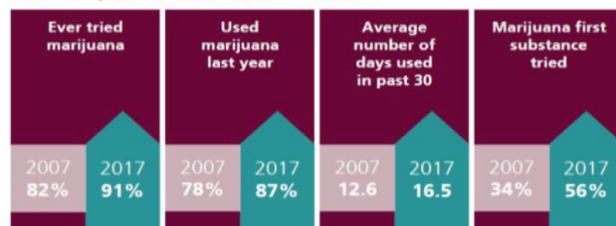


2017 Juvenile Arrestee Drug Use in the San Diego Region

-Marijuana Use Summary-

When the juvenile component of the nationally-funded ADAM (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring) program was discontinued in 2003 (one year before the entire program ended), local funding was secured, which enabled this important data collection effort to continue in the region as the San Diego County Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program. SAM (and ADAM when it was in existence) is unique in that while most data tracking drug-use trends over time rely solely on self-report, SAM includes an objective measure of recent drug use over time with the analysis of a *voluntary urine sample that is confidential and anonymous*.

Youth use of marijuana has increased, and a greater percentage report it is the first substance they have ever tried, before alcohol and tobacco.



SANDAG is pleased to share with you the first two publications from new Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) data from 2017. As you may already know SAM, which involves tracking drug use trends over time among the justice-involved population, was once conducted in 35 cities nationally, but has only continued in San Diego County uninterrupted, through the support of local stakeholders.

Marijuana remains drug of choice:

Marijuana remained the drug of choice for youths at Juvenile Hall, with **45 percent positive** at the time of the SAM interview and **56 percent** reporting it was the **first substance they ever tried** (compared to 25% for alcohol). Fourteen percent (**14%**) of youths thought that marijuana could be harmful to users (compared to 36% for alcohol).

In 2007, when the question “What was the first substance you ever tried?” was first asked, slightly

more youths reported that alcohol was the first substance they had ever tried (39%), followed by marijuana (34%). **Ten years later, this pattern was quite different, with over half (56%) reporting marijuana was the first substance they had ever tried, with only one in four (25%) reporting alcohol was the first substance they had tried.**

Almost three-fourths (73%) of the youths interviewed reported Marijuana (91%) and alcohol (90%) were the most frequently tried substances, followed by tobacco (74%). Over half (55%) of the youths also reported binge drinking alcohol (defined as five or more drinks on one occasion).

For many of these youths, marijuana use started first, around the age of 12.4, followed by alcohol at 12.7, and tobacco at 12.9, on average. Binge alcohol use, on average, appeared to start about one year after initial alcohol use.

Data regarding alcohol and marijuana use not listed on SANDAG summary.

Using alcohol and marijuana together significantly increases impairment levels and produces much higher blood concentrations of THC than does marijuana use alone (Hartman, et al., 2015; Ramaekers, et al., 2000).

Youth who reported positive views about marijuana when they were in sixth grade were 63% more likely to drive under the influence or ride in a car with an impaired driver when they were in high school than their peers who had reported less positive views (Ewing et al., 2015).

