

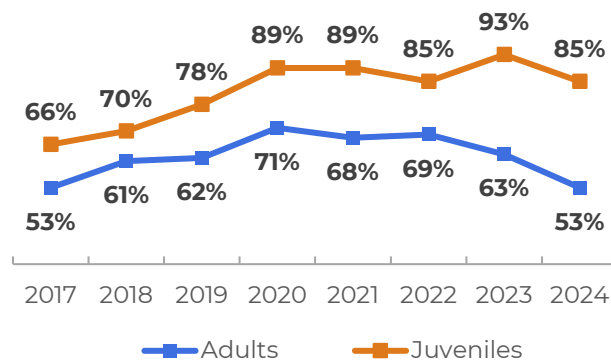
Marijuana Use Among San Diego Arrestees: Eight Years After Proposition 64

As part of SANDAG's Substance Use Monitoring (SUM) project, individuals booked into San Diego County jails are interviewed to better understand substance use trends across the region. Since the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016—which legalized the recreational use of marijuana in California for individuals 21 years of age and older—tracking marijuana usage has become a key tool for evaluating its potential impact on public health and safety. In 2024, 93% of juveniles and 83% of adults interviewed reported having tried marijuana. This CJ Flash highlights insights from 147 individuals who were administered a supplemental marijuana addendum due to reporting marijuana use within 30 days of their interview.¹

Highlight 1: THC vaping remains prevalent among youth as adult use falls

Vaping rates among juveniles have consistently exceeded those of adults, with 85% of juveniles reporting THC vaping in 2024—significantly higher than the 53% reported by adults. Notably, juvenile usage peaked at 93% in the previous year, while adult vaping rates declined for the second consecutive year, returning to the same level observed in 2017. A majority of respondents (86%) say smoking is their preferred method of consumption (not shown).

Figure 1: Percentage of Respondents who Have Ever Vaped THC, 2017 to 2024

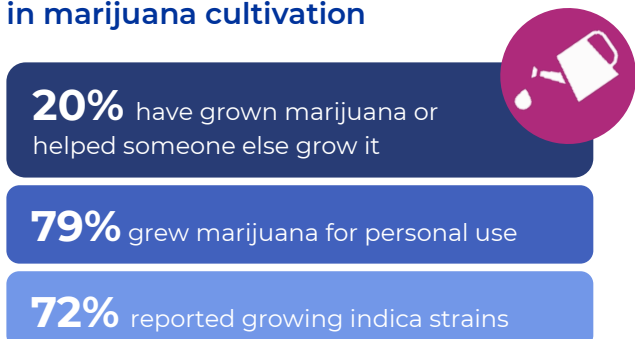


Source: SANDAG, 2024

Highlight 2: One in five have been involved in growing marijuana

In 2024, one in five respondents (20%) reported ever growing marijuana or helping someone else grow it. Most did so for personal use (79%), but a few also reported selling it (14%) and/or supplying dispensaries (10%). Among the different strains, indica was the most commonly grown (72%), followed by sativa (38%) and hybrid varieties (24%).

Figure 2: Respondent involvement in marijuana cultivation



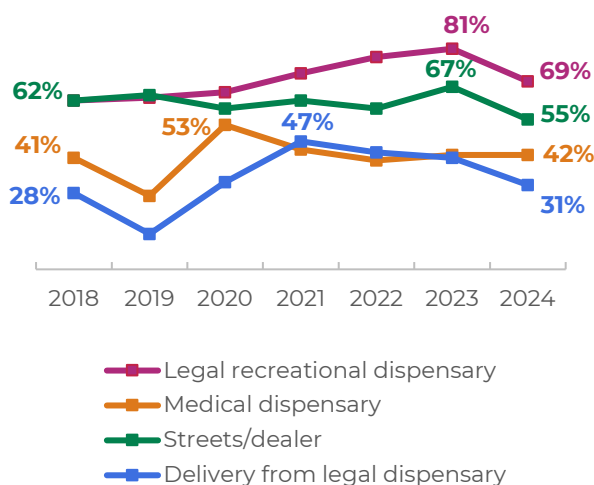
Source: SANDAG, 2024

¹ In 2024, a total of 147 individuals completed the marijuana addendum (120 adults and 27 juveniles). Due to an overall decrease in the number of respondents interviewed over the years, longitudinal findings should be interpreted with caution. More information about SUM is available at [SANDAG.org/cj](https://www.sandag.org/cj).

Highlight 3: Despite marijuana legalization, street dealer purchases remain common

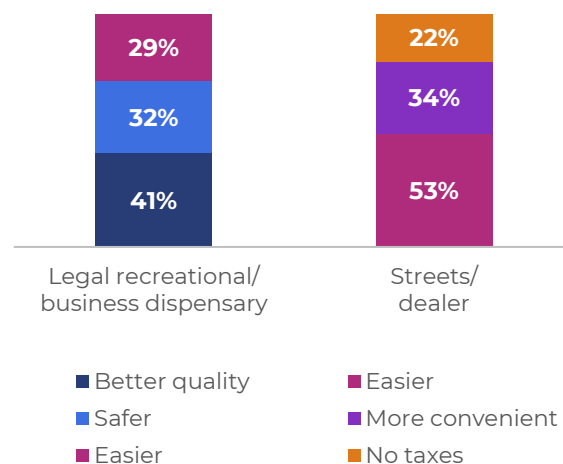
Despite rising purchases from legal recreational dispensaries (which peaked at 81% in 2023), street dealers remain the second most common source for adults in this sample, indicating that legalization has not fully displaced the illicit market.² When asked about their preferred method for obtaining marijuana, 44% of adult respondents preferred legal dispensaries, citing perceived quality, safety, and ease of access as the top three reasons. In contrast, 25% preferred street dealers, primarily due to perceived ease, convenience, and tax avoidance.

Figure 3: Reported marijuana sources in the last 12 months, 2018 to 2024



Source: SANDAG, 2024

Figure 4: Reasons for preferring each marijuana source



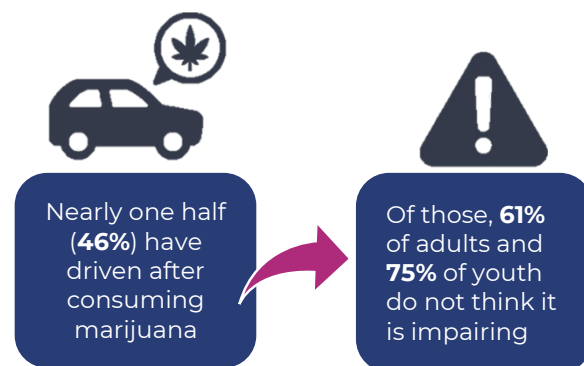
Note: Totals do not add to 100 due to multiple choice responses.

Source: SANDAG, 2024

Highlight 4: Most people who have driven under the influence of marijuana do not believe it impairs driving

In 2024, 46% of respondents reported having driven after ingesting or smoking marijuana. Among adults who reported doing so, 61% also said they do not believe this behavior impairs driving ability. The gap was even wider among juveniles: 75% of those who reported ever driving after using marijuana said they do not believe driving under its influence affects driving performance. Together, these findings highlight a disconnect between reported behavior and perceived safety risks.

Figure 5: Percentage of respondents who have driven under the influence of marijuana and perceived risk



Source: SANDAG, 2024

² Highlight 3 data comes from the SUM main adult instrument. There were 130 adult respondents that provided information on where they obtained marijuana in the 12 months prior to interviewing.

Highlight 5: Majority of respondents view marijuana as beneficial despite addiction risks

In 2024, 70% of respondents said marijuana is psychologically addictive and half (50%) felt it is physically addictive. Yet despite these beliefs, nearly all respondents (92%) still viewed marijuana as beneficial, particularly for improving mood and relieving stress and anxiety. Notably, juveniles were more likely than adults to cite benefits for ADHD or concentration (28% versus 5%). These findings suggest that the perceived therapeutic value of marijuana may outweigh concerns about addiction, whether psychological or physical.

Figure 6: Respondent perceptions of marijuana's addictiveness and benefits

