



# Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report

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## Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004

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Prior drug use among State prisoners remained stable on all measures between 1997 and 2004, according to the most recent findings from the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities. Over the same period, the percentage of Federal inmates who reported prior drug use rose on all measures. For the first time, half (50%) of Federal inmates reported drug use in the month before their offense, up from 45% in 1997.

In the 2004 survey, BJS included measures of drug dependence and abuse for the first time. These estimates were based on criteria specified in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition (DSM-IV). Fifty-three percent of State and 45% of Federal prisoners met the DSM-IV criteria for drug dependence or abuse.

Prisoners who met the criteria for recent drug dependence or abuse had extensive criminal records. Among State prisoners who were dependent on or abusing drugs, 53% had at least three prior sentences to probation or incarceration, compared to 32% of other inmates. At the time of their arrest, drug dependent or abusing State prisoners (48%) were also more likely than other inmates (37%) to have been on probation or parole supervision.

### Highlights

**In 2004 nearly a third of State and a quarter of Federal prisoners committed their offense under the influence of drugs, unchanged since 1997**

Drug use	Percent of prisoners	
	2004	1997
In the month before the offense		
State	56%	57%
Federal	50	45
At the time of the offense		
State	32%	33%
Federal	26	22
Any dependence or abuse		
State	53%	--
Federal	45	--

-- Not reported.

- 17% of State and 18% of Federal prisoners committed their crime to obtain money for drugs.

- Violent offenders in State prison (50%) were less likely than drug (72%) and property (64%) offenders to have used drugs in the month prior to their offense.

**Among drug dependent/abusing prisoners, 40% of State and 49% of Federal inmates took part in drug abuse treatment or programs since admission to prison**

Type of treatment since admission	Percent of prisoners meeting drug dependence or abuse criteria —	
	State	Federal
Any drug treatment or programs	40%	49%
Treatment	15	17
Other programs	35	41

- Among inmates who used drugs in the month before their offense, between 1997 and 2004 participation in drug abuse programs increased in both State (from 34% to 39%) and Federal prison (from 39% to 45%).

**Among both State and Federal prisoners, white inmates were at least 20 times more likely than black inmates to report recent methamphetamine use**

Characteristic	Percent of prisoners using methamphetamine in the month before the offense —	
	State	Federal
All prisoners	11%	10%
Male	10	10
Female	17	15
White	20	29
Black	1	1
Hispanic	12	5

- State prisoner reports of methamphetamine use in the month before the offense rose from 7% in 1997 to 11% in 2004.

- Between 1997 and 2004, prior drug use by State prisoners was stable on all drug types except methamphetamine, which rose on all measures.

**Overall drug use by State prisoners unchanged from 1997; methamphetamine use rose**

A third of State inmates said they had committed their current offense while under the influence of drugs (table 1). Over half used drugs in the month before the offense, and more than two-thirds had used drugs regularly at some time in their lives. These figures were unchanged from 1997.

Marijuana remained the most common drug used by State prisoners. Forty percent of State prisoners reported using marijuana in the month before their offense, and 15% said they had used marijuana at the time of the offense. All measures of marijuana use were within 1% of 1997 estimates.

Reported use of cocaine or crack cocaine in the month before the offense fell from 25% of State prisoners in 1997 to 21% in 2004, while use at the time of offense fell from 15% to 12%.

Over the same period, the use of heroin and other opiates fell slightly on all measures. Use of hallucinogens (including ecstasy) in the month before the offense rose slightly from 4% to 6%.

State prisoner reports of stimulant use went up on all measures. Stimulant use in the month before the offense increased from 9% in 1997 to 12% in 2004, and use at the time of offense rose from 4% to 7%.

The increases in the use of stimulants were attributable to the rising use of methamphetamines. Use of methamphetamines in the month before the offense increased from 7% to 11%, and use at the time of the offense rose from 4% to 6%.

**Overall drug use by Federal prisoners rose; cocaine/crack use declined**

Across all measures of use, Federal prisoners reported higher levels of prior drug use from 1997 to 2004 (table 2). An estimated 26% of Federal inmates reported using drugs at the time of the offense, up from 22% in 1997. Drug use in the month before the offense rose to 50% of Federal prisoners, up from 45% in 1997.

**Table 1. Drug use by State prisoners, 1997 and 2004**

Type of drug	Percent of State prisoners who used drugs —							
	Ever		Regularly <sup>a</sup>		In the month before offense		At the time of offense	
	2004	1997	2004	1997	2004	1997	2004	1997
Any drug <sup>b</sup>	83.2%	83.0%	69.2%	69.6%	56.0%	56.5%	32.1%	32.6%
Marijuana/hashish	77.6	77.0	59.0	58.3	40.3	39.2	15.4	15.1
Cocaine/crack	46.8	49.2	30.0	33.6	21.4	25.0	11.8	14.8
Heroin/opiates	23.4	24.5	13.1	15.0	8.2	9.2	4.4	5.6
Depressants <sup>c</sup>	21.3	23.7	9.9	11.3	5.4	5.1	2.0	1.8
Stimulants <sup>d</sup>	28.6	28.3	17.9	16.3	12.2	9.0	6.7	4.2
Methamphetamine	23.5	19.4	14.9	11.2	10.8	6.9	6.1	3.5
Hallucinogens <sup>e</sup>	32.9	28.7	13.3	11.3	5.9	4.0	2.0	1.8
Inhalants	13.6	14.4	4.5	5.4	1.0	1.0	--	--

Note: Detail adds to more than total because prisoners may have used more than one type of drug.

-- Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Used drugs at least once a week for at least a month.

<sup>b</sup>Other unspecified drugs are included in the totals.

<sup>c</sup>Includes barbiturates, tranquilizers, and Quaalude.

<sup>d</sup>Includes amphetamine and methamphetamine.

<sup>e</sup>Includes LSD, PCP, and ecstasy.

**Table 2. Drug use by Federal prisoners, 1997 and 2004**

Type of drug	Percent of Federal prisoners who used drugs —							
	Ever		Regularly <sup>a</sup>		In the month before offense		At the time of offense	
	2004	1997	2004	1997	2004	1997	2004	1997
Any drug <sup>b</sup>	78.7%	72.9%	64.3%	57.3%	50.2%	44.8%	26.4%	22.4%
Marijuana/hashish	71.2	65.2	53.0	46.6	36.2	30.4	14.0	10.8
Cocaine/crack	43.3	44.8	27.5	28.2	18.0	20.0	7.4	9.3
Heroin/opiates	17.9	16.1	9.2	8.9	5.8	5.4	3.2	3.0
Depressants <sup>c</sup>	16.9	16.5	8.6	8.0	4.4	3.2	1.4	1.0
Stimulants <sup>d</sup>	21.0	20.9	14.8	12.9	10.8	7.6	7.4	4.1
Methamphetamine	17.9	15.1	12.8	9.6	10.1	6.5	7.2	3.7
Hallucinogens <sup>e</sup>	25.9	19.0	11.9	6.4	5.8	1.7	1.9	0.8
Inhalants	7.5	7.7	3.0	2.6	0.8	0.5	--	--

Note: Detail adds to more than total because prisoners may have used more than one type of drug.

-- Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Used drugs at least once a week for at least a month.

<sup>b</sup>Other unspecified drugs are included in the totals.

<sup>c</sup>Includes barbiturates, tranquilizers, and Quaalude.

<sup>d</sup>Includes amphetamine and methamphetamine.

<sup>e</sup>Includes LSD, PCP, and ecstasy.

During the period, marijuana use among Federal prisoners in the month before the offense rose from 30% to 36%. Stimulant use in the month before the offense grew slightly, due to methamphetamines which rose from 7% to 10%. Use of hallucinogens in the month before the offense rose from 2% to 6%.

Heroin or other opiate use among Federal prisoners remained stable. In both years 3% of inmates committed their crimes while using heroin or other opiates. Depressant use was also unchanged.

The percentage of Federal prisoners who reported prior use of cocaine-based drugs dropped between 1997 and 2004. Use of cocaine or crack in the month before the offense fell slightly from 20% to 18%, and use at the time of the offense fell from 9% to 7%. No other drug types displayed a decline in prior use during this period.

### Women in Federal prison report sharp increase in prior drug use

Among Federal inmates, men (50%) were slightly more likely than women (48%) to report drug use in the month before the offense in 2004 (table 3). Drug use in the month before among

women held in Federal prisons increased by more than 11 percentage points, up from 37% in 1997. Use by men was up from 45%.

Women in State prisons in 2004 reported slightly lower levels of drug use in the month before the offense

**Table 3. Drug use in the month before the offense, by selected characteristics of State and Federal prisoners, 1997 and 2004**

Characteristic	Percent of prisoners reporting drug use in the month before the offense —			
	State		Federal	
	2004	1997	2004	1997
All prisoners	56.0%	56.5%	50.2%	44.8%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	55.7%	56.1%	50.4%	45.4%
Female	59.3	62.4	47.6	36.7
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>				
White <sup>a</sup>	57.7%	55.2%	58.2%	49.4%
Black <sup>a</sup>	56.0	58.3	52.7	47.2
Hispanic	53.5	55.0	38.4	37.5
Other <sup>a,b</sup>	52.9	52.7	48.4	38.5
<b>Age</b>				
24 or younger	66.2%	63.2%	62.0%	57.2%
25-34	60.9	60.0	56.7	48.5
35-44	54.9	56.5	47.9	46.8
45-54	47.4	40.4	44.9	35.2
55 or older	19.2	18.4	20.9	24.3

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin.

<sup>b</sup>Includes Asians, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, and inmates who specified more than one race.

### Profile of methamphetamine users among State and Federal prisoners, 2004

Among State prisoners in 2004 —

- Female inmates (17%) were more likely than males (10%) to report use of methamphetamines in the month before their offense.
- White inmates (20%) were almost twice as likely as Hispanics (12%) to have used methamphetamines. Around 1% of black inmates reported using methamphetamines in the month before the offense.
- Violent offenders (6%) were half as likely to use methamphetamines as either drug (19%) or property (13%) offenders.

Similar patterns emerged among Federal inmates:

- Females (15%) were more likely than males (10%) to have used methamphetamine in the month before the offense.
- White inmates (29%) were 6 times more likely than Hispanics (5%) to report using methamphetamines. Black inmates (1%) reported low use of methamphetamines.
- The percentage of drug offenders who reported use of methamphetamines (14%) was 3 times higher than that of violent or property offenders (4% of each).

Percent of prisoners reporting methamphetamine use in the month before the offense —

Characteristic	Percent of prisoners reporting methamphetamine use in the month before the offense —	
	State	Federal
All prisoners	10.8%	10.1%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	10.4%	9.7%
Female	16.8	15.1
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>		
White <sup>a</sup>	20.3%	29.4%
Black <sup>a</sup>	1.1	0.7
Hispanic	12.1	5.1
Other <sup>a,b</sup>	17.1	14.4
<b>Age</b>		
24 or younger	11.0%	7.5%
25-34	12.6	8.4
35-44	11.5	13.2
45-54	7.7	12.9
55 or older	3.3	2.6
<b>Most serious offense</b>		
Violent	6.3%	3.6%
Property	12.9	4.1
Drugs	19.1	14.0
Public order	12.1	7.1

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin.

<sup>b</sup>Includes Asians, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, and inmates who specified more than one race.

**In 2004 an estimated 333,000 prisoners were held for drug law violations; 21% of State, 55% of Federal inmates**

Between the 1997 and 2004 prison inmate surveys, the number of drug offenders in State and Federal prisons grew by 57,000 inmates. Despite this numerical growth, drug offenders made up the same percentage of State prisoners in both 1997 and 2004 (21%). The percentage of Federal prisoners serving time for drug offenses declined from 63% in 1997 to 55% in 2004.

*State drug offenders reported serious criminal records:*

- 50% were on probation, parole, or escape at the time of their arrest;
- 78% had a prior sentence to incarceration or probation; 46% had three or more prior sentences;
- 22% had a prior violent offense; 16% reported that all prior sentences were for drug offenses.

*Drug offenders in Federal prisons had less extensive criminal records:*

- 24% were on a criminal justice status at the time of their arrest;
- 62% had a prior sentence; 30% had three or more prior sentences;
- 16% had a prior violent offense; 15% reported prior sentences only for drug offenses.

Drug offenders in State prisons (45%) were 3 times more likely than those in Federal prisons (17%) to report a maximum sentence of less than 5 years. State drug offenders (15%) were half as likely as Federal drug offenders (28%) to report a sentence of 15 years or more. In part, the longer sentences for Federal drug offenders reflect the higher proportion of trafficking offenders and the more serious drug distribution crimes that fall under Federal jurisdiction.

Percent of prisoners held for drug offenses, 2004

Type of drug offense	Percent of prisoners held for drug offenses, 2004	
	State	Federal
<b>Type of drug offense</b>		
Possession	27.9%	5.3%
Trafficking <sup>a</sup>	69.4	91.4
Other	2.7	3.3
<b>Criminal justice status at arrest</b>		
None	50.1%	75.9%
Any status	49.9	24.1
On parole	22.2	9.8
On probation	27.4	14.1
<b>Criminal history</b>		
None	20.7%	37.5%
Priors	79.3	62.5
Violent recidivists	22.4	15.8
Drug recidivists only	16.3	15.3
Other recidivists <sup>b</sup>	40.6	31.4
<b>Number of prior sentences</b>		
0	22.4%	39.0%
1	15.9	15.5
2	16.1	15.2
3-5	26.4	20.1
6-10	13.2	7.3
11 or more	6.0	3.0
<b>Total maximum sentence length</b>		
Less than 36 months	23.6%	6.2%
36-59 months	21.1	10.9
60-119 months	29.9	29.3
120-179 months	10.3	26.0
180 months or more	13.5	25.4
Life	1.6	2.2

<sup>a</sup>Includes those reporting an intent to distribute.

<sup>b</sup>Includes recidivists with unknown prior offense types.

**The percentage of drug offenders serving time for crimes involving stimulants nearly doubled between 1997 and 2004**

Between 1997 and 2004, the percentage of drug offenders in State prisons serving time for drug law violations involving stimulants rose from 10% to 19%.

These sentences covered possession, use, manufacture, and trafficking of stimulants. The percentage who reported the involvement of cocaine-based drugs in their offense dropped from 72% to 62%. The percentage of Federal drug offenders who reported sentences for crimes involving stimulants grew from 11% to 19%, while the percentage serving time for crimes involving marijuana fell from 19% to 12%.

Type of drug involved in the offense	Percent of drug offenders			
	State		Federal	
	2004	1997	2004	1997
Marijuana/hashish	12.7%	12.9%	12.4%	18.9%
Cocaine/crack	61.8	72.1	65.5	65.5
Heroin/other opiates	12.2	12.8	8.1	9.9
Depressants	2.2	1.2	1.4	0.6
Stimulants	18.6	9.9	18.7	11.0
Hallucinogens	1.7	1.1	2.3	1.7

Note: More than one type of drug may have been involved in the offense.

(60%) than in 1997 (62%). The percentage of male State prisoners who reported drug use in the month before their crimes remained unchanged (56% in both years).

Among Federal inmates in 2004, 58% of whites, 53% of blacks, and 38% of Hispanics reported using drugs in the month before the offense. With the exception of Hispanics, all racial/ethnic groups of Federal inmates reported higher levels of drug use than in 1997.

State prisoner reports of prior drug use showed little variation by race or Hispanic origin. In 2004, between 53% and 58% of all racial/ethnic groups reported using drugs in the month before the offense. In 1997 the same range was reported across all groups.

**Prior drug use grew most quickly among middle-aged inmates**

Drug use in the month before the offense was highest among the youngest inmates, and these percentages declined steadily with

age. About two-thirds of State and Federal inmates age 24 or younger reported drug use in the month before their offense, compared to a fifth of the inmates aged 55 or older.

Despite the lower level of drug use among older offenders, the largest increase in prior drug use since 1997 was reported by middle-aged inmates. Among State prisoners aged 45 to 54, drug use in the month before the offense rose from 40% to 47% in 2004. The increase reported by middle-aged inmates in Federal prison was larger, rising from 35% to 45%.

**1 in 4 violent offenders in prison committed their offenses under the influence of drugs**

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of drug offenders in State prison reported drug use in the month before their offense (table 4). Property offenders (64%) were more likely than violent and public-order offenders (50% of each) to have used drugs in the month before the offense. Burglary (68%), robbery

and larceny (67% of both) offenders reported the highest levels of drug use in the month of the offense.

Drug offenders (44%) were most likely to have committed their crimes while using drugs, followed by property offenders (39%). About a quarter of both violent (28%) and public-order (25%) offenders reported drug use at the time of their offense. Inmates serving time for sexual assault (17%) and aggravated assault (24%) were least likely to commit their crimes while under the influence of drugs.

An estimated 59% of Federal offenders held for drug trafficking reported using drugs in the month before their offense, followed by 57% of those held for robbery and 54% for weapons. About a quarter of Federal inmates (26%) committed their crimes while under the influence of drugs, led by trafficking (34%) and robbery (29%) offenders. Federal fraud offenders (9%) were the least likely to commit their crimes while under the influence of drugs.

For most types of offenders, these findings showed little change since 1997.

Most serious offense	Percent of prisoners who reported drug use at the time of the offense —			
	State		Federal	
	2004	1997	2004	1997
Total	32.1%	32.6%	26.4%	22.4%
Violent	27.7	29.0	24.0	24.5
Property	38.5	36.6	13.6	10.8
Drug	43.6	41.9	32.3	25.0
Public-order	25.4	23.1	18.7	15.6

**Table 4. Drug use of State and Federal prisoners, by type of offense, 2004**

Type of offense	Percent of prisoners who reported —			
	Use in the month before the offense		Use at the time of the offense	
	State	Federal	State	Federal
<b>Total<sup>a</sup></b>	56.0%	50.2%	32.1%	26.4%
<b>Violent offenses</b>	49.6%	49.1%	27.7%	24.0%
Homicide	48.9	44.9	27.3	16.8
Sexual assault <sup>b</sup>	32.3	17.0	17.4	13.8
Robbery	66.6	56.9	40.7	29.4
Assault	48.9	42.3	24.1	20.1
<b>Property offenses</b>	64.0%	27.7%	38.5%	13.6%
Burglary	67.7	:	41.1	:
Larceny/theft	66.6	:	40.1	:
Motor vehicle theft	65.4	:	38.7	:
Fraud	56.3	22.8	34.1	9.3
<b>Drug offenses</b>	71.9%	57.3%	43.6%	32.3%
Possession	76.4	46.4	46.0	20.9
Trafficking	70.0	58.8	42.3	33.8
<b>Public-order offenses<sup>c</sup></b>	49.9%	41.2%	25.4%	18.7%
Weapons	53.3	53.8	27.6	27.8
Other public-order	48.7	26.5	24.6	8.0

:Not calculated; too few cases to permit calculation.

<sup>a</sup>Includes offenses not shown.

<sup>b</sup>Includes rape and other sexual assault.

<sup>c</sup>Excluding DWI/DUI.

### 1 in 3 property offenders in State prisons report drug money as a motive in their crimes

Fewer than a fifth (17%) of all State prisoners said they committed their crimes to get money for drugs. By the type of offense, drug money as a motive in the offense varied widely. About 1 in 3 property offenders reported drug money as a motive, followed by about 1 in 4 drug offenders. Violent offenders (10%) and public-order offenders (7%) were least likely to report that they committed the offense to get money for drugs.

Among Federal inmates the overall percentage who committed their offense to get money for drugs (18%) was similar to State prisoners. A quarter of Federal drug offenders, 15% of violent offenders, and 11% of property offenders said they committed their crimes for drug money.

Most serious offense	Percent of prisoners who committed offense to get money for drugs	
	State	Federal
Total*	16.6%	18.4%
Violent	9.8	14.8
Property	30.3	10.6
Drug	26.4	25.3
Public-order	6.9	6.8

\*Includes offenses not shown.

### 53% of State and 45% of Federal prisoners met criteria for drug dependence or abuse

More than half of State prisoners (53%) said they experienced symptoms consistent with drug dependence or abuse in the 12 months prior to their admission to prison (table 5). Seventeen percent reported symptoms that met the criteria for drug abuse only. (See box below for abuse and dependence symptoms.)

Federal inmates (45%) were less likely to meet the drug dependence or abuse criteria than State inmates.

### Prevalence of drug dependence or abuse symptoms among State and Federal prisoners, 2004

	Percent of prison inmates	
	State	Federal
<b>Abuse symptoms</b>		
<b>Failure to fulfill major role obligations</b> Lose job; job/school problems, such as missing too much work/school, being demoted at work, dropping out of school; not taking care of children	26.3%	18.2%
<b>Continued use in hazardous situations</b> Get in situations that increased chances of getting hurt, like driving, swimming, using machinery or walking in unsafe area	34.4	29.3
<b>Drug-related legal problems</b> Arrested or held by police due to drug use	23.2	17.7
<b>Recurrent social or interpersonal problems</b> Arguments/problems with spouse, intimate, family or friends or get into physical fights	44.7	34.1
<b>Dependence symptoms</b>		
<b>Tolerance</b> Usual drugs had less effect; or used more drugs to get the wanted effect	33.7%	27.9%
<b>Withdrawal</b> Bad aftereffects from cutting down or stopping drugs, such as shaking, feeling nervous, anxious, sick to stomach, or taking drugs to get over any bad aftereffects	28.6	21.5
<b>Compulsive use</b> More drug use or using for longer periods than intended	32.2	27.6
<b>Impaired control</b> More than once wanted to cut down/tried to cut down but couldn't	32.4	25.5
<b>Time spent obtaining, using, recovering</b> Spent a lot of time using drugs or getting over the bad aftereffects	29.7	23.5
<b>Neglect of activities</b> Gave up on activities of interest/importance, like work, school, hobbies, or associating with family and friends	26.5	19.9
<b>Continued use despite problems</b> Continued to use drugs even though it was causing emotional or psychological problems.	35.7	28.0

The 2004 Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities included questions to measure the prevalence of substance dependence or abuse as defined in the DSM-IV. These new estimates are not comparable to measures of prior drug use and related experiences in previous BJS surveys.

Abuse symptoms included repeated drug use in hazardous situations or recurrent occupational, educational, legal or social problems related to drug use. Inmates reporting any of these symptoms in the 12 months prior to their admission met the abuse criteria. Recurrent social problems due to drug use (45% of State and 34% of Federal inmates) was the most commonly reported abuse symptom.

Dependence criteria covered a range of symptoms, including behavioral, cognitive, and physiological problems. Inmates reporting three or more symptoms in the 12 months before admission met the dependence criteria. Continued use despite emotional or psychological problems was the most common symptom reported by both State (36%) and Federal (28%) inmates, followed by increasing tolerance (34% State and 28% Federal).

Note: See References for sources on measuring prevalence of substance dependence or abuse using the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition (DSM-IV).

State and Federal prisoners were more likely than other adults in the U.S. resident population to meet the criteria for drug dependence or abuse. Using the same criteria, the National Epidemiologic Survey of Alcohol and Related Conditions, 2002 (NESARC) measured the national prevalence of various substance abuse disorders. According to BJS's analysis of

NESARC data, 2% of U.S. adult residents were dependent on or abusing drugs in the last 12 months.

Diagnostic criteria	Percent of adult U.S. residents, 2002
Any drug dependence or abuse	2.0%
Dependence and abuse	0.5
Dependence only	0.1
Abuse only	1.4
No dependence or abuse	98.0

Note: Findings from the *National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions, 2002*, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. See *Methodology*.

inmates (59%) reported higher levels of drug dependence or abuse than black (44%) or Hispanic (34%) inmates.

State prisoners age 45 or older were less likely to report drug dependence or abuse than other inmates. Between 55% and 60% of the under-45 age groups met the dependence or abuse criteria, compared to 47% of inmates age 45-54, and 18% of those age 55 or older. Among Federal inmates, drug dependence or abuse declined steadily with age, from 58% of inmates 24 or younger to 21% of those age 55 or older.

Violent offenders (47%) were the only offender group in State prisons with less than half meeting the DSM-IV criteria for drug dependence or abuse. Property and drug offenders (63% of each) were the most likely to be drug dependent or abusing.

Drug offenders (52%) were the only group of Federal inmates with at least half meeting the drug dependence or abuse criteria. Property offenders (27%) reported the lowest percentage of drug dependence or abuse.

**Table 5. Prevalence of drug dependence or abuse among State and Federal prisoners, 2004**

Diagnostic criteria	Percent of prison inmates —	
	State	Federal
Any dependence or abuse	53.4%	45.5%
Dependence and abuse	34.9	27.5
Dependence only	1.2	1.2
Abuse only	17.3	16.8
No dependence or abuse*	46.6	54.5

Note: See Methodology for definition of dependence or abuse based on the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV)*.

\*Includes inmates who did not use drugs.

**Table 6. Drug dependence or abuse among State and Federal prisoners, by selected characteristics, 2004**

Characteristic	Percent of prisoners meeting drug dependence or abuse criteria —	
	State	Federal
<b>All prisoners</b>	53.4%	45.5%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	53.0%	45.7%
Female	60.2	42.8
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>		
White <sup>a</sup>	59.1%	59.2%
Black <sup>a</sup>	50.1	43.8
Hispanic	51.0	33.6
Other <sup>a,b</sup>	50.7	47.2
<b>Age</b>		
24 or younger	59.8%	58.2%
25-34	56.5	51.1
35-44	55.1	40.8
45-54	47.2	43.5
55 or older	18.3	20.6
<b>Most serious offense</b>		
Violent	46.7%	41.6%
Property	63.2	27.3
Drug	63.1	51.9
Public-order	50.2	41.2

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin.

<sup>b</sup>Includes Asians, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, and inmates who specified more than one race.

**In State prisons, violent offenders were least likely to meet criteria for drug dependence or abuse**

An estimated 60% of female and 53% of male State prisoners were dependent on or abusing drugs (table 6). White inmates in State prisons (59%) were most likely to meet the drug dependence or abuse criteria, followed by Hispanic (51%) and black (50%) inmates.

In Federal facilities 46% of male inmates and 43% of female inmates were dependent on or abusing drugs in the year prior to their admission. White

**Table 7. Criminal history of State and Federal prisoners, by drug dependence or abuse, 2004**

Characteristic	Percent of prisoners —			
	State		Federal	
	Dependence or abuse	Other inmates	Dependence or abuse	Other inmates
<b>Criminal justice status at arrest</b>				
None	51.9%	62.8%	70.1%	75.4%
Any status	48.1	37.2	29.9	24.6
On parole	20.9	15.9	12.1	12.6
On probation	26.7	21.0	17.2	11.7
<b>Criminal history</b>				
None	15.6%	32.1%	25.2%	42.8%
Priors	84.4	67.9	74.8	57.2
Violent recidivists	46.8	40.6	28.1	23.5
Drug recidivists only	4.0	2.8	10.2	6.8
Other recidivists*	33.6	24.5	36.5	26.9
<b>Number of prior probation/incarceration sentences</b>				
0	16.9%	34.0%	27.1%	44.2%
1	14.1	17.4	14.4	16.8
2	15.8	16.4	16.1	14.6
3-5	28.5	21.7	25.9	16.5
6-10	16.5	7.9	11.4	5.9
11 or more	8.2	2.7	5.2	2.0

\*Includes recidivists with unknown prior offense types.

**Half of drug dependent or abusing inmates in State prisons reported three or more prior sentences**

Nearly half (48%) of State prisoners meeting the DSM-IV criteria for drug dependence or abuse were on some form of criminal justice status (probation, parole, or escape) at the time of their arrest, compared to 37% of other State inmates (table 7). Federal inmates meeting the DSM-IV criteria (30%) were slightly more likely to have been on a criminal justice status at the time of arrest than other Federal inmates (25%).

Drug dependent or abusing inmates in State prisons were more likely than other prisoners to have a prior offense (84% compared to 68%). More than half (53%) of drug dependent or abusing State prisoners reported at least three prior sentences; a third (32%) of other State prisoners had three or more prior sentences.

**1 in 7 drug dependent or abusing inmates in State prison were homeless in year before admission**

Drug dependent or abusing inmates were more likely than other inmates to report troubled personal backgrounds, including experiences of physical or sexual abuse, homelessness, unemployment, parental substance abuse, and parental incarceration.

Drug dependent or abusing inmates in State prisons (14%) were twice as likely as other inmates (6%) to report being homeless during the year before admission to prison (table 8). They also reported lower levels of employment in the month prior to admission (68% compared to 78% of other inmates).

While growing up, 42% of drug dependent or abusing State prisoners received public assistance, 45% lived in single-parent homes, and 41% had

a substance-abusing parent. By comparison, 31% of other inmates received public assistance, 39% lived in single-parent homes, and 24% had a substance-abusing parent.

Reports of prior physical or sexual abuse were also higher among drug dependent or abusing State prisoners (23%) than among other inmates (15%).

State prisoners who were drug dependent or abusing were about twice as likely as other inmates to report past incarceration of either a mother (8% compared to 4%) or father (21% compared to 13%). A majority of drug dependent or abusing inmates (53%) reported the prior incarceration of a member of their immediate family (parent, sibling, child, or spouse), compared to 40% of other inmates.

**Participation in drug abuse programs rose in both State and Federal prison since 1997**

The percentage of recent drug users in State prison who reported participation in a variety of drug abuse programs rose from 34% in 1997 to 39% in 2004 (table 9). This increase was the result of the growing percentage of recent drug users who reported taking part in self-help groups, peer counseling and drug abuse education programs (up from 28% to 34%). Over the same period, the percentage of recent drug users taking part in drug treatment programs with a trained professional was almost unchanged (15% in 1997, 14% in 2004).

Participation in drug abuse programs also increased among Federal inmates who had used drugs in the month before their offense, from 39% in 1997 to 45% in 2004. While there was no change in percentage of these inmates who had undergone drug treatment with a trained professional (15% in both years), the percentage taking part in other drug abuse programs rose from 32% in 1997 to 39% in 2004.

**Table 8. Family background of State and Federal prison inmates, by drug dependence or abuse criteria, 2004**

Characteristic	Percent of prisoners —			
	State		Federal	
	Dependence or abuse	Other inmates	Dependence or abuse	Other inmates
<b>Homeless in past year</b>	13.9%	5.7%	5.7%	3.3%
<b>Employed in month before admission to jail</b>	68.2%	77.6%	67.3%	76.8%
Full-time	56.4	67.0	55.6	67.0
Part-time	9.6	8.5	9.1	8.1
<b>Ever abused</b>	23.4%	15.4%	14.0%	8.8%
Physically abused	19.6	12.2	11.8	7.0
Sexually abused	10.1	7.0	5.0	3.5
<b>While growing up —</b>				
Ever received public assistance*	42.2%	31.5%	35.3%	23.4%
Ever lived in a foster home, agency, or institution	17.6	10.9	8.6	7.4
Lived most of the time with—				
Both parents	41.0%	48.5%	43.9%	51.1%
One parent	45.1	39.3	42.8	36.8
Someone else	11.4	10.5	12.4	11.6
Parents or guardians ever abused —				
Alcohol	24.1%	16.8%	23.8%	13.3%
Drugs	3.4	1.6	2.3	1.4
Both alcohol and drugs	13.9	5.3	10.0	2.6
Neither	58.6	76.3	63.9	82.7
<b>Family member ever incarcerated —</b>	53.4%	40.2%	49.7%	34.8%
Mother	7.5	3.9	4.9	3.4
Father	21.2	12.8	16.5	8.9
Brother	36.3	29.0	33.1	24.2
Sister	7.3	4.9	5.7	4.1
Child	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.3
Spouse	1.8	0.8	2.6	1.7

\*Public assistance includes public housing, AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid, WIC, and other welfare programs.

**Number of Federal prisoners taking part in drug abuse programs up 90% between 1997 and 2004**

With the continued growth in the State prisoner population, the estimated number of inmates reporting drug use in the month before the offense rose from 598,700 in 1997 to 686,700 in 2004. Among these users the number who took part in any drug abuse programs rose from 205,300 to 269,200.

More than 9,000 additional State inmates reported receiving professional drug treatment. However, the largest increase was seen in the number of inmates taking part in self-help/peer counseling groups and drug abuse education classes, up 62,000 since 1997.

	Estimated number of prisoners who used drugs in the month before the offense —	
	2004	1997
<b>Any drug treatment or programs since admission</b>		
State	269,200	205,300
Federal	29,400	15,500
<b>Treatment</b>		
State	96,800	87,400
Federal	9,900	6,100
<b>Other programs</b>		
State	231,400	169,400
Federal	25,200	12,700

During the period, the estimated number of Federal inmates who reported drug use in the month before their offense rose by 25,000 inmates from 39,900 to 64,900. In 2004, an estimated 9,900 Federal prisoners with a recent drug use history had been in a drug treatment program with a trained professional, up from an estimated 6,100 in 1997.

The number of inmates taking part in self-help or peer counseling groups and drug abuse education classes increased by more than 12,000 inmates. The number of recent drug users receiving some type of drug abuse program in Federal prisons rose by 90% (from 15,500 to 29,400 prisoners).

**Over 250,000 dependent/abusing State inmates took part in drug abuse programs since admission**

In 2004, about 642,000 State prisoners were drug dependent or abusing in the year before their admission to prison. An estimated 258,900 of these inmates (or 40%) had taken part in some type of drug abuse program (table 10). These inmates were more than twice as likely to report participation in self-help or peer counseling groups and education programs (35%) than to receive drug treatment from a trained professional (15%).

In Federal prison, a higher percentage of drug dependent or abusing inmates (49%) reported taking part in some type of drug abuse programs. Nearly 1 in 3 took part in drug abuse education classes, and 1 in 5 had participated in self-help or peer counseling groups. Overall, 17% took part in drug treatment programs with a trained professional, and 41% had participated in other drug abuse programs.

**Table 9. Drug treatment or program participation since admission among State and Federal prisoners who used drugs in the month before the offense, 1997 and 2004**

Type of drug treatment or program since admission	Percent of prisoners who used drugs in the month before the offense —			
	State		Federal	
	2004	1997	2004	1997
<b>Any drug treatment or programs</b>	39.2%	34.3%	45.3%	38.8%
<b>Treatment</b>	14.1%	14.6%	15.2%	15.4%
Residential facility or unit	9.2	8.8	8.7	10.9
Counseling by a professional	6.0	6.0	6.8	5.5
Detoxification unit	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.3
Maintenance drug	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.4
<b>Other programs</b>	33.7%	28.3%	38.8%	31.7%
Self-help group/peer counseling	26.9	23.1	20.8	15.8
Education program	17.0	14.1	28.1	23.8

**Table 10. Drug treatment or program participation since admission among State and Federal prisoners who met drug dependence or abuse criteria, 2004**

Type of drug treatment or program since admission	Percent of prisoners meeting criteria for drug dependence or abuse —	
	State	Federal
	<b>Any drug treatment or programs</b>	40.3%
<b>Treatment</b>	14.8%	17.4%
Residential facility or unit	9.5	9.2
Counseling by a professional	6.5	8.7
Detoxification unit	0.8	0.9
Maintenance drug	0.3	0.4
<b>Other programs</b>	34.8%	41.0%
Self-help group/peer counseling	28.0	22.1
Education program	17.8	30.2

## Methodology

The findings in this report are based on the data in the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004. Conducted every 5 or 6 years since 1974 (Federal facilities were added for the first time in 1991), the inmate surveys are the only national source of detailed information on criminal offenders, particularly special populations such as drug and alcohol users and offenders who have mental health problems.

The survey design included a stratified two-stage sample where facilities were selected in the first stage and inmates to be interviewed in the second stage. In the second sampling stage, interviewers from the Census Bureau visited each selected facility and systematically selected a sample of inmates. Computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) was used to conduct the interviews.

### *Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004*

The State prison sample was selected from a universe of 1,585 facilities. A total of 287 State prisons participated in the survey; 2 refused, 11 were closed or had no inmates to survey, and 1 was erroneously included in the universe. A total of 14,499 inmates in the State facilities were interviewed; 1,653 inmates refused to participate, resulting in a second-stage nonresponse rate of 10.2%.

The Federal prison sample was selected from 148 Federal prisons and satellite facilities. Thirty-nine of the 40 prisons selected participated in the survey. After the initial sample of inmates was drawn, a secondary sample of 1 in 3 drug offenders was selected. A total of 3,686 inmates in Federal facilities were interviewed and 567 refused to participate, resulting in a second-stage nonresponse rate of 13.3%.

## Accuracy of survey estimates

The accuracy of the survey estimates depends on sampling and measurement errors. Sampling errors occur by chance because a sample of inmates rather than all inmates were interviewed. Measurement error can be attributed to many sources, such as nonresponse, recall difficulties, differ-

ences in the interpretation of questions among inmates, and processing errors.

The sampling error, as measured by an estimated standard error, varies by the size of the estimate and the size of the base population. These standard errors may be used to construct confidence intervals around percentages.

**Appendix Table 1. Standard errors of the estimated percentages, State prison inmates, 2004**

Base of the estimate	Estimated percentages					
	98 or 2	90 or 10	80 or 20	70 or 30	60 or 40	50
1,000	7.14	15.31	20.41	23.39	25.00	25.52
2,000	5.05	10.83	14.43	16.54	17.68	18.04
2,500	4.52	9.68	12.91	14.79	15.81	16.14
5,000	3.20	6.85	9.13	10.46	11.18	11.41
10,000	2.26	4.84	6.46	7.40	7.91	8.07
20,000	1.60	3.42	4.56	5.23	5.59	5.71
30,000	1.30	2.80	3.73	4.27	4.56	4.66
50,000	1.01	2.17	2.89	3.31	3.54	3.61
82,794 <sup>a</sup>	0.79	1.68	2.24	2.57	2.75	2.80
100,000	0.71	1.53	2.04	2.34	2.50	2.55
200,000	0.51	1.08	1.44	1.65	1.77	1.80
400,000	0.36	0.77	1.02	1.17	1.25	1.28
600,000	0.29	0.63	0.83	0.95	1.02	1.04
800,000	0.25	0.54	0.72	0.83	0.88	0.90
1,143,400 <sup>b</sup>	0.21	0.45	0.60	0.69	0.74	0.75
1,226,200	0.20	0.44	0.58	0.67	0.71	0.73

<sup>a</sup>The total weighted estimate of female State prisoners, 2004.

<sup>b</sup>The total weighted estimate of male State prisoners, 2004.

**Appendix Table 2. Standard errors of the estimated percentages, Federal prison inmates, 2004**

Base of the estimate	Estimated percentages					
	98 or 2	90 or 10	80 or 20	70 or 30	60 or 40	50
200	10.01	21.44	28.59	32.75	35.01	35.74
500	6.33	13.56	18.08	20.71	22.14	22.60
1,000	4.47	9.59	12.79	14.65	15.66	15.98
2,000	3.16	6.78	9.04	10.36	11.07	11.30
5,000	2.00	4.29	5.72	6.55	7.00	7.15
7,500	1.63	3.50	4.67	5.35	5.72	5.84
9,063 <sup>a</sup>	1.49	3.19	4.25	4.87	5.20	5.31
12,500	1.27	2.71	3.62	4.14	4.43	4.52
15,000	1.16	2.48	3.30	3.78	4.04	4.13
25,000	0.89	1.92	2.56	2.93	3.13	3.20
40,000	0.71	1.52	2.02	2.32	2.48	2.53
50,000	0.63	1.36	1.81	2.07	2.21	2.26
75,000	0.52	1.11	1.48	1.69	1.81	1.85
100,000	0.45	0.96	1.28	1.46	1.57	1.60
120,237 <sup>b</sup>	0.41	0.87	1.17	1.34	1.43	1.46
129,300	0.39	0.84	1.12	1.29	1.38	1.41

<sup>a</sup>The total weighted estimate of female Federal prisoners, 2004.

<sup>b</sup>The total weighted estimate of male Federal prisoners, 2004.

Estimates of the standard errors have been calculated for the 2004 surveys (see appendix tables 1 and 2 for standard errors; see appendix table 3 for population base estimates). For example, the 95% confidence interval around the percentage of Federal inmates in 2004 who had used drugs in the month before their current offense is approximately 50.2% plus or minus 1.96 times 1.41% (or 47.4% to 53.0%).

A detailed description of the methodology for the State and Federal Prison survey, including standard error tables and links to other reports or findings will be available at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu> in Winter 2007. A detailed description of the methodology for the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails is available at <http://webapp.icpsr.umich.edu/cocoon/NACJD-STUDY/04359.xml>.

#### *Measures of drug dependence and abuse in the general population*

Caution should be used when making comparisons between prison inmates and the general population based on the 12-month DSM-IV structured interview. There are significant variations in questionnaire design and data analysis. For example, questions on the severity or duration of symptoms and questions about whether symptoms are due to bereavement, substance use, or a medical condition may vary from survey to survey.

For details on the methodology used in the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions, sponsored by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, see the Data Reference Manual, <http://niaaa.census.gov/>. For additional information on the prevalence of drug dependence and abuse in the general population, see the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh.htm>.

**Appendix table 3. Base estimates for selected characteristics of State and Federal prisoners, 2004**

Characteristic	Base estimate, number of prisoners, 2004	
	State	Federal
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	1,143,400	120,200
Female	82,800	9,100
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>		
White, non-Hispanic	431,500	33,600
Black, non-Hispanic	496,900	56,000
Hispanic	222,700	32,400
<b>Age</b>		
24 or younger	212,400	11,600
25-34	405,500	49,700
35-44	373,700	37,300
45-54	172,700	22,200
55 or older	61,900	8,500
<b>Most serious offense</b>		
Violent	579,100	18,600
Property	226,800	8,300
Drug	257,900	70,600
Public-order	143,500	26,200
<b>Drug dependent/abusing in the 12 months prior to admission</b>		
Yes	642,500	57,200
No	558,100	68,300

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For the State and Federal prisoners survey, at the U.S. Census Bureau Steven M. Bittner, Colette Heiston, and Kenneth Mayo carried out questionnaire design, data collection and processing, under the supervision of Marilyn M. Monahan, Demographic Surveys Division. Renee Arion programmed the questionnaire and Dave Keating programmed the listing instrument, under the supervision of Rob Wallace, Technologies Management Office. Programming assistance in the Demographic Surveys Division was provided by Chris Alaura, Mildred Ballenger, Bach-Loan Nguyen, and Scott Raudabaugh, under the supervision of David Watt.

Dave Hornick and Danielle N. Castelo, Demographic Surveys Methods Division, under the supervision of Thomas F. Moore, designed the sample and weighting specifications. Sydnee Chatten-Reynolds and Luis Padilla, Field Division, under the supervision of Richard Ning, coordinated the field operations. The affiliations for the Census Bureau date to the time of the survey.

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This report in portable document format and in ASCII and its related statistical data and tables are available at the BJS World Wide Web Internet site: <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>>.

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