

# **Bahamas National Household Drug Survey**

*United States Embassy*

*Organization of American States (OAS)*

*Inter-American Drug Abuse Commission (CICAD)*

*Ministry of Health*

*Ministry of National Security*

*Department of Statistics*

*July 2017*

ATLANTIC OCEAN

# *Scope of the Drug Problem*

# Worldwide

- A quarter of a billion (5%) of adults have used drugs at least once in 2015
- 0.6 percent of global adult population suffered from drug use disorders
- Past year users:
  - 183 million cannabis
  - 17 million cocaine
  - 22 million ecstasy

*Source: UNODC World Drug Report 2017*

# *Caribbean Region*

- Mainly secondary school student drug prevalence surveys
- Users in past month (current) 2010:
  - 37% alcohol
  - 5% cigarettes
  - 4% Inhalants
  - 5% marijuana
  - Cocaine and crack, less than 1% lifetime use


Source: *CICAD Comparative Analysis of Student Drug Use in Caribbean Countries, 2010*

# *Bahamas*

- Again, most recent prevalence surveys were youth targeted
  - 2011 Secondary School Drug Survey; 2013 Global School Health Survey
  - Most common drug remains alcohol; about a third drank in past 30 days
  - 11%-14% ever used marijuana
  - 2%-5% smoked cigarettes in past month

# ***Bahamas***

- Last adult household prevalence survey was in 1991 (16-59 Years); percent EVER using:
  - 74% Alcohol
  - 39% Tobacco
  - 14% Marijuana
  - 6% Cocaine
  - 1% Tranquilizers
  - 3% “Pills”
- Rates higher for young males 18-29 years



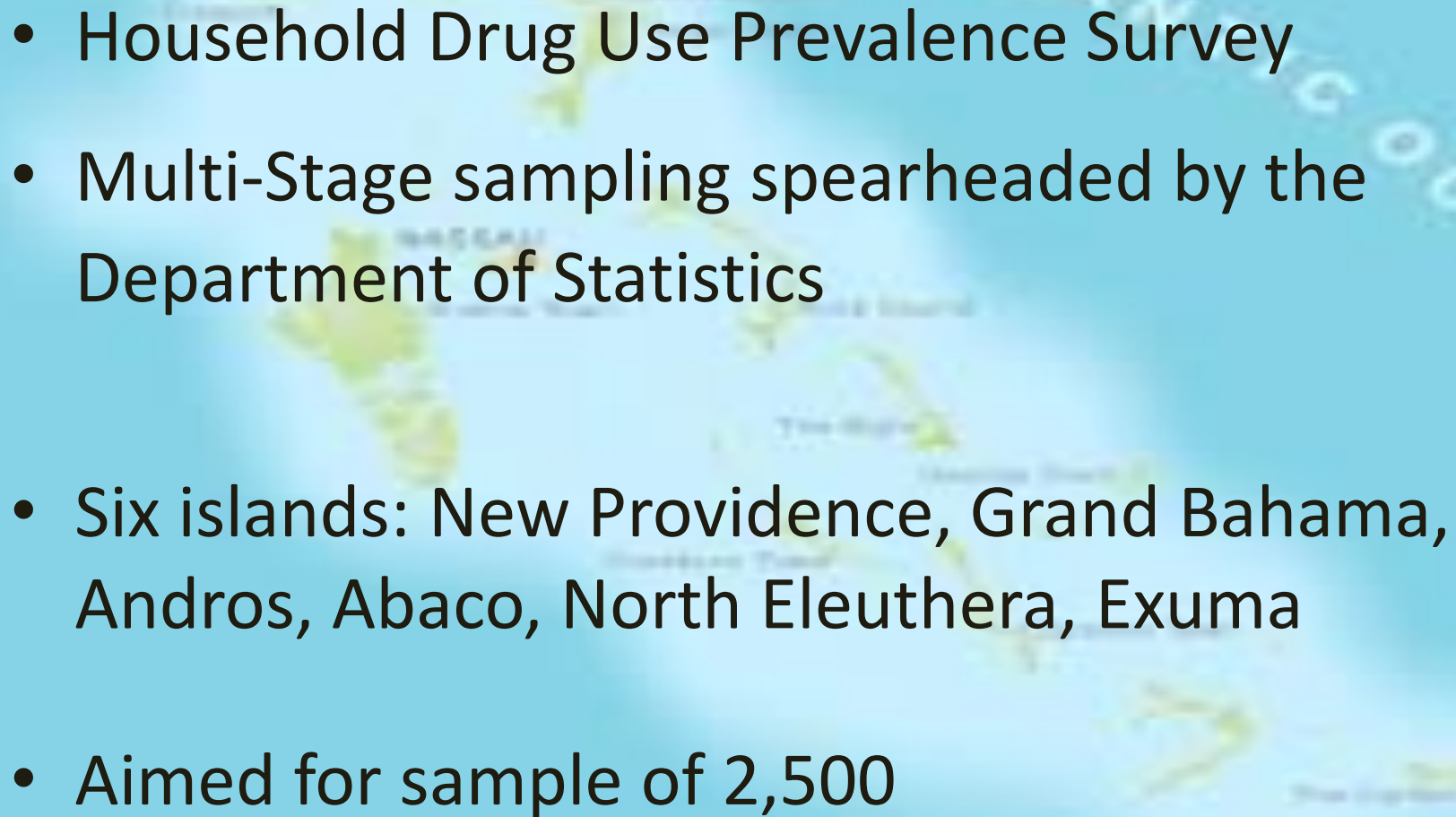
***Bahamas National  
Household Drug  
Survey***



A stylized map of the Atlantic Ocean region, showing the eastern coast of North and South America on the left and the western coast of Europe and Africa on the right. The map is rendered in a light blue and yellow color scheme. The word "ATLANTIC OCEAN" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, curving along the top right edge of the map. Overlaid on the map is the word "Methods" in a large, bold, italicized, dark brown font. In the bottom left corner, there is a small, stylized compass rose. At the bottom center, the text "facts.co" is visible in a small, white font.

# *Methods*



- 
- Household Drug Use Prevalence Survey
  - Multi-Stage sampling spearheaded by the Department of Statistics
  - Six islands: New Providence, Grand Bahama, Andros, Abaco, North Eleuthera, Exuma
  - Aimed for sample of 2,500

# *Sampling Steps*


Used constituencies on each island as  
Supervisory Districts (SD)



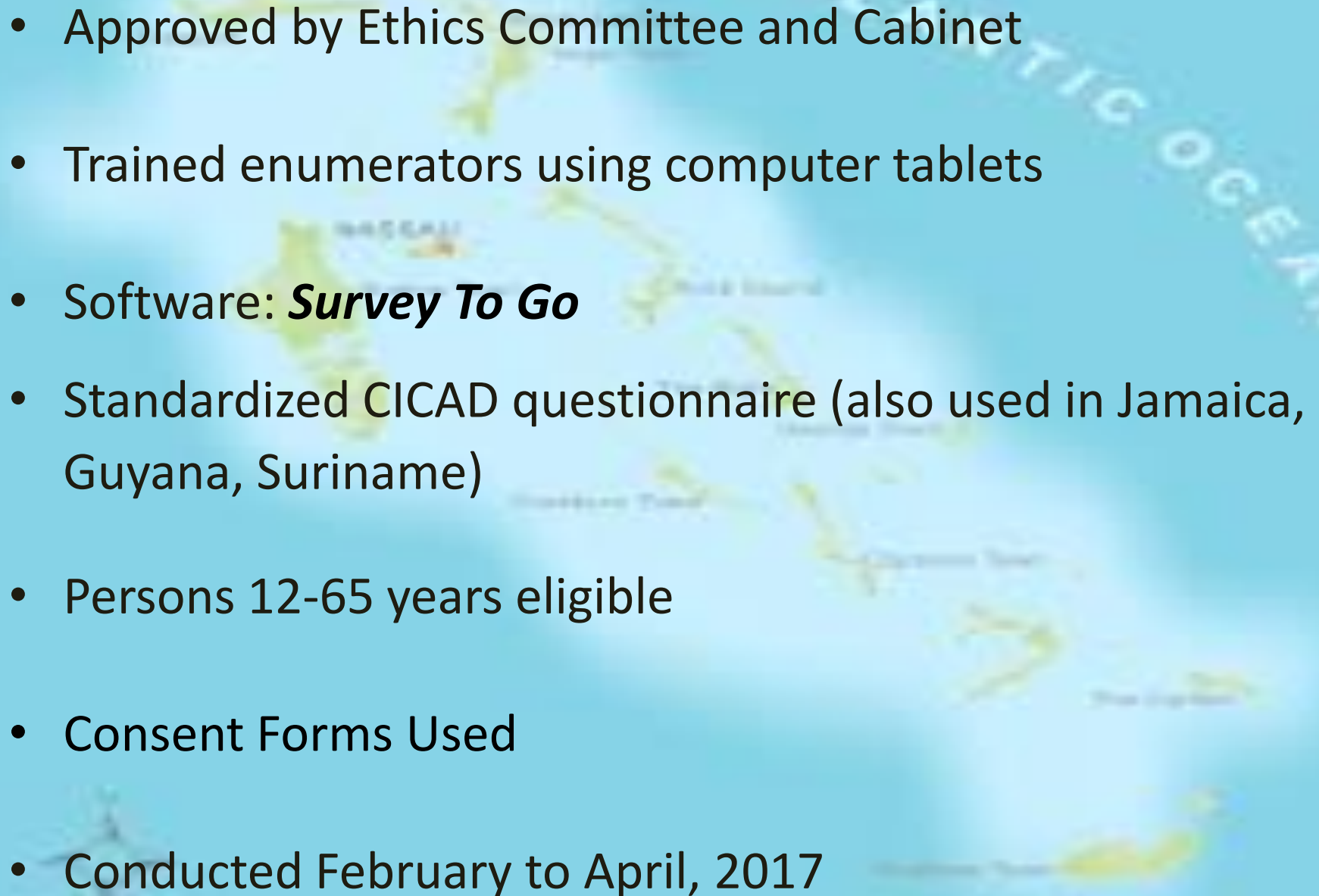
Randomly chosen Enumeration Districts  
(EDs) within each SD



Systematically selected houses in each ED  
(e.g. every 4<sup>th</sup> house, with a random start)



Randomly chosen individual 12-65 years in  
each selected household (Kish method)

- 
- Approved by Ethics Committee and Cabinet
  - Trained enumerators using computer tablets
  - Software: ***Survey To Go***
  - Standardized CICAD questionnaire (also used in Jamaica, Guyana, Suriname)
  - Persons 12-65 years eligible
  - Consent Forms Used
  - Conducted February to April, 2017

# Questionnaire

- Questionnaire consisted of 11 main sections:
  - Demographics
  - Perceived risk of alcohol and drug use
  - Use of alcohol and drugs
    - Frequency
    - Quantity
    - Expenditure
    - Age at first use
  - Perceived use by family, friends, and neighbourhood
  - Treatment
  - Opinion of government response and future possible marijuana laws

# ***Analysis***

- Analysis reflects survey design
- Data weighted to represent population
- Used Excel, SPSS and Stata software
- Present mainly descriptive statistics today



# *Results*

# Demographics

- n = 2,533
  - Response rate of around **70%**
- 52% Female
- Average age 36 years
- 94% Black; 90% born in The Bahamas
- 34% Baptist; 11% Catholic; 11% Anglican
- 56% Single, 31% Married, 6% Divorced or Separated



# ***Socio-Economic Status***

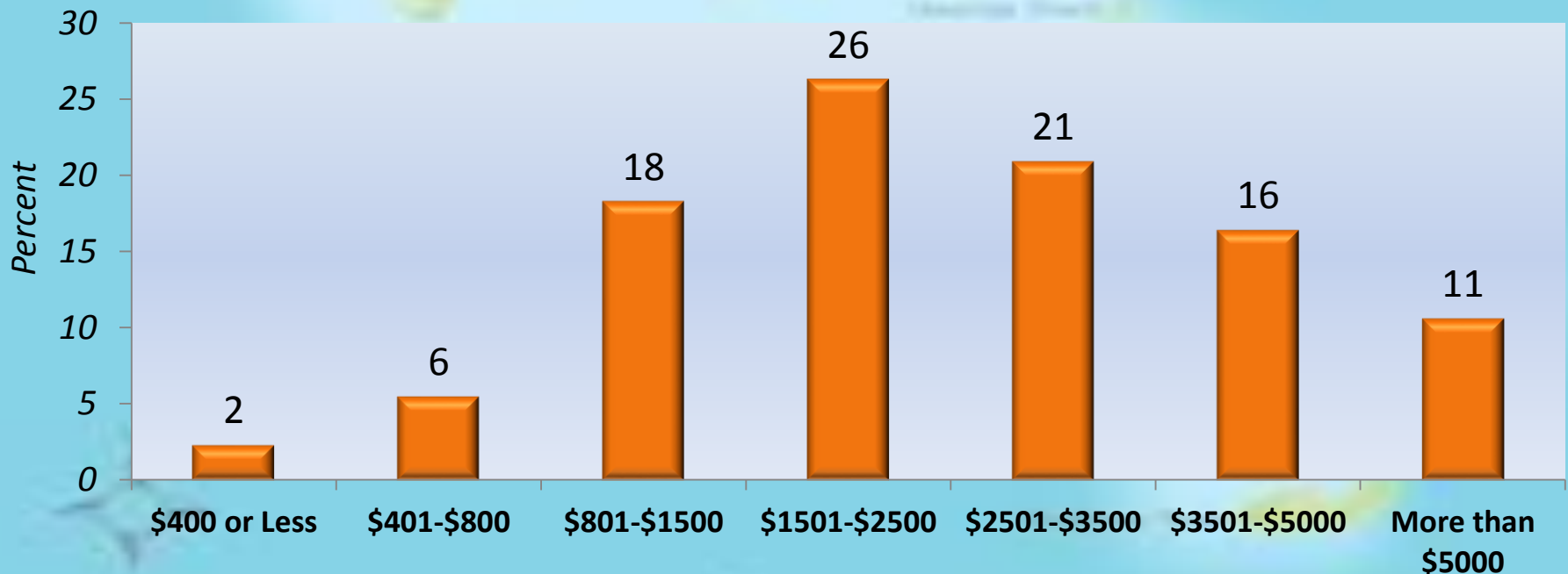


- Highest Education
  - 54% Completed High School
  - 18% College/University
  - 10% Primary School
  - 4% Vocational Training
- Employment
  - 62% Working
  - 15% Unemployed
  - 14% Students
  - 4% Retired, independent, etc.

# *Socio-Economic Status*

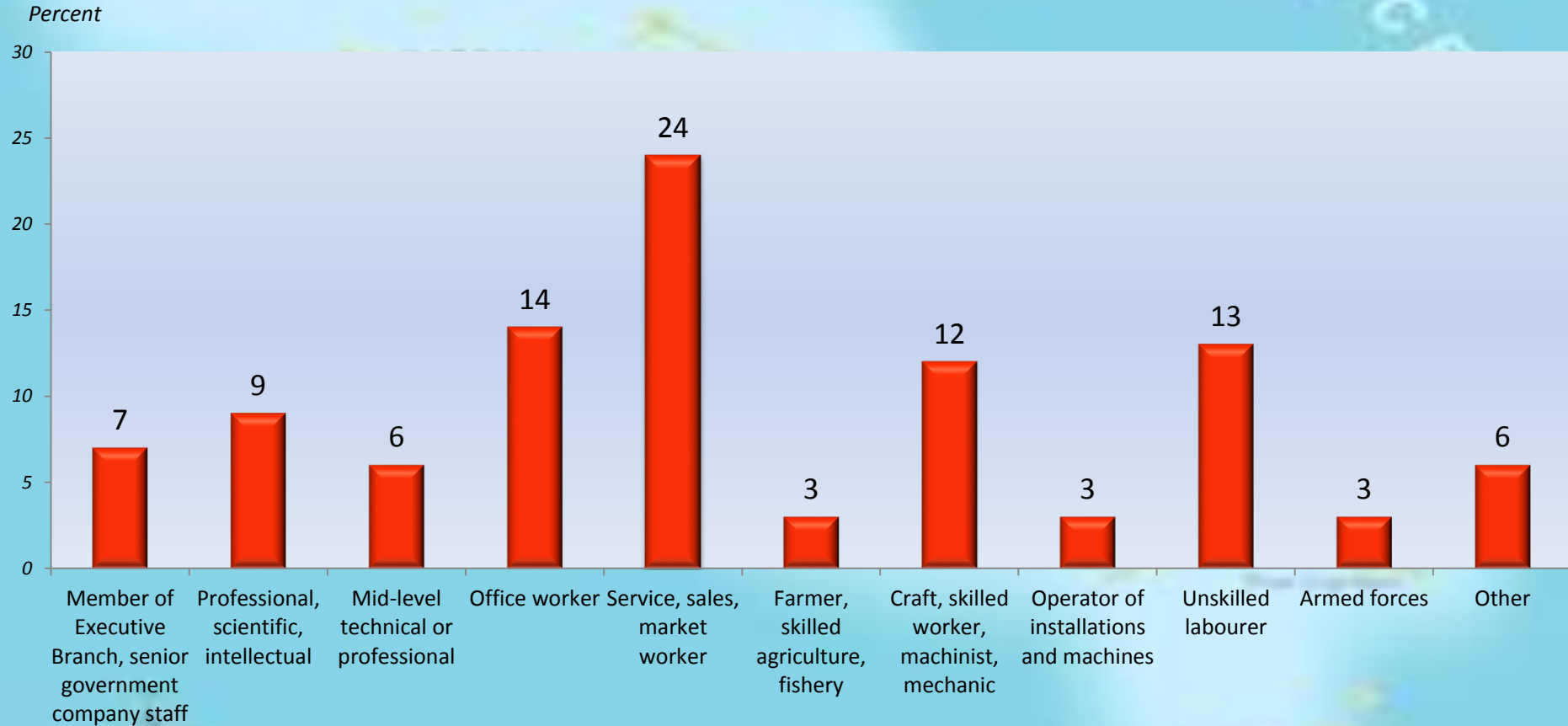
- 40% head of their household
  - Most (61%) heads of households were male
- Income

**Household Monthly Income**



# Socio-Economic Status

## Percent of Job Groupings



The background is a blurred map of the Atlantic Ocean region, showing the eastern coast of North and South America and the western coast of Europe and Africa. The text "ATLANTIC OCEAN" is visible in the upper right. The main title "Drug Use Prevalence" is centered in a large, bold, dark font. A compass rose is in the bottom left, and the "facts.cc" logo is at the bottom center.

# Drug Use Prevalence



# Alcohol

## Perceived High Risk of Alcohol Consumption



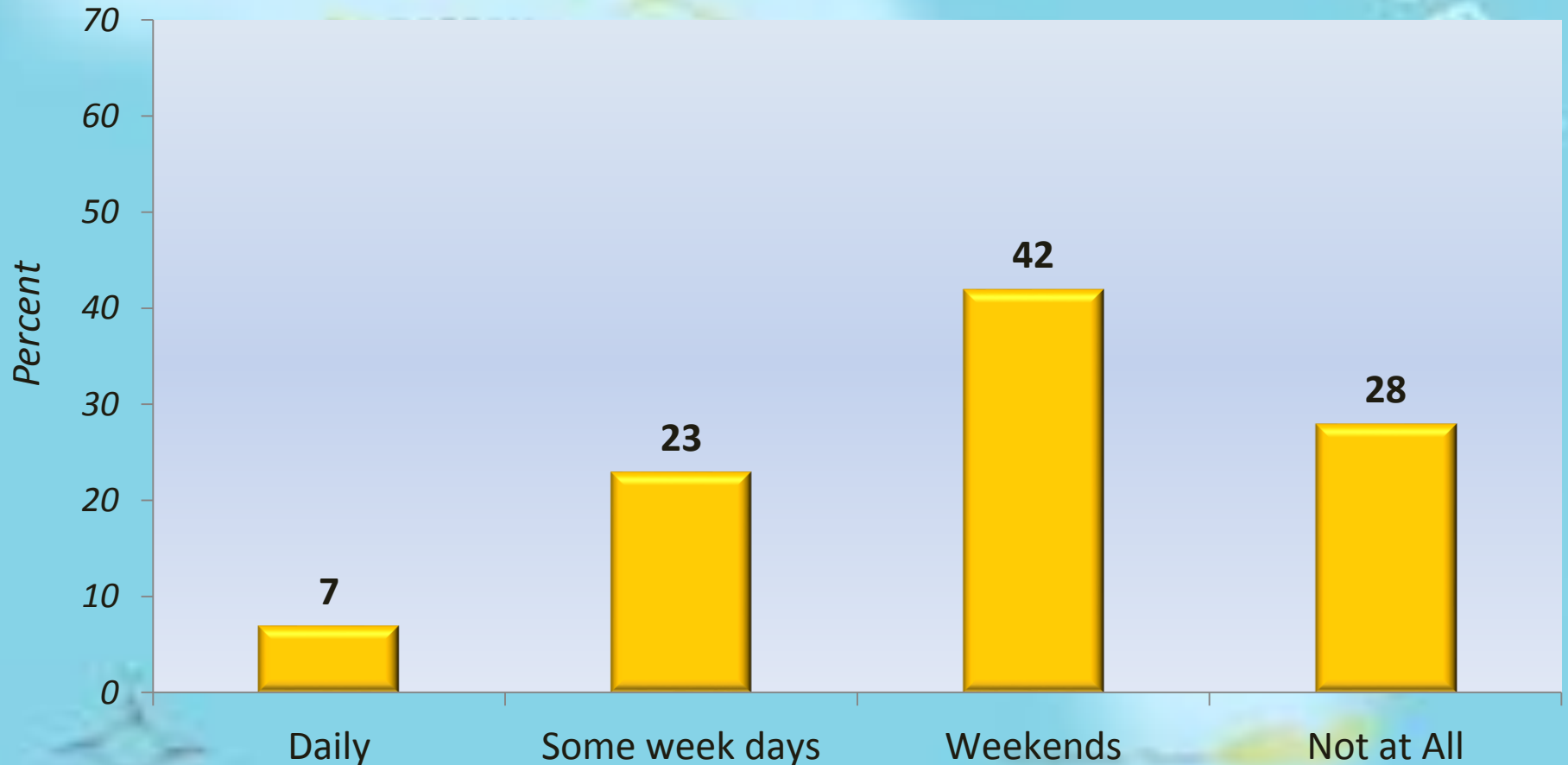
# *Alcohol*

- 74% have drunk alcohol in their life
  - 78% Males, 71% Females
- Average age at first drink is 18 years
- 55% drank in the past year
- 43% are current alcohol consumers (drank in the past 30 days)
  - 52% Males, 34% Females



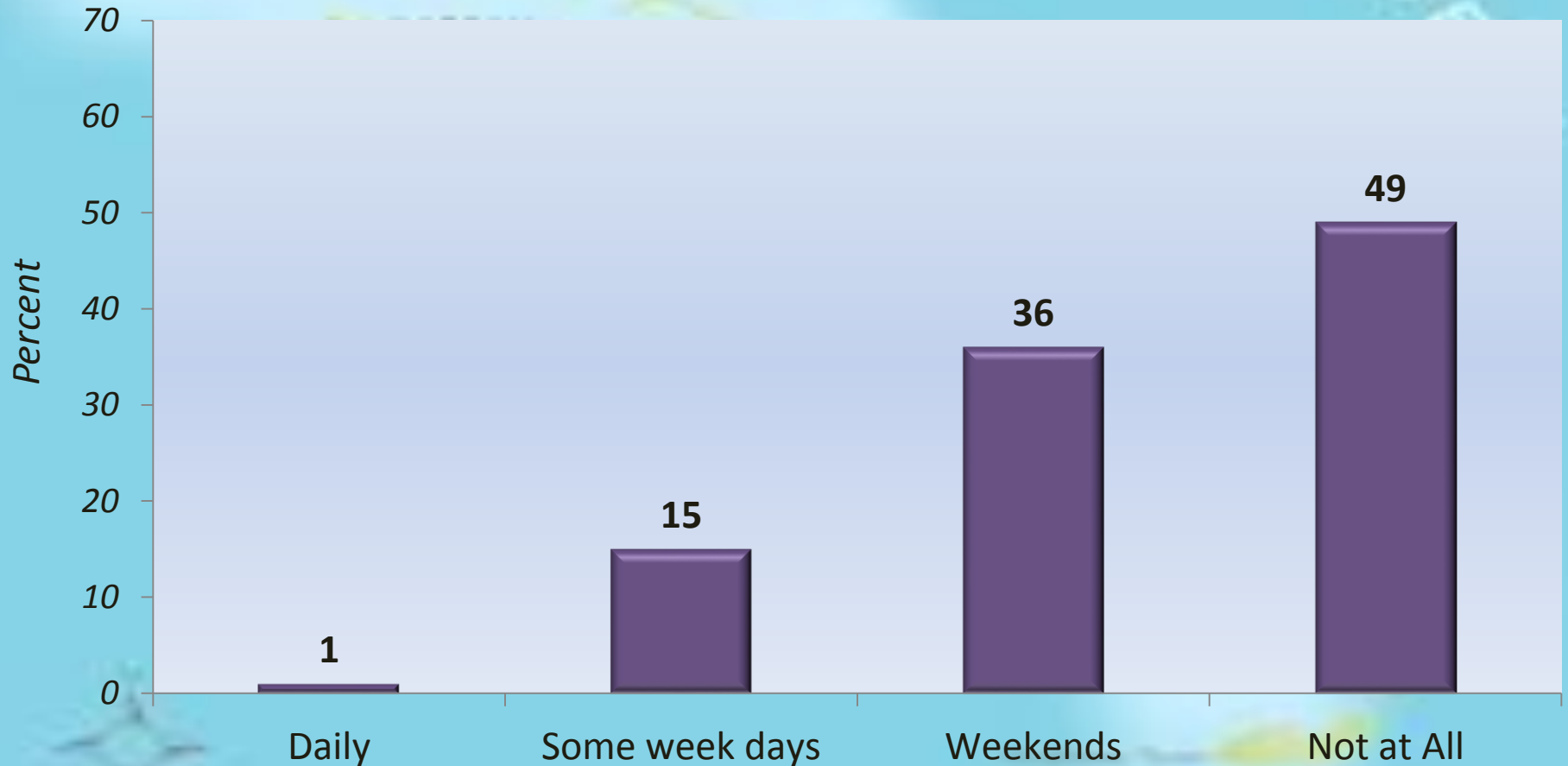
# *Beverage Types and Frequency*

## Low Alcohol Content (Beer, Guinness, Breezers)



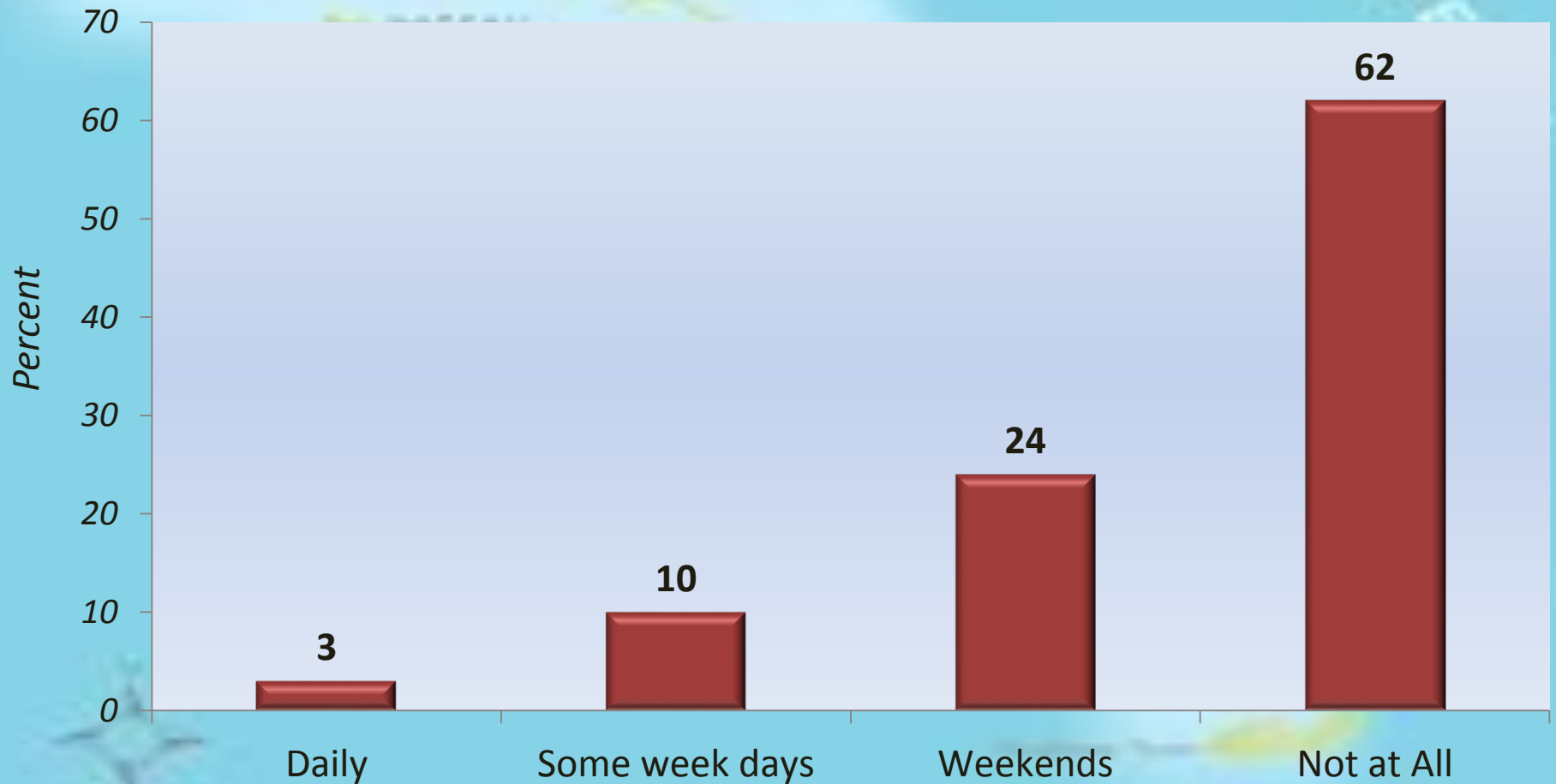
# *Beverage Types and Frequency*

## Medium Alcohol Content (Wine, Bailey's)



# *Beverage Types and Frequency*

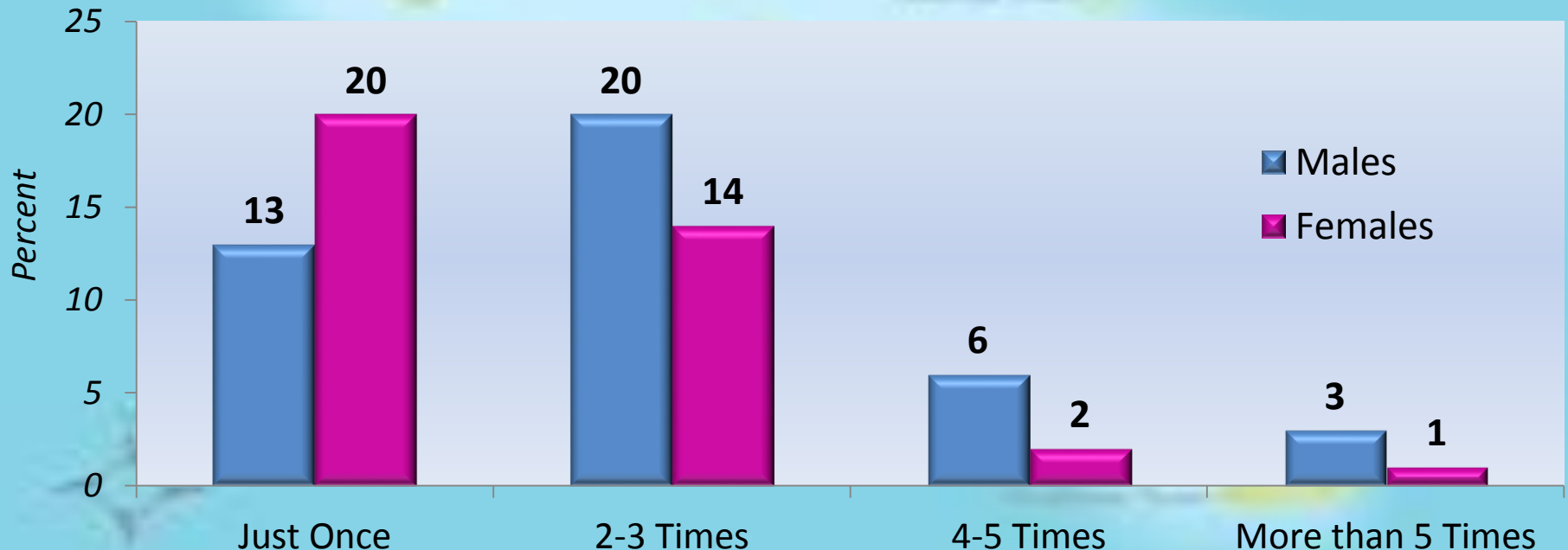
## High Alcohol Content (Whiskey, Rum, Vodka, Gin)



# High Consumption

- Around one out of five (22%) have gotten drunk at least one day in the past month
- Approximately one out of five (19%) spent more than \$50 on alcohol in the past month
- Binge drinking, 4 (females)/5 (males) or more drinks on one occasion:

**Binge Drinking in Past Two Weeks**



# Alcohol Problems

## Selected Alcohol Drinking Consequences Occurring at least Monthly



# ***Alcohol Problems cont'd.***

- 6% have injured themselves or someone else as result of drinking
  - At least 4,000 injuries a year
- 21% have driven a vehicle in past year while under influence of alcohol
- 7% had friends, relatives or a doctor concerned about their drinking
- 65% (of all persons) have relatives or friends who get drunk
  - Most know two or more

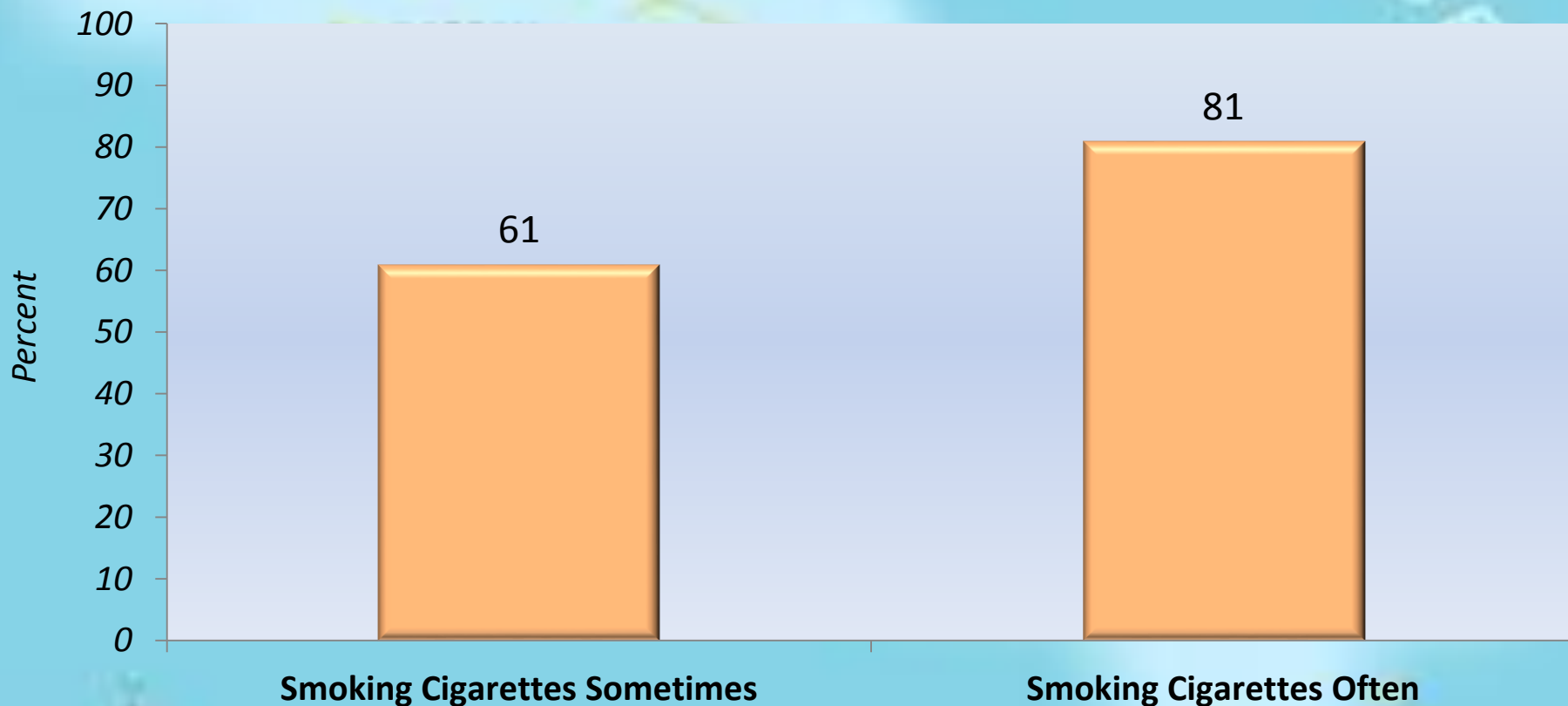






# Tobacco

## Perceived High Risk of Cigarette Consumption

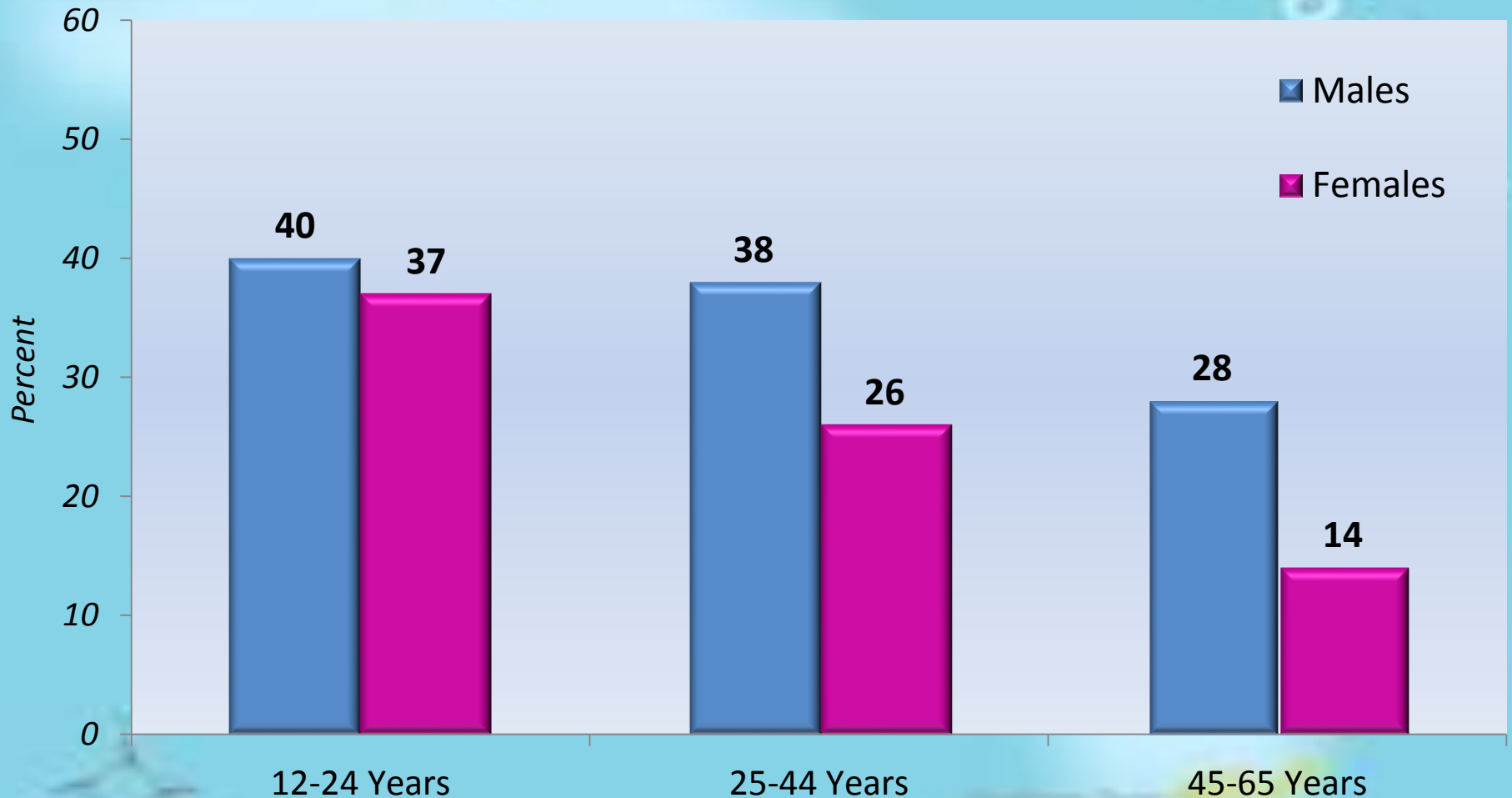


# Tobacco

- 21% have smoked tobacco in their life
  - 33% Males, 9% Females
- Average age of first smoke is 18 years
- 7% are current smokers
  - 12% Males, 2% Females
  - Of current smokers, 56% smoke on a daily basis
- One out of seven smokers spend more than \$50 a month on cigarettes

# Who are the Current Smokers?

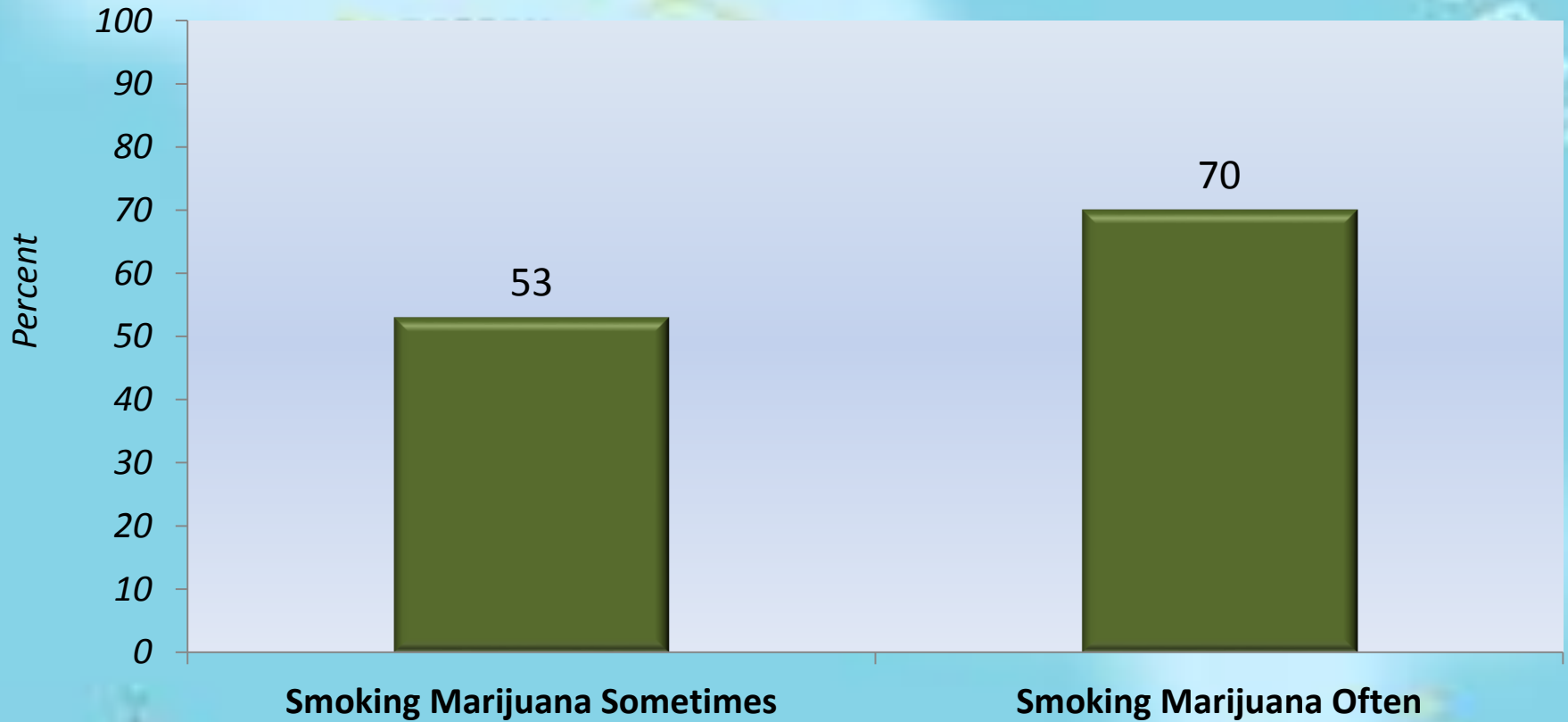
Percent of Tobacco Smokers who Smoked in Past Month by Age and Sex





# *Marijuana*

## Perceived High Risk of Smoking Marijuana

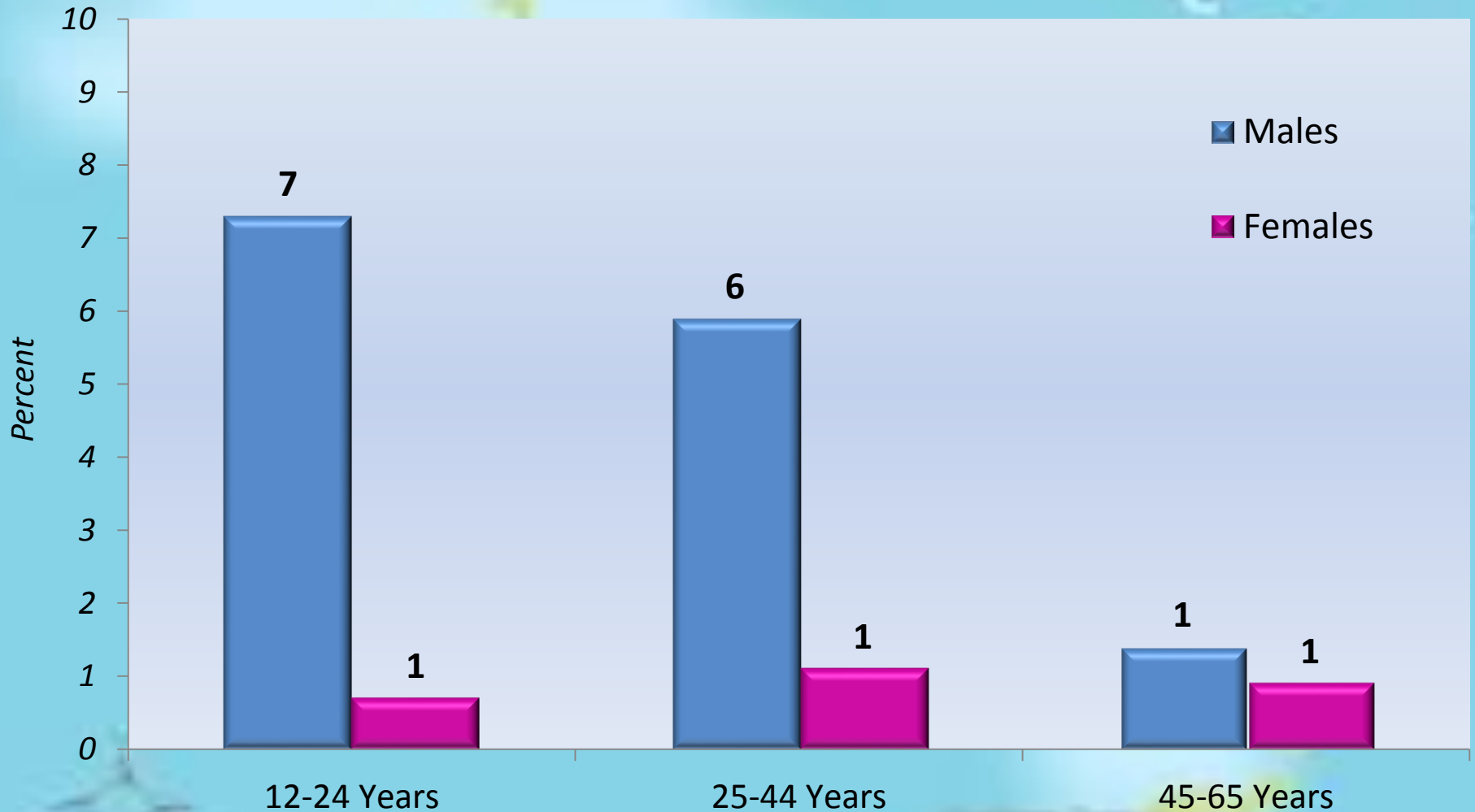


# ***Marijuana***

- 13% have smoked marijuana in their life
  - 20% Males, 7% Females
- Average age of first marijuana smoke is 17 years
- 3% smoked marijuana in the past year
- 3% are current marijuana smokers
  - 5% Males, 1% Females

# Who are the Current Marijuana Smokers?

Percent of Males and Females who Smoked in Past Month

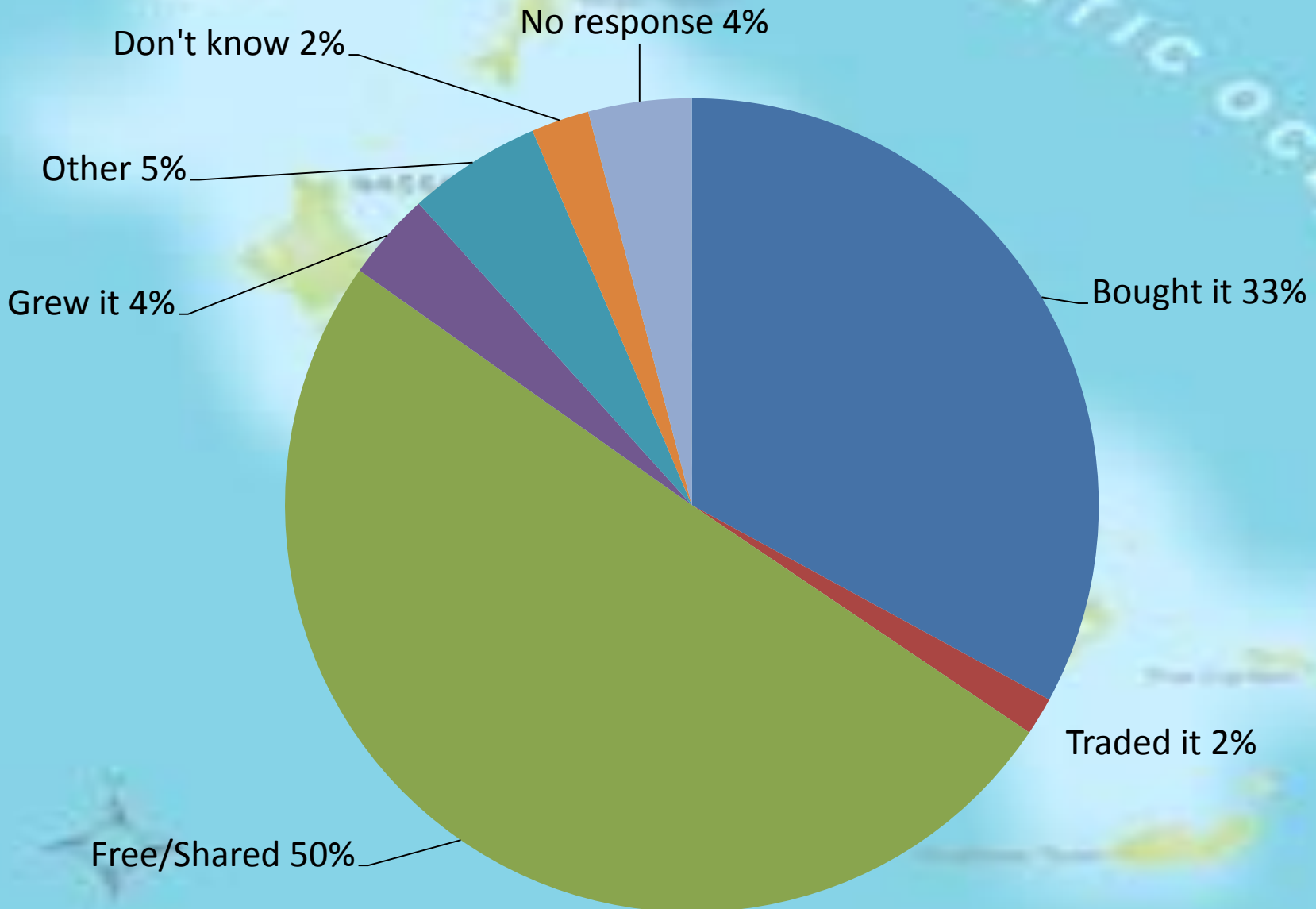




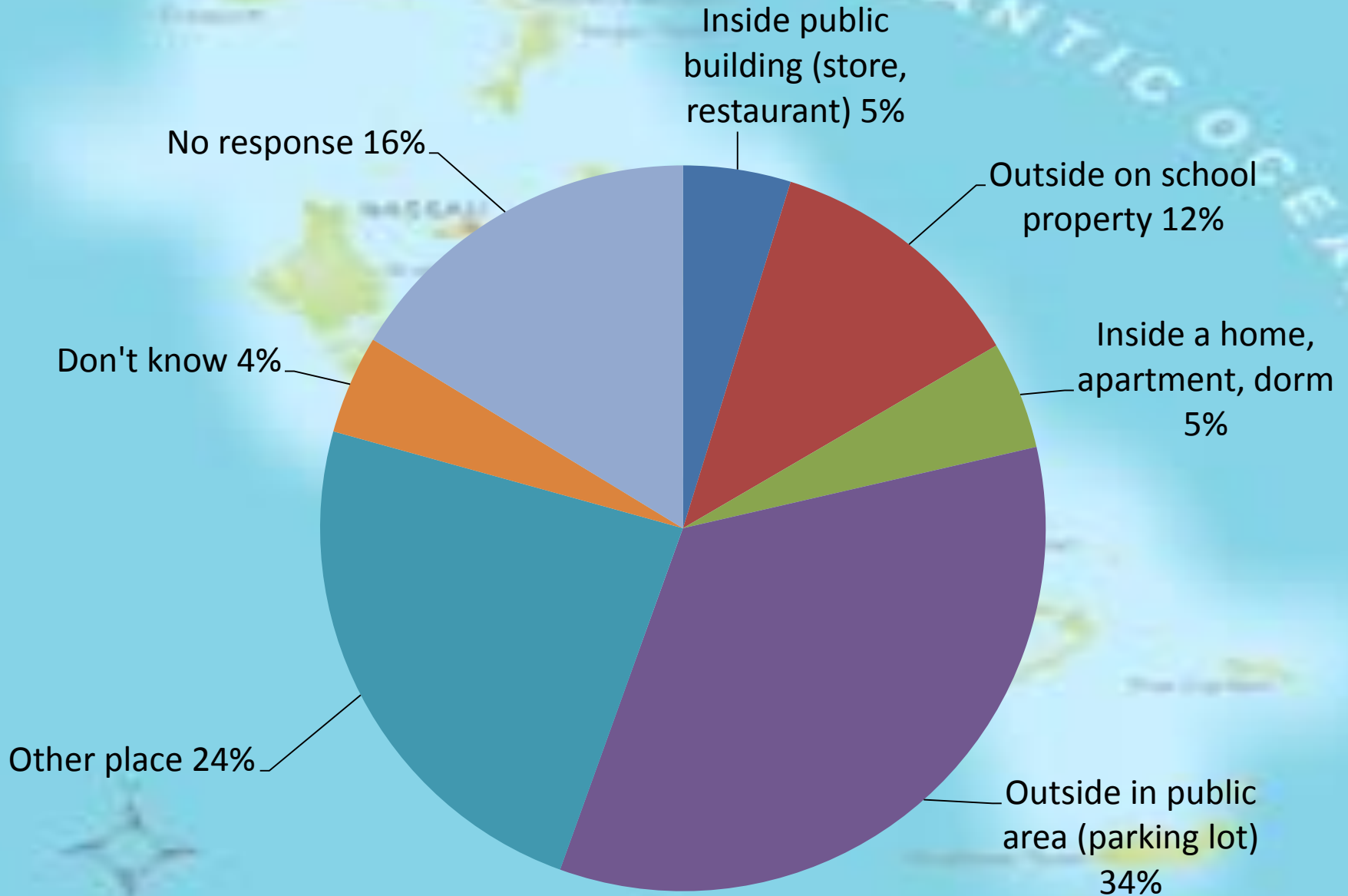
# ***Marijuana Smoking Habits***

- Marijuana smokers smoked an average of 17 days in the past month
  - Of these, 40% smoke on a daily basis
  - A monthly average of 11 joints
- Four out of ten spent more than \$50 in past month
  - Joint costs an average of \$7
- 43% of last joint (lifetime users) was “very strong/strong”

# Method of Obtaining Marijuana (Last Time)

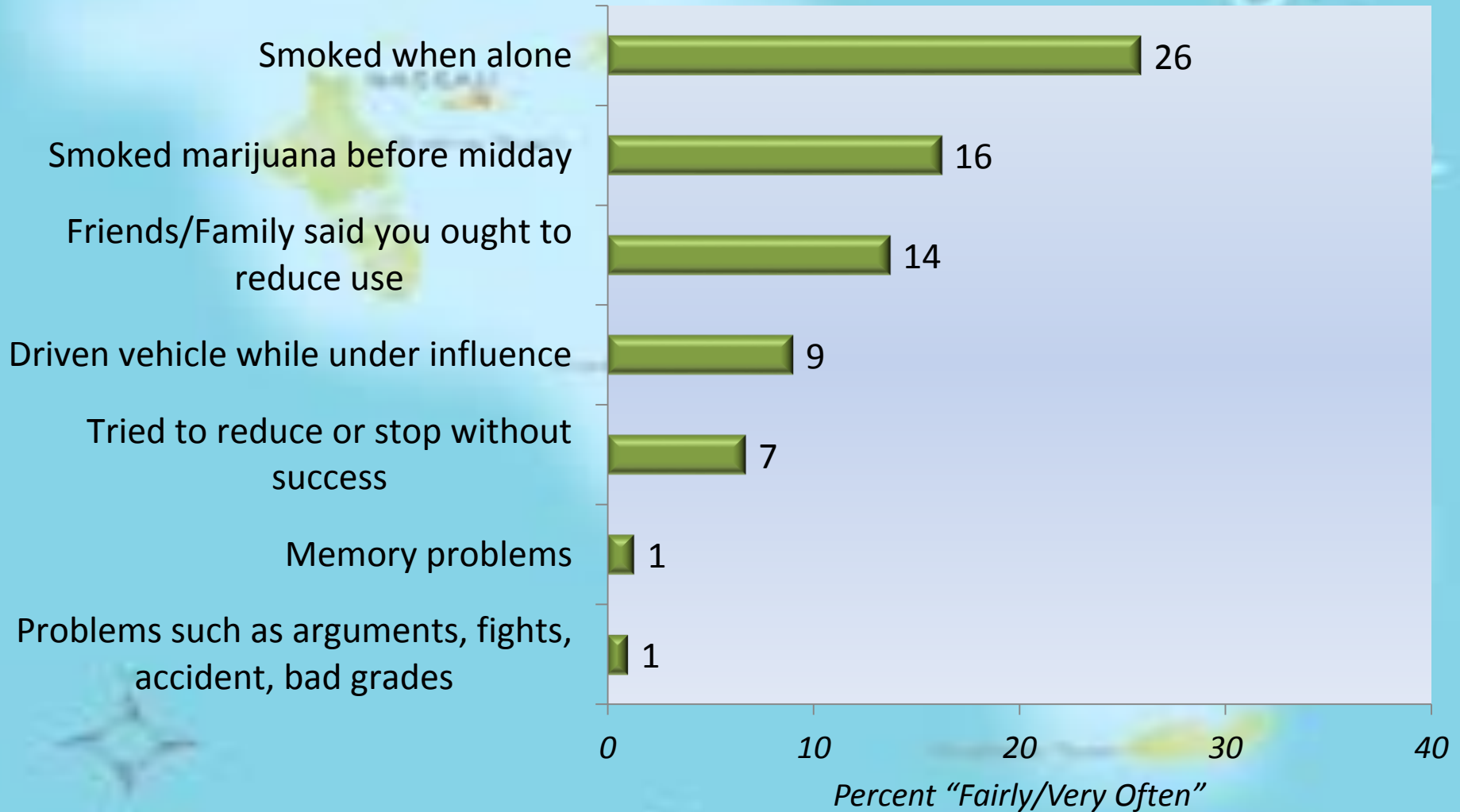


# Place Where Last Bought Marijuana



# Marijuana Abuse

## Signs of Marijuana Abuse Occurring in Past Year

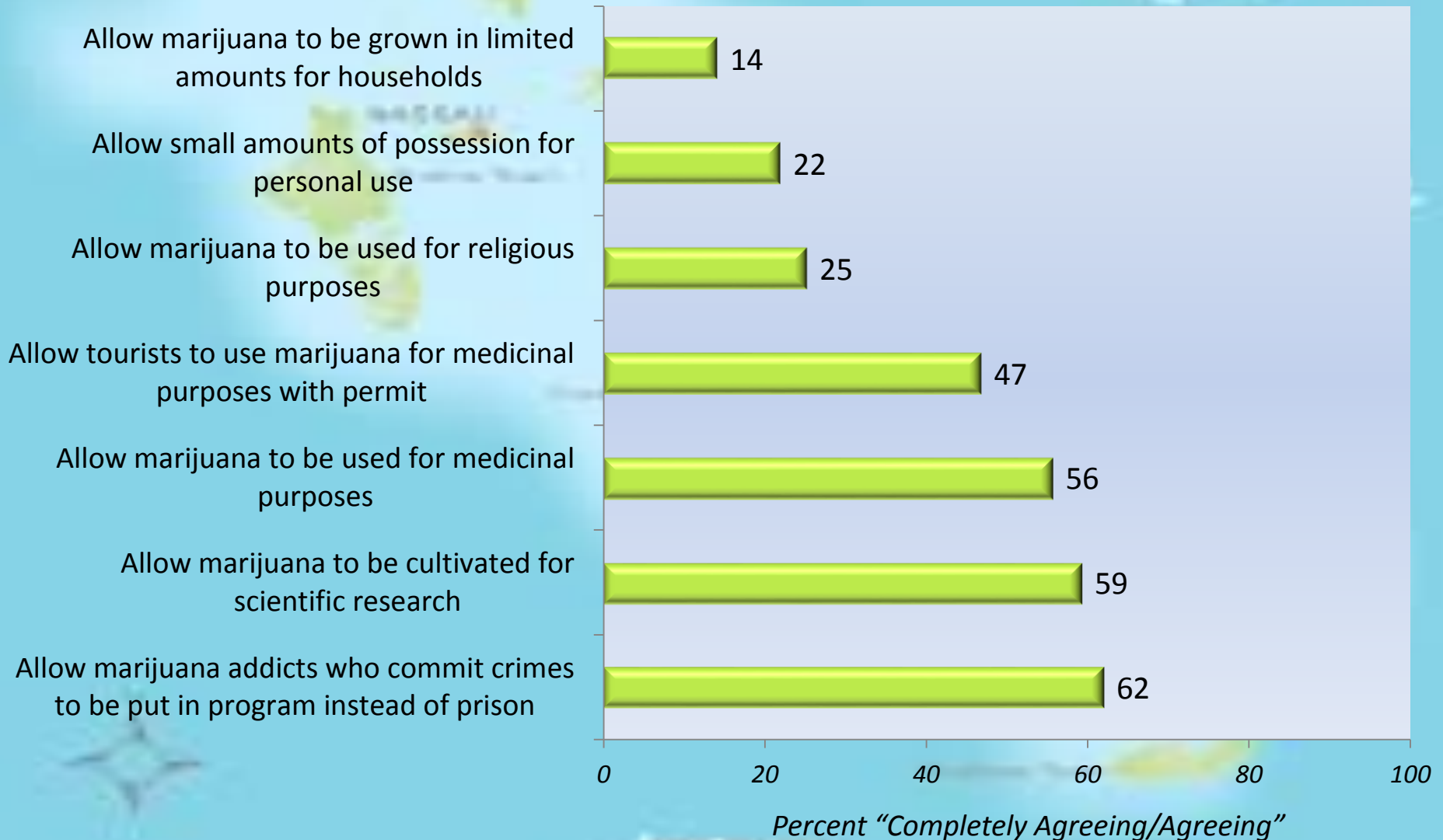


# *Marijuana as “Medicine”*

- Many persons have used marijuana other than smoking:
  - Pastries, candies, sweets, etc. (7%)
  - Teas, juices (3%)
  - Oils, butter, wax, etc. (1%)
- 2% have used it for a medical condition, including:
  - Asthma
  - Flu
  - Back problems
  - Headaches
  - General sickness
  - Pain
  - Stress
  - Diabetes
  - Calms them

# Marijuana Policies

## Opinions for Marijuana Laws and Policy

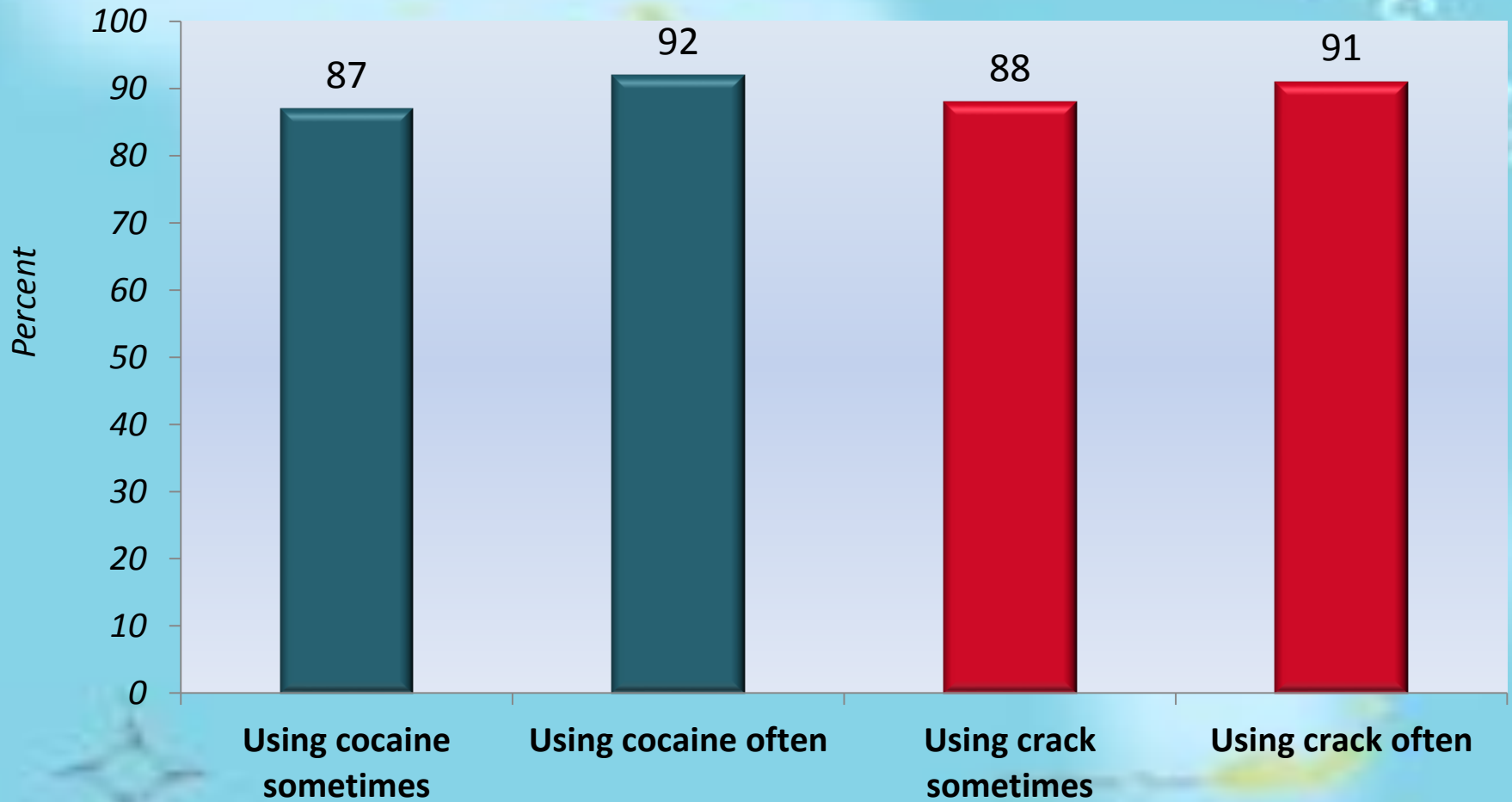






# Cocaine

## Perceived High Risk of Cocaine Use



# Cocaine

- 1% indicated ever using cocaine
  - 2% males, 0.4% females
  - Average age of first use is 25 years
  - 0.05% are current users of cocaine
- Around 1% have ever used crack cocaine
  - 1% males, 0.5% females
  - Average age is also 25 years for first use
  - 0.03% are current users



# *Emerging Drugs*

- **Inhalants (glue, paint, varnish, gasoline)**

- 0.3% are lifetime users

- **Grabba**

- 3% have used in their life

- 22 years, average age of first use

- **Beady/Bidi**

- 5% have used

- 20 years, average first use age



- **E-Cigarettes (hookah pens)**

- 2% lifetime users
- 20 years

- **Hookah Pipes (tobacco water pipes)**

- 2% lifetime users
- 21 years

- **Lean (sizzurp)**

- 2% lifetime users
- 20 years

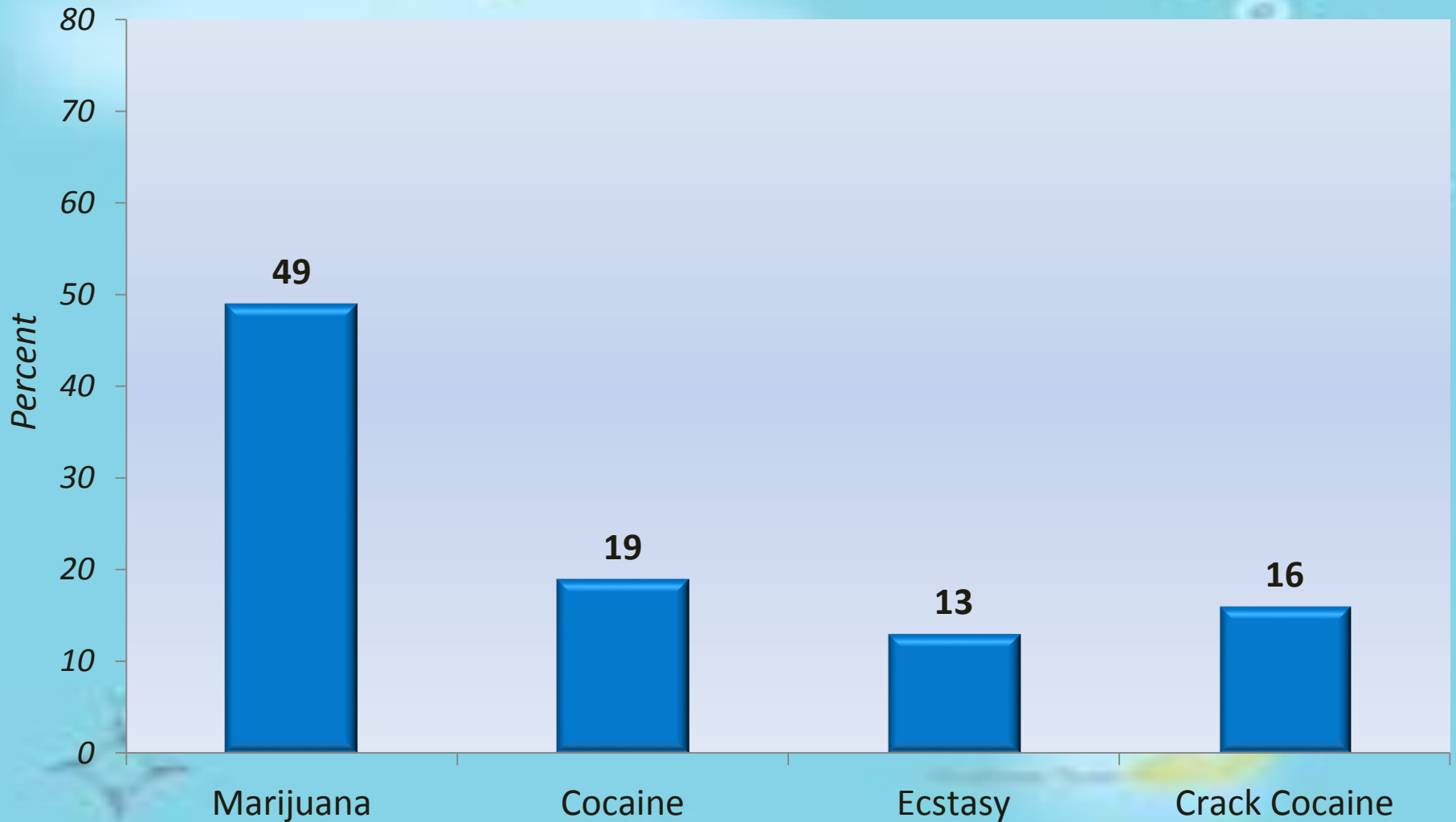


- **Prescription Drugs** (all less than 1%)

- Tranquilizers 0.4% lifetime users
- Stimulants 0.4%
- Pain-Killers 0.6%

# *Drug Access*

Percent with "Easy" Access to Illegal Drugs



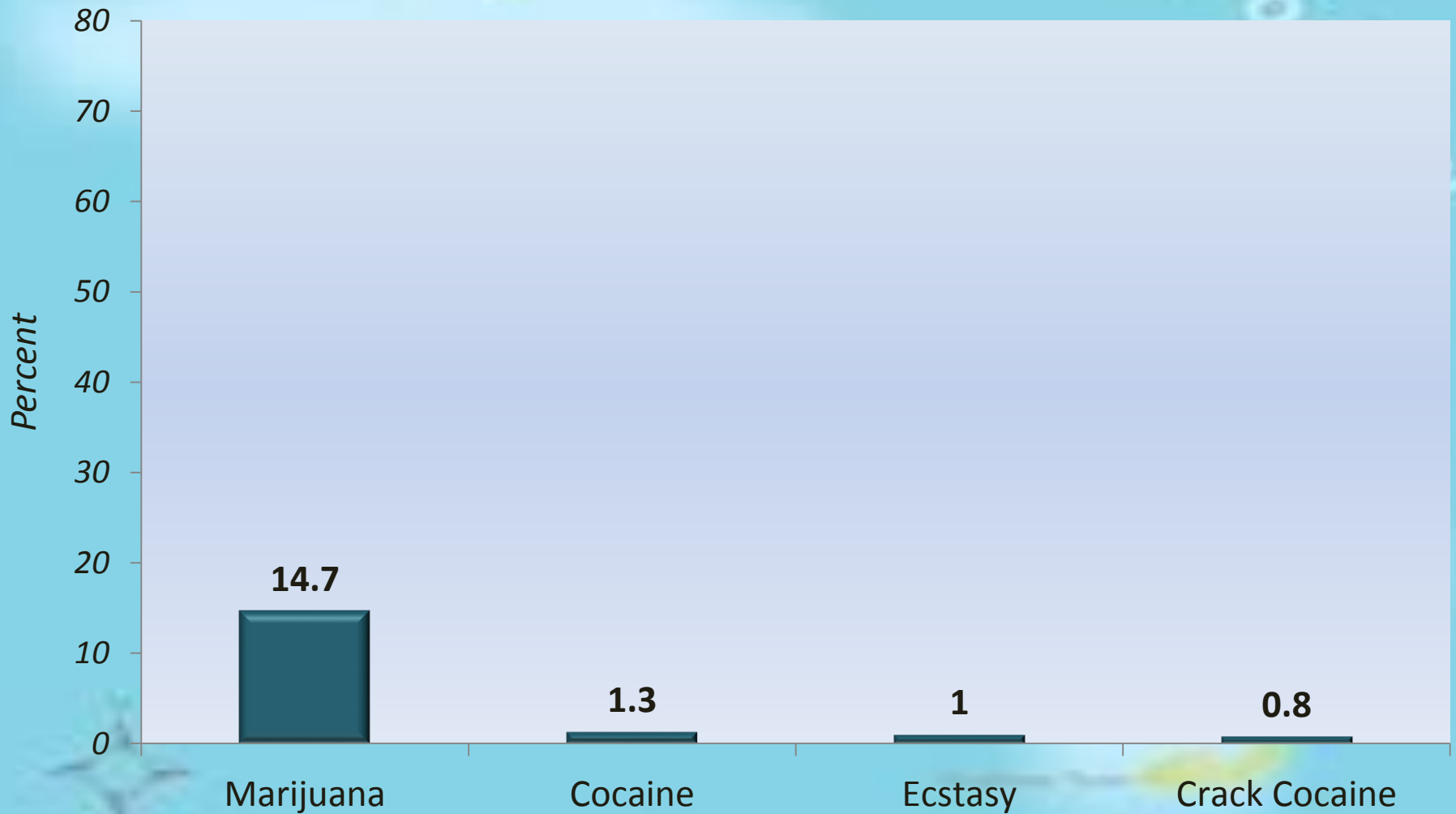


# *Drug Access cont'd.*

- Four out of ten (42%) have friends/ family members who take illegal drugs
  - Most know two or more
- 36% had a chance to try an illegal drug
  - Eight out of ten two or more times
- One out of ten (10%) answered “maybe” or “yes” they are curious to try an illegal drug

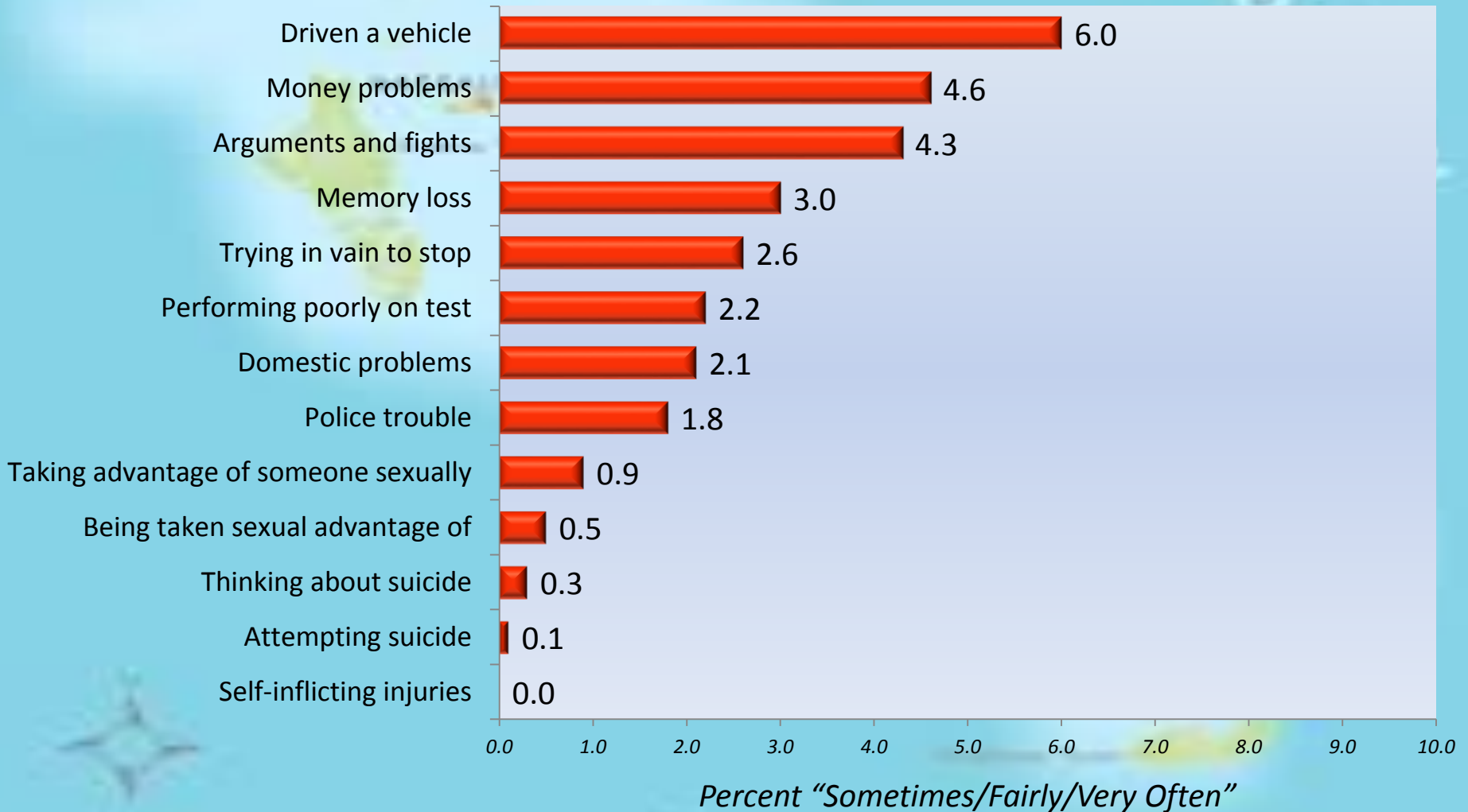
# *Drug Access cont'd.*

Percent Offered Illegal Drugs at Least a Year Ago



# Drug Use Problems

## Users Experiencing Selected Consequences of Drug and Alcohol Use





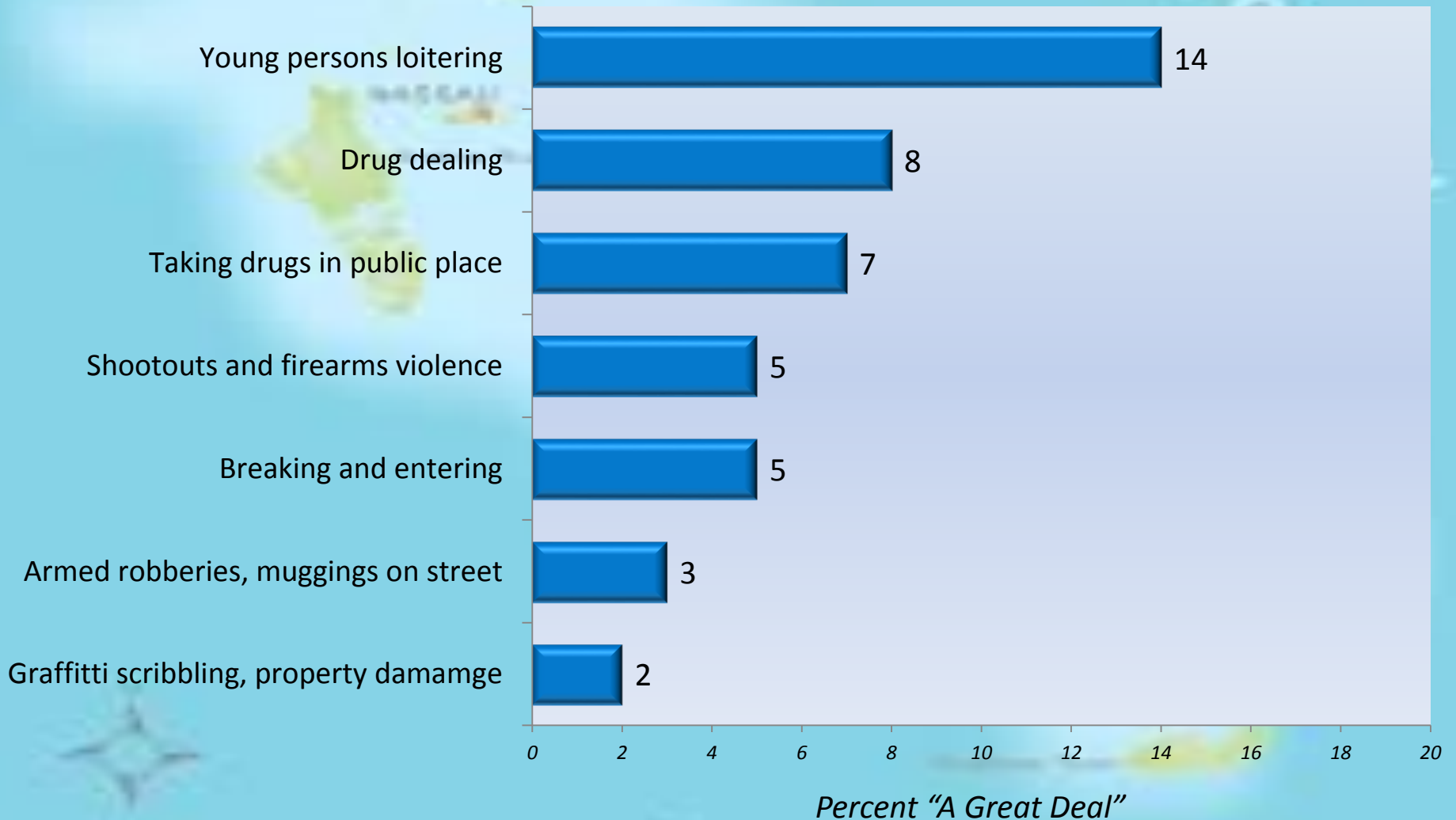
- 2% ever received treatment
  - Of these, a third within the past year
    - 9% for only alcohol
    - 66% for only drugs
    - 19% both alcohol and drugs
  - Most admitted in a rehabilitation centre
    - Average of 4 months
- 2% felt the need for treatment who did not get treatment
  - Not ready to stop using (most popular)
  - Don't know where to get treatment
  - No transportation
  - Could not afford
  - Negative effect on job

# ***Workplace Alcohol and Drug Policies***

- 48% reported NO existence of special regulations at their job controlling substance use among employees
- 63% did NOT receive information about drug and alcohol prevention and use
- 63% reported NO programs for employees with substance use problems

# Neighbourhood Activities

## Users Experiencing Activities in Their Community





# *Perceptions of Drug Situation and Government Response*

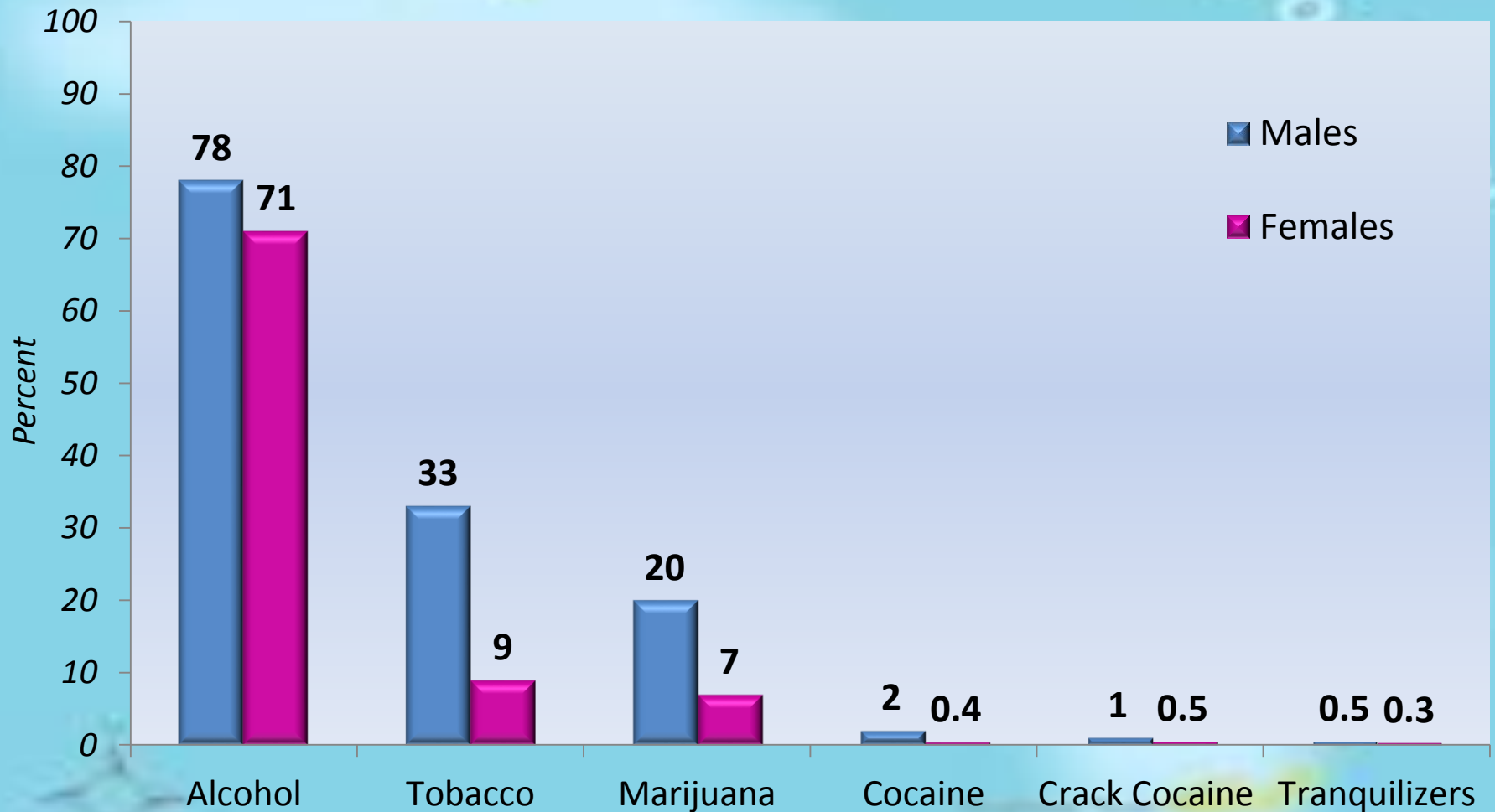
- Most (70%) believe drug use in The Bahamas has increased
- Around two out of three (64%) believe the drug situation will get worse
- 37% believe the drug issue is among important concerns of the government
- 3% know of drug prevention programs in their community
- 12% know the name of the country's drug control agency
- 9% know the name of the country's national drug prevention agency



# *Conclusions*

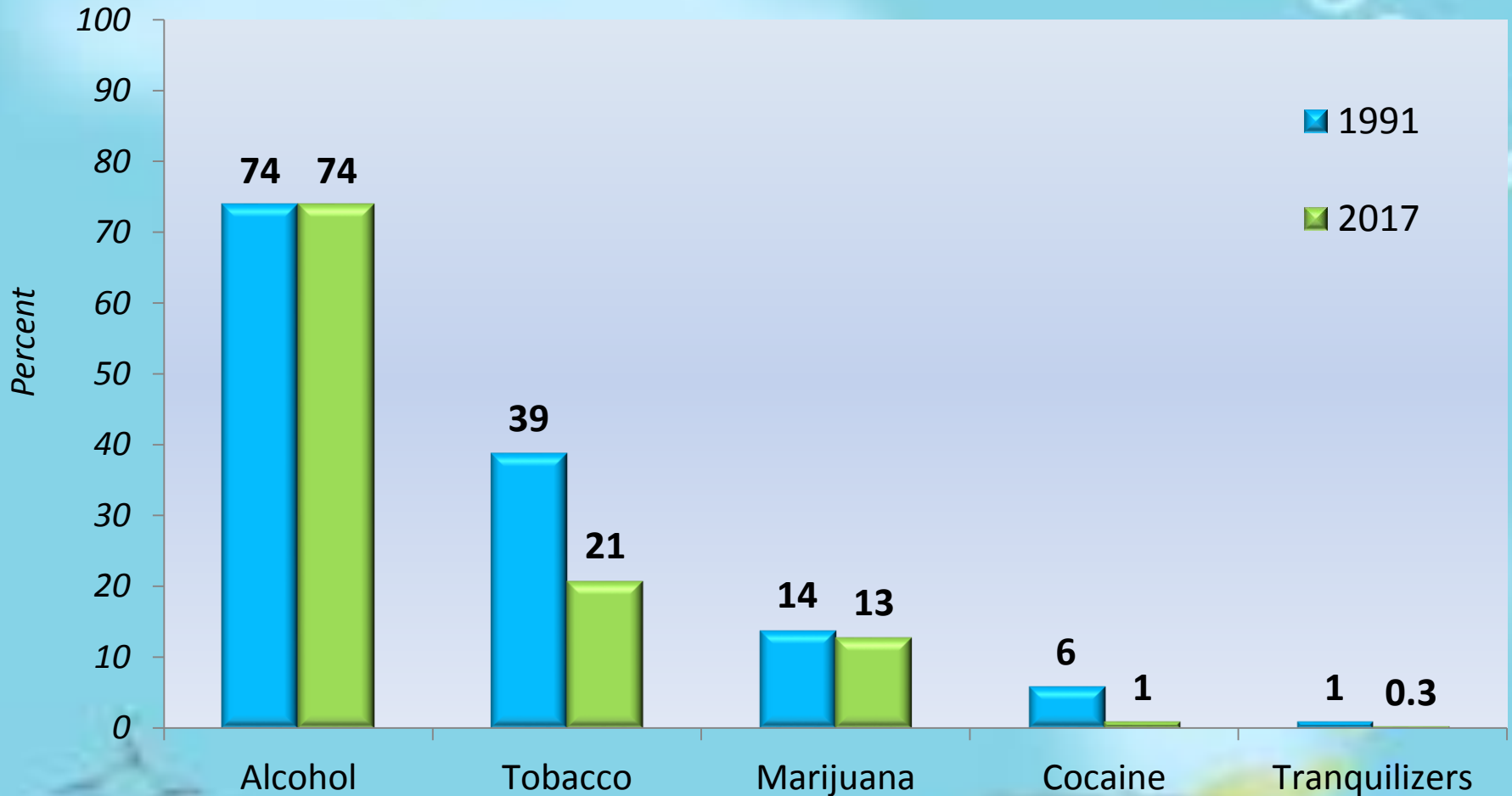
# Summary

Percent of Males and Females Who Ever Used



# Compared with 1991...

Percent of Selected Drugs Ever Used – Comparison with 1991 Prevalence Survey



# *Compared with 1991...*

- Males are still more likely than females to use drugs
- The most prevalent drugs continue to be:
  - Alcohol
  - Tobacco
  - Marijuana
- Levels of alcohol and marijuana use remain the same

# *Compared with 1991...*

- Declining use of drugs:
  - Tobacco
  - Cocaine
  - Tranquilizers
- Cocaine use appears to be very low in the current survey



# *Implications*

- While use of these drugs (TOBACCO, COCAINE, TRANQUILIZERS) appear to be declining, ongoing prevention messages need to be maintained and continuously strengthened.
- Workplace policies regarding drug and alcohol abuse need to be established and/or strengthened.



# *Implications*

- There appear to be emerging drug trends
  - Bidi (5%)
  - Grabba (3%)
  - Lean/Cough syrup, Hookah Pipes, E-cigarettes (each 2%)
- While use of fairly new drugs are at a minimal level, due vigilance is needed to identify gateways and monitor any shifts in trends.

# *Implications*

- With the relative ease of access to marijuana, there is an urgent need to increase drug prevention education about marijuana abuse and its long-term harmful health effects.
- Places where drugs are purchased are key locations to target when launching prevention messages.

# *Implications*

- Vulnerable groups (e.g., those with friends and family who use drugs or neighbourhoods where drugs are used) need to be targeted for education and prevention.
- Abuse of prescription drugs does not appear to be a problem. However, as worldwide concern increases about prescription drug abuse, we must remain vigilant about local patterns of use.

# *Recommendations...*

- These will come from the workshop discussions



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*Thank you!*