

Washington State Young Adult Health Survey

Overview

The Washington State Young Adult Health Survey measures marijuana and other substance use, perceptions of harm, risk factors, and consequences among young adults (18 to 25 years old) living in Washington State. Motivated by the passage of Initiative 502 in 2012, the survey began in 2014 before recreational marijuana stores opened their doors.

A total of 7,163 eligible young adults participated in the 2018 survey from five cohorts. The survey is administered annually in summer/fall.

Survey data are used for:

- Implementing new rules required by Initiative 502, which legalized the recreational use of marijuana for adults 21 and older
- Monitoring trends in marijuana use patterns and consequences among young adults
- Assessing the impact of Initiative 502
- Surveillance, and to guide strategic planning of prevention and intervention programs

Key findings from the survey are:

- Almost half (48.5%) of young adults in 2018 reported they used marijuana during the past year. This is a significant increase from 2014 (43.5%). Young adults ages 21-25 are driving this increase.
- In 2018, 41% of young adults aged 18-25 who used marijuana in the past 30 days reported having driven within three hours of use.
- Among young adults that reported any use in the past year, 55% reported simultaneous use of alcohol and marijuana.
- The most commonly reported source of marijuana for young adults was from friends until 2016, when respondents 21 and older reported more frequently obtaining marijuana from retail stores.

Eligibility requirements

Participants must be residents of Washington State and between the ages of 18 and 25. Respondents were recruited using a combination of direct mail advertising to a random sample of 18- to 25-year-olds registered with the Department of Licensing and online advertising, including social media. Eligibility is confirmed via telephone interviews with potential survey respondents.

Authority

Initiative 502 Section 28 authorizes the use of revenue to pay for the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey and an expansion to include the young adult population (the Young Adult Health Survey). The surveys are managed by the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) within the Health Care Authority.

2020-21 budget

\$400,000 Designated Marijuana Account Funds for annual surveys in state fiscal years 2019-2021.

Key partners

The survey is conducted collaboratively by DBHR and its contractor, the University of Washington. The State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup member agencies and partners advise survey development and implementation.

For More Information:

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