

# The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

Special edition: Spotlight on  
addictions in collaboration with  
the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

United States of America | May 2021



# Table of contents

## **1 May 2021 highlights** **3**

Nearly one-third of Americans that use alcohol have increased their consumption since the pandemic	3
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## **2 The Mental Health Index™** **6**

Mental Health Index™ sub-scores	7
Optimism	8
General psychological health	9
Financial risk	10

## **3 Mental Health Index™ (regional)** **11**

Demographics	12
Employment	12
Emergency savings	12

## **4 Mental Health Index™ (industry)** **14**

## **5 The Mental Stress Change score** **15**

## **6 Mental Stress Change (percentages)** **16**

Demographics	17
Geography	17
Employment	17

## **7 The Mental Stress Change (industry)** **19**

## **8 Spotlight** **20**

Substance use	20
Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on substance use	27
Treatment for substance use	29
Impact on work and personal life	32
Spending on drugs or alcohol	35
Reasons for alcohol or drug use	37
Reducing substance use	38
Employer resources for substance abuse	40
Concern about drinking or drug use of someone in the household	41

## **9 Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™** **42**

Methodology	42
Calculations	42
Additional data and analyses	42

# May 2021 highlights

## Key insight: Nearly one-third of Americans that use alcohol have increased their consumption since the pandemic

The May 2021 Mental Health Index report is a special issue, focusing on substance use. The research questions in the spotlight section of this report were developed in collaboration with the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation.

### Drug use among Americans has increased since the pandemic

- More than one-quarter (29 percent) of Americans that use drugs report an increase in drug use since the onset of the pandemic and this group has among the least favorable mental health score (-23.4) as well as the least favorable isolation score (-36.1).
- 44% would prefer to use drugs less than they currently do.

### Substance use affects both job and home-related tasks and responsibilities

- One in four indicate that alcohol or drugs have made it difficult to complete job-related tasks and responsibilities.
- People who use medications more than prescribed are more than five times more likely to report difficulty completing job-related tasks and responsibilities at least once per week than those who use their medication as prescribed.
- 19% miss work or call in sick at least once per week due to alcohol or drug use.
- People missing work due to substance use have significantly lower mental health scores than those who do not miss work.

## Nearly one-third of Americans that use alcohol have increased their consumption since the pandemic

- Nearly one-third (31 per cent) of alcohol users have increased their consumption since the onset of the pandemic and this group is among those with the least favorable mental health score (-14.7) as well as the least favorable isolation score (-23.6).
- 6% of alcohol users consume 15 or more drinks per week compared to 2% in the pre-2020 benchmark.
- More than one-quarter (26 percent) regret their spending on drugs or alcohol.
- More than one-quarter (26 percent) would prefer to drink less than they currently do.
- Household income is strongly related to alcohol use: 22% of households with an income of less than \$30,000 report using alcohol at least once per week compared to 50% of households with an income of more than \$150,000.
- People without emergency savings are more than seventy percent more likely to report that their drinking has increased compared to those with emergency savings.

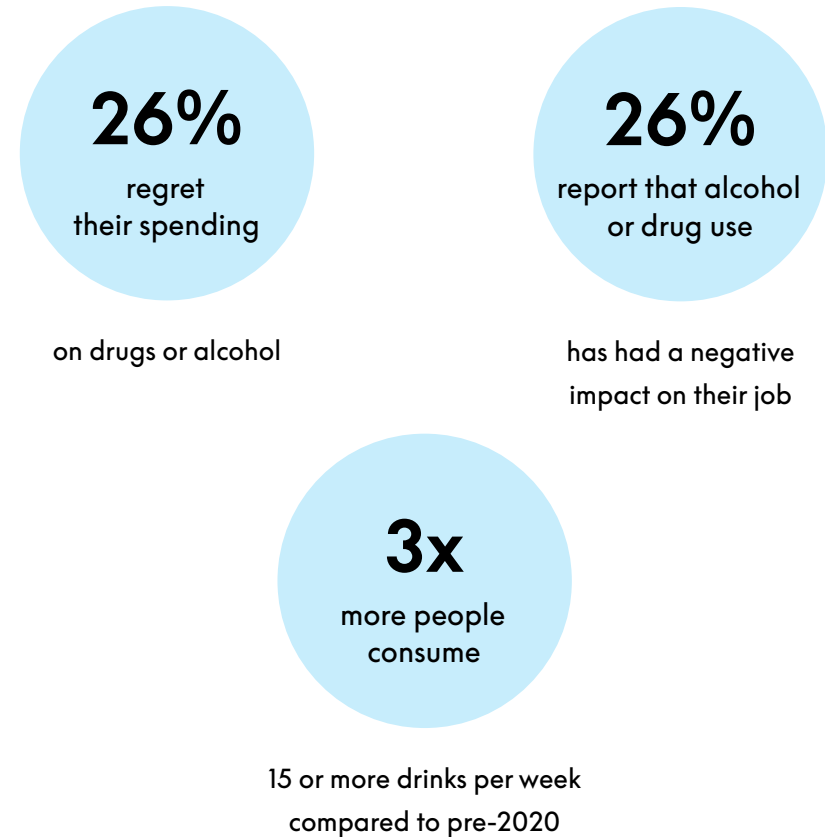
- Nearly one in four (24 percent) report that alcohol or drugs have had an impact on home or family-related tasks and responsibilities.

### Full-time post-secondary students continue to struggle

- For the fourteenth consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-24.7). Students also have the most significant increase in mental stress.
- Students are three and a half times as likely as non-students to regularly use more than prescribed or to use in ways that are not prescribed.
- Students are two and half times more likely to report an increase in drug use compared to working adults who are not students.
- Students using drugs or alcohol are more than five times more likely to report getting treatment for an alcohol or drug problem than non-students.

### Parents report more substance use than non-parents and indicate an impact on their work and home lives

- Parents are more than four times as likely to use medical cannabis, twice as likely to use recreational cannabis, and nearly three times as likely to vape than non-parents.
- Parents are nearly four times as likely as non-parents to report regularly using more than prescribed.
- Parents are two and half times more likely to report an increase in drug use compared to non-parents.
- Parents using drugs or alcohol are nearly five times more likely to report getting treatment for an alcohol or drug problem than non-parents.



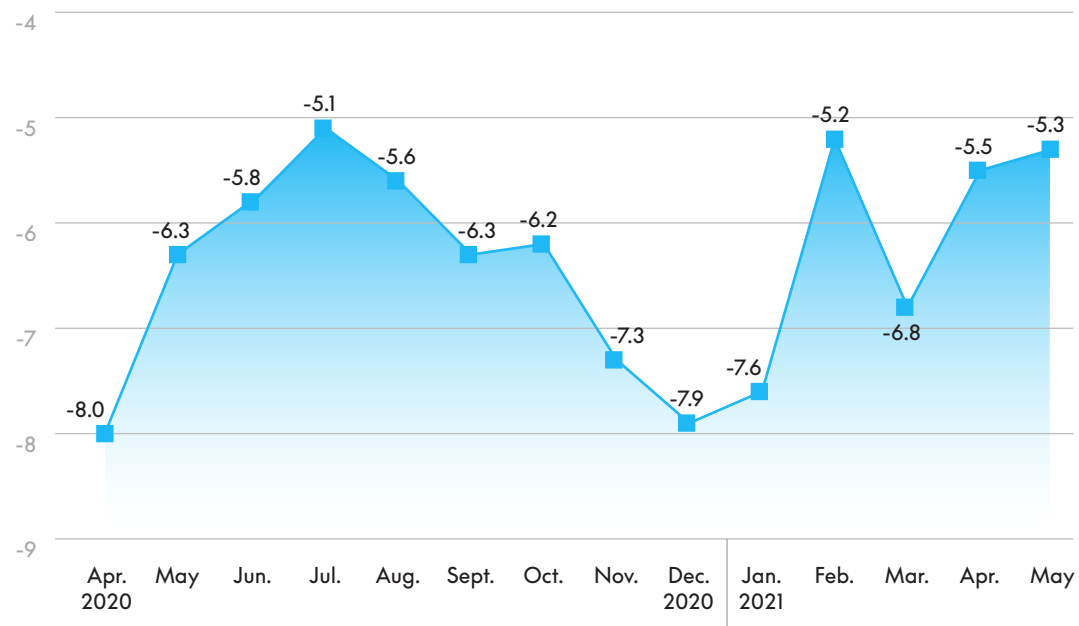
- Parents who report using drugs or alcohol are nearly five times as likely as non-parents to report calling in sick or being unable to go to work because of alcohol or drug use at least once a week.
- Parents using drugs or alcohol are more than four times more likely than non-parents to report that alcohol or drug use has made it difficult to complete home or family-related tasks and responsibilities at least once per week.
- Parents who report using drugs or alcohol are nearly five times as likely as non-parents to report spending money on alcohol or drugs instead of needed items.
- Parents are nearly four times as likely as non-parents to regret spending money on drugs or alcohol.

## Support for substance use

- Among people acknowledging an alcohol or drug problem, forty-four percent think they could self-manage or change on their own, twenty-two percent do not believe that treatment would be effective, sixteen percent would be concerned about what friends/family would think and fifteen percent did not want to spend the money.
- More than one-quarter (26 percent) report that their employer provides resources to help with problem drinking or drug use. Forty-four percent either do not know whether their employer offers any resources or are not sure what is offered.

# The Mental Health Index™

The Mental Health Index™ (MHI) is a measure of deviation from the benchmark<sup>1</sup> of mental health and risk. **The overall Mental Health Index™ for May 2021 is -5 points.** A 5-points decrease from the pre-COVID-19 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed twenty-seventh percent of the benchmark population.



<sup>1</sup> The benchmark reflects data collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

MHI Current Month  
May 2021

-5.3

April 2021

-5.5

## Mental Health Index™ sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index™ sub-score is for the risk measure of work productivity (-8.2 points), followed by depression (-7.5), anxiety (-6.9), isolation (-6.8), optimism (-4.3), and general psychological health (2.4). The best sub-score, at more than 8-points above the benchmark, is financial risk (8.5).

- Work productivity, depression, and financial risk scores have declined from the prior month.
- With a 1.1-points increase, the optimism score has seen the greatest improvement from April 2021.

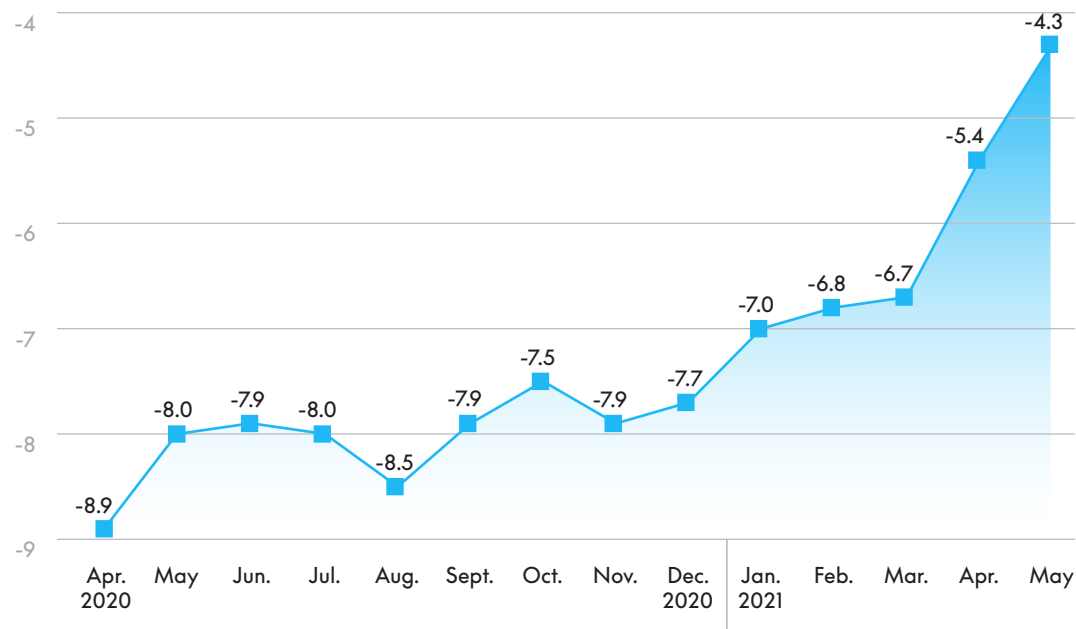
Mental Health Index™ Sub-scores <sup>2</sup> 2021	May	April
Work productivity	-8.2	-7.1
Depression	-7.5	-6.7
Anxiety	-6.9	-7.1
Isolation	-6.8	-7.0
Optimism	-4.3	-5.4
Psychological health	2.4	1.8
Financial risk	8.5	9.3

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<sup>2</sup> The demographic breakdown of sub-scores is available upon request.

# Optimism

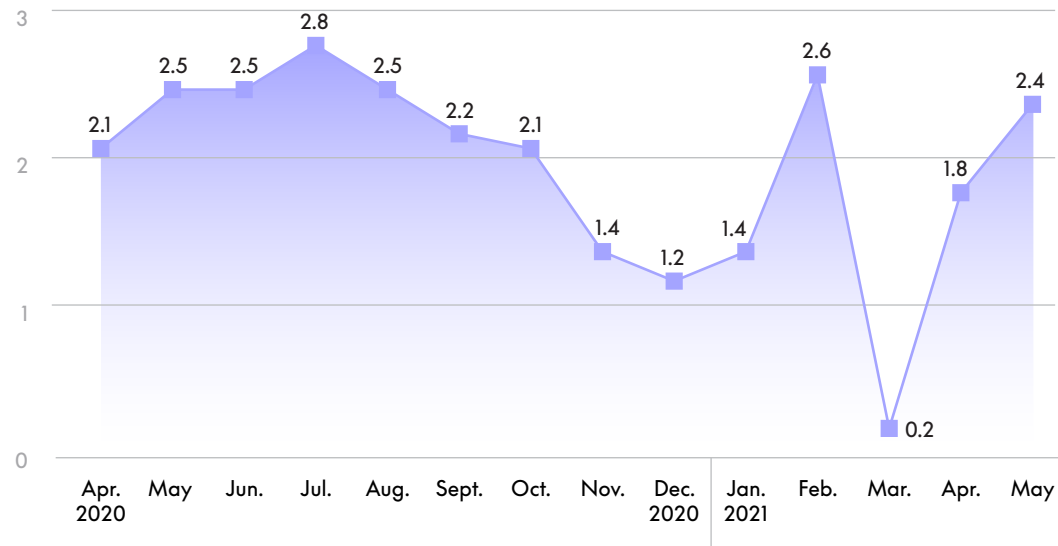
Optimism scores since April 2020 have shown general improvement. The optimism score in May 2021 (-4.3) is the highest since the introduction of the scale, nearly 5-points higher than in April 2020 (-8.9). While optimism continues to improve among working Americans, it remains below the pre-2020 benchmark.





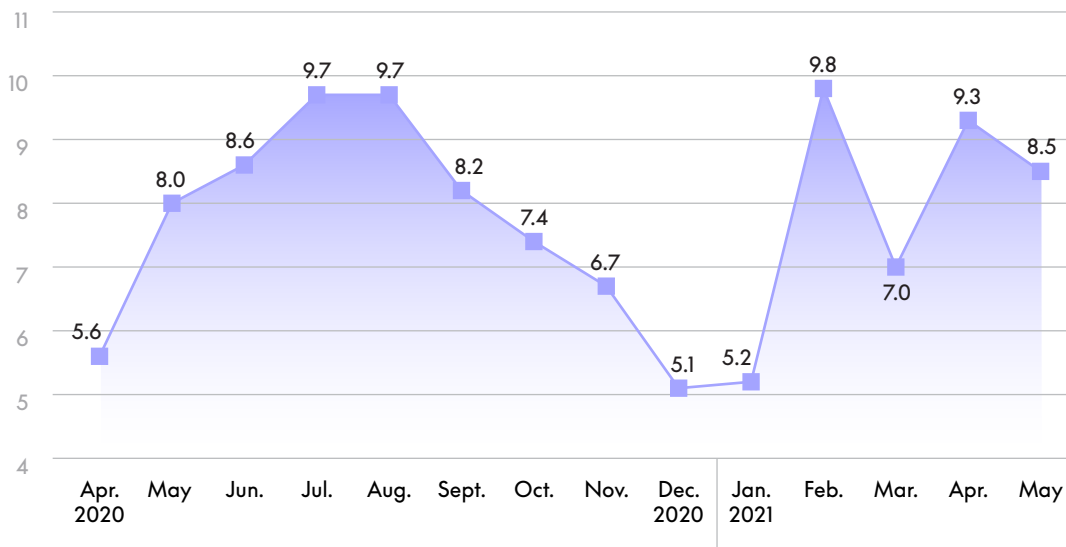
# General psychological health

The psychological health measure assesses individuals' self-perception of their overall level of psychological health. While modest improvements to general psychological health were observed from April to July 2020, a steady decline was observed from July to December 2020. Increases were observed in January and February 2021, nearing the high in July 2020 (2.8). A sharp decline of 1.2 points was seen in March 2021 followed by two months of recovery to 2.4 points in May 2021, above its value at the start of the MHI.



Financial risk

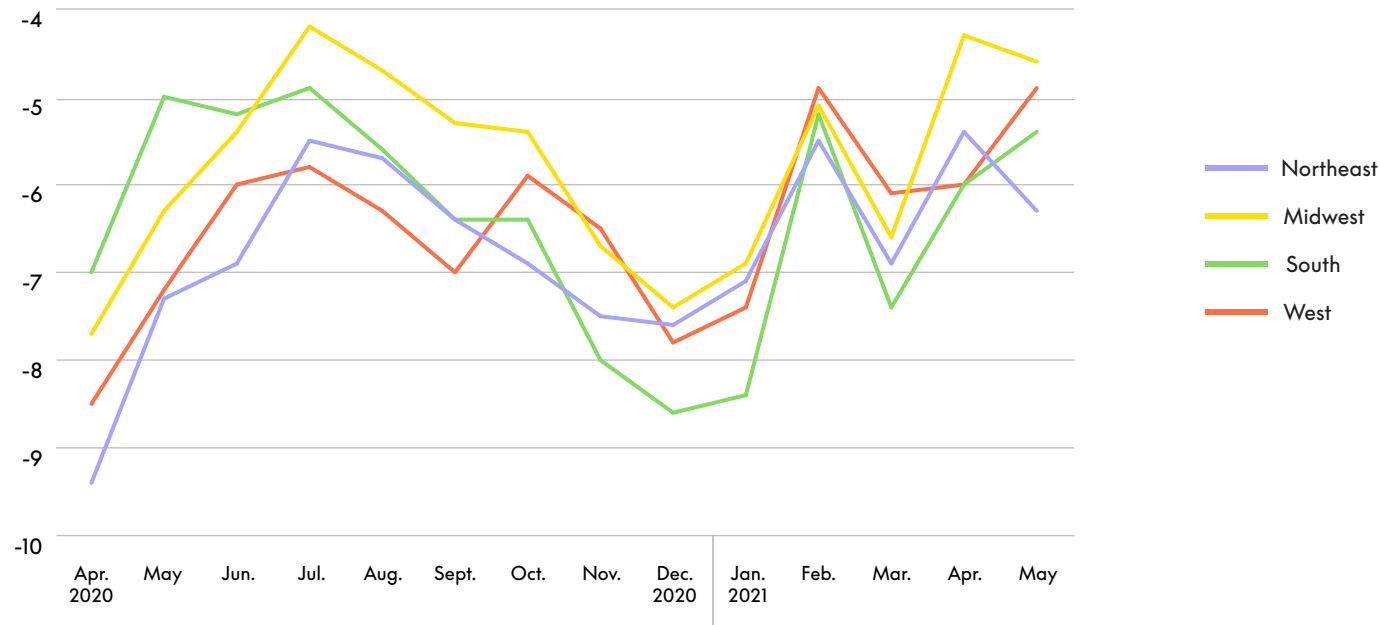
Despite a 0.8-point decline from the prior month, the financial risk score continues to be the strongest of all sub-scores and is well above the pre-2020 benchmark. Scores above zero indicate that more people are maintaining emergency savings compared to the pre-2020 benchmark.



# Mental Health Index™ (regional)

Regional mental health scores since April 2020 have shown general improvement through July; followed by declines until December 2020. Since January 2021, mental health scores have been inconsistent from month to month. In May 2021, mental health scores for the Northeast and Midwest regions have declined whereas, the mental health scores for the South and West of the United States have improved compared to the prior month.

- Despite a 0.3-point decline from the prior month, the mental health score in the Midwest remains strongest.
- The lowest mental health score in May is observed in the Northeast (-6.3), a 0.9-point decline from April 2021.



## Demographics

- Since the start of the MHI, women have had a significantly lower mental health score than men. In May 2021, the mental health score of women is -6.6 compared to -4.0 for men.
- In each of the past fourteen months, mental health scores have improved with age.
- Differences in mental health scores between people with and without children have been seen since the launch of the Index in April 2020. More than one year later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (-9.8) compared to those without children (-3.4).

## Employment

- Overall, five per cent of respondents are unemployed<sup>3</sup> and eleven per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (-18.1), followed by those not currently employed (-15.1), and those reporting fewer hours compared to the prior month (-14.9).
- Managers have a lower mental health score (-6.0) than non-managers (-4.6).
- Individuals working for organizations with more than 10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (-1.4).
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (-9.3).

## Emergency savings

- People without emergency savings continue to experience a lower score in mental health (-22.7) than the overall group. Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of -0.6.

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3 MHI respondents who have been employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

Employment status	May 2021	April 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	-3.4	-3.5
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	-14.9	-15.1
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-18.1	-14.5
Not currently employed	-15.1	-15.5
Age group	May 2021	April 2021
Age 20-29	-16.7	-19.1
Age 30-39	-11.4	-12.1
Age 40-49	-7.7	-6.6
Age 50-59	-1.0	-1.0
Age 60-69	2.9	2.4
Number of children	May 2021	April 2021
No children in household	-3.4	-3.8
1 child	-10.2	-10.5
2 children	-10.0	-8.7
3 children or more	-6.8	-9.4

Region	May 2021	April 2021
Northeast	-6.3	-5.4
Midwest	-4.6	-4.3
South	-5.4	-6.0
West	-4.9	-6.0
Gender	May 2021	April 2021
Men	-4.0	-3.6
Women	-6.6	-7.0
Household income	May 2021	April 2021
<\$30K/annum	-16.5	-16.1
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	-9.4	-9.9
\$60K to <\$100K	-4.4	-4.9
\$100K to <\$150K	-3.5	-2.7
\$150K or more	1.4	2.2

Employer size	May 2021	April 2021
Self-employed/ sole proprietor	-6.1	-5.4
2-50 employees	-3.9	-5.6
51-100 employees	-9.3	-7.6
101-500 employees	-6.9	-6.8
501-1,000 employees	-6.6	-7.1
1,001-5,000 employees	-4.7	-3.3
5,001-10,000 employees	-4.3	-3.7
More than 10,000 employees	-1.4	-1.4
Manager	May 2021	April 2021
Manager	-6.0	-5.7
Non-manager	-4.6	-4.7

Numbers highlighted in **orange** are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in **green** are the least negative scores in the group.

#### Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

# Mental Health Index™ (industry)

For the fourteenth consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-23.6). This score continues to be significantly lower than the next lowest scores, among individuals in Information and Cultural Industries (-12.0), and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (-11.6).

Individuals employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (0.2), Public Administration (-1.6), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (-1.7) show the highest mental health scores this month.

Individuals employed in Food Services, Administrative and Support services, and Management of Companies and Enterprises have seen the greatest improvement in mental health since last month.

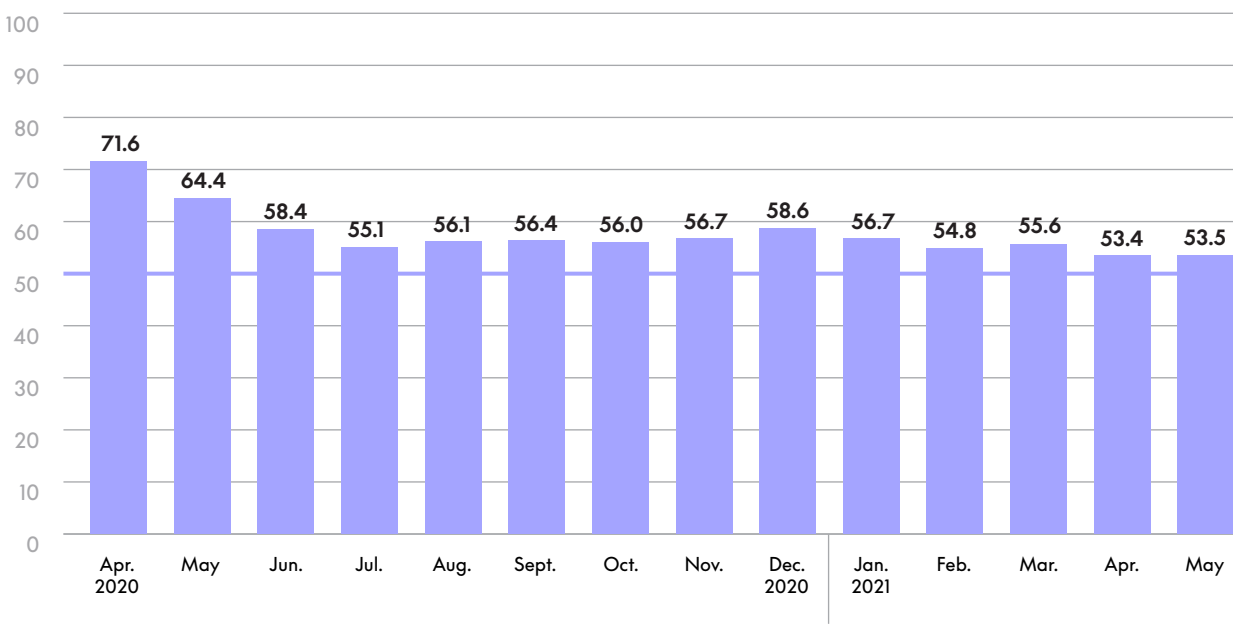
Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	May 2021	April 2021	Change
Food Services	-10.6	-16.6	6.0
Administrative and Support services	-4.9	-10.4	5.5
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-5.2	-8.2	3.0
Wholesale Trade	-10.3	-12.6	2.3
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	0.2	-1.2	1.3
I am a student	-23.6	-25.0	1.3
Retail Trade	-7.4	-8.6	1.3
Finance and Insurance	-2.8	-3.7	0.9
Construction	-6.3	-7.2	0.9
Utilities	-3.8	-4.5	0.7
Educational Services	-3.3	-3.9	0.7
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-5.0	-5.3	0.3
Other services (except Public Administration)	-3.7	-3.0	-0.7
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-1.7	-1.0	-0.7
Other	-7.3	-6.6	-0.7
Transportation and Warehousing	-3.6	-2.9	-0.7
Public Administration	-1.6	-0.8	-0.8
Manufacturing	-2.2	-1.3	-0.9
Health Care and Social Assistance	-6.7	-5.6	-1.1
Accommodation	-3.2	-0.5	-2.6
Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	-11.1	-6.5	-4.7
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-11.6	-6.5	-5.1
Information and Cultural Industries	-12.0	-5.8	-6.1

# The Mental Stress Change score

The Mental Stress Change score (MStressChg) is a measure of the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month. **The Mental Stress Change score for May 2021 is 53.5.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month.

The current score indicates that 17 percent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with 10 percent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress since April 2020 indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the American population.



- ▲ More mental stress
- 50 = No change from prior month
- ▼ Less mental stress

MStressChg Current  
Month—May 2021

53.5

MStressChg  
April 2021

53.4

# Mental Stress Change (percentages)

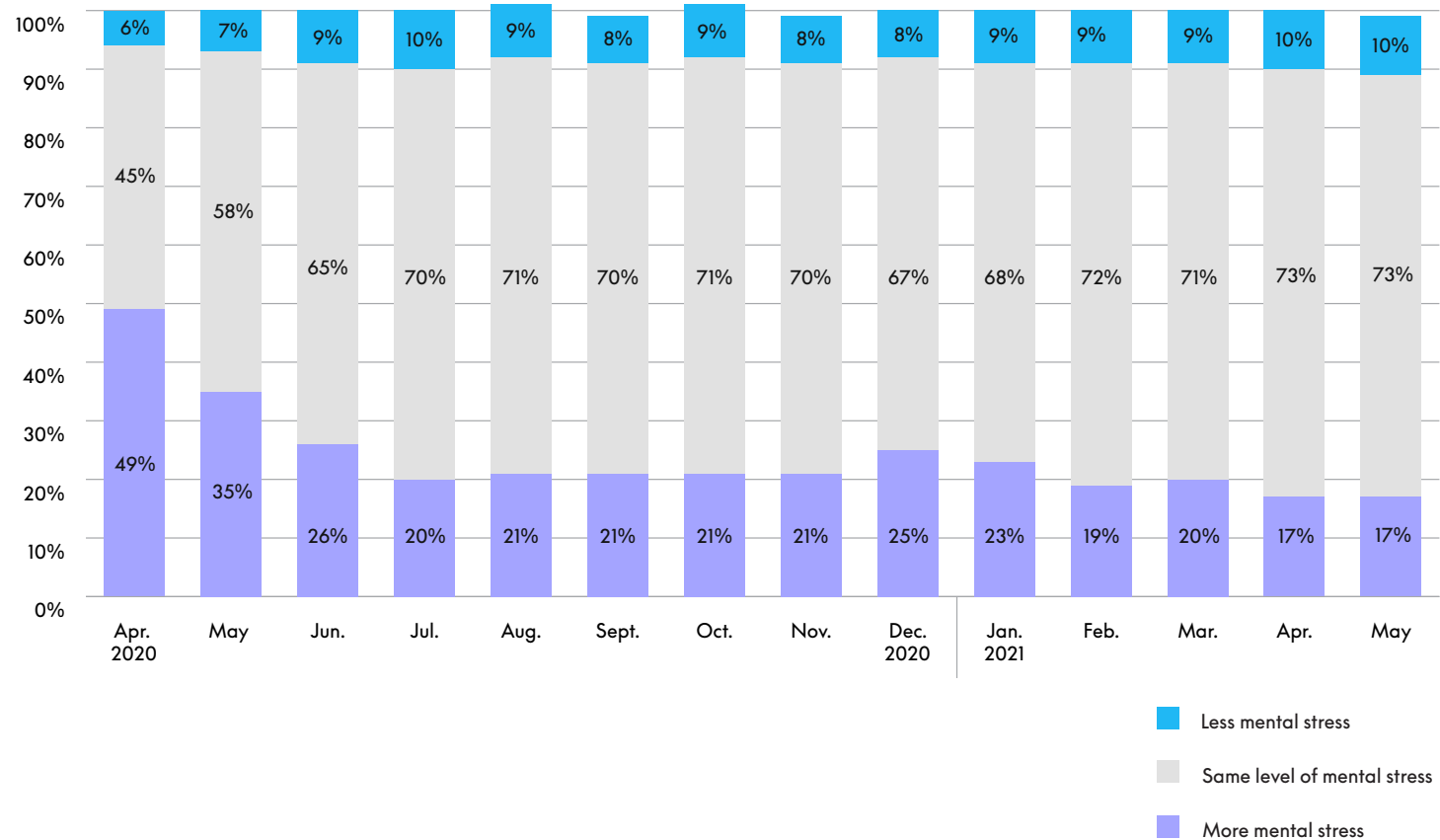
Mental Stress Change tracks stress changes each month.

The percentages of those experiencing more stress, the same level of stress, and less stress for each month of the survey are shown in the graph

For more than one year, the percentage of those experiencing more mental stress than the previous month has steadily decreased; however, the data shows that those experiencing less mental stress are insufficient to lower the overall Mental Stress Change score to below 50 (the level at which stress is lower than the previous month). As the proportion of individuals reporting the same level of stress or more stress than the previous month continues to significantly outweigh the proportion reporting less mental stress, the population will continue to feel the effects of significantly increased stress and will not be able to reach a more sustainable and health level of stress.

In April 2020, 49 percent of individuals reported an increase in mental stress. Those reporting increased month-over-month mental stress reduced to 17 percent in May 2021, while 72 percent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and only 10 percent report a decrease in mental stress.

Mental Stress Change by month





## Demographics

- Since the start of the MHI in April 2020, younger people are experiencing a greater increase in mental stress month over month, when compared to older respondents.
- Since April 2020, females have had larger increases in mental stress compared with males. In May 2021, the mental stress change score of women (53.9) is close to that of men (53.2).

## Geography

- The greatest increase in month-over-month stress is for respondents living in the Midwest (54.1), followed by the Northeast (53.9), the South (53.3), and the West (52.8).

## Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with reduced salary (63.3), followed by employed people with reduced hours (59.5), unemployed people (59.1), and employed people with no change to salary or hours (52.3).
- Managers have a greater increase in mental stress (55.0) than non-managers (52.5).

Employment status	May 2021	April 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	52.3	52.2
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	59.5	60.0
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	63.3	59.7
Not currently employed	59.1	57.6
Age group	May 2021	April 2021
Age 20-29	58.3	60.7
Age 30-39	56.6	57.5
Age 40-49	54.5	51.9
Age 50-59	51.5	51.1
Age 60-69	49.5	50.4
Number of children	May 2021	April 2021
No children in household	52.2	52.6
1 child	57.4	57.3
2 children	56.3	52.8
3 children or more	54.8	55.6

Region	May 2021	April 2021
Northeast	53.9	52.9
Midwest	54.1	54.0
South	53.3	53.3
West	52.8	53.4
Gender	May 2021	April 2021
Men	53.2	52.5
Women	53.9	54.3
Household income	May 2021	April 2021
<\$30K/annum	60.2	57.0
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	53.9	54.5
\$60K to <\$100K	53.1	53.8
\$100K to <\$150K	52.9	52.9
\$150K or more	52.0	50.0

Employer size	May 2021	April 2021
Self-employed/ sole proprietor	53.2	51.6
2-50 employees	52.9	53.3
51-100 employees	54.4	53.1
101-500 employees	54.2	55.2
501-1,000 employees	54.6	55.3
1,001-5,000 employees	52.4	52.5
5,001-10,000 employees	53.1	52.2
More than 10,000 employees	52.7	52.0
Manager	May 2021	April 2021
Manager	55.0	54.5
Non-manager	52.5	52.5

Numbers highlighted in orange are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in green are the least negative scores in the group.

#### Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

# The Mental Stress Change (industry)

Mental Stress Change scores for individuals employed in Transportation and Warehousing (47.2) and Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (47.4) indicate that overall, people in these industries are experiencing less mental stress when compared to the prior month.

Full-time post-secondary students continue to have the most significant increase in mental stress (67.4), followed by individuals employed in Information and Cultural Industries (62.4), and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (58.2).

Mental Stress changes from the last two months are shown in the table.

Industry	May 2021	April 2021
Transportation and Warehousing	47.2	49.0
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	47.4	50.6
Accommodation	50.0	51.3
Manufacturing	50.2	52.7
Other services (except Public Administration)	50.6	53.3
Public Administration	50.8	50.0
Educational Services	51.8	52.8
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	52.3	53.9
Wholesale Trade	52.3	57.1
Other	52.5	52.8
Finance and Insurance	52.7	53.8
Construction	52.8	52.5
Management of Companies and Enterprises	53.5	51.6
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	54.0	53.2
Administrative and Support services	54.3	54.9
Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	54.5	43.8
Utilities	54.6	63.0
Retail Trade	55.1	53.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	56.6	53.5
Food Services	57.5	62.9
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	58.2	51.6
Information and Cultural Industries	62.4	52.3
I am a student	67.4	66.5

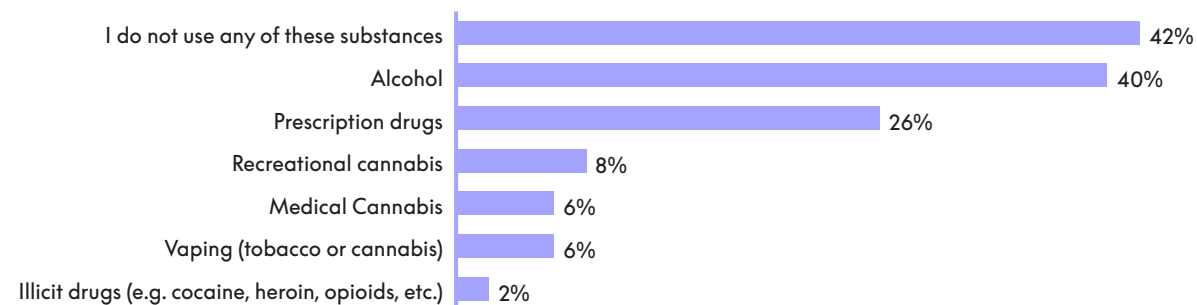
# Spotlight

## Substance use

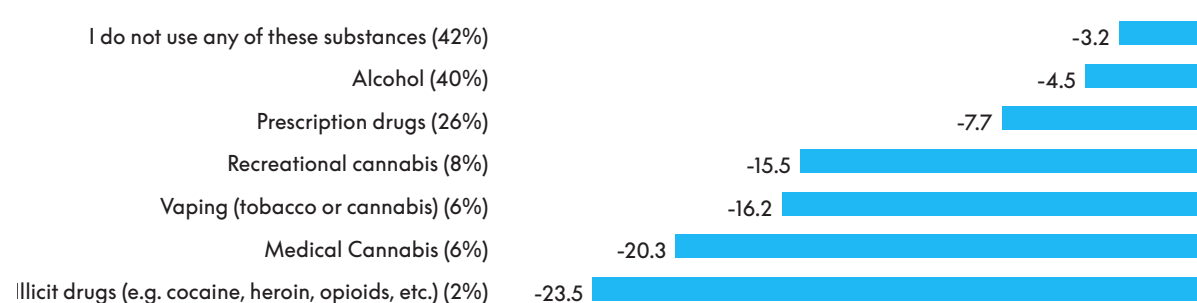
The COVID-19 pandemic impact on mental health has been definitively shown by the Mental Health Index. For this month's report, respondents were asked about their substance use since the onset of the pandemic.

- Forty percent of people use alcohol at least once every week (occasional drinkers are not considered in this proportion), twenty-six percent use prescription drugs, eight percent use recreational cannabis, and six percent use medical cannabis.
- Forty-two percent report not using any substances and this group has the highest mental health score (-3.2).
- Household income is strongly related to alcohol use. Twenty-two percent of households with an income of less than \$30,000 report using alcohol compared to fifty percent of households with an income of more than \$150,000.
- Parents are more than four times as likely to use medical cannabis, twice as likely to use recreational cannabis, and nearly three times as likely to vape than non-parents.
- Respondents under 50 are more than twice as likely to report using recreational cannabis compared to those 50 and over.
- Managers are more than three times as likely as non-managers to use medical cannabis or to vape.

### Type of substances use



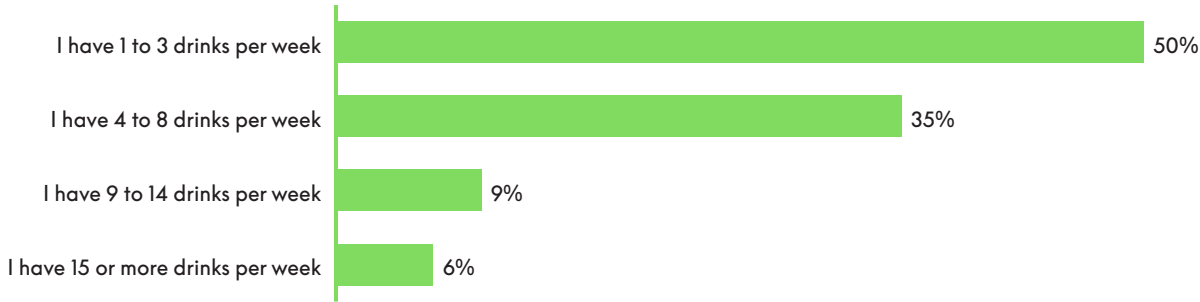
### MHI score by type of substance use



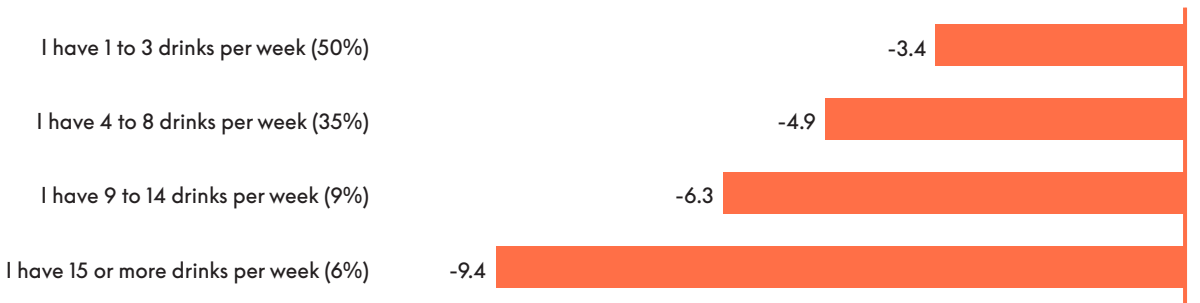
Alcohol use

- Half of the people who use alcohol consume 1 to 3 drinks per week. This group has the highest mental health score (-3.4) and the highest isolation score (-5.9).
- Six percent of people consume 15 or more drinks per week compared to 2% in the pre-2020 benchmark.
- The least favorable mental health score is among six per cent of people who consume 15 or more drinks per week (-9.4). This group also reports feeling the most isolated (-10.8).
- Men are twice as likely as women to consume 9 or more drinks per week.
- Individuals over 50 are fifty percent more likely to consume 15 or more drinks per week than those under 50.

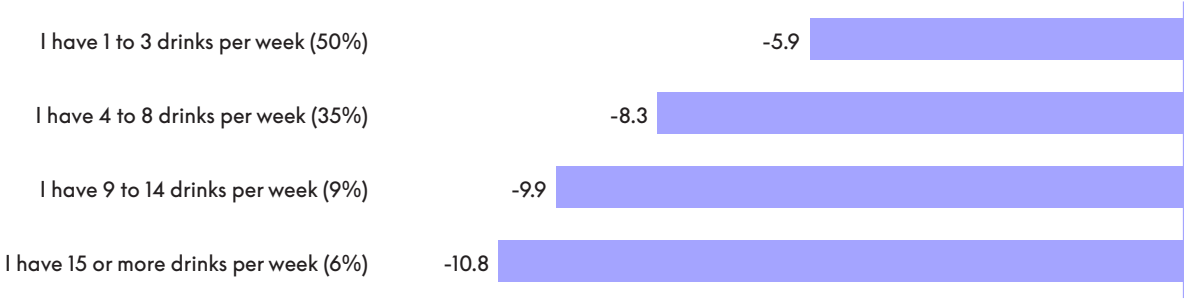
Number of alcoholic drinks consumed per week



MHI score by number of alcoholic drinks consumed per week



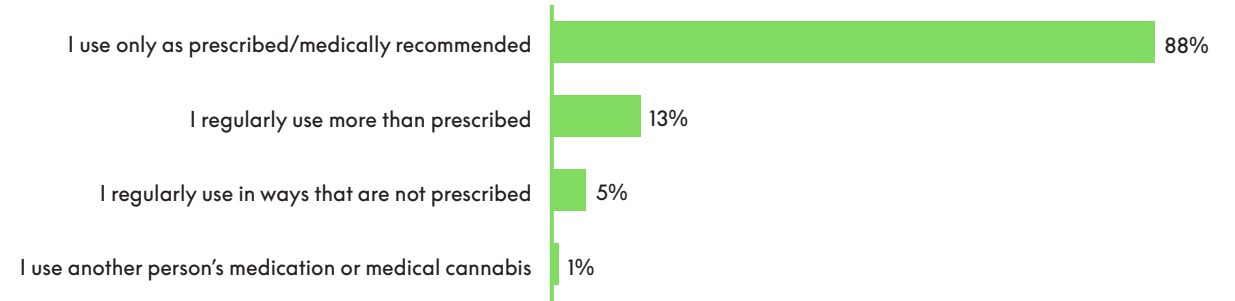
Isolation score by number of alcoholic drinks consumed per week



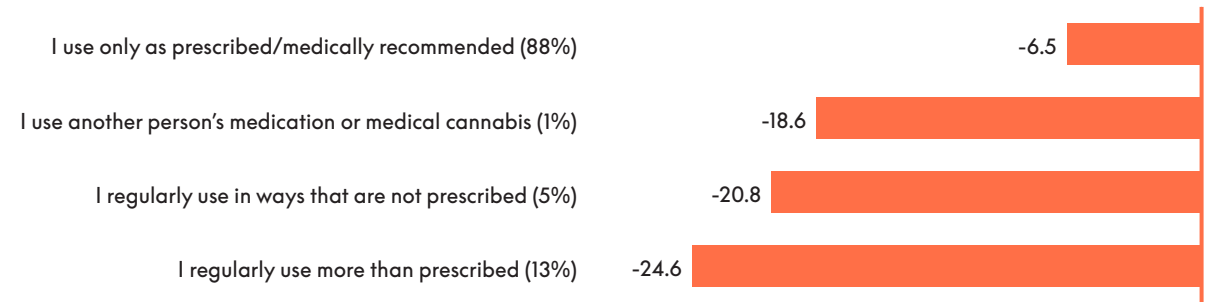
## Prescription drugs and medical cannabis

- Eighty-eight percent of people use prescription drugs or medical cannabis as prescribed, and this group has the best mental health score (-6.5).
- Thirteen percent of people regularly use prescription drugs or medical cannabis more than prescribed and five percent use these substances in ways that are not prescribed.
- Students are three and one-half times more likely than non-students to regularly use more than prescribed or to use in ways that are not prescribed.
- Parents are nearly four times more likely than non-parents to report regularly using more than prescribed.

## Use of prescription drugs or medical cannabis



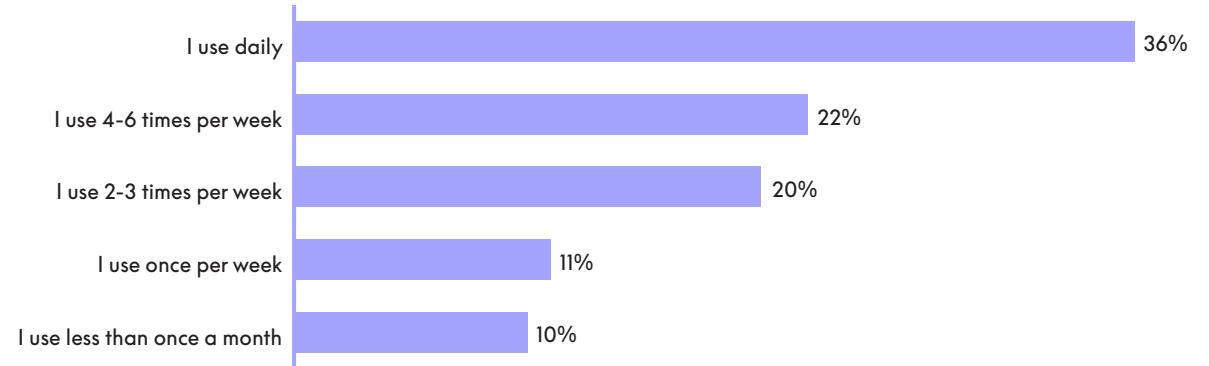
## MHI score by use of prescription drugs or medical cannabis



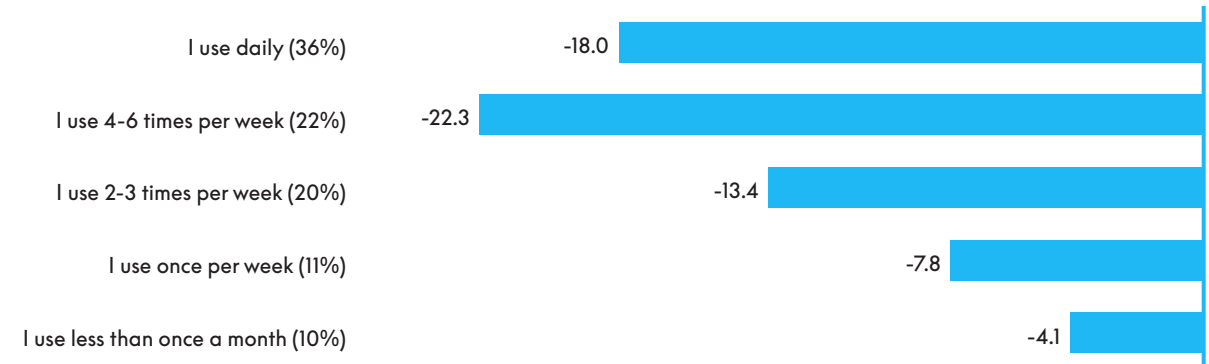
## Recreational cannabis

- Among the eight percent of respondents who are recreational cannabis users, more than one-third (36 percent) report using recreational cannabis daily, followed by twenty-two percent who use 4-6 times per week, and twenty percent who use 2-3 times per week.
- Individuals using recreational cannabis less than once per month have best mental health score (-4.1).
- The least favorable mental health score is among twenty-two percent of people who use recreational cannabis 4-6 times per week (-22.3).
- Individuals living in households with an income lower than \$60,000 are more than fifty percent more likely to use recreational cannabis daily compared to those living in households with an income over \$60,000.

## Use of recreational cannabis



## MHI score by use of recreational cannabis

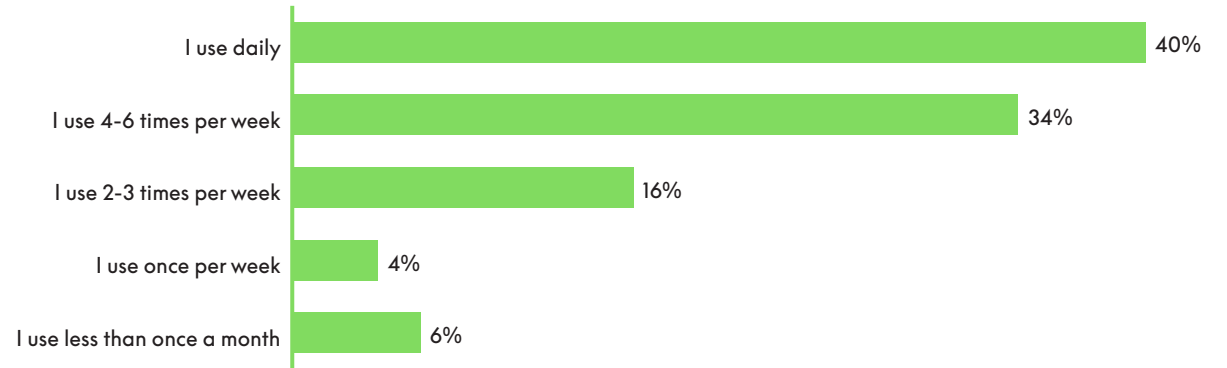




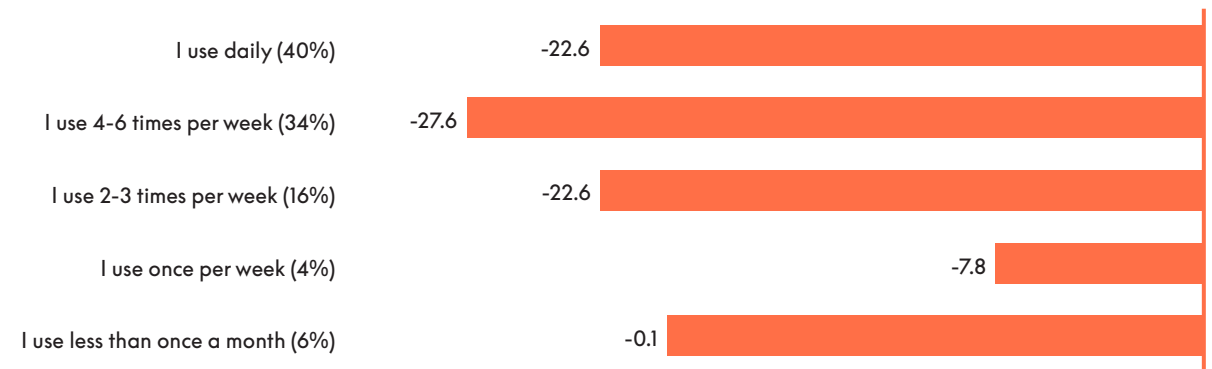
## Illicit drugs

- Among the two percent of respondents who report using illicit drugs, forty percent report using daily, thirty-four percent use 4-6 times per week, and sixteen percent use 2-3 times per week.
- Those who use illicit drugs 4-6 times per week have the worst mental health score (-27.6), more than 20-points below the overall average.

### Use of illicit drugs



### MHI score by use of illicit drugs



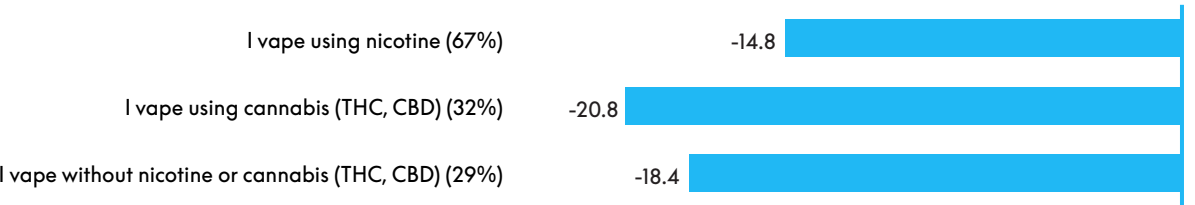
Vaping

- Six percent report vaping.
- Two-thirds (67 percent) vape nicotine, thirty-two percent vape cannabis, and twenty-nine percent vape without nicotine or cannabis.

Vape substance



MHI score by vape substance



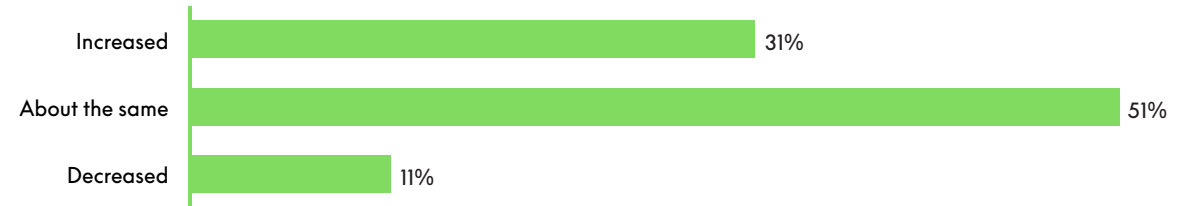
# Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on substance use

## Change in alcohol use

Respondents who use alcohol were asked about how their consumption has changed since the onset of the pandemic.

- Nearly one-third (31 percent) have increased their alcohol use since the onset of the pandemic and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-14.7) as well as the least favorable isolation score (-23.6). Both scores are significantly below the overall U.S. mental health score for May 2021 (-5.3).
- More than half (51 percent) report that their alcohol use has not changed since the onset of pandemic and this group has the most favorable mental health score (1.2).
- People without emergency savings are more than seventy percent more likely than those with emergency savings to report that their drinking has increased.

## Change in alcohol use since the onset of the pandemic



## MHI score by change in alcohol use since the onset of the pandemic

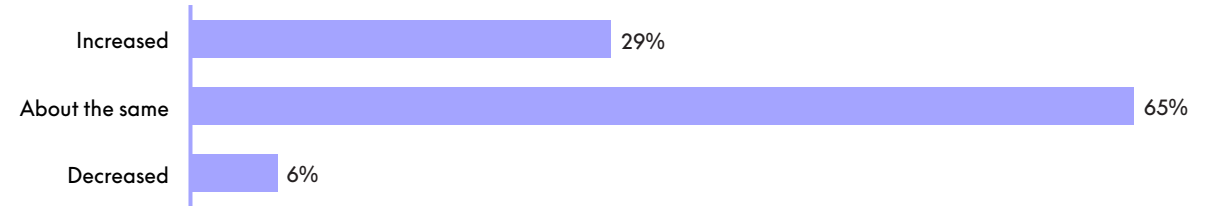


## Change in drug use

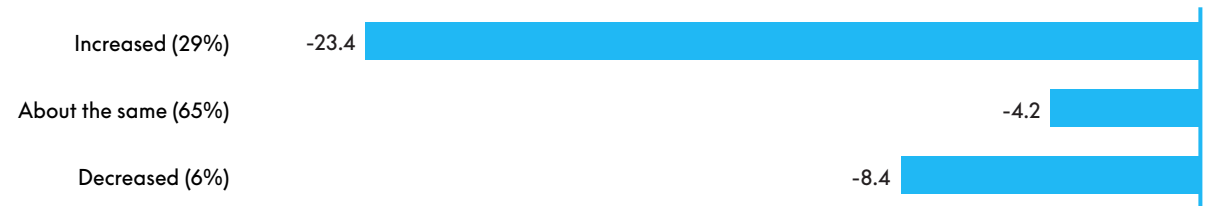
Respondents who use prescription drugs, recreational or medical cannabis, or illicit drugs were asked about how their drug use has changed since the onset of pandemic.

- More than one-quarter (29 percent) report an increase in drug use since the onset of the pandemic and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-23.4) as well as the least favorable isolation score (-36.1).
- Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) report that their drug use has not changed since the onset of pandemic and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-4.2).
- Individuals working fewer hours are twice as likely to report an increase in drug use compared to those with no change to salary or working hours.
- Students are two and half times more likely to report an increase in drug use as working adults who are not students.
- Parents are two and half times more likely to report an increase in drug use compared to non-parents.

## Change in drug use since the onset of the pandemic



## MHI score by change in drug use since the onset of the pandemic



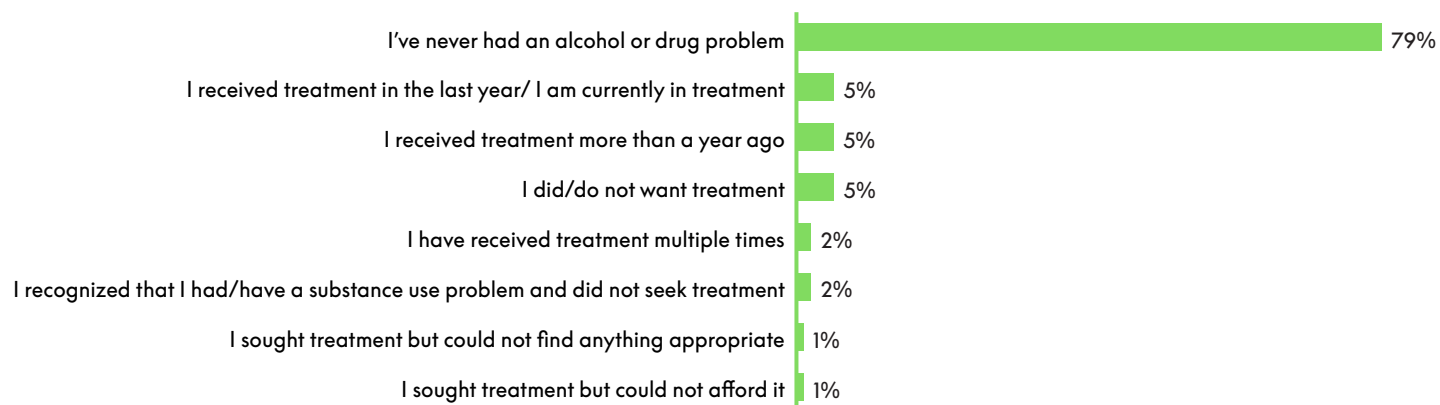
# Treatment for substance use

Respondents were asked if they have sought or received treatment for substance use.

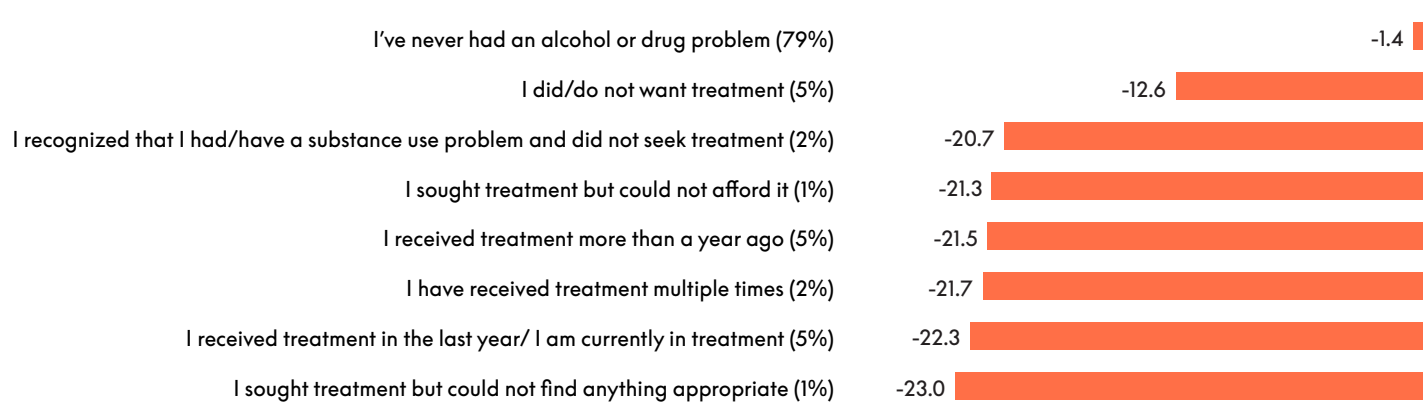
## Treatment for alcohol/drug use

- Seventy-nine percent report not having a drug or alcohol problem, and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-1.4).
- Five percent received treatment in the past year or at present, five percent received treatment more than one year ago and five percent do not want treatment.
- The lowest mental health score is among one per cent of people who sought treatment for substance use but could not afford it (-23.0).
- Students using drugs or alcohol are more than five times more likely to report getting treatment for an alcohol or drug problem than non-students.
- Parents using drugs or alcohol are nearly five times more likely to report getting treatment for an alcohol or drug problem than non-parents.

## Seeking or receiving treatment for an alcohol or drug problem



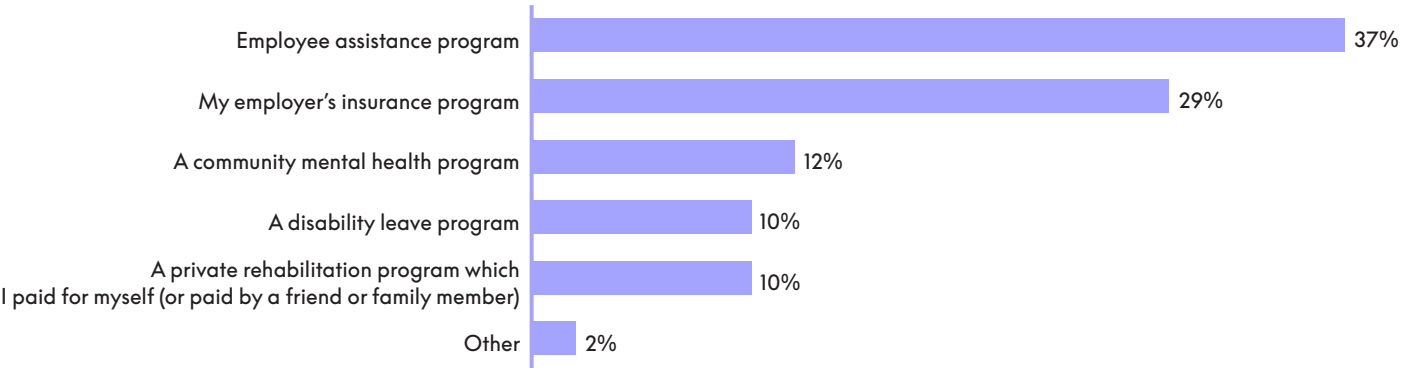
## MHI score by seeking or receiving treatment for an alcohol or drug problem



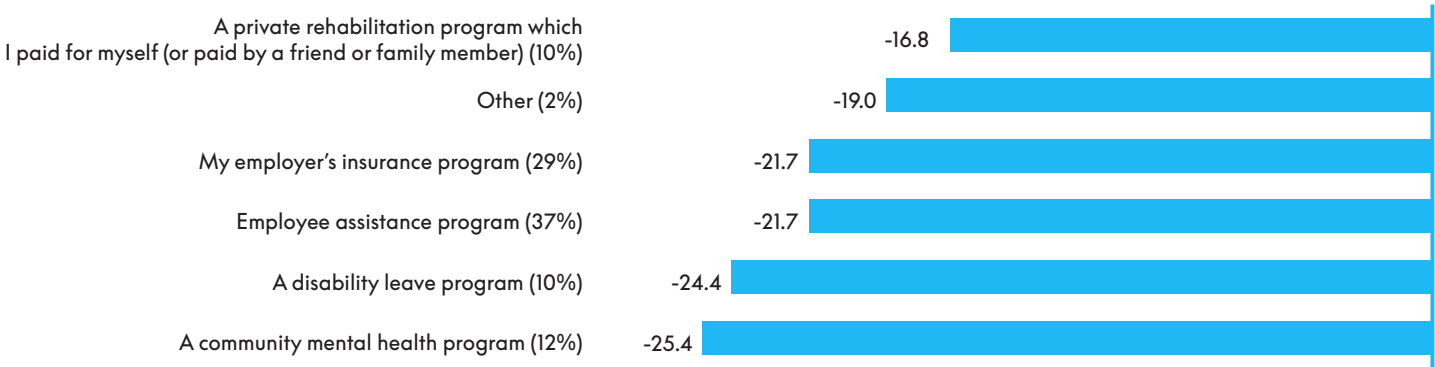
Source of most recent treatment

Among people who report receiving treatment, more than one-third (37 percent) report using their Employee Assistance Program (EAP), followed by twenty-nine percent using their employer’s insurance program, and twelve percent using a community mental health treatment.

Source of most recent treatment program



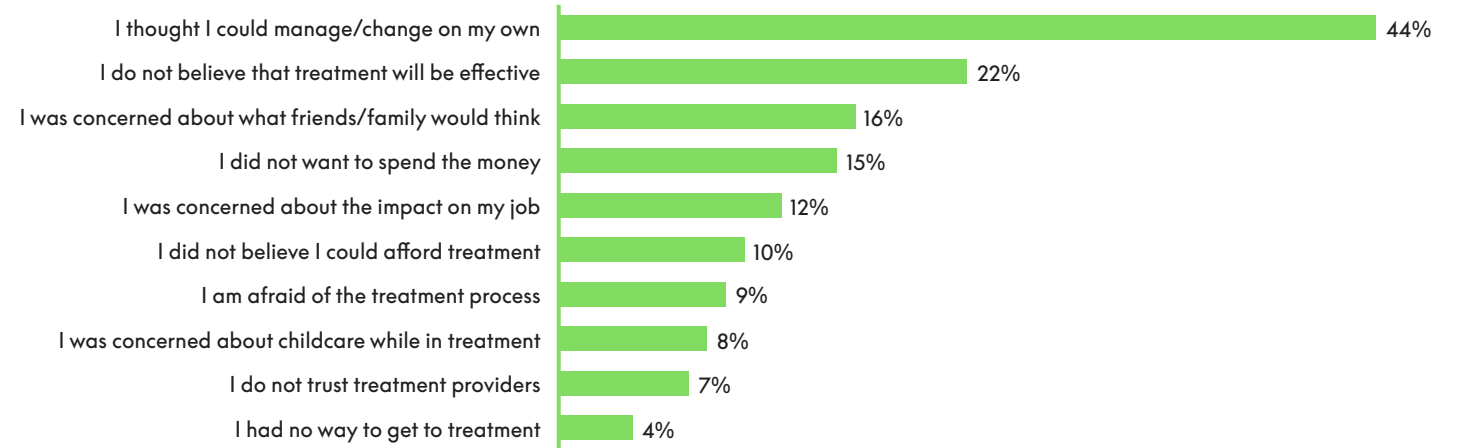
MHI score by source of most recent treatment program



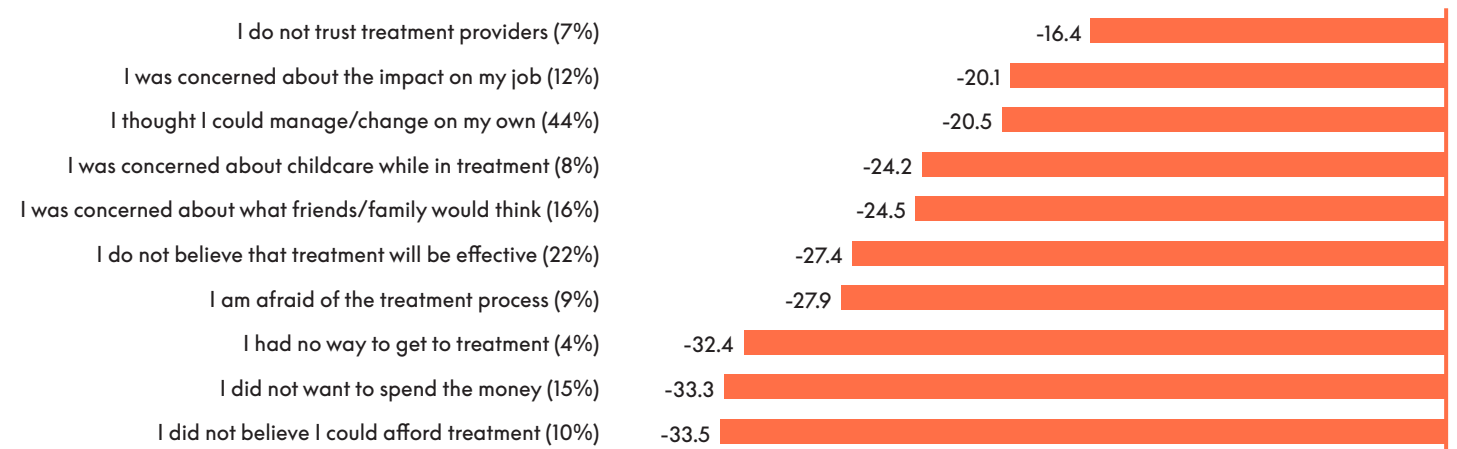
## Reasons for not seeking treatment

- Ten per cent of the respondents believe they could not afford treatment and they have the least favorable mental health score (-33.5).
- Among people acknowledging an alcohol or drug problem, forty-four percent think they could self-manage or change on their own, twenty-two percent do not believe that treatment would be effective, sixteen percent would be concerned about what friends/family would think and fifteen percent did not want to spend the money.
- Ten percent of people who believe that they could not afford treatment have the least favorable mental health score (-33.5).

### Reason for not seeking treatment



### MHI score by reasons for not seeking treatment



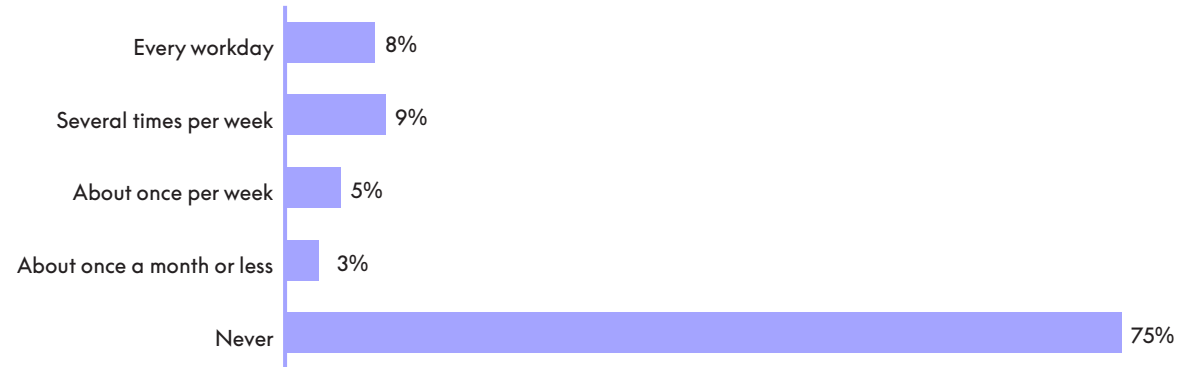
## Impact on work and personal life

Those reporting that they use alcohol or drugs were asked if their usage impacted their ability to complete work tasks or responsibilities, caused absence from work, or impacted their ability to complete tasks or responsibilities at home.

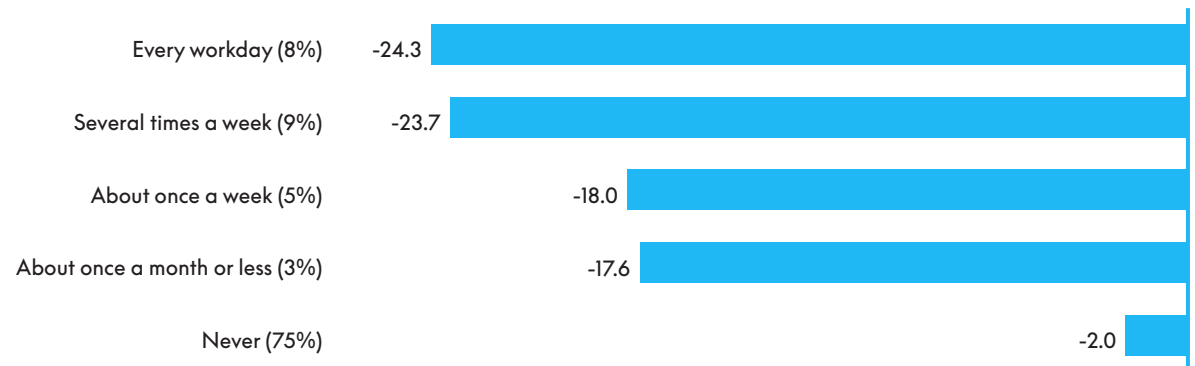
### Impact of alcohol or drugs on job-related tasks and responsibilities

- Three-quarters (75 percent) of the total population have never had difficulties completing job-related tasks and responsibilities at work because of alcohol or drug use and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-2.0).
- One in four reports that alcohol or drugs have made it difficult to complete job-related tasks and responsibilities.
- People who use medications more than prescribed are more than five times more likely to report difficulty completing job-related tasks and responsibilities at least once per week than those who use their medication as prescribed.

### How often alcohol or drugs have made it difficult to complete job-related tasks and responsibilities



### MHI score by how often alcohol or drugs have made it difficult to complete job-related tasks and responsibilities





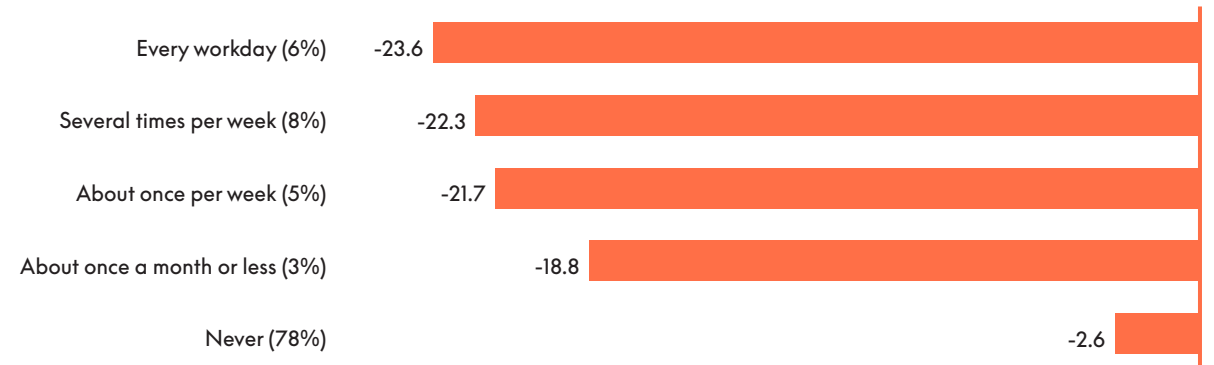
## Impact of alcohol or drugs on absenteeism

- Seventy-eight percent of the population have never missed work due to alcohol or drug use and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-2.6).
- Nineteen percent miss work or call in sick at least once per week due to alcohol or drug use.
- People missing work have significantly lower mental health scores; six percent who miss work daily because of alcohol or drug use have the least favorable mental health score (-23.6), followed by eight percent who miss work several times per week (-22.3), and five percent who miss work about once per week (-21.7).
- Parents who report using drugs or alcohol are nearly five times more likely than non-parents to report calling in sick or being unable to go to work because of alcohol or drug use at least once per week.

## Absenteeism due to alcohol or drug use



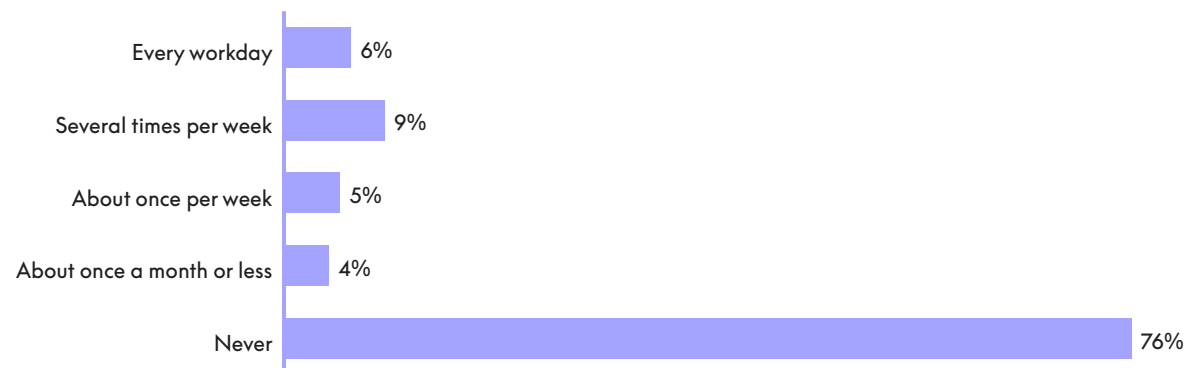
## MHI score by absenteeism due to alcohol or drug use



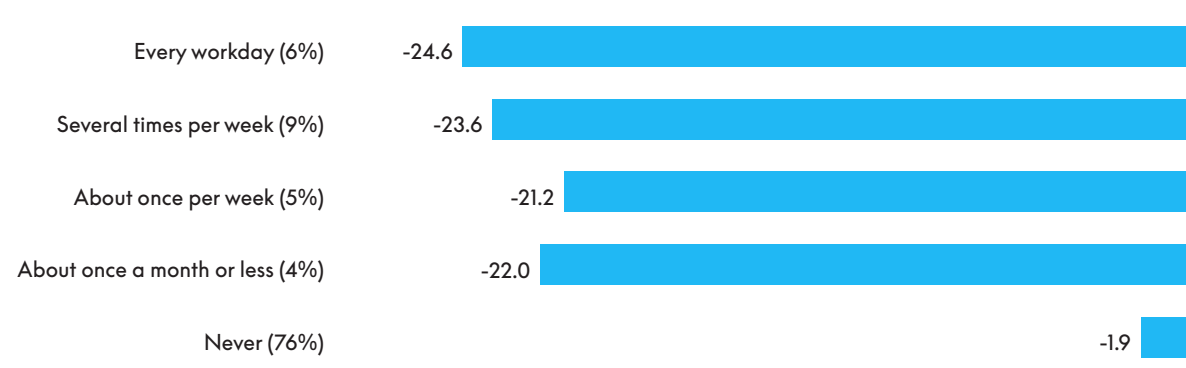
## Impact of alcohol or drugs on home or family-related tasks and responsibilities

- Seventy-six percent have never had difficulties with home or family-related tasks and responsibilities due to alcohol or drug use and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-1.9).
- Nearly one in four (24 percent) report that alcohol or drugs have had an impact on home or family-related tasks and responsibilities.
- Six percent of people who have difficulty with home or family-related tasks and responsibilities every day have the least favorable mental health score (-24.6).
- Individuals working fewer hours or with reduced salary are two and a half times more likely to report that alcohol or drug use has made it difficult to complete home or family-related tasks and responsibilities at least once per week.
- Parents using drugs or alcohol are more than four times more likely than non-parents to report that alcohol or drug use has made it difficult to complete home or family-related tasks and responsibilities at least once per week.
- Managers are more than four times more likely than non-managers to report that alcohol or drug use has made it difficult to complete home or family-related tasks and responsibilities at home at least once a week.

## Impact of alcohol or drug use on home or family-related tasks and responsibilities



## MHI score by impact of alcohol or drug use on home or family-related tasks and responsibilities



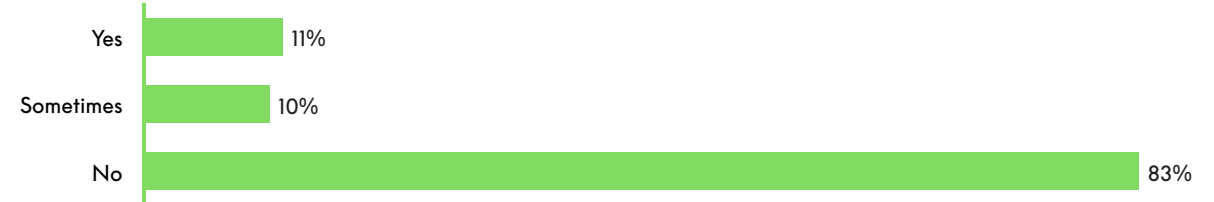
## Spending on drugs or alcohol

Respondents reporting use of any type of substance were asked whether they have spent money on drugs or alcohol that was needed for something else (e.g., rent, food). This group was also asked whether they regretted the amount of money spent on alcohol or drugs.

### Spending on drugs or alcohol instead of essentials

- Seventy-nine percent have never spent money on alcohol or drugs that was needed for something else, and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-2.4).
- Twenty-one percent spent money on alcohol or drugs that was needed for something else.
- Parents who report using drugs or alcohol are nearly five times more likely than non-parents to report spending money on alcohol or drugs instead of needed items.
- People without emergency savings are nearly three times more likely than those with emergency savings to report spending money on alcohol or drugs instead of needed items.
- Managers are nearly four times more likely than non-managers to report spending money on alcohol or drugs instead of needed items.

### Spending money on alcohol or drugs that is needed for something else



### MHI score by spending money on alcohol or drugs that is needed for something else



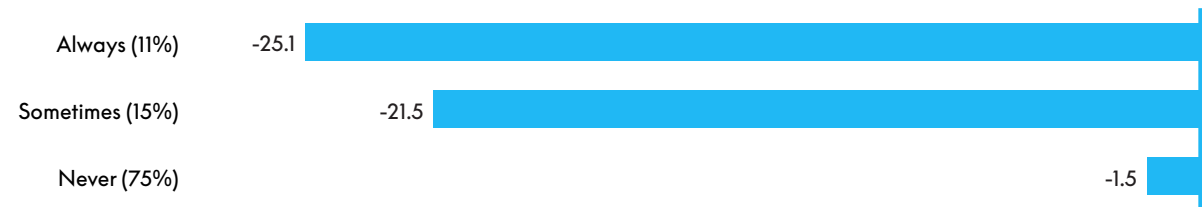
## Regret over spending on drugs or alcohol

- Seventy-five percent report that they never regret spending money on drugs or alcohol and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-1.5).
- More than one-quarter (26 percent) report regret over their spending on drugs or alcohol.
- Parents are nearly four times as likely as non-parents to regret spending money on drugs or alcohol.
- People without emergency savings are more than twice as likely as those with emergency savings to regret spending money on drugs or alcohol.
- Managers are nearly three times more likely than non-managers to regret spending money on drugs or alcohol.

## Regret over spending on alcohol or drugs



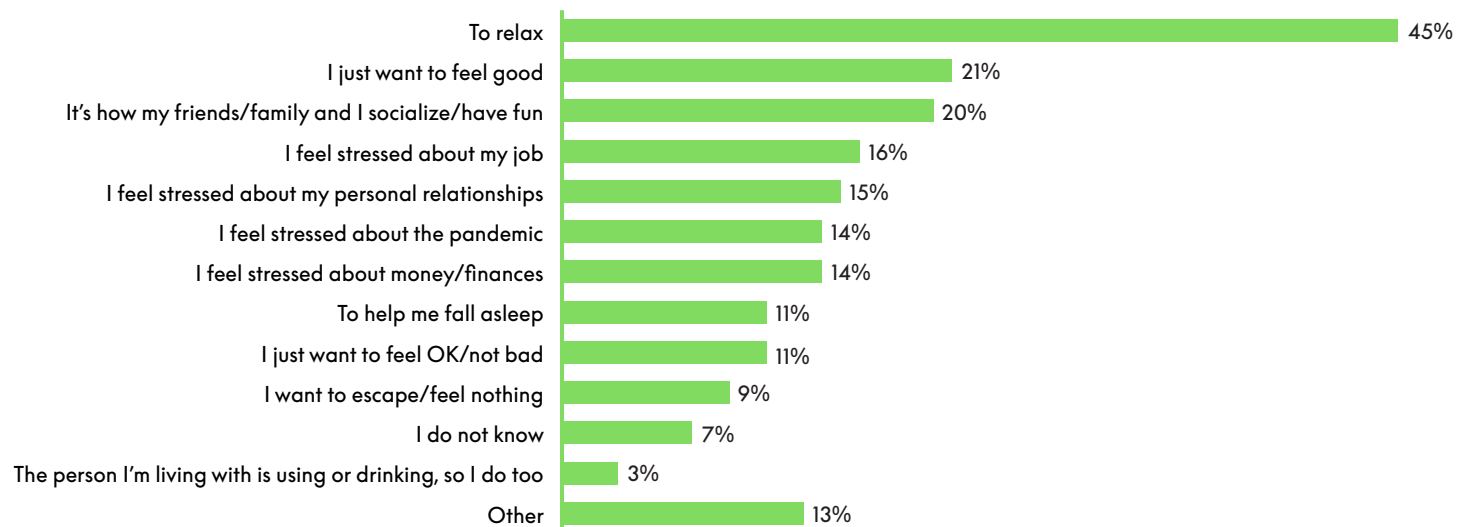
## MHI score by regret over spending on alcohol or drugs



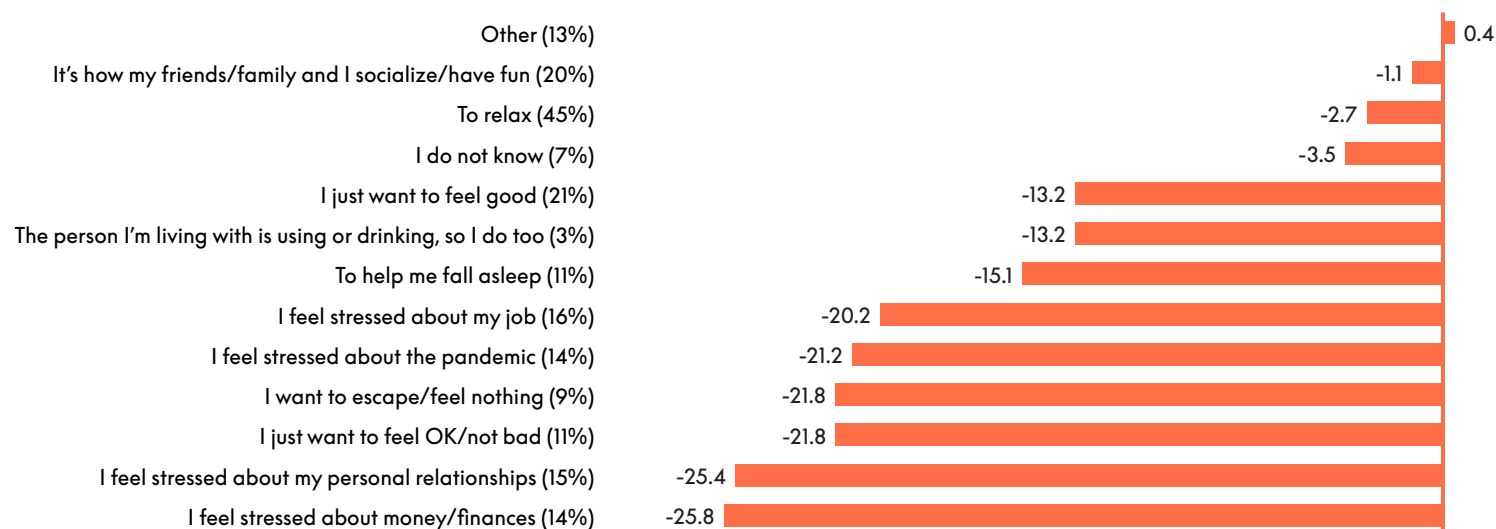
## Reasons for alcohol or drug use

- Among those who consume alcohol or drugs, nearly half (45 percent) use alcohol or drugs to relax, twenty-one percent use alcohol or drugs to feel good, and twenty percent use alcohol or drugs to socialize and have fun.
- Fourteen percent report that stress about money/finances is the reason they use alcohol or drugs, and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-25.8).

### Reason for use of alcohol or drugs



### MHI score by reasons for use of alcohol or drugs



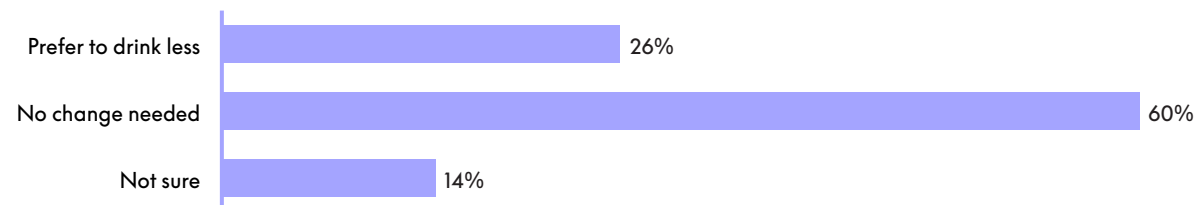
# Reducing substance use

## Reducing alcohol use

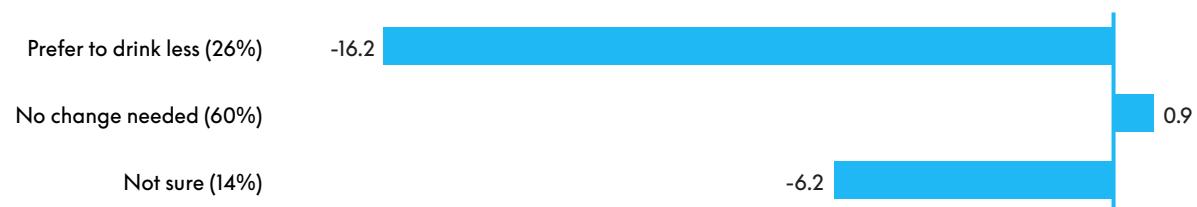
Respondents who use alcohol were asked whether they would prefer to drink less than they currently do.

- More than one-quarter (26 percent) would prefer to drink less than they currently do, and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-16.2).
- Sixty percent report that they do not need to change their alcohol use and this group has the most favorable mental health score (0.9).
- As the number of drinks per week increases, so does the percentage of people reporting that they want to drink less. Forty-eight percent of people that consume 15 or more drinks per week would prefer to drink less compared to sixteen percent that consume 1-3 drinks per week.

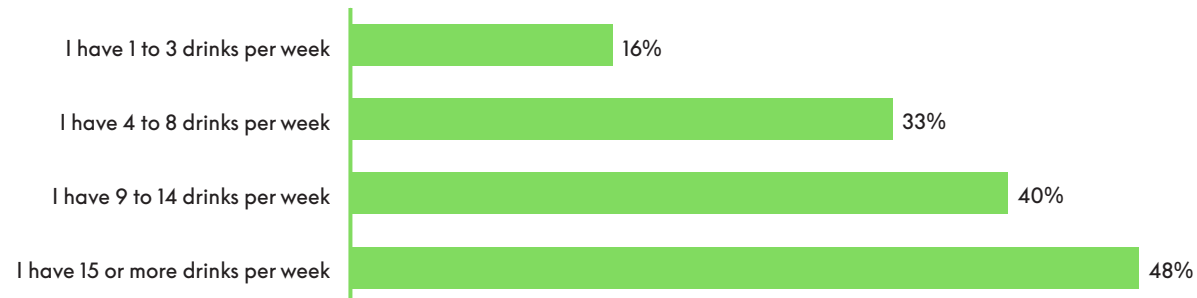
### I would prefer to drink less than I currently do



### MHI score by I would prefer to drink less than I currently do



### I would prefer to drink less



## Reducing drug use

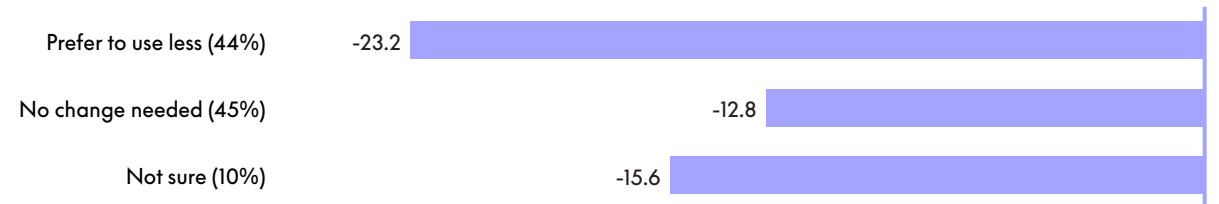
Respondents who use recreational cannabis at least once per week or who use illicit drugs alcohol were asked whether they would prefer to use less than they currently do.

- Forty-four percent would prefer to use drugs less than they currently do and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-23.2).
- Nearly half (45 percent) indicate that they do not need to change their drug use and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-12.8), although it remains below the overall mental health score (-5.3).
- Those who use recreational cannabis 4-6 times per week are most likely to want to use less than they do compared to other users.

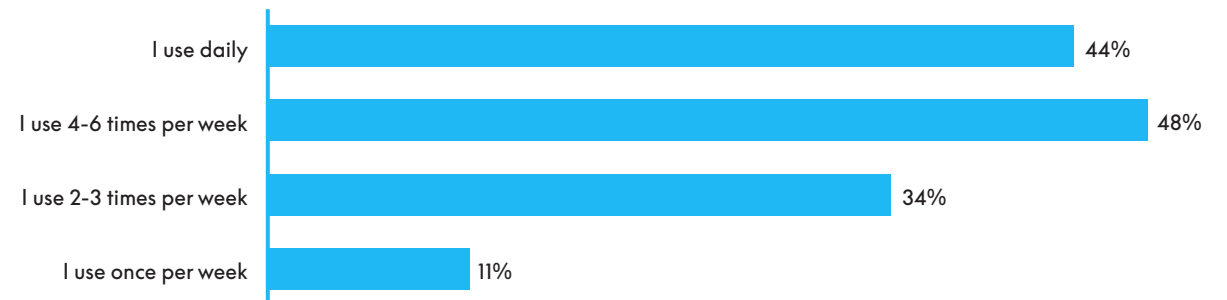
### I would prefer to use drugs less than I currently do



### MHI score by I would prefer to use drugs less than I currently do



### I would prefer to use drugs less than I currently do

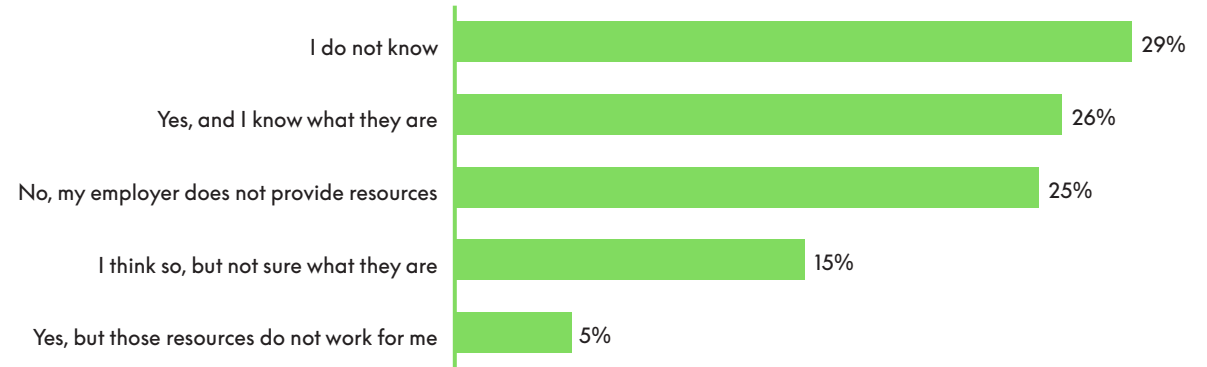


# Employer resources for substance abuse

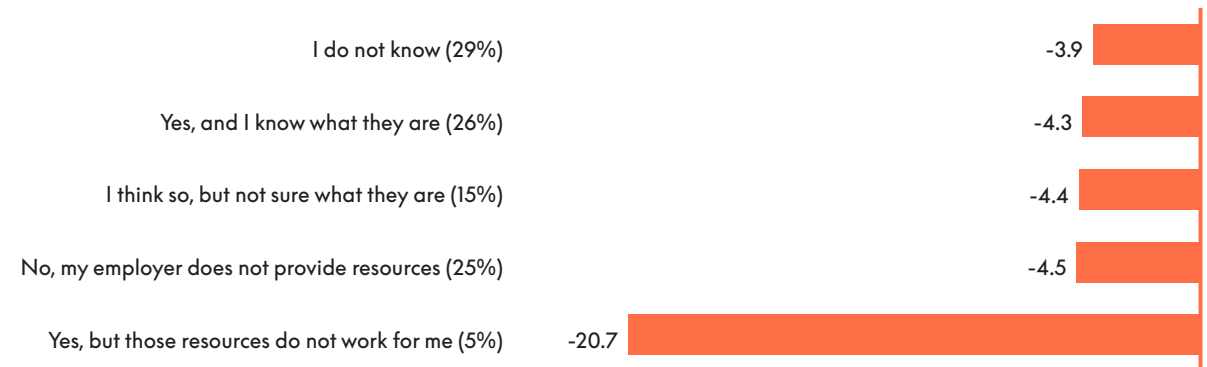
Respondents were asked whether their employer has resources to help with problem drinking or drug use.

- More than one-quarter (26 percent) report that their employer provides resources to help with problem drinking or drug use.
- Forty-four percent either do not know whether their employer offers any resources or are not sure what is offered.
- The least favorable mental health score is among five percent who report that their employer does provide resources, but the resources do not work for them (-20.7).
- Parents are five times more likely to report that employer-provided resources do not work for them than non-parents.
- Managers are nearly three times more likely to report that employer-provided resources do not work for them than non-managers.

## Employer resources to help with problem drinking or drug use



## MHI score by employer resources to help with problem drinking or drug use





# Concern about drinking or drug use of someone in the household

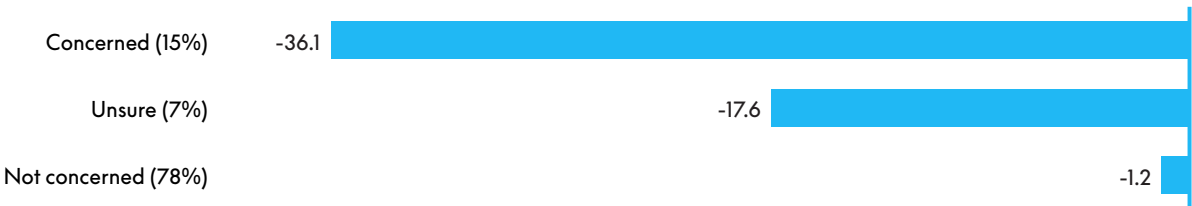
Respondents were asked if they were concerned about the drinking or drug use of someone in their household.

- Nearly eighty percent (78 percent) have no concerns and this group has the highest mental health score (-1.2)
- Fifteen percent of people are concerned about the drinking or drug use of someone in their household and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-36.1), a figure more than 30-points below the overall average (-5.2).
- Parents are nearly four times as likely to report concern about the drinking or drug use of someone else in their household than non-parents.

Concern about drinking or drug use of someone in the household



MHI score by concern about drinking or drug use of someone in the household



# Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

The mental health and wellbeing of a population is essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index™ provides a measure of the current mental health status of employed adults in each geography compared to benchmarks collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The increases and decreases in the MHI are intended to predict cost and productivity risks and inform the need for investment in mental health support by business and government.

## The Mental Health Index™ report has three parts:

1. The overall Mental Health Index™ (MHI), which is a measure of change compared to the benchmark of mental health and risk.
2. A Mental Stress Change (MStressChg) score, which measures the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month.
3. A spotlight section that reflects the specific impact of current issues in the community.

## Methodology

Data for this report is collected through an online survey of 5,000 Americans who are living in the United States and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United States.

The same respondents take part each month to remove a sampling bias. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index™ is published monthly starting in April 2020. Benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Data for the current report was collected between April 24 to May 6, 2021.

## Calculations

To create the Mental Health Index™, the first step leverages a response scoring system turning individual responses to each question into a point value. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. Everyone's scores are added and then divided by a total number of possible points to get a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores.

To demonstrate change, the current month's scores are then compared to the benchmark and the prior month. The benchmark comprises data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. **The change compared to the benchmark is the Mental Health Index™. A score of zero in the Mental Health Index™ reflects no change, positive scores reflect improvement, and negative scores reflect decline.**

A Mental Stress Change score is also reported given that increasing and prolonged mental stress is a potential contributor to changes in mental health. It is reported separately and is not part of the calculation of the Mental Health Index™. The Mental Stress Change score is (percentage reporting less mental stress + percentage reporting the same level of mental stress \* 0.5) \* -1 + 100. The score reflects a comparison of the current to the prior month. **A Mental Stress Change score of 50 reflects no change in mental stress from the prior month. Scores above 50 reflect an increase in mental stress and scores below 50 reflect a decrease in mental stress.** The range is from zero to 100. A succession of scores over 50, month over month, reflects high risk.

## Additional data and analyses

Demographic breakdown of sub-scores, and specific cross-correlational and custom analyses, are available upon request. Benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group is available upon request. Contact [MHI@lifeworks.com](mailto:MHI@lifeworks.com)



## About LifeWorks

LifeWorks is a global leader in delivering technology-enabled solutions that help clients support the total wellbeing of their people and build organizational resiliency. By improving lives, we improve business. Our solutions span employee and family assistance, health and wellness, recognition, pension and benefits administration, retirement and financial consulting, actuarial and investment services. LifeWorks employs approximately 7,000 employees who work with some 24,000 client organizations that use our services in more than 160 countries. LifeWorks is a publicly traded company on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: LWRK).

For more information, visit:

 [LifeWorks.com](https://www.lifeworks.com)

 [twitter.com/LifeWorks](https://twitter.com/LifeWorks)

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## About the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation is a force of healing and hope for individuals, families and communities affected by addiction to alcohol and other drugs. As the nation's leading nonprofit provider of comprehensive inpatient and outpatient addiction and mental health care for adults and youth, the Foundation has treatment centers and telehealth services nationwide as well as a network of collaborators throughout health care. With a legacy that began in 1949 and includes the 1982 founding of the Betty Ford Center, the Foundation today also encompasses a graduate school of addiction studies, a publishing division, an addiction research center, recovery advocacy and thought leadership, professional and medical education programs, school-based prevention resources and a specialized program for children who grow up in families with addiction.

For more information, visit:

 [www.HazeldenBettyFord.org](https://www.HazeldenBettyFord.org)

 [twitter.com/hazldnbettyford](https://twitter.com/hazldnbettyford)