

Key Findings of the Public Opinion Survey on 2020 Anti-drug Publicity Measures

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Public Opinion Survey on 2020 Anti-drug Publicity Measures (the 2020 Survey) were to –

- (a) gauge public perception on the effectiveness and the extent of penetration of current anti-drug publicity messages under the Narcotics Division’s preventive education and publicity (PE&P) campaign;
- (b) understand the public’s preference on receiving anti-drug messages, including the effectiveness of different media platforms and avenues in disseminating anti-drug messages, anti-drug messages required to be strengthened, and the most effective messages that can discourage persons from taking drugs; and
- (c) understand the public perception in general publicity channels and modes, including the most common media channels from which publicity messages were received, the most common social media platforms used by members of the public, and their perception on the most attractive publicity modes.

BACKGROUND

2. ND has since 2007 commissioned annual public opinion surveys on anti-drug publicity messages. The Statistics Unit of the Security Bureau designs the survey questionnaire, and engages an outside contractor to refine the questionnaire. The data so collected form the basis of the analyses and compilation of relevant reports.

METHODOLOGY

3. The methodology for the 2020 Survey was similar to that of the 2019 Survey. Following the experience in the 2019 Survey, both individuals with valid mobile telephone numbers¹ and from land-based domestic households that are

¹ According to information from the Office of the Communications Authority, as at December 2020, the mobile subscriber penetration rate in Hong Kong was 292.5% (which means on average there were more than two phone accounts per Hong Kong resident). The corresponding residential fixed line penetration rate in Hong Kong was 81.9%.

installed with residential telephone were enumerated in the 2020 Survey, with suitable adjustments to the relevant proportion between them².

4. The questionnaire used in the 2020 Survey was also suitably reviewed and revised, with questions refined and regrouped for a better flow and organisation in order to more effectively tap respondents' views and preference³, and for enhancing the information collected (e.g. anti-drug messages that should be strengthened; publicity channels and social media platforms from which they mostly received messages; publicity modes considered most attractive), with a view to providing more useful insights for the planning of PE&P initiatives.

5. The 2020 Survey was conducted between 9 December 2020 and 2 February 2021, mainly between 2:00pm to 10:00pm. It covered Hong Kong residents⁴ aged between 11 and 60 (both ages inclusive) who were able to speak and communicate in Cantonese or Chinese and either (a) belonged to households with a residential telephone line; or (b) had a mobile telephone number. Through random sampling, the contractor successfully enumerated 1 278 respondents (644 from residential telephone lines and 634 from mobile telephone numbers) by telephone interviews, with an overall cooperation rate of 21%⁵. The sample size and cooperation rate were considered statistically sufficient for meaningful analyses. The sampling error for all percentages using the total sample was less than plus/minus three percentage points at 95% confidence level. For subgroup analyses, the percentages of which were derived using smaller sample size, the sampling errors were larger and results may therefore need to be interpreted with caution.

² In the 2019 Survey, the proportions of enumerated individuals with valid mobile telephone numbers and from land-based domestic households that are installed with residential telephone lines were about 17% and 83% respectively. The targeted proportions between them were adjusted to 50%/50% for the 2020 Survey.

³ In particular, the 2020 Survey had not covered the awareness rate of the campaign slogan "Stand Firm! Knock Drugs Out (企硬! 唔take嘢)" given that ND had been working on the revamping of the overall theme against drug abuse, together with a corresponding thematic slogan and logo, with less exposure of the slogan in 2020.

⁴ Excluding foreign domestic helpers.

⁵ The cooperation rates of respondents from residential telephone lines and mobile telephone numbers were 16% and 32% respectively.

6. Respondents were mainly grouped into the following four categories⁶ –
- (a) general youngsters (aged from 11 to 20) of which 130 (10% of total) sets of responses were received;
 - (b) young adults (aged from 21 to 35) of which 337 (26%) sets of responses were received;
 - (c) “high-risk” group (those who knew someone was drug abuser and/or who had been offered drugs before) of which 169 (13%) sets of responses were received; and
 - (d) parents of which 599 (47%) sets of responses were received.

Views from the above four categories were specifically analysed.

KEY FINDINGS

I. Effectiveness and Extent of Penetration of ND’s Current Anti-drug Messages

7. All respondents were asked whether they had seen or heard about the following anti-drug messages and, if yes, the platform(s) they received the anti-drug messages.

Anti-drug Messages

A. Drug harms

Drugs, such as methamphetamine (commonly known as “Ice”), cocaine and ketamine, can be addictive and harmful to your body
(吸食毒品，例如：「冰毒」、可卡因、K仔，會上癮同埋對身體造成傷害)

B. Cannabis is a drug

Cannabis is a drug
(大麻係毒品)

C. Easy to seek help

Drug users or people suffering from drug problems can easily seek assistance, such as counselling services or drug rehabilitation services
(吸毒者或受毒品問題困擾嘅人能夠容易尋求協助，例如諮詢服務或戒毒服務)

⁶ The total number of sets of responses received from the four categories of respondents do not add up to 1 278 because a respondent from the high-risk group can be a general youngster, young adult, parent, or neither of the three. Also, some of the respondents do not fall under any of the four categories.

D. Enjoy healthy life

Live a healthy life and stay away from drugs
(要過健康嘅生活，遠離毒品)

E. Drug trafficking is a serious offence

Trafficking of drugs is a serious offence and will be fined and imprisoned
(販毒係嚴重罪行，會被罰款同監禁)

8. The awareness rate of message A (“Drug harms”) increased slightly from 92% in 2019 to 94% in 2020. Increases were also recorded for general youngsters and high risk group while decrease was observed for young adults. The awareness rate of message B (“Cannabis is a drug”) increased from 77% in 2019 to 84% in 2020. Increases were also observed from all the subgroups analysed, including general youngsters, young adults, high risk group and parents. This might be attributable to the new themed announcement in the public interest (API) on cannabis (“Enjoy life to the full. Don’t let cannabis ruin you”) and dedicated TV programmes launched/broadcast in June 2020. The TV API was also disseminated as advertisement through various physical and online platforms, thus reaching a wide spectrum of the public. ND also published a new “Cannabis is a drug” pamphlet and a detailed note in June and July 2020 respectively to give more in-depth information and address commonly asked questions and misconceptions about cannabis. Two advertorials on interviews with Chairman of this Sub-committee and a medical practitioner focusing on correcting misconception of cannabis were also published on popular online parenting platforms in May and October 2020 respectively.

9. Message C (“Easy to seek help”) was consolidated from two messages that were featured in the 2019 Survey, namely “186 186 Hotline and WhatsApp/WeChat 98 186 186” and “Seek help early”⁷. The awareness rate was 55%. Messages D (“Enjoy healthy life”) and E (“Drug trafficking is a serious offence”), which also represented the new foci of anti-drug messages in 2020, were newly added in the Survey. The awareness rates were relatively high, at 78% and 87% respectively in 2020.

⁷ The two messages in detail were –

- (a) **186 186 Hotline and WhatsApp/WeChat 98 186 186:** Drug abusers and persons in need can call the hotline 186 186 or make use of WhatsApp/WeChat 98 186 186 to seek anti-drug counselling services or assistance (吸毒者或有需要人士可以打熱線186 186或者使用WhatsApp／微信 98 186 186尋求禁毒諮詢服務或協助); and
- (b) **Seek Help Early:** Collaborate efforts to discover people with drug problems early and help them to quit drugs (每個人都可以幫手及早發現身邊有冇人受吸毒問題困擾，幫助佢哋向毒品說不).

Table 1: Awareness of Anti-drug Messages

		All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents	
Anti-drug Messages	A	Drug harms	94% (92%)	95% (87%)	92% (95%)	95% (92%)	94% (94%)
	B	Cannabis is a drug	84% (77%)	83% (78%)	80% (77%)	86% (81%)	85% (79%)
	C	Easy to seek help [#]	55% (N/A)	69% (N/A)	50% (N/A)	50% (N/A)	56% (N/A)
	D	Enjoy healthy life	78% (N/A)	76% (N/A)	72% (N/A)	77% (N/A)	82% (N/A)
	E	Drug trafficking is a serious offence	87% (N/A)	91% (N/A)	88% (N/A)	90% (N/A)	86% (N/A)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2019 Survey.
 (2) “N/A” means “Not Available”.

Remark (#): The respective awareness rates of the two relevant messages in the 2019 Survey, namely “186 186 Hotline and WhatsApp/WeChat 98 186 186” and “Seek help early”, were as follows –

Awareness Rates in the 2019 Survey					
	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
186 186 and 98 186 186	59%	70%	61%	59%	56%
Seek help early	60%	47%	59%	60%	66%

10. As to the current platforms for receiving anti-drug messages, TV continued to be the most common media across all groups of respondents, followed by advertisements placed at public transport (i.e. MTR and bus) and web-based and mobile platforms (i.e. social media platforms, webpages and mobile apps). For general youngsters, apart from TV, web-based and mobile platforms and schools were common avenues to receive anti-drug messages. Details are at Table 2.

Table 2: Top Five Media Platforms and Avenues for Receiving Anti-drug Messages

		All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Ranking	1	TV 93% (94%)	TV 91% (93%)	TV 90% (94%)	TV 92% (98%)	TV 95% (94%)
	2	Public transport 77% (78%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 84% (72%)	Public transport 83% (84%)	Public transport 78% (87%)	Public transport 76% (77%)
	3	Web-based and mobile platforms 65% (62%)	Schools 79% (54%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 72% (75%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 70% (64%)	Radio 62% (67%)
	4	Radio 55% (59%)	Public transport 74% (80%)	External walls on buildings and banners on bridges 56% (47%)	Radio 57% (67%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 60% (56%)
	5	External walls on buildings and banners on bridges 52% (48%)	Cross boundary port 55% (53%)	Schools 52% (44%)	Cross boundary port 54% (56%)	Cross boundary port 54% (47%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2019 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

11. For different age groups, the penetration rates of web-based and mobile platforms were high among young people and young adults (at 84% and 72% respectively). The penetration rate of anti-drug activities and schools increased from 72% in 2019 to 88% in 2020 among young people. Details are at Table 3.

Table 3: Penetration Rates of Various Media Platforms and Avenues among Different Age Groups in Receiving Anti-drug Messages

Media Platforms/Avenues	Age group		
	Age 11-20	Age 21-35	Age 36-60
TV	91% (93%)	90% (94%)	94% (94%)
Radio	35% (43%)	49% (54%)	63% (64%)
Public transport	74% (80%)	83% (84%)	76% (76%)
Web-based and mobile platforms	84% (72%)	72% (75%)	57% (54%)
Anti-drug activities and schools	88% (72%)	62% (60%)	48% (45%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2019 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

12. Respondents' awareness of the harms of several common drugs was also gauged. The awareness rate was the highest for "Ice", followed by ketamine. For general youngsters, the awareness rate was the highest for "Ice", followed by ketamine and cocaine. The awareness rate for cannabis ranked fifth (i.e. 87% among all respondents) but had improved compared to the 2019 Survey, and was relatively high (94%) for general youngsters. Details are given in Table 4.

13. Five other drugs (namely heroin, ecstasy, cough medicine, tranquillizers and LSD) were newly included in the 2020 Survey. The awareness rates of the harms of heroin, ecstasy and cough medicine were generally high, ranging from 80% to 92%, while those of tranquillizers and LSD were comparatively lower (64% and 47% respectively).

Table 4: Awareness Rates of Drug Harms

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
“Ice”	95% (90%)	98% (97%)	95% (91%)	96% (94%)	96% (88%)
Ketamine	93% (91%)	95% (92%)	92% (92%)	93% (96%)	94% (90%)
Heroin	92% (N/A)	93% (N/A)	92% (N/A)	93% (N/A)	94% (N/A)
Cocaine	90% (86%)	95% (87%)	91% (88%)	91% (90%)	89% (84%)
Cannabis	87% (82%)	94% (84%)	81% (84%)	90% (77%)	88% (79%)
Ecstasy	86% (N/A)	81% (N/A)	85% (N/A)	83% (N/A)	88% (N/A)
Cough Medicine	80% (N/A)	79% (N/A)	74% (N/A)	85% (N/A)	82% (N/A)
Tranquillizers	64% (N/A)	56% (N/A)	56% (N/A)	65% (N/A)	70% (N/A)
LSD	47% (N/A)	37% (N/A)	44% (N/A)	50% (N/A)	50% (N/A)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2019 Survey.
(2) “N/A” means “Not Available”.

14. A new question on whether respondents were aware of ND’s 24-hour helpline “186 186” or the instant messaging service “98 186 186” was included in the 2020 Survey for better understanding the public awareness of the services. Although the awareness rate was relatively moderate (56%), the awareness rate among general youngsters was comparatively high at 70%. Details are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Awareness Rates of the Help Seeking Hotlines
and Instant Messaging Services
(New Question in the 2020 Survey)

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Awareness rates of the help seeking hotlines and Instant Message Services	56%	70%	53%	65%	55%

15. The general impression of ND’s two APIs which were broadcast in 2020 was also gauged. The APIs were –

- (a) TV Announcement 2020 (Enjoy life to the full. Don’t let cannabis ruin you)
電視宣傳短片2020 (自在生活 遠離大麻); and
- (b) Anti-drug 2018 (Don’t lose your life to drugs)
企硬2018 (Take 到上癮，無咗人生).

16. As set out at Table 6, the overall awareness rate of the two themed APIs broadcast in 2020 was 79%. Analysed by category, the awareness rates of the themed APIs were above 80% for all categories except young adults.

Table 6: Awareness Rate of Themed APIs

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Overall	79% (N/A) [#]	82% (N/A) [#]	73% (N/A) [#]	86% (N/A) [#]	81% (N/A) [#]

Remark (#): In the 2019 Survey, respondents were asked about their impression of each of the three theme APIs broadcast in 2019 (two were produced in 2016 and one in 2018). Since their production years were different, respondents might have deeper impression on the API that was more recently produced. In the 2020 Survey, the question was slightly amended, with respondents asked about their general impression of the two APIs, rather than impression of each of the APIs. The results of this question in the 2019 and 2020 Surveys were therefore not comparable.

17. As to the reasons why the respondents were aware of the APIs, the most commonly quoted ones were “anti-drug messages delivered are clear (傳達嘅抗毒訊息明確清晰)” (88%) and “slogans are simple/catchy (口號精簡/容易上口)” (85%). Details are set out at Table 7.

Table 7: Reasons of Being Aware of Themed APIs

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Anti-drug messages delivered are clear (傳達嘅抗毒訊息明確清晰)	88% (88%)	94% (87%)	84% (88%)	91% (84%)	89% (91%)
Slogans are simple/catchy (口號精簡/容易上口)	85% (88%)	94% (85%)	84% (88%)	82% (84%)	83% (91%)
Plots are creative (橋段具有創意)	53% (73%)	63% (82%)	40% (70%)	46% (76%)	58% (74%)
Visual effects are rich, screens are colourful and eye-catching (視覺效果豐富，畫面鮮豔奪目)	48% (64%)	59% (66%)	44% (65%)	44% (72%)	49% (66%)
Characters and plots are attractive (角色同情節吸引)	45% (N/A)	43% (N/A)	38% (N/A)	39% (N/A)	50% (N/A)
Plots have a fresh feeling (橋段有清新感覺)	40% (N/A)	49% (N/A)	30% (N/A)	38% (N/A)	44% (N/A)
Background music is easy to remember (背景音樂令人容易記得)	32% (N/A)	28% (N/A)	29% (N/A)	24% (N/A)	38% (N/A)

- Notes:
- (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2019 Survey.
 - (2) Multiple answers are allowed.
 - (3) Respondents were asked the reasons they were aware of the APIs in general, rather than each API in both Surveys. The results were therefore comparable. Reasons with “N/A” (i.e. “Not Available”) in brackets represent newly added reasons in the 2020 Survey that were not available in the 2019 Survey.

II. Preference on Receiving Anti-drug Messages

18. Other than understanding the effectiveness and extent of penetration of ND’s current anti-drug messages, respondents were also asked on their preference on receiving anti-drug messages.

19. Respondents were asked of their views on the effectiveness of various platforms in disseminating anti-drug messages. Web-based and mobile platforms (91%) were the most effective means, followed by TV (87%) and public transport (80%). Web-based and mobile platforms were considered the most effective means by all except one group of respondents. Details are set out at Table 8.

Table 8: Top Five Media Platforms and Avenues
Considered Effective in Disseminating Anti-drug Messages

		All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Ranking	1	Web-based and mobile platforms 91% (94%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 97% (98%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 90% (94%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 91% (92%)	TV 90% (92%)
	2	TV 87% (91%)	TV 90% (95%)	TV 82% (91%)	TV 84% (80%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 89% (91%)
	3	Public transport 80% (86%)	Public transport 80% (91%)	Public transport 80% (83%)	Public transport 80% (73%)	Public transport 82% (87%)
	4	Venue of entertainment 71% (81%)	Venue of entertainment 66% (75%)	Venue of entertainment 75% (82%)	Venue of entertainment 70% (84%)	Venue of entertainment 71% (82%)
	5	Radio 64% (69%)	Radio 63% (56%)	Radio 56% (66%)	Radio 60% (66%)	Radio 69% (75%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2019 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

20. A new question to tap respondents' views on the anti-drug messages that should be strengthened was included in the 2020 Survey. The results would be useful for ND to consider the anti-drug messages to be disseminated in future PE&P initiatives. In general, 93% of the respondents would like the message "Drugs can be addictive and harmful to your body" to be strengthened, followed by "Drug trafficking is a serious offence and will be fined and imprisoned" (86%). Details are given in Table 9.

Table 9: Anti-drug Messages That Should Be Strengthened
(New Question in the 2020 Survey)

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Drugs can be addictive and harmful to your body (吸食毒品會上癮同埋對身體造成傷害)	93%	88%	93%	89%	97%
Drug trafficking is a serious offence and will be fined and imprisoned (販毒係嚴重罪行，會被罰款同監禁)	86%	92%	81%	82%	87%
Live a healthy life and stay away from drugs (要過健康嘅生活，遠離毒品)	84%	91%	75%	83%	87%
Drug users or people suffering from drug problems can easily seek assistance, such as counselling services or drug rehabilitation services (吸毒者或受毒品問題困擾嘅人能夠容易尋求協助，例如諮詢服務或戒毒服務)	81%	88%	79%	75%	80%
Cannabis is a drug (大麻係毒品)	75%	74%	69%	69%	80%

Note: Multiple answers are allowed.

21. A new question to gauge respondents' views on the most effective message to discourage drug taking was also included in the 2020 Survey. The results would likewise be useful for ND to consider key messages to be used in future PE&P. A total of 44% of the respondents opined that "Drugs can cause serious harm to your body" was the most effective message to discourage persons from taking drug. Details are given in Table 10.

Table 10: Most Effective Message to Discourage Drug Taking
(New Question in the 2020 Survey)

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Drugs can cause serious harm to your body (吸毒會對身體造成嚴重損害)	44%	31%	46%	38%	46%
Drug taking or possession of drugs are serious offences (吸毒或管有毒品屬嚴重罪行)	15%	14%	18%	18%	13%
Drug addiction can cause physical and mental pain, drug rehabilitation can develop a healthy lifestyle (毒癮發作會造成身心痛苦，戒毒可以建立健康生活方式)	14%	15%	11%	12%	16%
Drugs do not help solving real problems (吸毒對解決現實問題沒有幫助)	12%	15%	13%	17%	10%
Avoid worrying family (避免令家人擔心)	10%	15%	8%	11%	10%
Drugs waste money (吸毒浪費金錢)	4%	9%	4%	4%	3%

Note: Only one answer is allowed.

III. Perception on General Publicity Channels and Modes

22. A new section was also added to ask respondents' perception of general publicity channels and modes. The results would be useful for ND in selecting the appropriate channels and modes for PE&P initiatives. Three new questions were added.

23. The first question sought to understand respondents' views on the channels from which they mostly received publicity messages. In general, half of the respondents replied that TV was the most common platform, followed by social media (19%). Social media ranked second across all respondents, general youngsters and young adults. Details are given in Table 11.

Table 11: Most Common Channels for Receiving Publicity Messages
(New Question in the 2020 Survey)

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
TV	50%	60%	32%	49%	55%
Social media	19%	20%	30%	16%	14%
Public transport	15%	8%	19%	18%	15%
Radio	6%	4%	4%	6%	6%
Electronic or app-version of newspaper and magazine	4%	@	6%	5%	5%
Mobile app ads	4%	4%	6%	3%	3%
Webpage or discussion forum	2%	1%	3%	3%	1%
Paper version of newspaper and magazine	1%	@	@	@	1%

Notes: (1) Only one answer is allowed.
(2) @ Less than 0.5%

24. The second question sought to tap respondents' views on the most commonly used social media platform. The results would be useful for ND to understand the popularity of various platforms, thereby giving us insights on the social media platforms to be used for disseminating anti-drug messages. Overall, Facebook (36%) ranked first, followed by YouTube (24%) and Instagram (21%). For general youngsters and young adults, Instagram ranked first, with 59% of general youngsters and 39% of young adults replying that Instagram was their most commonly used social media platform. Details are given in Table 12.

Table 12: Most Commonly Used Social Media Platform
(*New Question in the 2020 Survey*)

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Facebook	36%	5%	31%	39%	41%
YouTUBE	24%	29%	19%	23%	27%
Instagram	21%	59%	39%	21%	4%
WeChat (微信)	12%	4%	5%	10%	21%
Weibo (微博)	1%	@	1%	3%	1%
Twitter	1%	1%	1%	1%	@
Snapchat	@	@	@	@	@
Telegram	@	@	@	@	@

Notes: (1) Only one answer is allowed.
(2) @ Less than 0.5%

25. The third question sought to understand respondents' views on the most attractive publicity mode. In general, 37% of the respondents opined that "animation and micro movies" was the most attractive publicity mode, followed by "topical TV shows" (21%). "Guidebook" ranked second for both general youngsters (19%) and young adults (19%). Details are given in Table 13.

Table 13: Views on Most Attractive Publicity Mode
(New Question in the 2020 Survey)

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Animation and micro movies (動畫、微電影)	37%	41%	43%	38%	34%
Topical TV shows (專題電視節目)	21%	15%	13%	17%	28%
Celebrity or KOL promotion (名人或 KOL 宣傳)	17%	16%	18%	18%	17%
Guidebook (懶人包)	14%	19%	19%	12%	10%
Large-scale publicity activities, such as outdoor publicity activities (大型實體宣傳活動，如戶外宣傳活動)	9%	10%	7%	13%	9%

Note: Only one answer is allowed.

Narcotics Division
Security Bureau
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