

# Marijuana Use on the Rise Among Youth and Adults, According to National Survey on Drug Use and Health

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According to the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), released today by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 9.4 percent of the American population aged 12 and older have used an illicit drug, with marijuana the most used.

Among youth ages 12 to 17, 7.1 percent have used marijuana, “representing a continuing increase and a significant increase from 2011,” according to SAMHSA Administrator Pamela Hyde.

The release of this report coincides with the 25th annual observance of National Recovery Month which aims to promote the societal benefits of prevention, treatment and recovery for mental and substance abuse disorders.

The report found that among those 12 and older, 4.5 million abused prescription drugs. In addition, there were 1.5 million cocaine users, or .6 percent; 1.3 users of hallucinogens, or .5 percent; 496,000 used inhalants, or .2 percent and 289,000 heroin users, or .1 percent of the population.

When it comes to youth, there were 2.2 million aged 12 to 17 that currently used illicit drugs in 2013, representing 8.8 percent of the youth population. Marijuana was the most popular substance used, with 7.1 percent of youth using it; 2.2 percent used prescription drugs; .6 percent used hallucinogens; .5 percent used inhalants; .2 percent used cocaine and .1 percent used heroin.

As for alcohol, slightly more than half of Americans aged 12 or older were current alcohol users, an estimated 136.9 million, or 52.2 percent. Nearly a quarter of those users were binge drinkers – about 60.1 million people or 22.9 percent. Heavy drinking was reported by 6.3 percent of the population aged 12 or older, or 16.5 million Americans.

Of youth aged 12 to 17, 2.9 million were current alcohol users, or 11.6 percent. In 2013, 1.6 million of them reported binge drinking in the past month, or 6.2 percent of the population and 1.2 percent or 293,000 were heavy alcohol users.

The NSDUH also found that in 2013, 20.2 million individuals needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem but did not receive it. “That’s a continuing problem that we need to work on,” Hyde noted.

In addition, just over 21.6 million Americans ages 12 and older (or 8.2 percent) had a substance use

disorder, meaning they met the criteria for alcohol or illicit drug dependence or abuse. Among youth, over 5 percent met the criteria for a substance use disorder.

Hyde also stressed the important role that prevention plays in addressing drug use. “At SAMHSA we are trying to address this issue upstream because we know it is easier to stay healthy than to get healthy,” she said.

Michael Botticelli, Acting Director of National Drug Control Policy, stressed the power of recovery and the importance of the National Recovery Month campaign in removing the stigma associated with substance use disorders.

“My story is not one in a million, it’s one of millions,” he said.

The full NSDUH report will be available in the coming weeks. [Click here](#) to view an abbreviated version.

Those seeking help for mental and/or substance abuse disorders can visit <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/> or call 1-800 662 HELP (4357) for round-the-clock information on treatment programs across the nation.