

Highlights for the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health

- Tobacco Product Use or Nicotine Vaping
 - In 2020, 20.7% of people aged 12 or older (or 57.3 million people) used nicotine products (i.e., used tobacco products or vaped nicotine) in the past month.
 - Among past month users of nicotine products, nearly two thirds of adolescents aged 12 to 17 (63.1%) vaped nicotine but did not use tobacco products. In contrast, 88.9% of past month nicotine product users aged 26 or older used only tobacco products.
- Alcohol Use
 - In 2020, 50.0% of people aged 12 or older (or 138.5 million people) used alcohol in the past month (i.e., current alcohol users)
 - Among the 138.5 million people who were current alcohol users, 61.6 million people (or 44.4%) were classified as binge drinkers and 17.7 million people (28.8% of current binge drinkers and 12.8% of current alcohol users) were classified as heavy drinkers.
 - The percentage of people who were past month binge alcohol users was highest among young adults aged 18 to 25 (31.4%) compared with 22.9% of adults aged 26 or older and 4.1% of adolescents aged 12 to 17.
- Illicit Drug Use
 - In 2020, 21.4% of people aged 12 or older (or 59.3 million people) used illicit drugs in the past year, including 17.9% (or 49.6 million people) who used marijuana.
 - The percentage of people who used marijuana in the past year was highest among young adults aged 18 to 25 (34.5%) compared with 16.3% of adults aged 26 or older and 10.1% of adolescents aged 12 to 17.
 - Among people aged 12 or older in 2020, 3.4% (or 9.5 million people) misused opioids in the past year. Among the 9.5 million people who misused opioids in the past year, 9.3 million people misused prescription pain relievers and 902,000 people used heroin.
- Initiation of Substance Use
 - Among people aged 12 or older in 2020, 1.3 million people initiated cigarette smoking, 4.1 million initiated alcohol use, 2.8 million initiated marijuana use, and 1.2 million initiated prescription pain reliever misuse in the past year.
 - The vast majority of people who were past year initiates of cigarette smoking or alcohol use tried cigarettes or alcohol for the first time before age 26. In contrast, nearly two thirds of past year initiates of prescription pain reliever misuse were aged 26 or older when they initiated misuse.
- Perceived Risk from Substance Use
 - Only about one fourth of people aged 12 or older in 2020 (27.4%) perceived great risk of harm from smoking marijuana once or twice a week.
 - Young adults aged 18 to 25 were less likely than adolescents aged 12 to 17 or adults aged 26 or older to perceive great risk of harm from smoking marijuana weekly.
- Substance Use Disorder
 - The 2020 survey marked the first year in which substance use disorders (SUDs) were assessed using the criteria defined in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental*

Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5), as opposed to criteria specified in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th edition (DSM-IV).

- In 2020, 40.3 million people aged 12 or older (or 14.5%) had an SUD in the past year, including 28.3 million with alcohol use disorder, 18.4 million with an illicit drug use disorder, and 6.5 million with both alcohol use disorder and an illicit drug use disorder.
- Mental Health
 - In 2020, 17.0% of adolescents aged 12 to 17 (or 4.1 million people) had a major depressive episode (MDE) in the past year, and 2.7% (or 644,000 people) had a co-occurring MDE and an SUD in the past year.
 - In 2020, 21.0% of adults aged 18 or older (or 52.9 million people) had any mental illness (AMI), and 5.6% (or 14.2 million people) had serious mental illness (SMI) in the past year.
 - An estimated 6.7% of adults aged 18 or older in 2020 (or 17.0 million people) had co-occurring AMI and an SUD, and 2.2% (or 5.7 million people) had co-occurring SMI and an SUD in the past year.
- Suicidal Thoughts and Behavior
 - In 2020, 4.9% of adults aged 18 or older (or 12.2 million people) had serious thoughts of suicide, 1.3% (or 3.2 million people) made a suicide plan, and 0.5% (or 1.2 million people) attempted suicide in the past year.
 - Among Whites aged 18 or older, 5.3% (or 8.4 million people) had serious thoughts of suicide, 1.4% (or 2.2 million people) made a suicide plan, and 0.5% (or 741,000 people) attempted suicide in the past year.
 - Among people of two or more races aged 18 or older, 11.0% (or 514,000 people) had serious thoughts of suicide, 3.3% (or 155,000 people) made a suicide plan, and 1.2% (or 57,000 people) attempted suicide in the past year.
 - Among Hispanics or Latinos aged 18 or older, 4.2% (or 1.8 million people) had serious thoughts of suicide, 1.2% (or 503,000 people) made a suicide plan, and 0.6% (or 243,000 people) attempted suicide in the past year.
 - Among adolescents aged 12 to 17, 12.0% (or 3.0 million people) had serious thoughts of suicide, 5.3% (or 1.3 million people) made a suicide plan, and 2.5% (or 629,000 people) attempted suicide in the past year.
- Substance Use Treatment
 - In 2020, 14.9% of people aged 12 or older (or 41.1 million people) were classified as needing substance use treatment in the past year. These findings were consistent with the SUD data.
 - Among people aged 12 or older in 2020 who needed substance use treatment but did not receive treatment at a specialty facility in the past year, 97.5% did not feel that they needed treatment.
- Mental Health Service Use
 - In 2020, 17.3% of adolescents aged 12 to 17 (or 4.2 million people) received mental health services in a specialty setting in the past year.

- An estimated 16.9% of adults aged 18 or older in 2020 (or 41.4 million people) received inpatient or outpatient mental health services or took prescription medication for a mental health issue in the past year.
- Less than half of adults aged 18 or older in 2020 with AMI (46.2%) received mental health services in the past year. About two thirds of adults aged 18 or older with SMI (64.5%) received mental health services (but about one third did not).
- About half of adults aged 18 or older in 2020 with SMI (49.7%) perceived an unmet need for mental health services in the past year.
- Service Use among People with Co-Occurring SUD and Mental Health Issues
 - About half of adults aged 18 or older in 2020 with a co-occurring SUD and AMI in the past year received either substance use treatment at a specialty facility or mental health services in the past year (50.5%), but only 5.7% received both services.
 - About two thirds of adults aged 18 or older with a co-occurring SUD and SMI in the past year received either substance use treatment at a specialty facility or mental health services in the past year (66.4%), but only 9.3% received both services.
- Perceived Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic
 - In Quarter 4 of 2020 (October to December), adolescents aged 12 to 17 who had a past year MDE were more likely than those who did not have a past year MDE to perceive that the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic negatively affected their mental health “quite a bit or a lot.” Similarly, adults aged 18 or older who had AMI or SMI in the past year were more likely than adults who did not have mental illness to perceive that the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected their mental health “quite a bit or a lot.”
 - In Quarter 4 of 2020, 25.9 million past year users of alcohol and 10.9 million past year users of drugs other than alcohol perceived that they were using these substances “a little more or much more” than they did before the COVID-19 pandemic began.