

Key Findings of the Public Opinion Survey on 2021 Anti-drug Publicity Measures

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Public Opinion Survey on 2021 Anti-drug Publicity Measures (the 2021 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 (ND'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 2021 Survey was similar to that of the 2020 Survey. Following the experience in the 2020 Survey, both individuals with valid mobile telephone numbers¹ and from land-based domestic households that are installed with residential telephone were enumerated in the 2021 Survey, with suitable

¹ According to information from the Office of the Communications Authority, as at December 2021, the mobile subscriber penetration rate in Hong Kong was 323.4% (which means on average there were more than three phone accounts per Hong Kong resident). The corresponding residential fixed line penetration rate in Hong Kong was 78.3%.

adjustments to the relevant proportion between them².

4. The 2021 Survey was conducted between 6 December 2021 and 24 January 2022, mainly between 2:00pm to 10:00pm. It covered Hong Kong residents³ 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 1 211 respondents (486 from residential telephone lines and 725 from mobile telephone numbers) by telephone interviews, with an overall cooperation rate of 48%⁴. 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.

5. Respondents were mainly grouped into the following four categories⁵ –

- (a) general youngsters (aged from 11 to 20) of which 201 (17% of total) sets of responses were received;
- (b) young adults (aged from 21 to 35) of which 334 (28%) 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 208 (17%) sets of responses were received; and
- (d) parents of which 588 (49%) sets of responses were received.

Views from the above four categories were specifically analysed.

² In the 2020 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 50% and 50% respectively. The targeted proportions between them were adjusted to 60%/40% for the 2021 Survey.

³ Excluding foreign domestic helpers.

⁴ The cooperation rates of respondents from residential telephone lines and mobile telephone numbers were 34% and 64% respectively.

⁵ The total number of sets of responses received from the four categories of respondents do not add up to 1 211 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.

KEY FINDINGS

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

6. 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)

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)

F. Harms of abusing ketamine

Ketamine abuse can cause bladder contracture, liver damage, anxiety and depression, etc.

(吸食氯胺酮(K仔)的禍害，例如導致膀胱萎縮、導致肝臟功能受損、焦慮、抑鬱等)

7. The awareness rate of message A (“Drug harms”) increased slightly from 94% in 2020 to 97% in 2021. Increases were also recorded from all the subgroups analysed, including general youngsters, young adults, high risk group and parents. The awareness rate of message B (“Cannabis is a drug”) increased from 84% in 2020 to 93% in 2021. This might be attributable to the themed announcement in the public interest (API) on cannabis (“Enjoy life to the full. Don’t let cannabis ruin you”) since June 2020 and ND’s highlight of the iconic message (“Cannabis is a Drug 大麻係毒品”) in a range of physical and online publicity initiatives (e.g. social media posts, external wall banners, public transport advertisements).

8. The awareness rate of Message C (“Easy to seek help”) increased from 55% in 2020 to 73% in 2021. In this connection, ND had placed more emphasis on the importance and ways to seek help in all suitably PE&P initiatives, including the ones commissioned by ND directly or the ones implemented by grantees of Beat Drugs Fund (BDF) Regular Fund Scheme (RFS). Messages D (“Enjoy healthy life”) and E (“Drug trafficking is a serious offence”) had high awareness rates of 90% (78% in 2020) and 95% (87% in 2020) respectively. For the increase in message E, ND had also put more emphasis on the dire consequences on drug trafficking, regardless of the ones commissioned by ND directly or the ones implemented by BDF RFS grantees. It might be worth noting that a high awareness rate (91%) was observed for the newly publicised anti-drug message “Harms of abusing ketamine”. This might be attributable to the new themed announcement in the API on ketamine (“Don’t be K.O.’d by Ketamine!”) in June 2021.

Table 1: Awareness of Anti-drug Messages

		All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents	
Anti-drug Messages	A	Drug harms	97% (94%)	97% (95%)	96% (92%)	100% (95%)	98% (94%)
	B	Cannabis is a drug	93% (84%)	95% (83%)	91% (80%)	93% (86%)	92% (85%)
	C	Easy to seek help	73% (55%)	79% (69%)	73% (50%)	76% (50%)	73% (56%)
	D	Enjoy healthy life	90% (78%)	93% (76%)	88% (72%)	91% (77%)	91% (82%)
	E	Drug trafficking is a serious offence	95% (87%)	95% (91%)	94% (88%)	94% (90%)	95% (86%)
	F	Harms of abusing ketamine	91% (N/A)	90% (N/A)	88% (N/A)	92% (N/A)	92% (N/A)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) "N/A" means "Not Available".

9. As to the current platforms for receiving anti-drug messages, TV continued to be the most common media across most of the groups of respondents (except for general youngsters), 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 schools, TV as well as web-based and mobile platforms 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 91% (93%)	Schools 80% (79%)	TV 94% (90%)	TV 91% (92%)	TV 93% (95%)
	2	Public transport 75% (77%)	TV 78% (91%)	Public transport 83% (83%)	Public transport 77% (78%)	Public transport 76% (76%)
	3	Web-based and mobile platforms 65% (65%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 60% (84%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 80% (72%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 63% (70%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 61% (60%)
	4	Government office and community centre 53% (46%)	Public transport 59% (74%)	External walls on buildings and banners on bridges 65% (56%)	Government office and community centre 51% (53%)	Radio 58% (62%)
	5	External walls on buildings and banners on bridges 52% (52%)	Anti-drug events 37% (53%)	Government office and community centre 64% (46%)	External walls on buildings and banners on bridges 48% (53%)	Government office and community centre 56% (50%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

10. The penetration rate of web-based and mobile platforms for young adults increased from 72% in 2020 to 80% in 2021. The penetration rate of anti-drug activities and schools for young people and young adults remained high at 82% and 70% respectively. 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	78% (91%)	94% (90%)	92% (94%)
Radio	26% (35%)	52% (49%)	57% (63%)
Public transport	59% (74%)	83% (83%)	75% (76%)
Web-based and mobile platforms	60% (84%)	80% (72%)	59% (57%)
Anti-drug activities and schools	82% (88%)	70% (62%)	55% (48%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

11. Respondents’ awareness of the harms of several common drugs was also gauged. The awareness rate was the highest for “Ice”, heroin and ketamine (all were 96%). 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. 92% among all respondents) but had improved compared to the 2020 Survey, and was relatively high for general youngsters (ranked fourth at 94%) and for young adults (ranked sixth at 88%). Details are given in Table 4.

Table 4: Awareness Rates of Drug Harms

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
“Ice”	96% (95%)	98% (98%)	95% (95%)	96% (96%)	97% (96%)
Heroin	96% (92%)	93% (93%)	95% (92%)	97% (93%)	97% (94%)
Ketamine	96% (93%)	96% (95%)	95% (92%)	96% (93%)	96% (94%)
Cocaine	95% (90%)	95% (95%)	94% (91%)	95% (91%)	94% (89%)
Cannabis	92% (87%)	94% (94%)	88% (81%)	92% (90%)	93% (88%)
Ecstasy	91% (86%)	88% (81%)	92% (85%)	96% (83%)	92% (88%)
Cough Medicine	87% (80%)	85% (79%)	86% (74%)	89% (85%)	87% (82%)
Tranquillizers	74% (64%)	61% (56%)	71% (56%)	81% (65%)	76% (70%)
LSD	57% (47%)	53% (37%)	57% (44%)	57% (50%)	56% (50%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.

12. The awareness rate of ND’s 24-hour helpline “186 186” or the instant messaging service “98 186 186” increased from 56% in 2020 to 69% in 2021 and the awareness rate among young adults was the highest at 73%. Details are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Awareness Rates of the Help Seeking Hotlines and Instant Messaging Services

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Awareness rates of the help seeking hotlines and Instant Message Services	69% (56%)	69% (70%)	73% (53%)	65% (65%)	66% (55%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.

13. The general impression of ND’s four APIs which were broadcast in 2021 was also gauged. The APIs were –

- (a) TV Announcement 2021 (Don’t be K.O.’d by Ketamine!)
電視宣傳短片2021 (咪畀K仔K.O.你！);
- (b) TV Announcement 2021 (Drug trafficking ruins your life. Don’t take the bait)
電視宣傳短片2021 (販毒誘害 切勿上釣);
- (c) 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
- (d) Anti-drug 2018 (Don’t lose your life to drugs)
企硬2018 (Take 到上癮，無咗人生).

14. As set out at Table 6, the overall awareness rate of the four themed APIs broadcast in 2021 was 94%. Analysed by category, the awareness rates of the themed APIs were above 90% for all categories.

Table 6: Awareness Rate of Themed APIs

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Overall	94% (79%)	95% (82%)	93% (73%)	96% (86%)	95% (81%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.

15. As to the reasons why the respondents were aware of the APIs, the most commonly quoted ones were “slogans are simple/catchy (口號精簡/容易上口)” (81%) and “anti-drug messages delivered are clear (傳達嘅抗毒訊息明確清晰)” (77%). 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
Slogans are simple/catchy (口號精簡/容易上口)	81% (85%)	78% (94%)	83% (84%)	82% (82%)	81% (83%)
Anti-drug messages delivered are clear (傳達嘅抗毒訊息明確清晰)	77% (88%)	56% (94%)	82% (84%)	80% (91%)	79% (89%)
Plots are creative (橋段具有創意)	47% (53%)	36% (63%)	48% (40%)	49% (46%)	50% (58%)
Visual effects are rich, screens are colourful and eye-catching (視覺效果豐富，畫面鮮豔奪目)	40% (48%)	32% (59%)	47% (44%)	43% (44%)	43% (49%)
Characters and plots are attractive (角色同情節吸引)	38% (45%)	21% (43%)	43% (38%)	37% (39%)	43% (50%)
Background music is easy to remember (背景音樂令人容易記得)	31% (32%)	30% (28%)	33% (29%)	32% (24%)	33% (38%)
Plots have a fresh feeling (橋段有清新感覺)	30% (40%)	20% (49%)	31% (30%)	30% (38%)	32% (44%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

II. Preference on Receiving Anti-drug Messages

16. 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.

17. Respondents were asked of their views on the effectiveness of various platforms in disseminating anti-drug messages. Web-based and mobile platforms (87%) were the most effective means, followed by TV (84%) and public transport (76%). Web-based and mobile platforms were considered the most effective means by all categories except parents. 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 87% (91%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 88% (97%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 96% (90%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 87% (91%)	TV 86% (90%)
	2	TV 84% (87%)	TV 71% (90%)	TV 86% (82%)	TV 82% (84%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 82% (89%)
	3	Public transport 76% (80%)	Public transport 50% (80%)	Public transport 84% (80%)	Public transport 78% (80%)	Public transport 78% (82%)
	4	Venue of entertainment 67% (71%)	Venue of entertainment 40% (66%)	Venue of entertainment 75% (75%)	Venue of entertainment 67% (70%)	Venue of entertainment 70% (71%)
	5	Radio 54% (64%)	Radio 32% (63%)	Radio 57% (56%)	Radio 52% (60%)	Radio 59% (69%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

18. The results of respondents' views on the anti-drug messages that should be strengthened would be useful for ND to consider the anti-drug messages to be disseminated in future PE&P initiatives. In general, 83% 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" (82%). Details are given in Table 9.

Table 9: Anti-drug Messages That Should Be Strengthened

	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)	83% (93%)	65% (88%)	82% (93%)	85% (89%)	88% (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)	82% (86%)	61% (92%)	84% (81%)	83% (82%)	86% (87%)
Live a healthy life and stay away from drugs (要過健康嘅生活，遠離毒品)	74% (84%)	54% (91%)	71% (75%)	78% (83%)	80% (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)	74% (81%)	54% (88%)	82% (79%)	71% (75%)	73% (80%)
Cannabis is a drug (大麻係毒品)	65% (75%)	40% (74%)	68% (69%)	66% (69%)	69% (80%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

19. The results of respondents' views on the most effective message to discourage drug taking would be useful for ND to consider key messages to be used in future PE&P. A total of 46% 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

	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)	46% (44%)	32% (31%)	43% (46%)	47% (38%)	52% (46%)
Drug taking or possession of drugs are serious offences (吸毒或管有毒品屬嚴重罪行)	15% (15%)	13% (14%)	16% (18%)	17% (18%)	16% (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)	12% (14%)	9% (15%)	12% (11%)	11% (12%)	11% (16%)
Drugs do not help solving real problems (吸毒對解決現實問題沒有幫助)	11% (12%)	13% (15%)	15% (13%)	9% (17%)	9% (10%)
Avoid worrying family (避免令家人擔心)	9% (10%)	20% (15%)	6% (8%)	9% (11%)	8% (10%)
Drugs waste money (吸毒浪費金錢)	6% (4%)	12% (9%)	7% (4%)	6% (4%)	4% (3%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
(2) Only one answer is allowed.

III. Perception on General Publicity Channels and Modes

20. The results of the three questions in this Section on respondents' perception of general publicity channels and modes would be useful for ND in selecting the appropriate channels and modes for PE&P initiatives.

21. The first question sought to understand respondents' views on the channels from which they mostly received publicity messages. In general, 44% of the respondents replied that TV was the most common platform, followed by social media (29%). Social media ranked first for young adults and second across general youngsters, high risk group and parents. Details are given in Table 11.

Table 11: Most Common Channels for Receiving Publicity Messages

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
TV	44% (50%)	36% (60%)	32% (32%)	41% (49%)	53% (55%)
Social media	29% (19%)	28% (20%)	46% (30%)	28% (16%)	20% (14%)
Public transport	11% (15%)	10% (8%)	10% (19%)	13% (18%)	12% (15%)
Electronic or app-version of newspaper and magazine	4% (4%)	8% (@)	3% (6%)	5% (5%)	4% (5%)
Mobile app ads	3% (4%)	3% (4%)	6% (6%)	3% (3%)	4% (3%)
Radio	3% (6%)	3% (4%)	1% (4%)	3% (6%)	4% (6%)
Webpage or discussion forum	2% (2%)	5% (1%)	2% (3%)	3% (3%)	1% (1%)
Paper version of newspaper and magazine	1% (1%)	4% (@)	1% (@)	3% (@)	1% (1%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.
 (2) Only one answer is allowed.
 (3) @ Less than 0.5%

22. 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 (37%) ranked first, followed by YouTube (24%) and Instagram (21%). For general youngsters and young adults, Instagram ranked first, with 47% of general youngsters and 41% 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

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Facebook	37% (36%)	6% (5%)	34% (31%)	41% (39%)	46% (41%)
YouTube	24% (24%)	31% (29%)	18% (19%)	30% (23%)	23% (27%)
Instagram	21% (21%)	47% (59%)	41% (39%)	12% (21%)	6% (4%)
WeChat (微信)	10% (12%)	11% (4%)	2% (5%)	11% (10%)	15% (21%)
Weibo (微博)	1% (1%)	1% (@)	@ (1%)	1% (3%)	1% (1%)
Telegram	@ (@)	@ (@)	2% (@)	@ (@)	@ (@)
Twitter	@ (1%)	1% (1%)	@ (1%)	@ (1%)	@ (@)
Snapchat	@ (@)	@ (@)	@ (@)	@ (@)	@ (@)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.

(2) Only one answer is allowed.

(3) @ Less than 0.5%

23. The third question sought to understand respondents' views on the most attractive publicity mode. In general, 27% of the respondents opined that “micro movies” was the most attractive publicity mode, followed by “celebrity or KOL promotion” (20%). “Topical TV shows” ranked second for both high risk group (20%) and parents (25%), while “large-scale publicity activities, such as outdoor publicity activities” ranked third for high risk group (20%) and “celebrity or KOL promotion” ranked third for parents (16%). Details are given in Table 13.

Table 13: Views on Most Attractive Publicity Mode

	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Micro movies[#] (微電影)	27% (N/A)	28% (N/A)	35% (N/A)	25% (N/A)	25% (N/A)
Celebrity or KOL promotion (名人或 KOL 宣傳)	20% (17%)	20% (16%)	23% (18%)	19% (18%)	16% (17%)
Topical TV shows (專題電視節目)	19% (21%)	8% (15%)	7% (13%)	20% (17%)	25% (28%)
Large-scale publicity activities, such as outdoor publicity activities (大型實體宣傳活動，如戶外宣傳活動)	14% (9%)	14% (10%)	9% (7%)	20% (13%)	16% (9%)
Animation[#] (動畫)	10% (N/A)	19% (N/A)	12% (N/A)	8% (N/A)	9% (N/A)
Guidebook (懶人包)	9% (14%)	9% (19%)	14% (19%)	6% (12%)	7% (10%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2020 Survey.

(2) Only one answer is allowed.

(3) “N/A” means “Not Available”.

Remark: (#) “Animation” and “Micro movies” were combined as one mode in the 2020 Survey. The combined percentages were as follows –

2020 Survey	All respondents	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Animation and micro movies	37%	41%	43%	38%	34%