard to mental health issues. Specifically, females were significantly more likely than males to have been diagnosed with a mental health issue (32% versus 18%) and received mental health treatment (22% versus 14%) (not shown).

¹⁶ All but three of the factors shown in Table 6 were also significantly related to an overnight stay in a facility. These included testing positive for any drug, testing positive for heroin, and having a previous CPS case.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

A total of 797 adult arrestees were interviewed as part of the SAM Program in 2007. Of those interviewed, 773 (97%) provided a viable urine sample¹⁷, but only 764 completed the entire interview; these individuals are described here. Four hundred ninety-nine (499) of these arrestees were male and 265 were female. Other characteristics include:

- 41 percent were White, 36 percent Hispanic, 20 percent Black, and 4 percent identified with “other” (22 of whom identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, 6 as American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 4 as multiple or mixed) in terms of ethnicity;
- 91 percent completed the interview in English and 9 percent in Spanish;
- 33.4 years (age range 18 to 77) was the average age of respondents ;
- 29 percent did not have a high school degree;
- 51 percent were employed;
- 80 percent were single (either never married, divorced, legally separated, or widowed) and 20 percent were married;
- 60 percent reported having children (of any age), 38 percent reported living with at least one child under the age of 18 (whether or not the child was their own), and 5 percent of the female arrestees reported they were pregnant;
- 19 percent of those who reported having any children also said that they had previously had an open case with Child Protective Services (CPS);
- 50 percent had ever been homeless and 12 percent were currently homeless;

- Of those reporting a stable residence, the average number of individuals they lived with in the past 30 days was 3.9 (range 1 to 40); and
- 63 percent currently had no health insurance.

In addition, all of the data (percentages and raw numbers) captured through the adult interview and urinalysis for 2004 through 2007 are available online at www.sandag.org/cj. For questions regarding the project methodology or data set, please contact SANDAG’s Criminal Justice Research Division at (619) 699-1900.

¹⁷ In 2007, additional analyses revealed that a willingness to provide a urine sample was not significantly related to the arrestee’s gender, ethnicity, age, or highest charge at arrest.

SUMMARY

As a continuation of the federally-funded ADAM (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring) program, the San Diego SAM (Substance Abuse Monitoring) program involves annual interviews with local arrestees booked into one of four booking facilities across the region. Because interviews are supplemented with urinalysis, these data provide one of the only objective measures of drug use trends over time for an at-risk population that may predict forthcoming trends in the general population. In addition, because of the richness of the qualitative information obtained, additional information useful to law enforcement, drug prevention specialists, treatment providers, other service providers, elected officials, and the general public are available regarding the current needs and issues of this group of criminally-involved individuals.

As described in the current bulletin (which highlights results from interviews conducted in 2007 with adult arrestees), current drug use was down for both male and female arrestees, with fewer individuals testing positive for any drug (marijuana, meth, cocaine, heroin, or PCP) in 2007. For males, the 57 percent positive rate was the lowest since 2000 (when sampling procedures for the project were improved) and represented a 9 percent decrease from 2006. For females, the 6 percent one-year decrease to 69 percent represented the first decline over the same time period.

Marijuana continues to be the drug of choice for arrestees, especially those between 18 and 24, with most arrestees reporting having tried it and around one in three testing positive for it around the time of booking into jail. Marijuana was the most common drug used in combination with other drugs, and users reported obtaining it through noncash means more frequently than other drugs and were most likely to describe it as easy to obtain.

Meth was used more often by female than male arrestees, but use was down for both groups compared to the peak reported in 2005. In 2007, 24 percent of male arrestees tested positive for meth (compared to 44% two years earlier), as did 44 percent of female arrestees (compared to 51%). In addition, fewer individuals reported that meth was easy to obtain and a greater number reported a recent inability to buy any when they had tried. Analyses by race revealed meth use is most common among individuals who identified as White or "other" ethnicity. In addition, unemployed individuals and those with a prior arrest history were more likely to test positive for meth, compared to those who were employed or reported this was their first arrest. Meth users were more likely to report committing acts of forgery, motor vehicle theft, and identity theft recently, compared to other arrestees.

Compared to other parts of the country, cocaine and crack are used less frequently than meth³. Individuals who obtained cocaine recently were most likely to report traveling to a different part of the County to get it. On the other hand, crack appears to be purchased in the Central MSA more than any other drug, with the greatest proportion of users reporting they recently bought it more than once on a given day.

With about one in five arrestees reporting ever having tried opiates and less than one in ten testing positive for it, heroin was the least commonly used of these four illicit substances among this population. However, those who used it were most likely to have a regular source and to have purchased it most frequently over a seven day period.

SUMMARY (CONT.)

Forty percent (40%) of arrestees reported using prescription drugs illegally in the past, with tranquilizers and painkillers among those most commonly abused. Individuals who had a history of abusing prescription drugs were more likely to test positive for marijuana, meth, and heroin than those who had not, suggesting that treatment providers should be aware of multiple addictions that could be present when serving this population.

Other relevant information about this population includes other lifestyle risks that affect both the individual, as well as the community at large. These include repeated contact with the criminal justice system, including as a juvenile; gang association; unmet reentry issues; intravenous drug use; unmet treatment needs; driving under the influence; missed work; health problems and visits to medical providers; lack of health insurance; previous contact with Child Protective Services (CPS); homelessness; and mental health issues that may be untreated.

