

ALCOHOL & DRUG USE AMONG Adults

IN STREET-BASED SETTINGS* in Victoria, BC 2010-2016
WHO USE SUBSTANCES



Who took part in the study?

*Data are drawn from the "High Risk Populations" study and based on a sample of adults over 19 recruited from drop-in and emergency shelter programs for street-involved adults in downtown Victoria. Participants must have used substances other than alcohol and/or cannabis at least once a month for the past 6 months to be eligible for the study. Data are not representative of the general population in Victoria. A total of 790 interviews were completed between 2010 and 2016.

AVERAGE AGE **41**

72% CAUCASIAN
19% INDIGENOUS
9% OTHER



25% FEMALE
75% MALE
<1% TRANSGENDER

90% STRAIGHT
7% BISEXUAL
1% GAY/LESBIAN
<1% OTHER

HOUSING STATUS

42% LIVE IN A SHELTER
28% RENT AN APARTMENT/HOUSE
16% HAVE NO FIXED ADDRESS

What are the most commonly used drugs? In the past 30 days

94%
TOBACCO

72%
CANNABIS

65%
ALCOHOL

56%
CRACK

51%
RX OPIOIDS*

40%
CRYSTAL METH

34%
HEROIN

28%
COCAINE

22%
METHADONE

18%
BENZOS

21% HAVE CONSUMED **NON-BEVERAGE ALCOHOL** (MOUTHWASH, RUBBING ALCOHOL, ETC) IN THEIR LIFETIME (2015-2016 DATA)

39% HAVE CONSUMED **FENTANYL** IN THE PAST 30 DAYS (2015-2016 DATA)

Are these adults injecting drugs?

Top 3 substances by those who have injected the last 30 days:



Are these adults engaging in harm reduction?

90% OF ADULTS WHO INJECTED
ACCESSED CLEAN
NEEDLES (PAST 30 DAYS)

83% OF ADULTS WHO USED CRACK
ACCESSED CLEAN CRACK
PIPES OR MOUTHPIECES
(PAST 30 DAYS)

43% USUALLY INJECTED
WITH OTHERS

49% HAD OVERDOSE
TRAINING (2015-16)

70% SAID THEIR OVERDOSE
TRAINING INCLUDED
NALOXONE (2015-16)

Are these adults experiencing harms from their substance use?

60% REPORTED EXPERIENCING AT LEAST ONE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM &

86% AT LEAST ONE DRUG-RELATED HARM IN THE PAST YEAR

60% self-reported an
OVERDOSE ever

AVERAGE #
of OVERDOSES ever: **9**
(overdose is self-defined by participant)

40% of OVERDOSES
were by INJECTION

MAIN SUBSTANCES IN OVERDOSE:

- 1 HEROIN
- 2 ALCOHOL
- 3 FENTANYL (2015-16 ONLY)
- 4 CRACK

61% WERE TAKING AT LEAST ONE OTHER DRUG AT OVERDOSE

Other substances involved in overdose:

CANNABIS

ALCOHOL

CRACK

AMPHETAMINES

Are these adults getting help with their substance use?

24% CURRENTLY ACCESSING
TREATMENT SERVICES
(2012-2016)



COUNSELLING
19%



PEER SUPPORT
21%



WITHDRAWAL
MANAGEMENT
45%



RESIDENTIAL
TREATMENT
5%

Why are these adults using alcohol and other drugs?

"I just like the feeling"

"Makes me feel better"

"Pain control"

"Helps me socially"

"Pain and anxiety reduction"

"No benefits"

"Makes me forget about my day"

"Helps with my fear and being lonely"

"Makes me thrive and want to live"

"Stay up to protect belongings"

"Getting high"

Thank you to the participants and community agencies who make this research possible

Data drawn from "High Risk Populations" study: <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/projects/aod-monitoring/high-risk/index.php>



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