

## Background

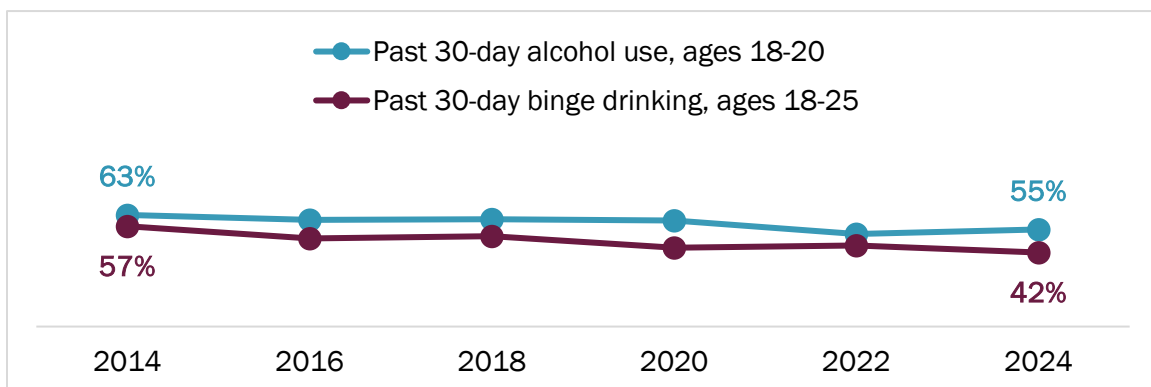
The 2024 Vermont Young Adult Survey (YAS) was conducted from March 4 through May 27 by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). This online survey was also conducted in 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022 and focuses on substance use and perceptions related to substance use among Vermont residents aged 18 to 25. This brief report presents selected findings from the 2024 survey, along with selected comparisons to data from previous years. More details regarding the YAS methods, along with a detailed set of findings, are available through the link provided at the end of this document.

## Key Findings

### Alcohol Use

- There were no significant changes from 2022 to 2024 in 30-day use of alcohol or binge drinking among all young adults, although the percent reporting both went down slightly from 2022 to 2024 to their lowest levels since 2014.
- Rates of both any alcohol use and binge drinking were significantly lower among underage persons than those aged 21 to 25.
- Full-time college students were more likely to report any alcohol use as well as binge drinking compared to other young adults.
- Past 30-day alcohol use among underage young adults (ages 18-20) and binge drinking among all young adults have decreased significantly since 2014.

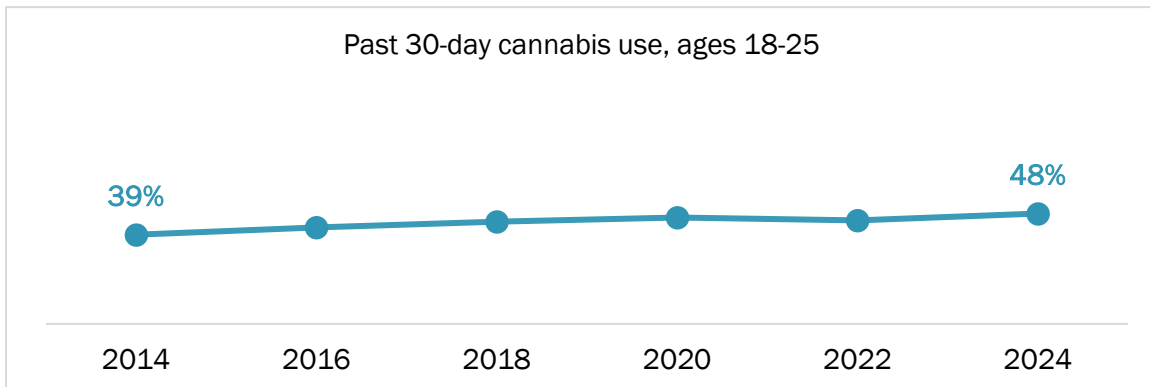
### **Past 30-day alcohol use among 18-20 year olds and binge drinking among all young adults have decreased significantly ( $p<.05$ ) from 2014-2024**



### Cannabis Use

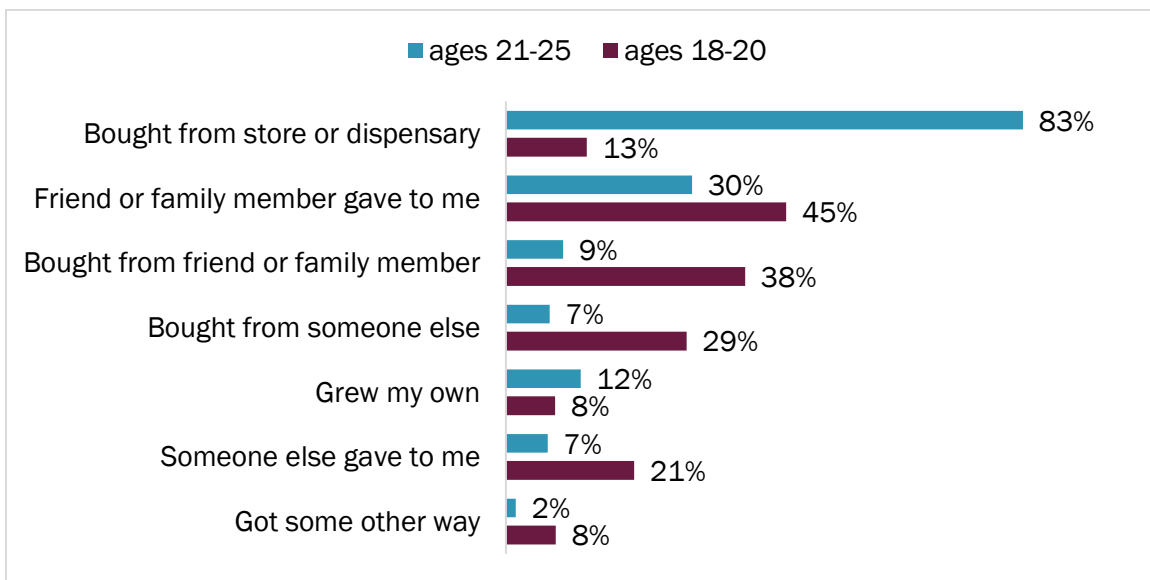
- Past 30-day cannabis use among young adults increased slightly from 45% in 2022 to 48% in 2024, and has been increasing since 2014.

## Past 30-day cannabis use has increased significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from 2014-2024



- A significantly higher percent of young adults who used cannabis in the past 30 days reported vaping it in 2024 (40%) compared to 2022 (33%). The most common method of consumption continues to be smoking (79%) although this decreased significantly from 2022 (86%).
- 2024 was the first year that cannabis users were asked how they usually get the cannabis that they use. Most cannabis users between the ages of 21-25 reported buying it from a store or dispensary (83%). Most underage users (ages 18-20) reported getting their cannabis from social sources (friends or family), but 13% also reported buying it from a store or dispensary.

## Most cannabis users aged 21-25 get cannabis from a store or dispensary while most underage users aged 18-20 get cannabis from social sources <sup>1</sup>



- The percent of older respondents (21-25) and LGBTQ+ young adults reporting past 30-day cannabis use was significantly higher than underage and cisgender heterosexual young adults, respectively.

<sup>1</sup> Because this item was select all that apply, response options may sum to more than 100.

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- Full-time college students used cannabis at higher rates than other young adults in 2024, although this difference was not statistically significant.
- In 2024, 44% of cannabis users reported using 20 or more days in the past 30 days. Also, significantly more cannabis users who are not in college full time (55%) reported using 20 or more days than full-time college students (32%).
- 19% of young adults in 2024 report that there is no risk from using cannabis regularly, a significant decrease from 29% in 2022.

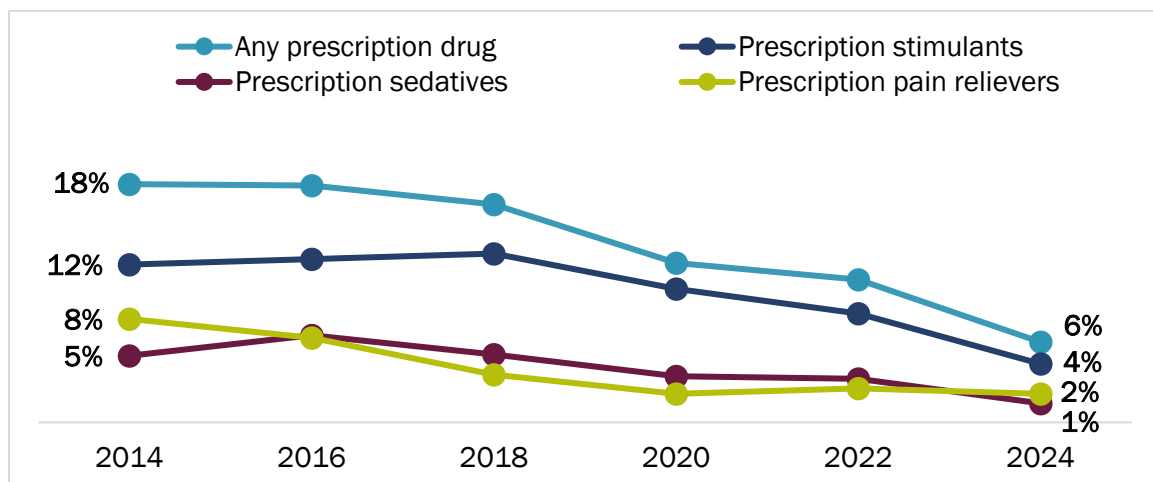
## Tobacco Use and Electronic Vaping Products

- Past 30-day use of electronic vaping products containing nicotine stayed the same at 27% in 2024, and went down slightly for underage (18-20 year old) young adults from 27% in 2022 to 25% in 2024 (not a statistically significant decrease).
- Past 30-day electronic vaping product use was significantly higher among young adults who are not full-time college students (33%) as compared to full-time college students (23%).
- There was a significant increase in past 30-day use of chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, nicotine pouches, or dissolvable tobacco products from 5% in 2022 to 9% in 2024.
- Rates of all types of tobacco/nicotine products except for electronic vaping products were significantly higher for males as compared to females.

## Prescription Drug Misuse

- The percent of young adults reporting misuse of prescription drugs in the past year decreased from 2022 to 2024 for all drug types. This decrease was statistically significant for misuse of sedatives and stimulants.

### Past year misuse of prescription drugs has decreased significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from 2014-2024



- Significantly more LGBTQ+ and BIPOC young adults reported past year misuse of prescription sedatives as compared to cisgender heterosexual and white, non-Hispanic young adults respectively, and significantly more LGBTQ+ young adults reported past use of prescription pain relievers as compared to cisgender heterosexual young adults.

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- Significantly more BIPOC young adults reported past year misuse of buprenorphine as compared to white, non-Hispanic young adults.

## Other Drug Use

- Past year use of heroin decreased from 2% in 2022 to 1% in 2024.
- Past year cocaine use decreased significantly from 7% in 2022 to 4% in 2024.
- Rates of past year use of hallucinogens was significantly higher for males (20%) than females (11%).
- Significantly fewer respondents in 2024 (12%) indicated a lack of awareness of dangers from fentanyl being mixed with other drugs as compared to 2022 (26%).
- 62% indicated that they do not know what xylazine is.

## Emotional Distress

- The percentage of respondents who reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless was significantly lower in 2024 (42%) as compared to 2022 (47%).
- Females and LGBTQ+ young adults were significantly more likely to report symptoms of emotional distress as compared to male and cisgender heterosexual young adults respectively.

## Changes in substance use due to policy changes

- 36% of young adults reported that the ability to purchase cannabis in stores since 2022 has not changed their use. 10% reported that their cannabis use had increased (43% said “not applicable – I do not use cannabis”).
- 61% of young adults reported that their alcohol use has not changed since restaurants and bars have been able to sell alcohol “to go” (28% said “not applicable – I do not use alcohol”).
- 36% of young adults who use flavored tobacco products said that they would buy flavored tobacco products from another state or country if they were no longer sold in Vermont.

## Stigma

- The percentage of young adults that agree or strongly agree that people who have been in treatment for substance use are negatively judged by others decreased significantly from 84% in 2022 to 79% in 2024.

## For more information...

The full report is available here: [Vermont Young Adult Survey 2024](#)

Questions regarding the survey or any of the data tables and reports based on the survey data should be directed to Amy Livingston at 802-490-5071, or [alivingston@pire.org](mailto:alivingston@pire.org).

*The 2024 Young Adult Survey was conducted for the Vermont Department of Health, Division of Substance Use Programs, by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). Funding was provided by the Partnerships for Success grant (also referred to in Vermont as Regional Prevention Partnerships, or RPP) from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The time and willingness of all respondents to participate in the survey is gratefully acknowledged.*