

## Drug Abuse Trends in the Youngstown Region

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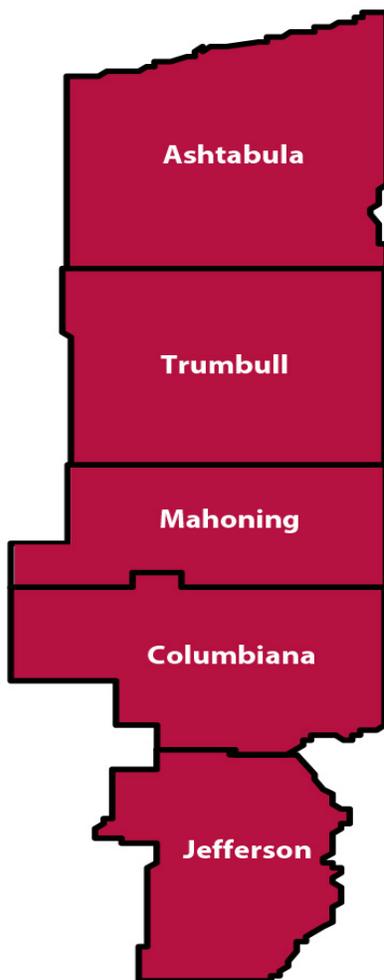
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### Data Sources for the Youngstown Region

This regional report was based upon qualitative data collected via focus group interviews. Participants were active and recovering drug users recruited from alcohol and other drug treatment programs in Ashtabula, Mahoning and Trumbull counties. Data triangulation was achieved through comparison of participant data to qualitative data collected from regional community professionals (treatment providers and law enforcement) via focus group interviews, as well as to data surveyed from the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Richfield Crime Lab, which serves the Akron-Canton, Cleveland and Youngstown areas. In addition, data were abstracted from the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) which collects results from drug chemistry analyses conducted by state and local forensic laboratories across Ohio. All secondary data are summary data of cases processed from January through June 2016. In addition to these data sources, Ohio media outlets were queried for information regarding regional drug abuse for July through December 2016.

*Note:* OSAM participants were asked to report on drug use/knowledge pertaining to the past six months prior to the interview; thus, current secondary data correspond to the reporting period of participants.

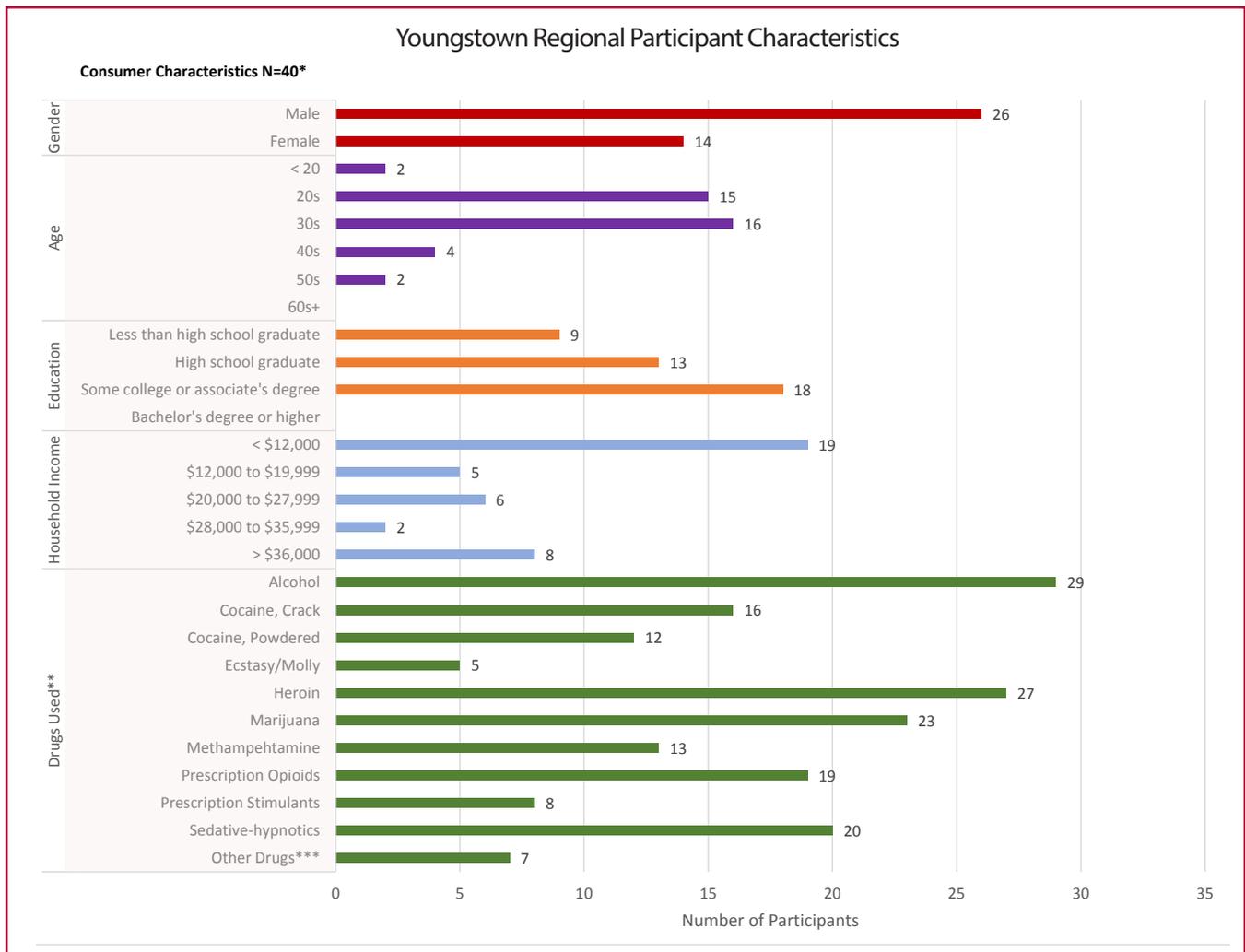
## Regional Profile

Indicator <sup>1</sup>	Ohio	Youngstown Region	OSAM Drug Consumers
Total Population, 2015	11,613,423	706,436	40
Gender (female), 2015	51.0%	50.8%	35.0%
Whites, 2015	82.7%	88.0%	80.0%
African Americans, 2015	12.7%	9.1%	12.5%
Hispanic or Latino Origin, 2015	3.6%	3.2%	5.1% <sup>2</sup>
High School Graduation Rate, 2015	89.1%	88.3%	77.5%
Median Household Income, 2015	\$51,086	\$42,868	\$12,000 to \$15,999 <sup>3</sup>
Persons Below Poverty Level, 2015	14.8%	17.0%	65.0%

<sup>1</sup> Ohio and Youngstown region statistics were derived from the most recent US Census; OSAM drug consumers were participants for this reporting period: July-December 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Hispanic or Latino Origin was unable to be determined for 1 participant due to missing and/or invalid data.

<sup>3</sup> Participants reported income by selecting a category that best represented their household's approximate income for the previous year. Note income categories have been collapsed in the table below.



\*Not all participants filled out forms completely; therefore, numbers may not equal 40.

\*\*Some respondents reported multiple drugs of use during the past six months.

\*\*\*Other drugs included: Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), phencyclidine (PCP), dimethyltryptamine (DMT), psilocybin mushrooms, sass (type of MDA) and Suboxone®.

## Historical Summary

Crack cocaine, heroin, marijuana, sedative-hypnotics and Suboxone® remained highly available in the Youngstown region; methamphetamine was also highly available. Changes in availability during the reporting period included: increased availability for marijuana; likely increased availability for methamphetamine; and likely decreased availability for prescription opioids and synthetic marijuana.

The general high availability of heroin remained the same during the reporting period. All respondent groups discussed that heroin was the dominate drug in the region. Law enforcement reported that most drug traffickers were focused on heroin. While many types of heroin were available, participants and law enforcement continued to report brown powdered heroin as most available. Law enforcement described primarily finding brown powdered heroin during arrests. Participants in one focus group reported on gray-colored heroin, referring to this type of heroin as “kitty litter.” A treatment provider explained that clients reported that users did not usually know the type or color of the purchased heroin until it was delivered to them.

In addition to brown powdered and black tar heroin, participants and law enforcement also reported availability of white powdered heroin in the region, which they clarified, was not “china white” heroin, but rather fentanyl. Participants and law enforcement discussed adulterants (aka “cuts”) that affected the quality of heroin and reported the top cutting agents for heroin as: fentanyl and other prescription opioids, along with Sleepinal® (sleep aid). The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported more fentanyl with heroin cases during the reporting period than previously seen.

Participants described the typical heroin user as male or female, aged 20-40 years, white and from all socio-economic statuses. In addition, participants noted increased heroin use among people younger than previously seen. Treatment providers also described typical heroin users as young, white individuals of all sexes, while law enforcement described typical users as white and of low socio-economic status; law enforcement in Trumbull County reported an increase in African-American males using heroin during the reporting period. Reportedly, African-American males typically snorted the drug.

Corroborating data indicated the presence of prescription opioids for illicit use in the region. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 305 prescription opioid cases identified during the reporting period, of which 15.7 percent were acetyl-fentanyl/ fentanyl cases. However, participants and law enforcement reported decreased availability of prescription opioids for illicit use during the reporting period.

Participants attributed decreased availability to doctors not writing as many prescriptions as previously. Law enforcement also attributed doctors, as well as pharmacists, for decreased availability due to their increased use of OARRS (Ohio Automated Rx [prescription] Reporting System) to eliminate “doctor shopping” (obtaining multiple opioid prescriptions from several doctors). In addition, both respondent groups discussed the ease of availability and the low cost of heroin as other reasons for the limited availability of prescription opioids.

Community professionals described typical illicit users of prescription opioids as similar to typical heroin users, mostly white people, of all sexes and crossing all socio-economic statuses and occupations. An exception was noted regarding the illicit use of tramadol. One law enforcement official reported that most of their tramadol cases involved African-American users.

Participants and community professionals also discussed the availability of high-grade marijuana extracts and concentrates, often appearing as oil and waxy forms of the drug (aka “dabs”). Participants most often reported high availability of extracts and concentrates, and indicated increased availability of these marijuana byproducts due to more users learning how to produce dabs. A profile for a typical marijuana user did not emerge from the data, although participants alluded to the drug being popular with younger people.

Lastly, participants reported high availability of methamphetamine. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 195 methamphetamine cases identified during the reporting period, of which 67.7 percent were Ashtabula County cases. All respondent groups believed the drug was most prevalent in rural Ashtabula County and that there was limited availability in Mahoning and Trumbull counties.

The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of methamphetamine cases it processes increased during the reporting period; the lab reported processing mostly crystal and off-white powdered methamphetamine. Participants and community professionals described typical methamphetamine users as young, rural white people.

## Current Trends

### Powdered Cocaine

Powdered cocaine remains moderately to highly available in the region. Participants most often reported the drug's current availability as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was '7'. Despite reporting powdered cocaine as being highly available, participants frequently remarked that powdered cocaine is not always easily obtainable. Participants reported crack cocaine as more prevalent in the region: *"If your gonna do some 'coke' (powdered cocaine), you might as well buy some crack (cocaine); Crack is a big thing now."*

Treatment providers most often reported the current availability of powdered cocaine as '3'; the previous most common score among treatment providers was not reported. Treatment providers stated: *"I don't see very much powdered cocaine use; They 'rock' (manufacture) it into 'rock' (crack) cocaine."* Law enforcement most often reported current availability as '5'; the previous most common score was '8'. A law enforcement official stated *"It's out there."*

Corroborating data indicated that cocaine is available in the region. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 684 cocaine cases reported during the past six months, of which 46.3 percent were from Mahoning County, the county in which the city of Youngstown is located (an increase from 494 cases for the previous six months, of which 46.2 percent were Mahoning County cases). Note laboratories logging cases into NFLIS do not typically differentiate between powdered and crack cocaine.

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. Youngstown

Police arrested a man after responding to a call that he overdosed in his driveway; police revived the man, then found a 'crack pipe,' hypodermic needles, and burnt spoons with probable heroin residue on them; in addition to drug possession, the man also faced child endangerment charges, as a 7-year-old boy was present during the incident ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), July 6, 2016). Federal Marshals conducted a six-month long investigation resulting in the arrest of an East Liverpool (Columbiana County) woman; confidential informants purchased 221 grams of cocaine during nine separate drug buys; the woman's boyfriend and another man set up the buys, and used the suspect and other women to deliver the drugs ([www.otfca.net](http://www.otfca.net), July 18, 2016). The Columbiana County Drug Task Force in collaboration with East Liverpool Police arrested a man during a raid of his East Liverpool home, confiscating suspected cocaine, marijuana and heroin ([www.otfca.net](http://www.otfca.net), July 24, 2016). A judge with the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court sentenced a man to four and a half years in prison for three different counts of cocaine possession from January to June 2016 ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 16, 2016). Austintown Police (Mahoning County) arrested three people after confiscating suspected cocaine, marijuana and heroin from their vehicle ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 16, 2016). Campbell Police (Mahoning County) responded to a domestic violence call; after officers took a man into custody, the man threw a bag of cocaine from the police car, prompting officers to search his home for additional drugs; officers seized eight grams of cocaine, five grams of marijuana, drug paraphernalia, weapons and ammunition ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 24, 2016). Officers from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Columbiana County Drug Task Force arrested seven people for trafficking powdered and crack cocaine from Columbus to East Liverpool ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 25, 2016). Steubenville Police (Jefferson County) executed a search warrant of a man's home, arresting the man after seizing 40 grams of cocaine, an undisclosed amount of heroin and nine firearms from his home ([www.wtov9.com](http://www.wtov9.com), Sept. 7, 2016). A Mahoning County grand jury indicted a man for possession of cocaine and heroin and for trafficking marijuana; Vice squad officers executed a search warrant of the man's home and found the drugs, as well as two assault rifles and two handguns ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 15, 2016). An Ashtabula County grand jury indicted a man for possessing and distributing over seven grams of cocaine in Ashtabula ([www.starbeacon.com](http://www.starbeacon.com), Oct. 11, 2016). Youngstown Police

arrested a man after finding him passed out in his car at a gas pump; officers found the man heavily intoxicated with alcohol and found several packets of cocaine ([www.wfmj.com](http://www.wfmj.com), Nov. 1, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a man during a traffic stop after finding him with two bags of cocaine and a semiautomatic handgun ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Nov. 9, 2016).

Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of powdered cocaine has remained the same during the past six months. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of powdered cocaine cases it processes has increased during the past six months.

Powdered Cocaine	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	No change
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	No change

Participants most often rated the current overall quality of powdered cocaine as '8' on a scale of '0' (poor quality, "garbage") to '10' (high quality); the previous most common score was '6.' Although participants most often reported high quality for powdered cocaine, they discussed that quality is variable. Participants reported: "It depends on what's comin' in; It depends how much someone 'stomps on' (adulterates) it; It's a toss-up ... it changes all the time."

Participants reported the top cutting agents (adulterates) for powdered cocaine as: baby laxative, creatine, prescription medications and vitamins. Other adulterates mentioned include: fentanyl and Novocain (local anesthetic). Law enforcement reported: "They're cutting cocaine with fentanyl now, too; They're mixing fentanyl with just about anything now." Overall, participants reported that quality of powdered cocaine has remained the same during the past six months.

Powdered Cocaine	Cutting Agents Reported by Crime Lab	
		levamisole and tetramisole (pet and livestock dewormers)

Reports of current prices for powdered cocaine were consistent among participants with experience buying the drug. One participant explained that prices for powdered cocaine are similar to the current prices for methamphetamine. Overall, participants reported that the price of powdered cocaine has remained the same during the past six months.

Powdered Cocaine	Current Prices for Powdered Cocaine	
	A line (single administration)	\$5
	1/4 gram	\$20
	1/2 gram	\$25
	A gram	\$50
	1/16 ounce (aka "teener")	\$100
	1/8 ounce (aka "eight ball")	\$150
An ounce	\$700	

Participants reported that the most common route of administration for powdered cocaine is snorting. Participants estimated that out of 10 powdered cocaine users, seven would snort and three would intravenously inject (aka "shoot") the drug. Although participants most often reported snorting as the most common route of administration, several participants shared: "Everybody's shooting it; To get the effect of cocaine, you need to put it in your vein." Some participants also reported that a few users smoke the drug.

Participants described typical powdered cocaine users as young, white people, both working class and professionals with a higher socio-economic status. Participants stated: "You gotta have money to do 'coke' (cocaine); Everybody in college, that's what they're doing when they're kickin' it." Participants also noted powdered cocaine use as popular among "alcoholics." Community professionals described typical powdered cocaine users as of middle to upper socio-economic status and suburban. A law enforcement officer from Ashtabula noted, "[Powdered cocaine use is high] in the Hispanic community, more so than anywhere else."

## Crack Cocaine

Crack cocaine remains highly available in the region. Participants most often reported the drug's current

availability as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was also '10'. Participants stated: *"I can find crack easily; You can get heroin and crack from the same dude; Every heroin dealer out there is selling crack, meth, heroin ..."* Treatment providers reported current availability as '7' and '10', while law enforcement reported it as '8'; the previous most common score was '7-8' for treatment providers and '10' for law enforcement. Treatment providers stated: *"More people using crack; I see more people who are heroin users now using both; A lot of people who started on just heroin end up using crack with it. It's almost like it starts that way ... more with heroin and then as their use increases, they add crack to that."*

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. Youngstown Police and a vice unit in Mahoning County arrested five people after raiding a home on the west side of Youngstown and confiscating crack cocaine, a scale with heroin residue, used needles and a metal crack pipe; one of the men in the home at the time of the raid immediately placed a bag of heroin in his mouth and ran after seeing police and was later detained; authorities charged another person for possession of Suboxone® and drug abuse instruments ([www.wfmj.com](http://www.wfmj.com), July 9, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a woman after she tried to hide from them, knowing she had outstanding warrants; officers found several needles, two crack pipes and spoons in her purse ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), July 22, 2016). The Mahoning Valley Crisis Response Team arrested four adults and one teenager after executing a search warrant of their home on the north side of Youngstown, seizing multiple drugs; officers witnessed a man throwing a bag of crack cocaine, a bottle of cough syrup and two bags of marijuana from the house; officers also found another man with heroin, another with crack cocaine and a handgun, and the 14-year-old teenager sitting in an SUV with a gun under the seat ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 11, 2016). A man from Jefferson was sentenced to 21 years in prison in the U.S. District Court in Ashtabula County for distributing crack cocaine and heroin, firearms, and for kidnapping and trafficking an 18-year-old girl whose remains were found in a fire pit outside the man's home; the man is accused of trafficking an additional seven to eight women in the area ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 15, 2016). An off-duty police officer alerted Youngstown Police after seeing a man dump tires behind a football field in Youngstown; an officer arrived to the scene and found crack cocaine and a crack pipe in the man's car; in a separate case,

Youngstown Police arrested another man during a traffic stop after finding ground crack cocaine in his vehicle ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 16, 2016). A judge at the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court sentenced a man to seven years in prison for possessing and distributing crack cocaine, as well as engaging in corrupt activity and money laundering; the man and two others were involved in a drug ring that laundered money through the production of rap records ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 12, 2016). Liberty Police (Mahoning County) arrested a woman during a traffic stop after seeing a bag of crack cocaine sticking out of her bra; officers confiscated two bags of the drug during the stop ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 22, 2016). Youngstown Police charged a man with drug possession after finding him passed out from an overdose; officers found crack cocaine and a crack pipe in the bedroom where the man was found ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Oct. 18, 2016). A Jefferson County Grand Jury indicted a man from Columbus for trafficking large amounts of crack cocaine and heroin in Steubenville ([www.wtov9.com](http://www.wtov9.com), Nov. 9, 2016).

Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of crack cocaine has remained the same during the past six months. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of crack cocaine cases it processes has increased during the past six months, although the lab noted that it does not typically differentiate between powdered and crack cocaine.

		Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
Crack Cocaine	 Participants	No change	
	 Law enforcement	No change	
	 Treatment providers	No change	

Participants most often rated the current overall quality of crack cocaine as '7' and '10' on a scale of '0' (poor quality, "garbage") to '10' (high quality); the previous most common score was '7'. Participants shared: *"[Quality depends] on who you're dealing with; Mine was real good. I got it in Youngstown."* Participants reported that crack cocaine is most often adulterated (aka "cut") with baking soda. A participant commented, *"When you have crack, that's your ingredient (cut) [baking soda]."* Overall, participants reported that the quality of crack cocaine has remained the same during the past six months.



<b>Crack Cocaine</b>	<b>Cutting Agents Reported by Crime Lab</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● levamisole and tetramisole (pet and livestock dewormers)</li> </ul>	

Current prices for crack cocaine were consistent among participants with experience buying the drug. One participant explained, "Every 'point' (1/10 gram) is 10 (\$10)."

<b>Crack Cocaine</b>	<b>Current Prices for Crack Cocaine</b>	
	1/10 gram	\$10
	2/10 gram	\$20
	A gram	\$60
	1/8 ounce	\$200

Participants reported that the most common route of administration for crack cocaine remains smoking. Participants estimated that out of 10 crack cocaine users, eight would smoke and two would inject the drug. A common response was, "Everybody's smoking it."

Participants described typical crack cocaine users as African Americans, unemployed and of low socio-economic status. One participant stated, "African American when it comes to the 'hard' (crack cocaine), period." Participants also explained that crack cocaine use is popular among people who use methamphetamine. Participants commented: "Anyone who likes 'speed' (methamphetamine); I'm a meth user. If I couldn't find meth for some reason, I'd go get some crack."

Community professionals reported a wide diversity among crack cocaine users. They described typical users as both black and white people, 18-60 years of age and of low socio-economic status. Treatment providers stated: "I see more 40 and over, older crack users, African American. They're still around. They haven't died from an overdose. They have heart issues and stuff now, but they're still here; The overdose risk isn't as high. It takes time for it to beat their body up." Law enforcement reported: "We've got more whites using crack; The majority of people that we arrest for crack are white; A lot of the black heroin dealers, or some of them, use crack cocaine. They won't use heroin; Heroin has branched out in the suburbs, in townships and stuff like that; But you don't see much crack in suburbs." In addition, community professionals noted that

some individuals using Vivitrol® as a form of treatment for their opiate addiction are also using crack cocaine.

### Heroin



Heroin remains highly available in the region. Participants and community professionals most often reported the current availability of the drug as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common scores were also '10'. Participants stated: "You could straight just walk down any street out here and find it; Heroin is a '10' all the way across the board in Ashtabula County." A law enforcement officer in Trumbull County described the scope of the heroin problem in their county: "Here in Trumbull County, you're having overdoses in every city. I don't think there is one city that hasn't had an overdose."

Corroborating data indicated that heroin is available in the region. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 712 heroin cases reported during the past six months, of which 36.1 percent were Mahoning County cases (there were 750 cases for the previous six months, of which 42.8 percent were Mahoning County cases).

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. The Youngstown Drug Task Force arrested the wife of a local drug dealer for attempting to flush 100 grams of heroin down the toilet during a raid of her home; officers also arrested her husband the same day during a raid at his workplace in Warren (Trumbull County) ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), July 5, 2016). A judge in Mahoning County sentenced a man to four years in prison for trafficking heroin after a two-year long investigation conducted by the Mahoning Valley Law Enforcement Task Force lead to his arrest ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), July 22, 2016). Youngstown Police and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) arrested a man for using his home to sell fentanyl and more than 100 grams of heroin in Youngstown ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), July 27, 2016). Canfield Police (Mahoning County) arrested a woman after receiving a call from a local gas station in which the caller reported that a woman was acting bizarrely and had taken her 2-year-old daughter, who was dirty and not wearing any shoes, into the bathroom with her for an extended time period;

officers arrived and found the woman in possession of heroin ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), July 28, 2016). A news source reported that the Trumbull County Coroner recently processed an unintentional overdose death case, wherein 3-methylfentanyl was identified in the toxicology report; local officials warned of the dangers of similar compounds in the county, including carfentanil, and encouraged family and friends to learn how to administer naloxone (medication to reverse an opiate overdose) ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 8, 2016). Boardman Township Police (Mahoning County) arrested two people during a traffic stop who had outstanding arrest warrants; during the stop, police found two hypodermic needles and heroin residue on a burnt spoon; the two individuals were charged with possession of drug-abuse instruments and illegal drug use ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 10, 2016). A grand jury in Ashtabula County indicted a man for possessing heroin and resisting arrest in July; during a police chase, officers saw bags of drugs falling out of the man's car; officers eventually caught up to the man, and used a Taser on him until he spit out additional bags of heroin from his mouth ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 19, 2016). East Liverpool Police (Columbiana County) arrested a couple when they saw their vehicle driving erratically, nearly hitting a school bus dropping off kids before coming to a stop; officers found the driver and passenger with symptoms of an overdose and a 4-year-old boy in the back seat; officers called EMS to the scene who administered several rounds of Narcan® (naloxone) to revive the couple ([www.nbc4i.com](http://www.nbc4i.com), Sept. 8, 2016). Brookfield Police (Trumbull County) arrested a Greenville (Darke County) couple and charged them with drug possession and child endangerment when police saw a man urinating on a trash can; officers found heroin in the man's pocket; officers charged the couple with child endangerment and heroin possession ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Sept. 8, 2016). Austintown Police (Mahoning County) arrested two women during an undercover investigation for soliciting prostitution in Austintown and Niles (Trumbull County); when police arrived at the motel where the women said they would be waiting, they found cotton swabs with heroin residue and several syringes; the women admitted to prostitution to support their heroin habits ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Sept. 28, 2016). A grand jury in Mahoning County indicted 28 people on various drug charges; among these 28 people, the jury indicted one man for heroin possession, which he had hidden in his underwear while being taken into custody for resisting arrest; the jury indicted another man when law enforcement found two rocks of crack cocaine in

his vehicle after pulling him over for running a stop sign ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 29, 2016). Austintown Police arrested a couple for using drugs in a grocery store parking lot; officers found marijuana, heroin, benzodiazepines and Suboxone® filmstrips on the couple during a search; the couple admitted to snorting heroin while holding their 16-month-old baby ([www.nbc4i.com](http://www.nbc4i.com), Sept. 29, 2016). A known drug dealer was sentenced in Columbiana County Common Pleas Court to two years in prison for drug possession and tampering with evidence; during a raid of his home in East Liverpool, law enforcement confiscated five grams of heroin and four grams of cocaine, guns and cash ([www.salemnews.net](http://www.salemnews.net), Oct. 1, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a man after executing a search warrant of his home on the north side of Youngstown and seizing a bag of heroin and four guns ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Oct. 21, 2016). Law enforcement in Trumbull County arrested a woman after executing a search warrant of her home and finding four bags of heroin and marijuana remnants; law enforcement also discovered two young, malnourished children living in poor conditions with her ([www.observer-reporter.com](http://www.observer-reporter.com), Oct. 22, 2016). Law enforcement in North Lima (Mahoning County) arrested a man for possessing drug-abuse instruments after responding to calls that the man was passed out in the bathroom of a restaurant with a syringe in his arm; after officers revived him, he admitted to using heroin ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Oct. 24, 2016). Officers from the Street Crimes Unit and the Tactical Entry Team executed a search warrant at a home in Warren (Trumbull County) after a 5-month long investigation that led to the seizure of 35 grams of heroin, 10 grams of cocaine, a small amount of oxycodone and several guns; two men were arrested ([www.wfmj.com](http://www.wfmj.com), Oct. 26, 2016). A Trumbull County Common Pleas Court jury convicted a 19-year-old mother after her two children consumed heroin while she took a nap; the woman lived with her mother and older brother, and knew her older brother and his friends sold drugs out of the house; her brother alerted her to the fact that the two children ingested heroin and the woman took her children to the emergency department, but did not immediately inform hospital workers that her kids ingested heroin, thereby delaying their treatment ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Nov. 4, 2016). A Youngstown man plead guilty to selling heroin to a man who subsequently died from an overdose; after executing a search warrant of the man's home, police seized 286 grams of heroin, 345 grams of powdered cocaine, 84 grams of crack cocaine, firearms and ammunition ([www.otfca.net](http://www.otfca.net), Nov. 23, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested an 18-year-old male after executing a

search warrant of his home and finding heroin, fentanyl and a semiautomatic handgun ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Nov. 25, 2016). A judge at the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court sentenced a man to one year in prison for an arrest made in October, wherein police found a bag of heroin and a semiautomatic handgun; the man violated prior drug charges from 2014 ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Nov. 28, 2016). Authorities in Columbiana County arrested nine people as part of a 51-count indictment for trafficking heroin and cocaine in Salem; this is the largest drug trafficking indictment in the county's history, and officers reported that the traffickers likely chose Salem since it is out of the way from other large drug rings in Youngstown and Warren, making it less dangerous and the market less saturated with the drugs ([www.wfmj.com](http://www.wfmj.com), Nov. 29, 2016).

While many types of heroin are currently available in the region, participants reported white powdered heroin as most available. Participants noted that white powdered heroin is often adulterated with fentanyl or is actually straight fentanyl. Participant comments included: *"Normally the white heroin you get in Ashtabula is not heroin ... it's fentanyl; There's fentanyl 'dope' (heroin-fentanyl mixtures) and there's just straight heroin. The fentanyl dope is what's killing everybody; Some people like fentanyl dope better than regular heroin."* A participant reported that fentanyl laced heroin, *"That's going up 10-fold (has increased tremendously in availability)."*

Participants also reported other colors of powdered heroin as currently available, including brown, gray and purple. Participants observed: *"There's some purple stuff going around right now; The light-colored brown shit's the good stuff; It be white or gray when I see it."* Law enforcement also reported coming across brown, gray and purple powdered heroin. Law enforcement officers stated: *"Brown with different colors because it's adulterated; In Ashtabula, we've actually been buying purple [heroin] ... it could be fentanyl, we haven't got the labs back yet ... could even be the carfentanil ... that's supposed to have a purplish color to it."* An undercover officer described the look and texture of some of the heroin: *"A lot of it we're buying is like ... you go out there in the driveway and pick up a handful of pebbles and its gray ... its stony looking; I mean it doesn't even look like what you would perceive as heroin ... that's from cutting it with something."*

Reportedly, black tar heroin is also available in the region. Participants most often reported the current availability of this heroin type as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available,

impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was '4'. Participants remarked: *"You're gonna pay more for it, but you can still get it; If you know a guy (dealer who sells black tar heroin), you can get it."* Conversely, community professionals reported no knowledge of black tar heroin. One law enforcement officer stated, *"We haven't seen any in the last six months."*

Participants and community professionals reported that the overall availability of heroin has increased during the past six months. An undercover law enforcement officer stated, *"We're noticing that it's increased because our prices are coming down."* The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of powdered heroin cases it processes has decreased during the past six months; the lab reported processing brown and tan powdered heroin. The lab also reported that the number of black tar heroin cases has increased, although the lab noted that it does not typically differentiate between black tar and powdered heroin.

Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months		
Heroin	 Participants	Increase
	 Law enforcement	Increase
	 Treatment providers	Increase

Participants most often rated the current overall quality of heroin as '10' on a scale of '0' (poor quality, "garbage") to '10' (high quality); the previous most common score was '9'. Participants explained: *"The quality isn't based on heroin anymore, it's based on if there's fentanyl in it; If you're talking about straight fentanyl, I mean it's a '10' ... it's quality; Any quality of heroin that's mixed with fentanyl or carfentanil, it's going to be top notch."* Participants reported that they usually do not know if they are getting fentanyl-laced heroin. A participant commented, *"It's Russian roulette. You never know what you're getting."*

Participants discussed adulterants (aka "cuts") that affect the quality of the drug and reported that the top cutting agents are carfentanil, cocaine and fentanyl. Additional cuts mentioned include: prescription opioids, sedative-hypnotics, Sleepinal® and vitamins. Participants reported: *"People are definitely cutting ... the heroin with fentanyl."*

*It's cheap to come by and you make more off of it; There's where the overdoses come in at; You take 20 micrograms [of fentanyl] and throw it to an ounce of 'boy' (heroin), then your boy is 10 times better cause you're getting both worlds.* Overall, participants reported that the quality of heroin has remained the same during the past six months.

<b>Heroin</b>	<b>Cutting Agents Reported by Crime Lab</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● fentanyl and fentanyl analogs (furanyl fentanyl, 3-methylfentanyl, valeryl fentanyl)</li> </ul>	

Reports of current prices for heroin were consistent among participants with experience buying the drug. Reportedly, the most common quantity purchased is 1/10 gram. An undercover law enforcement official stated, *"The vast majority of people out there are buying \$20, \$10 bags and ... getting point one (1/10 gram), point two (2/10 gram) maybe, most of the time you're probably closer to point one."* However, one participant shared, *"The more I'm going to buy, the cheaper it's going to get."* Overall, participants indicated that black tar heroin is more expensive than powdered heroin.

<b>Heroin</b>	<b>Current Prices for Heroin</b>	
	<b>Powdered heroin:</b>	
	1/10 gram	\$20
	1/2 gram	\$50
	A gram	\$100
	1/4 ounce	\$500

While there were a few reported ways of using heroin, generally the most common route of administration remains intravenous injection (aka "shooting"). Participants estimated that out of 10 heroin users, eight would shoot and two would snort the drug. A participant shared, *"You're wasting it if you don't [inject]."* Participants also reported that some heroin users smoke the drug, albeit this route was said to be uncommon. Treatment providers discussed the progression in heroin use from snorting to shooting: *"They start using it intranasal at first and then maybe move towards intravenous; If you're used to snorting 'oxys'*

*(OxyContin®) and someone lays out a line of heroin, you're much more likely to snort ... it the first time. Then someone says, 'hey, you really want to ... use a needle [to maximize your high]."*

Participants reported that injection needles are most available from dealers and diabetics. A participant reported, *"Some of your dealers will have them right there."* Additionally, participants reported obtaining needles from retail stores. Reportedly, needles most often sell two for \$5 on the street. When it comes to sharing needles, participants stated: *"If it's a couple, they're sharing for sure; Sharing's still happening; Most people share."* One participant explained, *"It's like this, I'm sick, I got a 20 (\$20), I don't have a 'rig' (injection needle), you got a rig, I'm sitting here throwing up, I'm getting your rig after you're done, I don't care. I'm getting myself right. It's like that. You know it's disgusting, you know it's wrong."*

Participants described typical heroin users as young to middle-aged white people of all socio-economic status and sexes. Participants shared: *"I know a lot of business people in the area that I was affiliated with when I was married to a business man that used heroin; I've seen nurses that use."* A participant with experience in selling heroin reported, *"The 29 [years of age] and older ... those are the big buyers."* In addition, participants noted more African-American people starting to use heroin during the past six months. A participant stated, *"I'm starting to see more black people 'tweak' (get high on heroin) now than I ever had in my life."* Participants also discussed the progression from prescription medication abuse to heroin use. One participant stated, *"You start doing pills and then it goes on to other shit and then you start doing the heroin."*

Community professionals described typical heroin users as white people, aged 20 years and older. Treatment providers also reported that heroin use is starting among younger people than previously; they have particularly seen an increase in young females using the drug. A treatment provider stated, *"They are starting so young, like in high school ... they may not even be finishing high school but they come from a place of opportunity ... places where you're expected to graduate but they're not [due to heroin use]."* Other treatment providers observed: *"We're noting second, third generation addiction; I have one in my group right now. Grandpa's a heroin addict, dad's a heroin addict and he learned to be a heroin addict from his father who specifically taught him how to be a heroin addict."*

Law enforcement noted an increase in older (geriatric) people frequently using heroin. A law enforcement officer stated, "We had an 82-year-old in here that was using [heroin]." Another officer reported, "We had a 60-year-old in Conneaut (Ashtabula County) overdose and die on heroin just a couple of weekends ago." The same officer added, "The average black person selling heroin in Ashtabula County is not using it. The average white [heroin dealer], by far, 9 out of 10 ... is using it. We're having as many females selling heroin ... for their own habit."

## Prescription Opioids



Prescription opioids are moderately to highly available for illicit use in the region. Participants most often reported the current street availability of these drugs as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was '6'. A participant stated, "Doctors still give out 'vikes' (Vicodin®) ... you go to the hospital and you're sick ... you're getting vikes." Community professionals most often reported current street availability as '6'; the previous most common scores were '3-8' for treatment providers and '10' for law enforcement. A treatment provider shared, "I hear them talking about it still and doing that when they couldn't get the heroin." A law enforcement officer stated, "You still have heroin users using pills."

Corroborating data indicated that prescription opioids are available for illicit use in the region. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 549 prescription opioid cases reported during the past six months, of which 41.9 percent were fentanyl/acetyl fentanyl cases; 33.5 percent of these fentanyl/acetyl fentanyl cases were Ashtabula County cases, 27.3 percent were Trumbull County cases, and 17.4 percent were Mahoning County cases (an increase from 305 prescription opioid cases for the previous six months, of which 15.7 percent were fentanyl/acetyl fentanyl cases).

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. Officers with the Columbiana County Drug Task Force arrested two men after executing a search warrant and confiscating 40 grams of fentanyl from their home; according to the DEA, 40 grams of fentanyl is enough for 20,000 deadly doses ([www.otfca.net](http://www.otfca.net), Aug. 17, 2016). Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) along with other regional law enforcement officers collaborated to raid a home in Niles (Trumbull County)

and arrested a man after seizing prescription drugs and crack cocaine; officers conducted the raid after making several drug buys from the man over the past several months ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 23, 2016). Austintown Police (Mahoning County) arrested a man during a traffic stop after seizing tramadol pills and marijuana from his vehicle ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 17, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a man following a robbery, wherein the man held a gun to another man's head in his driveway and stole a bottle of oxycodone and money from the man's pockets ([www.wytv.com](http://www.wytv.com), Sept. 19, 2016). A Mahoning County Grand Jury incited two women for prostitution and drug possession; officers responded to a solicitation by the women in Austintown and confiscated 19 oxycodone pills from their car ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Oct. 6, 2016). Officers from the U.S. Marshal's Office and the Youngstown Police arrested a local rapper during a party with his fans at a studio in Youngstown; officers investigating the rapper on prior drug-related charges immediately entered the building upon seeing the suspect; once the man saw officers inside, he threw a gun from his pocket onto the floor near a small child; officers confiscated baggies containing Percocet®, Endocet® and Ultram® ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Nov. 16, 2016). Law enforcement in Mahoning County arrested an 18-year-old male after executing a search warrant of his home and seizing Ultram® pills, two pieces of paper containing fentanyl, one bag of heroin and one bag of crack cocaine ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Nov. 25, 2016).

Participants continued to identify Percocet® and Vicodin® as the most popular prescription opioids in terms of widespread illicit. A participant commented, "You can go the dentist and get Vicodin®." Community professionals also identified Percocet® and Vicodin® as most popular. A treatment provider remarked, "'Roxi' (Roxicodone®) they say a lot, or Percocet®."

Participants reported that the general availability of prescription opioids has decreased during the past six months. One participant lamented, "Wish I could find Dilaudid®." Treatment providers also reported that the general availability of prescription opioids has decreased during the past six months, while law enforcement reported that availability has remained the same. Treatment providers stated: "Definitely harder [to obtain prescription opioids] than heroin; Heroin is more available; Definitely harder to obtain since the new prescribing rules; They don't doctor shop as much anymore because it's so regulated." A law enforcement officer commented, "They're always available if you want to spend the money to do it."

The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the numbers of fentanyl, methadone, morphine, OxyContin® and Percocet® cases it processes have increased during the past six months, while the numbers of Dilaudid®, Opana® and Vicodin® cases have decreased.

Prescription Opioids	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Decrease
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	Decrease

Reports of current street prices for prescription opioids were consistent among participants with experience buying the drugs.

Prescription Opioids	Current Street Prices for Prescription Opioids	
	Percocet®	\$3 for 0.5 mg \$5 for 7.5 mg \$6 for 10 mg
	Roxicodone®	\$15 for 15 mg \$20-25 for 30 mg
	Vicodin®	\$2 for 0.5 mg \$5 for 7.5 mg \$6 for 10 mg
	Ultram®	\$2 for 50 mg

Participants reported obtaining these drugs from dealers or doctors. A participant stated, "You can get [methadone] from people coming out of treatment." While there were a few reported ways of consuming prescription opioids, generally the most common route of administration for illicit use is snorting. Participants estimated that out of 10 illicit prescription opioid users, six would snort, three would orally consume and one would intravenously inject (aka "shoot") the drugs. Additionally, one participant stated, "You'll probably get that one person trying to smoke it." One participant reported specifically on routes of administration for illicit use of fentanyl patches and stated, "Some people like to break them up and suck the gel out."

Participants described the typical illicit prescription opioid user as people living in more suburban areas of

middle to upper socio-economic status. One participant stated, "People who want to keep it hush hush ... the business people, the housewives." Community professionals described typical illicit users as white people, 15-30 years of age, students, blue collar workers, healthcare workers and housewives. Treatment providers commented: "If they're gonna start doing that, they're younger, high school, maybe early college ... they start getting introduced to that then; Increase with the females." Treatment providers also explained that people in pain often illicitly use the drug. They stated: "The person who's been prescribed them for pain; Especially ones (careers) where it's hard on their bodies." Law enforcement commented: "Rich people can still get their pills; The majority of users are white."

### Suboxone®



Suboxone® remains highly available for illicit use in the region. Participants most often reported the current street availability of Suboxone® as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was also '10.' Participant comments included: "Suboxone® ... it's around every corner; They're handing it out to everybody." Treatment providers most often reported current street availability as '7' and '9,' while law enforcement most often reported it as '7;' the previous most common scores were '8' and '10,' respectively. A treatment provider stated "You hear a lot of misuse ... I used heroin one day and then I used Suboxone® until I could get heroin again." A law enforcement officer shared, "There's people trafficking in Suboxone®." Participants and community professionals reported the sublingual filmstrip (aka "strip") as the most available form of Suboxone®.

Corroborating data indicated that Suboxone® is available for illicit use in the region. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 84 buprenorphine (an ingredient in Suboxone®) cases reported during the past six months (there were 75 cases for the previous reporting period).

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. The Trumbull County Sheriff's Office investigated several suspects after finding strips of Suboxone® hidden inside a paper insert in a greeting card mailed to the Trumbull County Jail ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 2, 2016). Warren Police (Trumbull

County) responded to a car crash after receiving reports that a Poland (Mahoning County) man overdosed on opiates while driving a truck and hit a car in front of him at a traffic light; at the scene, law enforcement used two doses of Narcan® to revive him; while searching his wallet for identification, officers found two strips of Suboxone®, and the man admitted he did not have a prescription for the drug ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 17, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a man during a traffic stop after a K-9 officer alerted to marijuana and a Suboxone® strip that the man claimed he no longer uses; the man was charged with drug possession ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 29, 2016). An Ashtabula Grand Jury indicted a man for attempting to smuggle Suboxone® into a correctional institution and for possessing 28 grams of anabolic steroids ([www.starbeacon.com](http://www.starbeacon.com), Oct. 11, 2016).

Participants reported that the street availability of Suboxone® has increased during the past six months. One participant shared, *“People are finding ways around the counts,”* referring to using the drug illicitly while still displaying to healthcare workers that they appear to be using the drug as prescribed. Treatment providers reported that the street availability of Suboxone® has increased during the past six months, while law enforcement reported that availability has remained the same. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of Suboxone® cases it processes has increased during the past six months.

Suboxone®	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Increase
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	Increase

Reports of current street prices for Suboxone® were consistent among participants with experience buying the drug. Reportedly, Suboxone® 8 mg filmstrips sell for \$20 apiece. A participant shared, *“The people that are coming out of these programs, that are getting prescribed them that don’t have an income, are out there selling them ...”* In addition to obtaining Suboxone® from doctors, participants also reported getting the drug through dealers and other users. A treatment provider concurred, *“Heroin dealers also have Suboxone®.”*

Participants reported that the most common route of administration for illicit use of Suboxone® remains oral consumption, followed by intravenous injection (aka “shooting”). A participant remarked, *“I’ve seen people shoot ‘em.”* Participants and community professionals described the typical illicit Suboxone® user as someone addicted to heroin who is trying to stop withdrawal symptoms. One participant discussed, *“People that want to get off the drugs that don’t want to go to the doctors and admit they have an issue.”* A law enforcement officer explained, *“They’re just grabbing one or two up just to get them past their sickness until they can get heroin.”* In addition, treatment providers described illicit users as people who want to get high: *“Especially if you’re not an opiate addict, per se ... you’re just using that on the weekend; They say it really rocks them; They use it for energy.”*

## Sedative-Hypnotics

Sedative-hypnotics (benzodiazepines, barbiturates and muscle relaxants) remain highly available for illicit use in the region. Participants most often reported the current street availability of these drugs as ‘10’ on a scale of ‘0’ (not available, impossible to get) to ‘10’ (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was also ‘10’. A participant stated, *“Ativan®s been a big hit lately.”* Treatment providers most often reported current street availability as ‘10’; while law enforcement most often reported it as ‘7’; the previous most common score for both treatment providers and law enforcement was ‘8’. A treatment provider stated, *“I see a lot of people on ‘benzos’ (benzodiazepines).”*

Corroborating data indicated that sedative-hypnotics are available for illicit use in the region. A query of the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 146 benzodiazepine cases reported during the past six months, of which 42.5 percent were Mahoning County cases (there were 132 cases for the previous six months, of which 42.2 percent were Mahoning County cases).

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. A woman was arrested for attempting fill a fraudulent Xanax® prescription at a pharmacy in Poland (Mahoning County); the pharmacy called the prescribing doctor’s office, located in Virginia, who reported the prescription was fake ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), July 29, 2016). Boardman Police (Mahoning County) charged two high school students with drug possession after responding

to calls from the school that four students smelled like marijuana; after searching the car of one of the students, officers found a bag full of prescription pills, including Xanax®, along with a bag of marijuana; a search of another student's car yielded an additional bag of prescription pills, a jar of marijuana and a marijuana grinder ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Nov. 14, 2016).

Participants identified Klonopin®, Valium® and Xanax® as the most popular sedative-hypnotics in terms of widespread illicit use. Community professionals identified Xanax® as most popular. Treatment providers stated: *"Mostly 'xanies' (Xanax®) ... that's the big one ... big, by far; I do hear some Klonopin®."*

Participants reported that the general availability of sedative-hypnotics has remained the same during the past six months. Treatment providers also reported that general availability has remained the same during the past six months, while law enforcement reported increased availability. A treatment provider reported, *"The ones that like it, they don't seem to have any trouble getting it."* The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the numbers of Valium® and Xanax® cases it processes have increased during the past six months, while the number of Ativan® cases has decreased.

Sedative-Hypnotics	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	No change
	 Law enforcement	Increase
	 Treatment providers	No change

Reports of current street prices for sedative-hypnotics were consistent among participants with experience buying the drugs. A law enforcement officer commented, *"They're not that expensive. They're not like the narcotics."*

Sedative-Hypnotics	Current Street Prices for Sedative-Hypnotics	
	Ativan®	\$1 per pill (unspecified dose)
	Klonopin®	\$1 per pill (unspecified dose)
	Valium®	\$2 for 10 mg
	Xanax®	\$2 for 1 mg \$4 for 2 mg

Participants reported obtaining these drugs from dealers, doctors and other users. When referring to a doctor, a participant stated, *"He loaded me up."* A law enforcement officer explained, *"It's more kids getting it out of their medicine cabinets."*

While there were a few reported ways of consuming sedative-hypnotics, generally the most common route of administration for illicit use remains snorting. Participants estimated that out of 10 illicit sedative-hypnotic users, six would snort and four would orally consume the drugs. Participants explained: *"Depends on what type of high you trying to get ... if you want a quick high ... they're gonna snort them ... if you want it to kick in later ... they're gonna 'pop it' (orally consume); They snort 'xanie bars' (Xanax® 2 mg); You can't really 'shoot' (intravenously inject) them (Xanax®) up. I mean you can, but it's not worth it."* While most illicit users of sedative-hypnotics snort or orally ingest the drug, one participant noted, *"There are some people that shoot just about anything."*

Participants described typical illicit sedative-hypnotics users as females and people who use cocaine or heroin. Community professionals described typical illicit users as young white people. Law enforcement officers stated: *"You have a lot of that in the high schools; The schools are just populated with those types of pills; When they turn 18 [years of age], or graduate, you start seeing those same people overdosing on heroin."* A treatment provider explained why someone addicted to heroin may use sedative-hypnotics: *"For someone whose disease is starting to progress, they want to get a better high with the heroin. There are some folks who prefer benzos, you know that's their primary (drug of choice), but I say, usually, they're supplementing. They've learned that they can get a better high with the heroin when they add the benzos to it."*

## Marijuana



Marijuana remains highly available in the region. Participants and community professionals most often reported the current availability of the drug as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common scores were also '10'. A participant stated, *"You can always find 'weed' (marijuana)."* Law enforcement officers stated: *"You'll find weed in every heroin house; We're getting a lot of it shipped in from California."*

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. Liberty Township Police (Trumbull County) responded to a complaint of a marijuana grow operation in the basement of an area business; police searched the business and discovered three potted marijuana plants and tools to grow and cultivate marijuana; officers arrested the two business owners and charged them with drug possession ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 10, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a woman while she was at the hospital after a records check showed she had two outstanding warrants; police took the woman to jail where she admitted to having marijuana hidden inside her clothes ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 16, 2016). Warren Police (Trumbull County) responded to a call at local gas station after reports of an attempted robbery and gunshots fired in the area; the woman who reportedly fired the shots, the store clerk, shot at a man who attempted robbery in the store; however, officers arrested the clerk after finding marijuana in her purse; police also charged the woman with firing shots inside city limits ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 18, 2016). Boardman Township Police (Mahoning County) charged five teenagers from Wellsville (also Mahoning County) after stopping them in their vehicle and finding marijuana and alcohol in their car; police charged the driver for driving without a license, another teen for underage alcohol possession and marijuana possession, and all teens with a curfew violation ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 24, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a woman after executing a search warrant of her home and seizing marijuana, marijuana grinders and heroin; the woman attempted to drive away in her car, but officers stopped her and confiscated a bag of crack cocaine from her vehicle ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 8, 2016). Youngstown Police responded to a call about a suspicious vehicle parked in the driveway of a home; the driver eventually drove away, but police pulled the vehicle over for a traffic violation; officers found a metal crack pipe sitting in the car, and while police attempted to arrest a passenger, he pulled a used marijuana blunt (cigars) from his pants and scattered marijuana across the back seat of the police car; officers also found an oxycodone pill and a bag of crack cocaine ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Sept. 15, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested two people after searching a home and finding marijuana in a toilet and two ripped plastic bags with cocaine residue in them ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 15, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a man at a restaurant upon seeing a knife over a foot long in a sheath concealed

under his clothes as he sat down; police searched the man and also found four marijuana blunts in his pockets ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 27, 2016). Law enforcement in Youngstown charged a woman with multiple felonies after slipping out of handcuffs in the backseat of a police vehicle, urinating on an officer's jacket, and attempting to hide nine bags of crack cocaine in the squad car ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Oct. 3, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested three people in two separate traffic stops in one day; during one traffic stop, law enforcement discovered two people in the car with a stolen gun, marijuana and a marijuana grinder; during the other traffic stop, officers confiscated eight bags of marijuana and a handgun from a man driving under suspension ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Oct. 8, 2016). Youngstown Police arrested a man during the execution of a search warrant after seizing two bags of marijuana hidden in a sewer pipe in the basement of the man's home ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Oct. 12, 2016). An investigation lead by officers with the Mahoning Valley Law Enforcement Task Force's Drug Unit and assisted by the Ohio Attorney General's Heroin Unit, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations' High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program, U.S. Marshals Services and the U.S. Postal Service lead to the arrest of 20 people involved in a drug trafficking ring in the Mahoning Valley; of the 20 people, six were high-level traffickers who sold marijuana to low-level traffickers who would push the drug on the streets; marijuana was trafficked by mail from Arizona, California and Michigan directly to the front doors of the high-level traffickers ([www.patch.com](http://www.patch.com), Oct. 31, 2016). Warren Police arrested a man during a traffic stop after discovering marijuana, an unidentified pill, crack cocaine and heroin in his car ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Nov. 1, 2016).

Participants and community professionals discussed the current availability of high-grade marijuana, as well as marijuana extracts and concentrates, often appearing as oil and waxy forms of the drug (aka "dabs"). Participants most often reported the current availability of extracts and concentrates as '9-10,' the previous most common score was '10.' A participant reported, "I can find high-grade [marijuana] quicker than I can find low-grade [marijuana]."

Participants reported that the availability of low-grade marijuana has remained the same, while the availability of the high-grade marijuana, including extracts and concentrates, has increased during the past six months. Participant comments included: "It's increasing at a steady rate; In the past years, it went from maybe a '3' to a '10.' That

tells you how much; Marijuana just got legalized in the state of Ohio and you have a lot of people growing it." Participants also discussed the increased availability of marijuana concentrates and extracts: "More people getting hip to it; Everybody wants the next best thing."

Community professionals reported that the general availability of marijuana has remained the same during the past six months, while the availability of marijuana extracts and concentrates has increased. A treatment professional shared, "They're learning how to do it themselves (manufacture dabs) and vaporize some of it." A law enforcement officer remarked, "[Dabs are] like a fad they're starting to get into." The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of marijuana cases it processes has decreased during the past six months; note the lab does not differentiate marijuana extracts and concentrates from marijuana.

Marijuana	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Increase
	 Law enforcement	Increase
	 Treatment providers	Increase

Participants most often rated the current overall quality of high-grade marijuana as '10' on a scale of '0' (poor quality, "garbage") to '10' (high quality); the previous most common score was also '10'. Participants most often rated the current overall quality of low-grade marijuana as '3'; the previous most common score was '6'. However, a treatment provider reported that she thinks marijuana is all high-grade and stated, "There is no real low grade anymore." Overall, participants reported that the quality of low-grade marijuana has remained the same during the past six months, while the quality of high-grade marijuana has either increased or remained the same. Participants remarked: "They are improving their skills on the growing side; There's always some new shit coming out." Participants reported that the quality of marijuana concentrates and extracts has increased.

Reports of current prices for marijuana were provided by participants with experience buying the drug. A participant reported that when it comes to purchasing marijuana, "It's cheaper the more you buy." A law

enforcement officer commented, "Average person is buying a 'dime bag' (\$10 amount)."

Marijuana	Current Prices for Marijuana	
	<b>Low grade:</b>	
	A blunt (cigar)	\$5
	A gram	\$5
	1/8 ounce	\$20
	1/4 ounce	\$25
	1/2 ounce	\$40-50
	An ounce	\$80
	A pound	\$900
	<b>High grade:</b>	
	A blunt (cigar)	\$10
	A gram	\$20
	1/4 ounce	\$70
	1/2 ounce	\$120
An ounce	\$220	
A pound	\$2,000	

While there were a few reported ways of consuming marijuana, generally the most common route of administration remains smoking. Participants estimated that out of 10 marijuana users, all 10 would smoke the drug. A few participants also reported eating the drug as "edibles" (food containing marijuana such as cookies and brownies). One participant commented, "We're gonna smoke, then we're gonna get the 'munchies' (hungry) and eat it."

A profile of a typical marijuana user did not emerge from the data. Participants reported that typical users are anyone: "Everybody smokes weed; Marijuana is one of those drugs that everybody uses. They just keep it in the closet; People don't look at it like a bad thing anymore, so there's a wide variety of people that smoke marijuana; There ain't no age limit to smoke 'pot' (marijuana); Your gonna see your average smoker starts at like 13, 14 [years of age]."

Participants did indicate different profiles for users of low-grade marijuana, high-grade marijuana and marijuana extracts and concentrates. Participants reported that typical users of low-grade marijuana are those with less money, while users of high-grade marijuana and extracts and concentrates may have health problems and are more often white people.

Community professionals also reported that anyone may be a user of marijuana. A treatment provider reported, *"Almost all our clients started on weed. They all started on weed. It's just [that] some graduate to other things and some stay there. And the ones that stay, where that is still their primary drug of choice, is probably more young African American males or females, too. The Caucasians tend to move on."* Law enforcement officers responded: *"What groups don't; The majority of your trafficking people who sell heroin and crack will always be smoking [marijuana], always."*

## Methamphetamine



Methamphetamine remains highly available in the region. Participants most often reported the current availability of the drug as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was also '10'. However, participants clarified that high availability exists for Ashtabula County and other rural areas of the region. One participant summarized, *"Depends where you're at ... if you're in Ashtabula ... '10."*

Treatment providers most often reported the current availability of methamphetamine as '9,' while law enforcement most reported it as '10,' the previous most common scores were '3' and '5,' respectively. Treatment providers stated: *"There's not a lot of people using it, but if they want it ... they can get it. It's easy to get because you can just make it."* Law enforcement in Trumbull County reported: *"We've had four or five labs (methamphetamine labs) ... at least four in the past six months; They're probably getting four labs a week up North [in Ashtabula County]."* A law enforcement officer from Ashtabula indicated that perceived methamphetamine availability would be higher if their unit had more manpower to seek out producers of methamphetamine.

Corroborating data indicated that methamphetamine is available in the region. A query of the National Forensic

Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) for the counties which comprise the Youngstown region returned 198 methamphetamine cases reported during the past six months, of which 67.2 percent were Ashtabula County cases and 17.2 percent were Mahoning County cases (there were 195 cases for the previous six months, of which 67.7 percent were Ashtabula County cases and 11.8 percent were Mahoning County cases).

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. A Mahoning County grand jury charged a family of three for manufacturing methamphetamine in their home in Youngstown; officers found methamphetamine residue 10 feet away from a room where two children slept ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), July 22, 2016). A Trumbull County grand jury indicted a man for possessing chemicals used to manufacture methamphetamine and for drug possession; law enforcement arrested the man a week prior to this arrest after discovering the methamphetamine manufacturing paraphernalia in his apartment complex in Newtown Falls ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Aug. 17, 2016). The Columbiana County Drug Task Force and the Salem Police (also Columbiana County) arrested a man after raiding his home in Salem and discovering a methamphetamine laboratory ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com) Aug. 18, 2016). A judge at the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court sentenced a man to five years in prison for manufacturing methamphetamine in his trailer in Goshen Township ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 19, 2016). A judge at the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court sentenced a Beloit (Mahoning County) man and an Akron (Summit County) woman to three years of probation for possessing and manufacturing methamphetamine in Youngstown; the man later plead guilty and was sentenced to five years in prison ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Sept. 21, 2016). An Ashtabula County Grand Jury indicted a man in Hartsgrove Township and another man in Ashtabula, on separate occasions, for manufacturing and possessing methamphetamine ([www.starbeacon.com](http://www.starbeacon.com), Oct. 11, 2016). Officers from the Trumbull-Ashtabula Group (TAG) Law Enforcement Task Force discovered a methamphetamine laboratory in a rental home in Newton Falls after receiving an anonymous tip about the lab ([www.wkbn.com](http://www.wkbn.com), Oct. 12, 2016). City officials in Salem condemned a home for having hazardous materials used to manufacture methamphetamine; the city recently passed an ordinance requiring condemned homes to be tested by a certified drug-testing lab and then retested for absence of any substances ([www.wyvtv.com](http://www.wyvtv.com), Oct. 28, 2016).

Participants reported that methamphetamine is available in powdered, crystal and anhydrous forms throughout the region; however, they reported powdered methamphetamine as the most prevalent form of the drug. A law enforcement officer remarked, "Primarily 'shake-and-bake.'" The powdered form of methamphetamine is typically referred to as "shake-and-bake," which means users are producing the drug in a single sealed container, such as a two-liter soda bottle. By using common household chemicals along with ammonium nitrate (found in cold packs) and pseudoephedrine (found in some allergy medications), people who make methamphetamine can produce the drug in approximately 30 minutes in nearly any location.

Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of powdered methamphetamine has remained the same during the past six months, while the availability of crystal methamphetamine has increased and the availability of anhydrous methamphetamine has decreased. Participants in Ashtabula County reported: "I've seen more 'glass' (crystal methamphetamine) than I have shake-and-bake; Shake-and-bake is going down though because everybody's getting 'popped' (arrested)." A law enforcement officer stated, "We're getting more and more reports of crystal meth that is coming from somewhere else ... supposedly being brought up from Mexico." A law enforcement officer in Trumbull County reported, "It started to trickle down from Ashtabula and every year it's grown (increased in availability)."

The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of methamphetamine cases it processes has increased during the past six months; the lab reported processing mostly crystal and off-white powdered methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Increase
	 Law enforcement	Increase
	 Treatment providers	Increase

Participants most often rated the current overall quality of powdered methamphetamine as '5' on a scale of '0' (poor quality, "garbage") to '10' (high quality); the previous most

common score was '6-10.' Participants most often rated the current overall quality of crystal methamphetamine as '10'; the previous most common score was '8'. A participant shared, "It used to get out of my system in three days, and it stayed in my system five (the last time he used the drug)." Overall, participants reported that the quality of both powdered and crystal methamphetamine has remained the same during the past six months.

Reports of current prices for methamphetamine were variable among participants with experience buying the drug. A participant indicated, "Anhydrous is a little more pricier because it's purer."

Methamphetamine	Current Prices for Methamphetamine	
	1/10 gram	\$10
	1/2 gram	\$40-60
	A gram	\$70-100

Participants reported that the most common route of administration for methamphetamine is smoking. Participants estimated that out of 10 methamphetamine users, six would smoke, three would intravenously inject (aka "shoot") and one would snort the drug. Participants commented: "Injecting all the way; I'm 'hot railing' ... snorting and smoking it at the same time."

Participants described typical methamphetamine users as young, white males, truck drivers, construction workers, anyone who wants to stay awake for long hours and people who live in rural areas. Community professionals described typical users as white people, aged 20-40 years, of low socio-economic status as well as heroin users. Law enforcement officers discussed: "You don't see black people using meth; They're making meth ... selling their meth to buy heroin." A treatment provider concurred, "That's how they're making a living, too."

### Prescription Stimulants

Prescription stimulants are highly available for illicit use in the region. Participants most often reported the current street availability of these drugs as '8' on a scale of '0'

(not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was '7'. Treatment providers most often reported current street availability as '5' and '7'; the previous most common score was '3,'4,' and '8. Law enforcement most often reported current street availability as '1-2;' law enforcement did not assign an availability score for the previous reporting period. Community professionals remarked: *"I haven't heard anything; The heroin is taking such a spotlight that sometimes you just don't hear a lot about [illicit use of prescription stimulants] as much anymore; Maybe they're just on their way up to the bigger stuff."*

Participants and community professionals identified Adderall® as the most popular prescription stimulant in terms of widespread illicit use. A law enforcement officer stated, *"If we wanted to go out and buy Adderall®, we probably could do it without any type of problem."* In addition, some participants noted an increase in illicit use of Vyvanse®. Participants reported: *"People are really starting to get into them, Vyvanse®; Everybody's getting prescribed Vyvanse® now."*

Participants and community professionals reported that the general availability of prescription stimulants has remained the same during the past six months. A law enforcement officer stated, *"It's as available as it's ever been."* The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of Adderall® cases it processes has increased during the past six months, while the number of Ritalin® cases has decreased.

Prescription Stimulants	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	No change
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	No change

Reports of current street prices for prescription stimulants were reported by participants with experience buying these drugs.

Prescription Stimulants	Current Prices for Prescription Opioids	
	Adderall®	\$2-5 for 30 mg
	Vyvanse®	\$5 for 30 mg \$10 for 70 mg

Participants reported obtaining these drugs from doctors or other drug users. Reportedly, the most common route of administration for illicit use of prescription stimulants is snorting. Participants estimated that out of 10 illicit prescription stimulant users, eight would snort and two would orally consume the drugs.

Participants described typical illicit prescription stimulants users as teenagers, college students and/or people who work third shift. A participant remarked, *"College kids like it a lot."* Community professionals described typical illicit users as white people, high-school aged and college students. A law enforcement officer stated, *"Majority white from what I've seen."*

## Ecstasy

Ecstasy (methylenedioxymethamphetamine: MDMA, or other derivatives containing BZP, MDA and/or TFMPP) is moderately to highly available in the region. Participants most often reported the current availability of the pressed tablet form of ecstasy as '3' and of "molly" (powdered MDMA) as '8' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common scores were '5' and '7', respectively. A participant remarked, *"Molly took over."*

Treatment providers most often reported the current availability of ecstasy and molly as '6' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); providers were unable to assign an availability score to ecstasy previously, while they most often reported availability of molly as '4'. A treatment provider stated, *"I think it's going up ... I think it's high now."* Law enforcement in Ashtabula County most often reported the current availability of ecstasy as '6,' while law enforcement in Mahoning and Trumbull counties most often reported it as '1-2;' the previous most common score was '3' for all law enforcement. Law enforcement throughout the region most often reported the current

availability of molly as '1,' the previous most common score was '8.'

Participants reported the availability of ecstasy has remained the same during the past six months, while the availability of molly has increased. A participant reported, "Miley Cyrus got everybody talking about some molly." Treatment providers in urban areas reported that availability of ecstasy and molly has increased during the past six months, while treatment providers in rural areas reported that availability for both has decreased. Treatment providers in more urban areas reported: "I don't think it's hard to get ... it's just do they want it; I hear teens all the time with molly." A treatment provider in Mahoning County stated, "You don't hear that kind of thing ... as much."

Law enforcement reported that the availability of ecstasy and molly has remained the same. A law enforcement officer stated, "If we went out and hunted for it, we probably could find it." The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of ecstasy cases it processes has increased during the past six months; note the lab does not differentiate between ecstasy and molly cases.

Ecstasy	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Increase
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	No consensus

Reports of current prices for ecstasy and molly were reported by participants with experience buying the drugs.

Ecstasy/Molly	Current Prices for Ecstasy/Molly	
	<b>Ecstasy:</b>	
	Low dose (aka "single stack")	\$7
	High dose (aka "triple stack")	\$10
	<b>Molly:</b>	
	1/10 gram	\$20
A gram	\$75-100	

Participants continued to report that the most common route of administration for ecstasy remains oral consumption, and for molly, it remains snorting. Participants estimated that out of 10 ecstasy users, six would orally consume and four would snort the drug; out of 10 molly users, eight would snort, one would intravenously inject (aka "shoot") and one would orally consume. Participants shared: "[For] molly, I'm shooting; I'm either eating it or snorting it. I'll probably just do both."

Participants described typical ecstasy and molly users as high school and college students. Participants explained: "I'm gonna say the younger generation. You don't see too many old people out there 'rolling' (high on ecstasy and molly); Age range 18-30 [years] are your average molly users." Community professionals also described the typical ecstasy and molly users as college students. A treatment provider shared, "It's younger party people who haven't got to the heroin yet." A law enforcement officer stated, "It's more your club scene, college scene."

### Synthetic Marijuana



Synthetic marijuana (synthetic cannabinoids) remains available in the region. However, participants most often reported the drug's current availability as '0' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was '3-10.' A participant stated, "I haven't seen 'spice' (synthetic marijuana) ... in a while."

Treatment providers in rural areas most often reported the current availability of synthetic marijuana as '1,' while treatment providers in urban areas most often reported it as '9.' Treatment providers in urban areas commented: "We're hearing about it a lot ... especially, if they're trying to pass a drug test; You can get it on the Internet; Dealers will have it." Law enforcement most often reported current availability as '0,' the previous most common score was '7.' Law enforcement shared: "We're not seeing any; I'm sure that maybe some of these head shops might sell some different types of it; We're not getting the complaints like we had two years, three years ago."

Participants and treatment providers reported that the availability of synthetic marijuana has decreased during the past six months, while law enforcement reported that the availability has remained the same. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of synthetic marijuana case it processes has decreased during the past six months.

Synthetic Marijuana	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Decrease
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	Decrease

Reports of current prices for synthetic marijuana were consistent among participants with experience buying the drug. One participant declared, "It's cheaper than 'weed' (marijuana)."

Synthetic Marijuana	Current Prices for Synthetic Marijuana	
	A gram	\$10
	5 grams	\$30

Participants reported that the most common route of administration for synthetic marijuana remains smoking. Participants estimated that out of 10 synthetic marijuana users, all 10 would smoke the drug. Participants and community professionals described typical synthetic marijuana users as young, white people and those trying to pass a drug screen. Participants reported: "Anybody who has to pass a 'piss test' (urine drug screen); Thinking, 'I want to try this (marijuana), but they're too scared to smoke the real (marijuana); Anyone who doesn't have a drug dealer." A treatment provider shared, "You don't hear the African Americans talk about the spice too much. They just stay with the regular marijuana."

## Other Drugs in the Youngstown Region

Participants and community professionals listed a variety of other drugs as being present in the region, but these drugs were not mentioned by the majority of people interviewed: bath salts, hallucinogens (lysergic acid diethylamide [LSD] and psilocybin mushrooms) and Neurontin® (gabapentin, an anticonvulsant).

## Bath Salts

Bath salts (synthetic cathinones) remain available in the region. Participants most often reported the current availability of the drug as '0' and '2' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common score was '0'. Treatment providers most often reported current availability as '9-10', while law enforcement most often reported it as '0'; the previous most common scores were '0' for both treatment providers and law enforcement. Treatment providers stated: "It's not their drug of choice but I hear them say it still; My understanding is it's easy to get; I have seen a couple people where that was there drug of choice, but not many." A law enforcement officer reported, "We're not seeing any."

Participants reported that the availability of bath salts has decreased during the past six months, while community professionals reported that availability has remained the same. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of bath salts cases it processes has increased during the past six months.

Bath Salts	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Decrease
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	No change

Participants and community professionals described typical bath salts users as young, white people of middle to upper socio-economic status.

## Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens are highly available in the region. Participants most often reported the current availability of LSD as '10' and of psilocybin mushrooms as '8' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get); the previous most common scores were '7' for both LSD and psilocybin mushrooms. A participant remarked, "I can get it with a phone call." However, participants noted that the availability of psilocybin mushrooms is seasonal and dependent on weather conditions and the concert season.

Treatment providers were unable to reach a consensus as to the current availability of LSD and psilocybin mushrooms; they did not report on availability for the previous report. When asked about psilocybin mushrooms, a treatment provider stated, "That's not primarily a drug of choice." Law enforcement rated availability of LSD as '1', and were unable to rate the availability of psilocybin mushrooms; the previous most common score was '1' for both drugs. A law enforcement remarked on LSD, "Hearing about it, but we're not seeing anything."

Media outlets reported on law enforcement seizures and arrests in the region this reporting period. Boardman Township Police (Mahoning County) responded to a call from a woman who reported her 20-year-old son left her home expressing intent to commit suicide; law enforcement found the man, searched him, and confiscated psilocybin mushrooms, LSD, ecstasy, marijuana and other illicit drugs from a bag he had in his possession ([www.vindy.com](http://www.vindy.com), Aug. 6, 2016).

Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of LSD and psilocybin mushrooms has remained the same during the past six months. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of LSD cases it processes has increased during the past six months, while the number of psilocybin mushroom cases has decreased.

Hallucinogens	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	No change
	 Law enforcement	No change
	 Treatment providers	No change

Reports of current prices for LSD and Psilocybin mushrooms were reported by participants with experience buying the drugs.

Hallucinogens	Current Prices for Hallucinogens	
	<b>LSD:</b>	
	1 drop or 1 square of blotter paper (aka "a hit")	\$7
	<b>Psilocybin Mushrooms:</b>	
	1/8 gram	\$30

When asked about route of administration for LSD, a participant shared, "Liquid drop straight to the eyeball." Participants reported that psilocybin mushrooms are most often orally consumed; however, they also reported that a few users smoke them. Participants and community professionals described typical hallucinogen users as high school to college aged, white males, hippies and individuals who smoke marijuana. A treatment provider stated, "I think a female would be a little more apprehensive to hallucinogens than a male."

**Neurontin®**



Neurontin® is high availability for illicit use in the region. Participants and community professionals most often reported the current street availability of Neurontin® as '10' on a scale of '0' (not available, impossible to get) to '10' (highly available, extremely easy to get.); this drug was not discussed during the previous reporting period. Participants shared: "I've seen a lot of people eating that lately; Everybody has Neurontin®; It's super available; It's the new Tylenol®."

Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of Neurontin® for illicit use has increased during the past six months. A participant stated, "I never heard about it until like three months ago." A treatment provider reported, "In the last six months to a year, we've seen a lot more abuse of ... Neurontin® and Seroquel® (an antipsychotic)."

Neurontin®	Reported Availability Change during the Past 6 Months	
	 Participants	Increase
	 Law enforcement	Increase
	 Treatment providers	Increase

Reports of current street prices for Neurontin® were consistent among participants with experience buying the drug. Reportedly, Neurontin® sells for \$0.50 a pill, regardless of dosage. Participants reported obtaining this drug from doctors and other drug users. A treatment provider stated, "They're buying it on the street."

Participants described typical illicit Neurontin® users as females, opiate addicted people, and those who want to pass drug tests. Participants stated: *"I know a lot of people that are on gabapentin. A ton of girls, young girls that are on it now; It doesn't show up on drug tests."* Community professionals described typical illicit users as young, white females. Community professionals reported: *"A little more privileged kids ... maybe they have access to the doctors; [It is used] in an effort to beat urine screens."*

## Conclusion

Crack cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, sedative-hypnotics and Suboxone® remain highly available in the Youngstown region; also highly available are hallucinogens, Neurontin® (gabapentin, an anticonvulsant) and prescription stimulants. Changes in availability during the past six months include: increased availability for heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, Neurontin® and Suboxone®; decreased availability for synthetic marijuana; and possible decreased availability for prescription opioids.

Participants and community professionals reported that the overall availability of heroin and heroin-fentanyl mixtures has increased during the past six months. An undercover law enforcement officer surmised that the high availability of heroin has increased due to the lowering of street prices for the drug. While there are many types of heroin currently available in the region, participants reported white powdered heroin as most available.

Participants indicated that white powdered heroin is often adulterated with fentanyl or is actually straight fentanyl and acknowledged fentanyl as extremely potent, attributing it to the increases in overdoses in the region. A law enforcement officer in Trumbull County described the scope of the heroin problem in that county: *"Here in Trumbull County, you're having overdoses in every city. I don't think there is one city that hasn't had an overdose."*

Participants explained that heroin quality is defined as "better dope" if it contains fentanyl. Participants noted the most common cutting agents for heroin as carfentanyl, cocaine and fentanyl. Reportedly, fentanyl is increasingly used to cut other drugs as well. Law enforcement reported: *"They're cutting cocaine with fentanyl now, too; They're mixing fentanyl with just about anything now."*

Participants described typical heroin users as young to middle-aged white people of all socio-economic status and sexes, although they noted more African-American people starting to use heroin than previously. Community professionals described typical heroin users as white people, aged 20 years and older. Treatment providers noted that heroin use is starting among younger people than previously; they have particularly seen an increase in young females using the drug. Law enforcement noted an increase in older (geriatric) people using heroin.

Methamphetamine remains highly available in the region. However, participants clarified that high availability exists primarily in Ashtabula County and other rural areas of the region. Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of crystal methamphetamine has increased during the past six months. Participants attributed this increase to police arrests of "meth cooks," making powdered methamphetamine (aka "shake-and-bake") a riskier venture.

Law enforcement noted an increase in crystal methamphetamine being imported into the region; they reported this form of methamphetamine as likely coming from Mexico. Law enforcement in Trumbull County reported that methamphetamine is making its way into their county from Ashtabula County. The BCI Richfield Crime Lab reported that the number of methamphetamine cases it processes has increased during the past six months; the lab reported processing mostly crystal and off-white powdered methamphetamine.

Participants described typical methamphetamine users as young, white males, truck drivers, construction workers, anyone who wants to stay awake for long hours and people who live in rural areas. Community professionals described typical users as white people, aged 20-40 years, of low socio-economic status as well as heroin users.

Participants and community professionals reported that the availability of the high-grade marijuana, including extracts and concentrates (aka "dabs"), has increased during the past six months. Participant comments included: *"More people getting hip to it."* Law enforcement also noted an increase in popularity of dabs, referring to this increased interest as a "fad" that users are starting to get into. Treatment providers cited an increase in users learning how to manufacture dabs as the reason for increased availability. They also noted users vaporizing these high-grade marijuana products.

Lastly, participants and community professionals reported that the availability of Neurontin® for illicit use has increased during the past six months. Participants reported obtaining this drug from doctors and other drug users. A treatment provider stated, "*They're buying it on the street.*" Participants described typical illicit Neurontin® users as females, opiate addicted people, and those who want to pass drug tests. Community professionals described typical illicit users as young white females.