

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 6,292 eligible young adults participated in the 2017 survey from four 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 (47.4%) of young adults in 2017 reported they used marijuana during the past year. This is a marginally significant increase from 2014 (43.5%).
- More than 40% of young adults who have used marijuana report having driven within three hours of use in the past 30 days.
- Among young adults that reported any use in the past year, more than 50% 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

Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, Substance Use Disorder Prevention and Mental Health Promotion Section – Young Adult Health Survey
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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 Health Care Authority.

2019-20 budget

\$400,000 designated marijuana Funds for two surveys in fiscal year 2017-2019.

FY 2018 Cost & Number Served:

The 2017 survey collected information from 6,292 young adult (18 to 25 years old) respondents across Washington.

Key partners

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

Oversight

The Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery provides oversight to the survey

For More Information:

Sarah Mariani, sarah.mariani@hca.wa.gov, 360-725-9401