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**Special Siena College Poll: Vaping/Marijuana/Opioids**

## **78% Say Vaping Serious Public Health Problem; 61% Support Order to Ban Flavored E-Cigs; 12% Vape**

**Opioid Abuse Touches 62% NY'ers; Up From 54% in 2018**

***Majority Supports Legalizing Marijuana; Half Concerned about Youth Use & Abuse, Workplace Problems; 21% Current Pot Users***

**Loudonville, NY.** Seventy-eight percent think E-cigarette use and vaping is a somewhat (28 percent) or very (50 percent) serious public health problem according to a new Siena College Poll of New Yorkers released today.

Sixty-one percent support the emergency executive order banning the sale of flavored e-cigarettes in New York, 52 percent support banning all e-cigarettes and vaping devices from sale, and 74 percent support raising the age in New York to purchase nicotine products including vaping and e-cigarette products to 21 in all counties.

Currently 12 percent of New Yorkers vape on a regular basis.

Sixty-two percent of state residents, up from 54 percent in February 2018 are 'touched by opioid abuse.' Each of the five conditions that define being touched by opioids is up from the earlier survey. Twenty percent (up from 16 percent) say that they or someone in their immediate family has abused opioids, 25 percent (up from 14 percent) know someone through work that has abused opioids, and 35 percent (up from 24 percent) know of someone that has died due to opioid overdose. Thirty-eight percent (up from 25 percent) has had opioid abuse among their friends or extended family, and 49 percent (up from 25 percent) has had a friend, co-worker or acquaintance share with them that they have had opioid abuse in their family.

By 56-36 percent citizens support the legalization of recreational marijuana, but by 53-39 percent they believe legalization will lead to more use and abuse among young people. Forty-seven percent think legal marijuana will lead to workplace problems. Over half, 52 percent, have used marijuana and 21 percent currently do.

“While opioid abuse is seen as the most serious public health issue, concerns over vaping have risen dramatically and now approach a level similar to opioids. Marijuana is seen as the least serious from a list that also includes obesity, tobacco and alcohol,” said Siena College Research Institute Director Don Levy.

“Vaping is not only in the news, but 73 percent say that we are facing a vaping epidemic among young people. Seventy-eight percent have seen someone vaping in outdoor public spaces while 61 percent have witnessed vaping in an indoor public space,” Levy said. “Almost a quarter report being offered an e-cig and almost as many have been offered a vaping device used to inhale THC. By 60-27 percent, New Yorkers say e-cigarettes may promote nicotine addiction and can be harmful rather than help lessen cigarette smoking.”

Eighty-four percent, up from 80 percent in 2018, agree that the United States is in the middle of an opioid epidemic. Seventy-three percent say opioid abuse is a somewhat or very serious problem in their area. Over the past two years, 26 percent, up from 24 percent in 2018, have been prescribed opioids for pain by a doctor.

“While New Yorkers say that doctors are now warning those that receive opioid prescriptions about the risks associated with their use at a rate of 63 percent, up from 51 percent in 2018, over one-third report not being warned,” Levy said. “Similarly, 45 percent say that the pharmacy where they filled the prescription talked to them about the risks of opioid use, up from 42 percent a year ago, but that’s far short of every patient.”

Twenty-seven percent of all New Yorkers, 40 percent of those 18-34, 36 percent of those 35-49, will use marijuana if it becomes legal in New York. Thirteen percent have purchased it legally in another state and 44 percent know someone who has legally purchased marijuana.

“While not legal in New York, 31 percent say they have been offered pot to smoke over the last six months and 21 percent have been offered it to ingest,” Levy said. “Those numbers go sky high, 49 and 31 percent among young people. A small majority, 52 percent agree that marijuana is basically the same as alcohol and should be treated the same.

“New Yorkers are split right down the middle on whether legalizing recreational marijuana will or will not reduce opioid abuse,” Levy said. “And while 36 percent think, after considering potential social, public health and economic impacts, that legalized pot will be good for the people of New York, 31 percent think it will be bad and 28 percent say it really won’t have that much of an effect.”

Currently, 19 percent of adults use tobacco. Considering smoking tobacco, vaping nicotine, smoking marijuana and vaping THC, 66 percent don’t do any of the four, 19 percent do one and 15 percent do two or more.

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This Special Siena College Poll with sponsorship from the Prescription for Progress was conducted September 22- October 1, 2019 by random telephone calls to 589 New York adults via landline and cell phones and 217 responses drawn from a proprietary online panel of New Yorkers. Respondent sampling via phone was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. The overall results has an overall margin of error of  $\pm 4.3$  percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Telephone sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline (ASDE) and cell phone (Dynata) telephone numbers from within New York State weighted to reflect known population patterns. Data from the telephone and web samples were blended and statistically adjusted by age, education and gender to ensure representativeness. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SCRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information or comments, please call Don Levy at 518-783-2901. Survey cross-tabulations can be found at [www.siena.edu/scri/research](http://www.siena.edu/scri/research)