

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland at College Park *

1995 Survey of Americans' Attitudes Towards Drug Abuse and Policy Just Released

"Nearly half (49%) of all Americans say they know a friend, relative, neighbor, or someone at work who became addicted to illegal drugs."

This is one of the findings of Drug Strategies' 1995 survey of Americans' attitudes toward drug abuse and drug policy. The telephone survey, conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates from February 16 to 19, 1995, was of a nationally representative sample of 1,003 American householders age 18 and over. The survey repeated several questions which had been asked in Drug Strategies' 1994 survey. A selection of those responses endorsed by a majority of the participants appear below.

- **92%** of Americans support "subjecting reckless drivers to drug testing, as well as alcohol testing."
- **85%** do not believe that "drug abuse is mainly a problem in poor and minority neighborhoods and doesn't affect most parts of the country."
- **77%** disagree with the statement "smoking marijuana is not really a major problem and does not lead to drug addiction."
- **55%** (up from 46% in 1994) believe that "in dealing with drug-related crime, we need to emphasize prosecuting drug dealers and drug users, stricter sentencing for drug dealers, and stopping drugs before they are brought into the U.S."
- Increased drug use among young people is either the first or second biggest concern about drug addiction and abuse for **53%** of those surveyed.
- **52%** believe that drug abuse is an "extremely serious" or a "quite serious" problem for their community.
- "Implementing needle exchange programs to reduce the spread of diseases such as AIDS" is favored by **50%** of Americans (down from 55% in 1994).
- **50%** state that violent crime associated with drug trafficking is either their first or second biggest concern about drug addiction and abuse.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.'s telephone survey of 1,003 U.S. residents, February 16-19, 1995. Conducted for Drug Strategies, Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Margaret Beaudry of Drug Strategies at (202) 663-6090.

How Does Geocoding Apply to Substance Abuse Research?

To discover the practical applications of geocoding, order our new report, "Location of Drug-Using Arrestees and Treatment Centers in Washington, D.C.: A Geocoding Demonstration", by K. Petronis, C. Johnson, and E. D. Wish. A copy with black and white maps is available at no charge. A copy with color maps is available for \$15.00. Please contact CESAR for more information.

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