

2019 Hanover Young Adult Survey

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Hanover CSB

The Survey

The 2019 Hanover Young Adult Survey was developed with assistance from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the OMNI Institute, Hanover CARES, and the Prevention and Education Committee of the Hanover Opioid Response and Prevention Task Force. Direct mail marketing and targeted sample marketing were used to collect data on substance use and other health-risk behaviors among Hanover County residents ages 18 to 25 years. Participants completed an online survey and were given the option to enter a personal email address in order to receive a \$10 Visa gift card as incentive. The survey includes core (GPRA) measures such as past 30-day use (of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, opiates); age of first use; and perception of risk.

Sample Demographics

Using direct mail marketing, post cards were sent to the approximately 3,000 Hanover homes that include an individual age 18 to 25 years. Nine zip codes in Hanover County were included in the mailing. The target sample includes students who are from Hanover and are attending college, as well as those who are from other areas but are attending college in Hanover (e.g., Randolph-Macon College). The survey was closed at 478 participants (16% of the target population), because of the limit placed on the incentives. However, because recruitment specifically targeted the population of interest, the evaluation team is confident that the findings are based on data collected from 18- to 25-year olds in Hanover County, and not other participants outside of the targeted population.

The sample is 66 percent female and 32 percent male (2% non-binary or other). Most (61%) are between the ages of 18 and 20 years, with 38% 21 to 25 years. The ethnic breakdown is white (82.4%; 86.2% in county), black or African American (8.7%; 9.4% in county), two or more races (5.1%; 1.9 in county), Hispanic or Latino (3.6%; 3.2% in county), Asian (1.8%), other race (1.5%), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (.5).

Overall Results

Biggest Problem (Figure 1)

Participants were asked to rank order the three biggest substance use issues in our community.

The top five endorsed issues were:

1. Underage alcohol use
2. Binge drinking (Drinking 5 or more alcoholic drinks if male, or 4 or more alcoholic drinks if female, on one occasion)
3. Nicotine use
4. Marijuana use
5. Prescription Opioid use

Perception of Harm/Risk (Figure 2)

Greatest risk is believed to be associated with heroin use (89% said “great risk”) and driving after drinking 4 or 5 drinks (87%). Binge drinking (5 or more drinks on one occasion for men and 4 or more drinks for women) is considered to involve “great risk” or “moderate risk” for 83% of respondents. Marijuana use is considered to carry the least risk of harm (only 12% consider it causing “great risk” and only 25% for “moderate risk”). In fact, marijuana use is considered to have less risk of harm than nicotine use (34% “great risk” and 40% “moderate risk.”)

Perception of Alcohol/Drug Enforcement (Figure 3)

Participants were asked how likely it is that someone driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs would be stopped by law enforcement. Most responded that it is “somewhat likely” (55%), with others reporting that it is “very likely” (27%), “not very likely” (17%), or “not at all likely” (2%).

Past 30-day Substance Use (Figures 4-8)

Past 30-day alcohol use was reported by 53% of the participants. In addition, 28% reported past-30 day binge drinking; 16% used e-cigs (vaping products); 13% used marijuana; 12% used nicotine; 2% took a prescription drug only for the experience, feeling it caused, or to get high; and 2% used heroin. Four percent of respondents said they drove a vehicle within one or two hours of consuming 5 or more alcoholic drinks (4 if female), and 11% said they rode with someone who had consumed 2 or more alcoholic beverages within the previous one to two hours. Greater detail on the frequency of past 30-day substance use is presented in Figures 4 – 8.

Age of Onset (Figure 9)

Among 18- to 25-year olds surveyed, the average age of first use of alcohol is 16.58 years. This is promising news given the increased risk of substance use disorder for drinkers who began drinking before age 15 years. Average age of first use of prescription drug misuse is 16.86 years, for marijuana use is 16.93 years, and for heroin use is 18 years (based on 2 users in this sample).

Ease of Access (Figure 10)

Alcohol (if you are under age) and marijuana were reported to be the easiest substance to obtain, with 42% of respondents saying that alcohol is “very easy” to get if you are under 21 years of age and 32% saying that marijuana is “very easy” to get in our community. Most participants responded “don’t know” to how difficult it is to obtain prescription drugs from a friend or family member (44%), prescription drugs from a doctor (54%), and heroin (69%). These findings are consistent with the low occurrence of use of the substances in the current sample.

Access to Prescription Drugs to Get High (Figure 11)

When asked, “how do people get prescription drugs to get high?” most responded with “given by friends or relatives for free” (61%), “steal from friends or relatives” (58%), “buy from friends or relatives” (64%), or “buy from a drug dealer or other stranger” (64%). Open-ended responses to this question include: “online sale through social media such as Snapchat or Instagram,” “continual refills of a prescription past the time the prescription was supposed to be finished,” and “I don’t know.”

Awareness of Prevention Efforts

Respondents were asked if they had seen or heard any information in the past 12 months regarding *safe storage* of prescription drugs (e.g., medication lock boxes). Only 26.21% reported that they had witnessed this information in the past year. Likewise, respondents were asked about their awareness of information regarding *safe disposal* of prescription drugs (e.g., medication drop boxes, take back events, and drug deactivation packets). 36.39% had seen or heard this information. More than half (54.71%) had seen/heard media ads regarding *prescription drug misuse prevention*, but only 3% were aware of prescription drug misuse *prevention strategies* in the community.

Additional Demographic Data and Analyses

Research has demonstrated that sexual minorities may be at disproportionate risk for misusing prescription psychotropic medications as compared to their heterosexual peers (e.g., Li, Turner, Mustanksi, & Phillips, 2018). Therefore, the young adult survey included a question on sexuality. The current population included 81% heterosexual or straight, 4% gay or lesbian, 10% bisexual, 4% not sure/prefer not to say, and 1.3% other sexual minority. T-test were run comparing heterosexual ($n=317$) and combined sexual minority categories ($n=81$). Although there was slightly greater marijuana use in the sexual minority group, there were no substance use differences that were statistically significant (i.e., all p 's $> .05$).

One question asked about substance use during pregnancy. Only .26% (1 participant) reported alcohol use during pregnancy, .52% (2 participants) reported tobacco use, .26% (1) reported marijuana use, .26% (1) reported prescription opioid use, and .52% e-cigarettes (2). This question was not applicable to 96% of the sample.

Employment status was also collected. Multivariate tests indicate that those who are unemployed have more past-30 day alcohol use ($p < .05$), as compared to those who are employed full-time. There were no other significant differences between employment groups (i.e., full-time, part-time, or unemployed) for any other substance use outcomes.

Full-time college students (76%) reported slightly less past 30-day alcohol use ($p < .05$) but slightly more e-cigarette use ($p = .05$), as compared to part-time college students and participants not in school.

Appendix: Figures

Q4 In your opinion, what are the three biggest substance use issues in your community for young adults aged 18-25? (Please select "1" for the biggest problem, "2" for the 2nd biggest problem, and "3" for the 3rd biggest problem.):

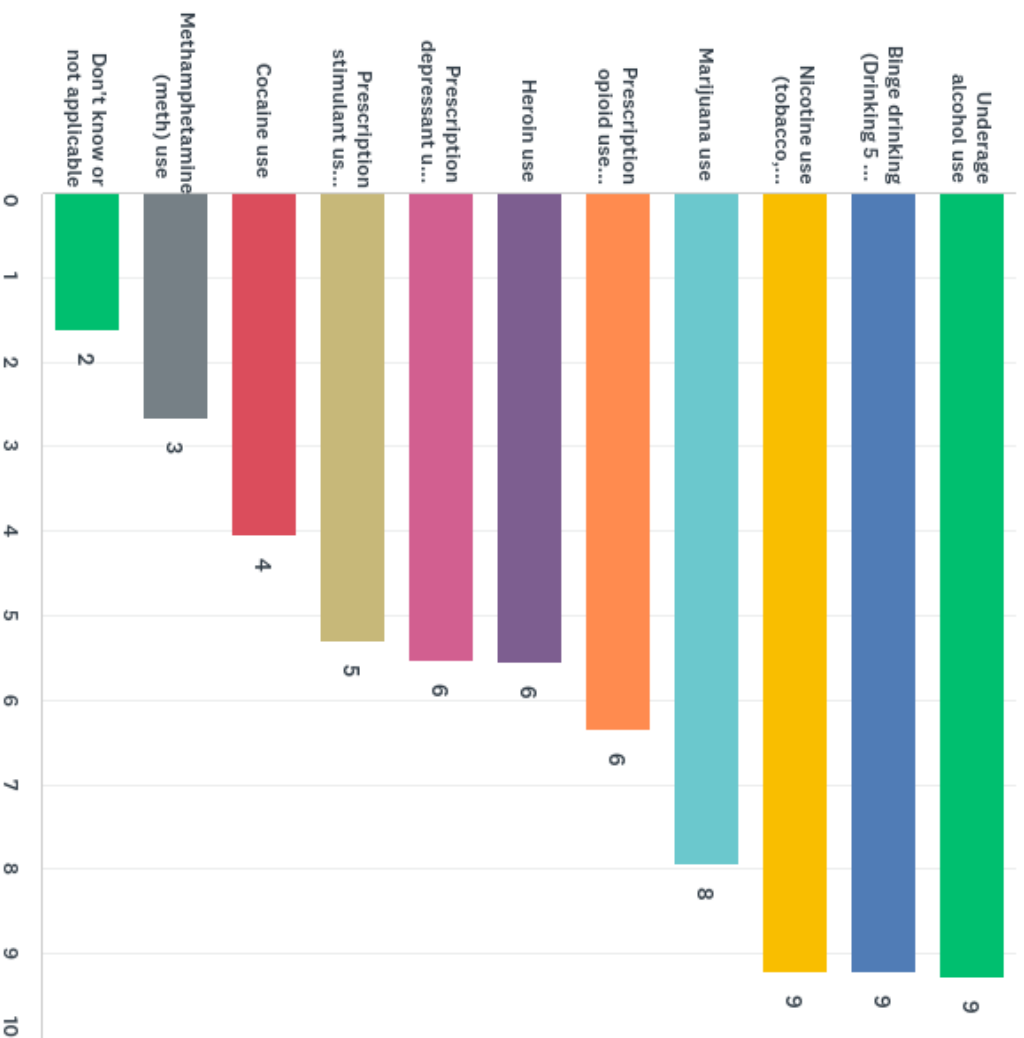


Figure 1: Biggest Substance Use Issue

Figure 2: Perception of Risk (Harm)

How much do you think people risk harming themselves physically or in other ways when they do the following:

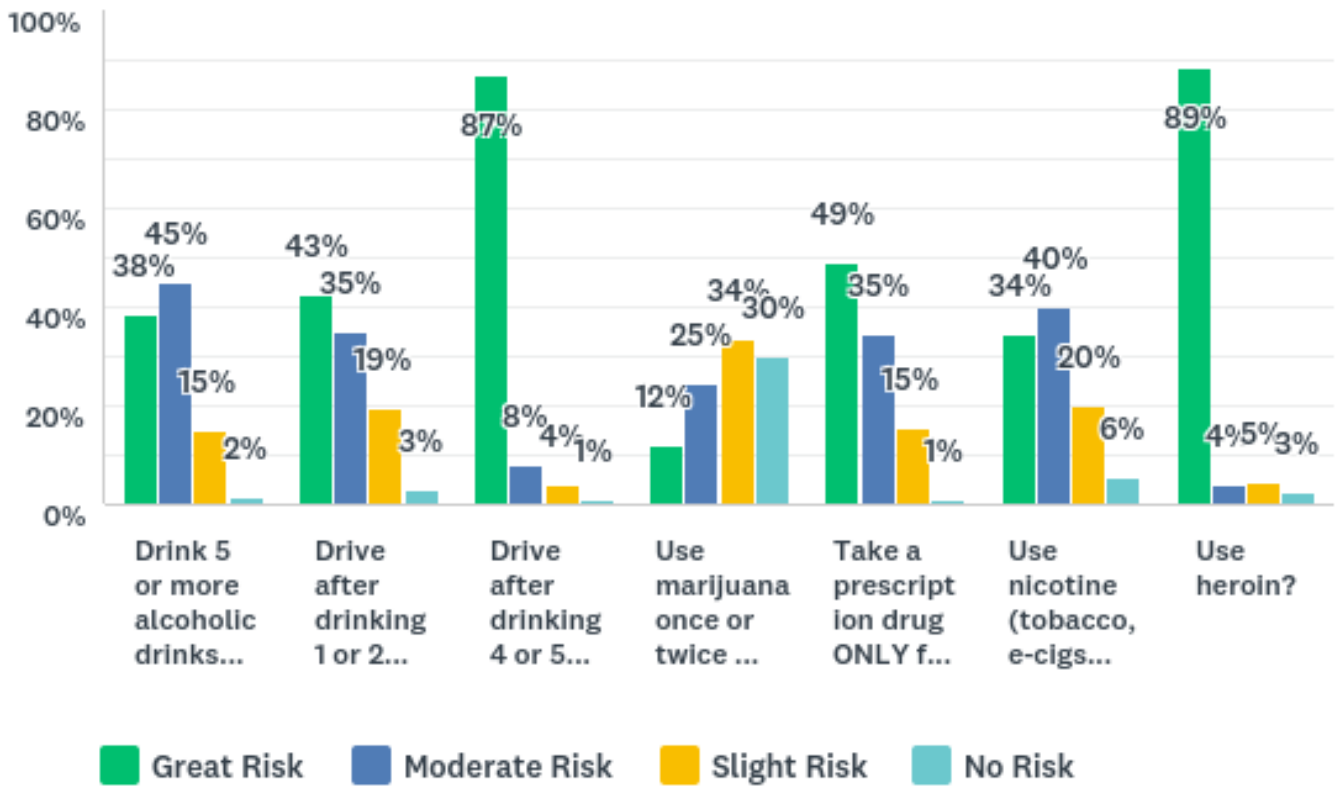


Figure 3: Perception of Law Enforcement

In your community, how likely is it that someone driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs would be stopped by the police/law enforcement?

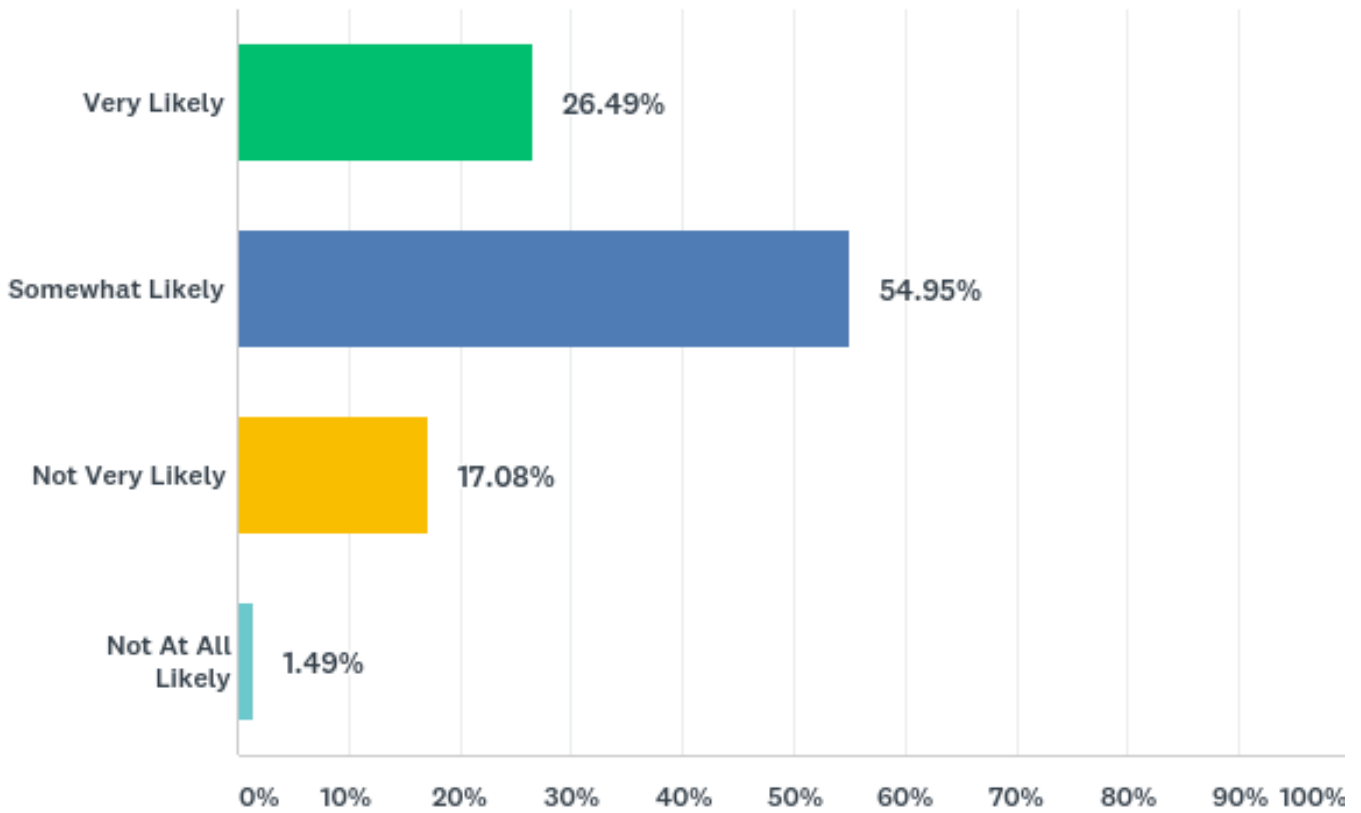


Figure 4: Past 30-day Substance Use

During the past 30 days, on how many days did you:

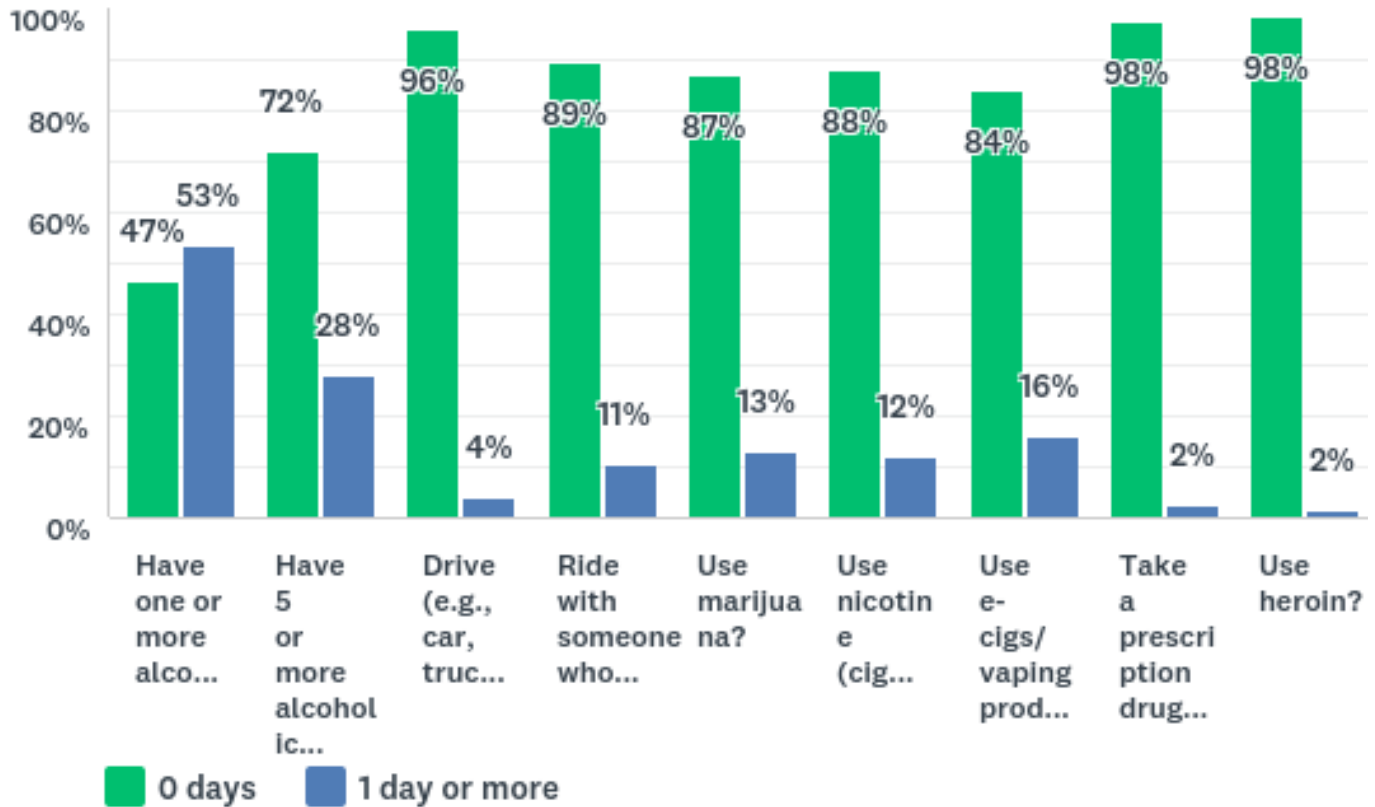


Figure 5: Past 30-day Use - Alcohol



Figure 6: Past 30-day Use – Binge Drinking (5 or more, men; 4 or more, women)

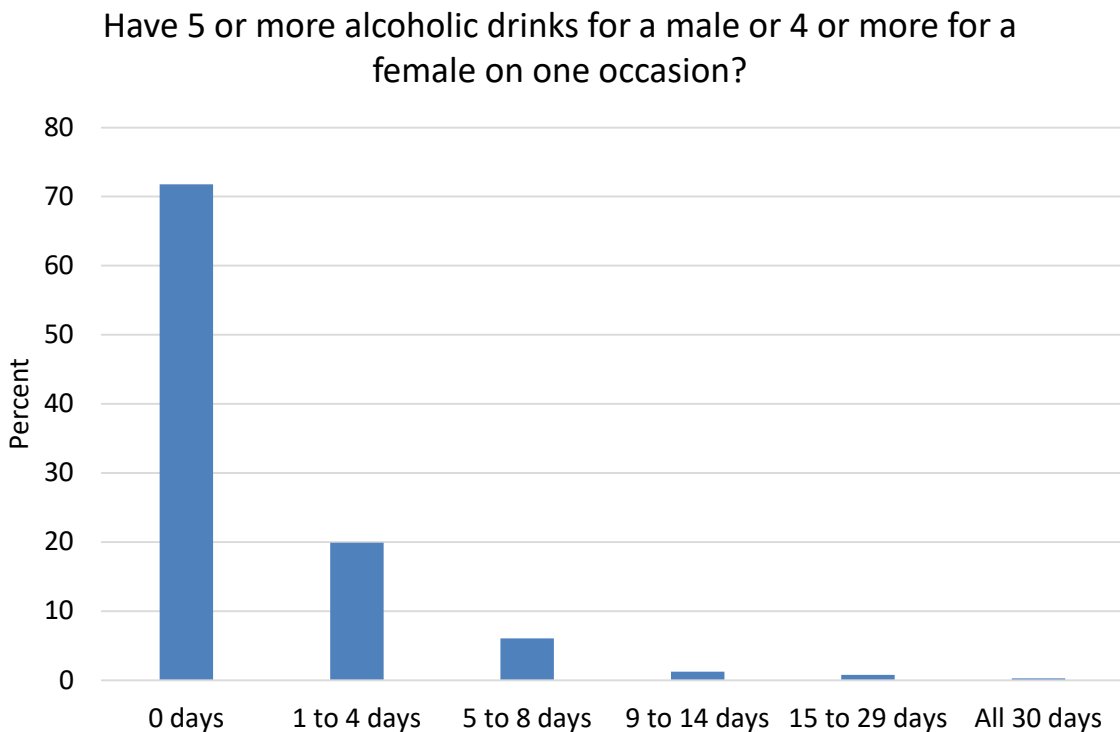


Figure 7: Past 30-day Use – E-cigarettes/Vaping

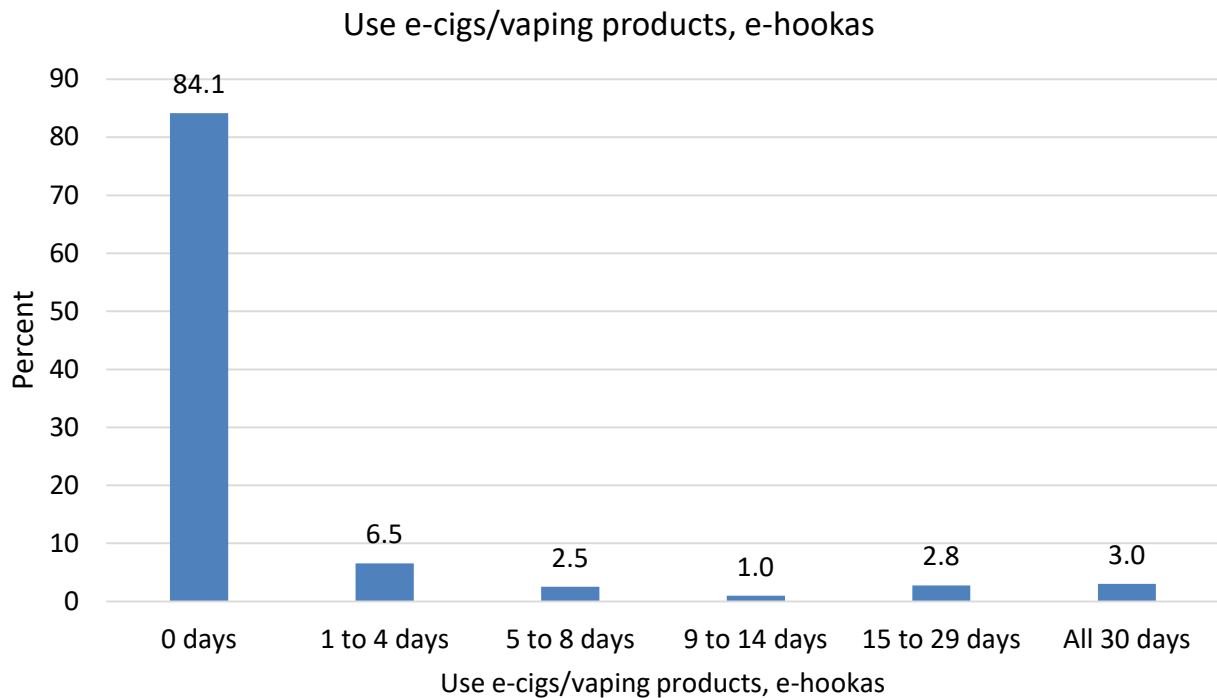


Figure 8: Past 30-day Use – Marijuana

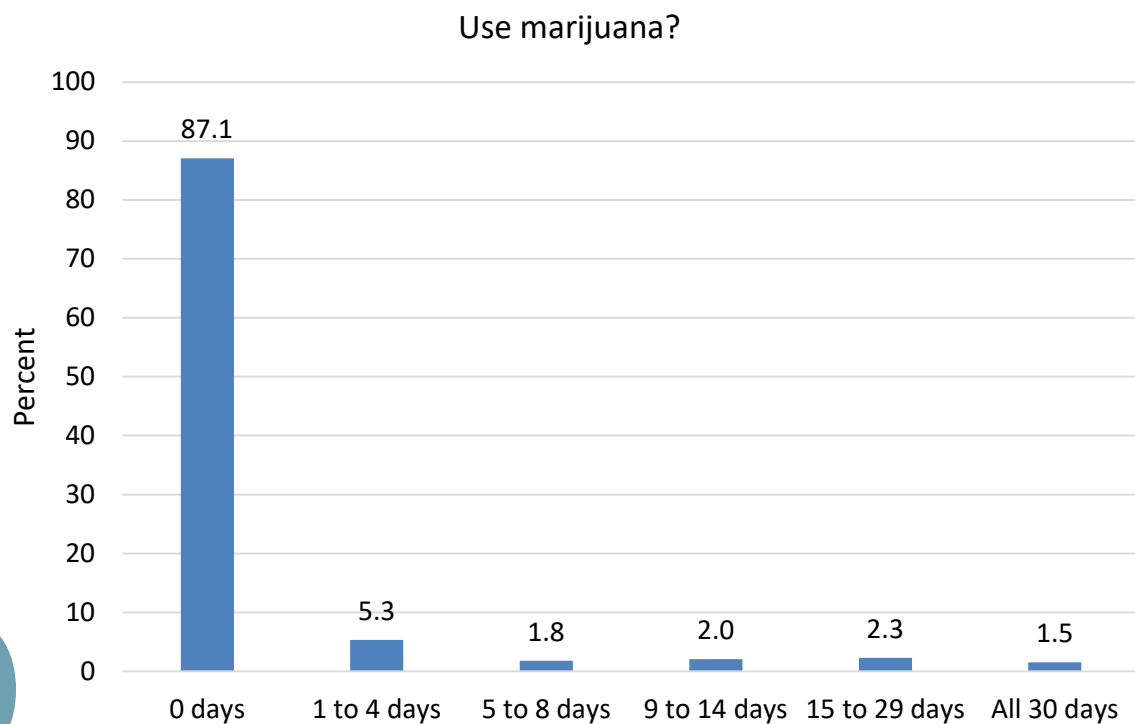


Figure 9: Average Age of Onset

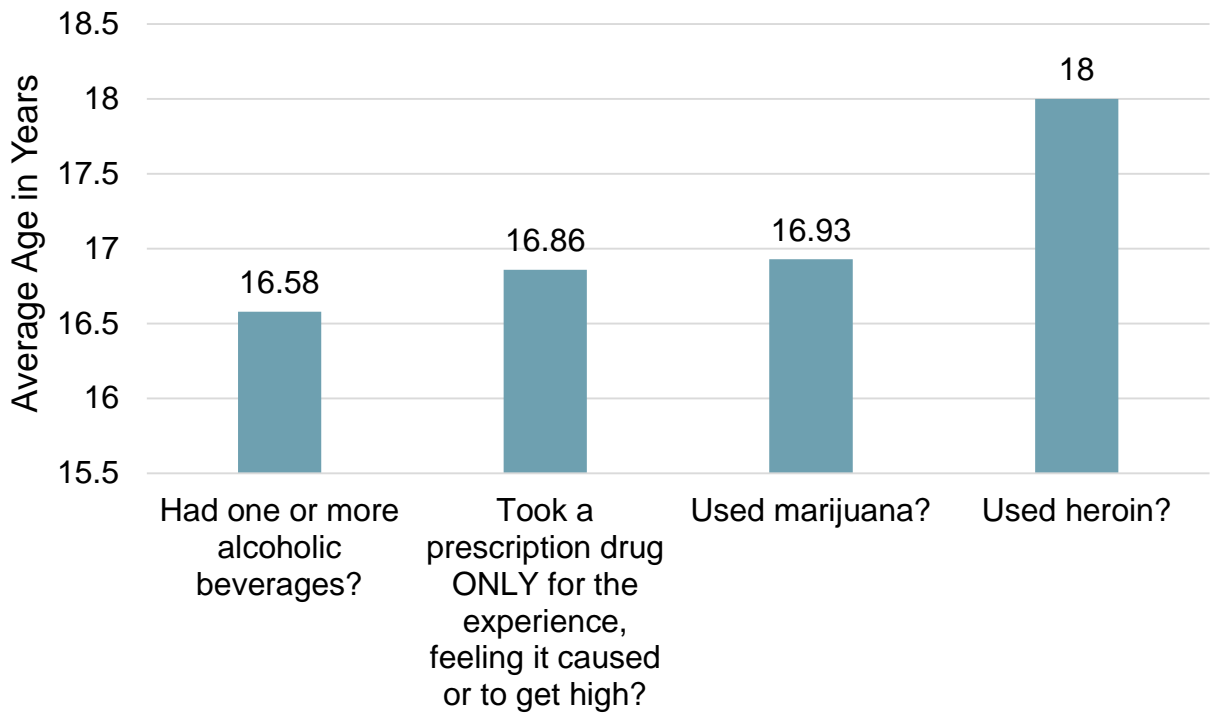


Figure 10: Ease/Difficulty of Access

How hard is it to get the following substances in your community:

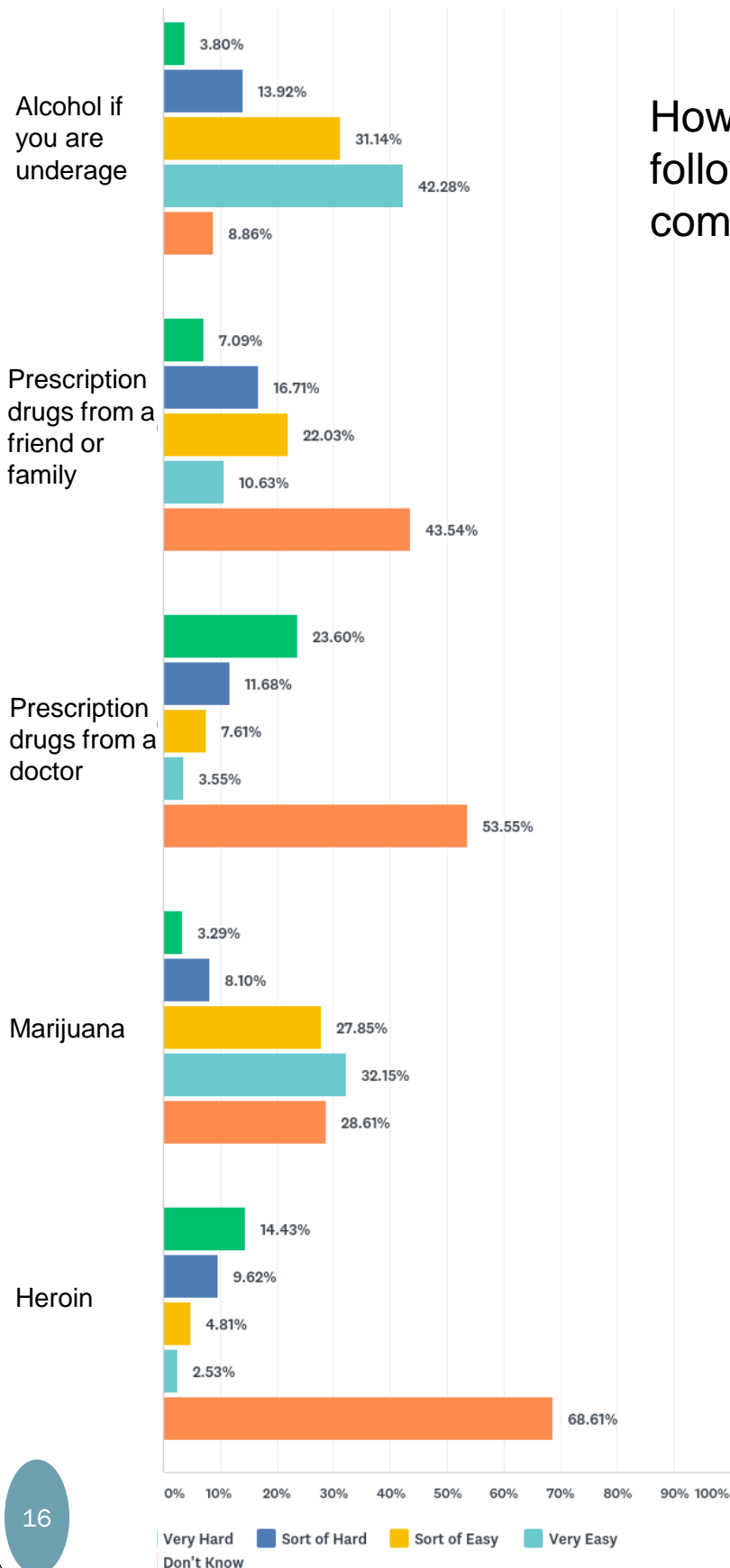


Figure 11: Access to Prescription Drugs to Get High

