

Key Findings of the Public Opinion Survey on 2023 Anti-drug Publicity Measures

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Public Opinion Survey on 2023 Anti-drug Publicity Measures (the 2023 Survey) were to –

- (a) gauge public perception on the effectiveness and the extent of penetration of current anti-drug publicity messages and measures under the Narcotics Division's (ND's) preventive education and publicity (PE&P) campaign;
- (b) understand the public's preference on receiving anti-drug messages, including the effectiveness of different media platforms and avenues in disseminating anti-drug messages, anti-drug messages required to be strengthened, and the most effective messages that can discourage persons from taking drugs; and
- (c) understand whether the public would take action to advise others not to take drugs or involve in drug trafficking after receiving anti-drug messages.

BACKGROUND

2. ND has since 2007 commissioned annual public opinion surveys on its anti-drug publicity messages. The Statistics Unit of the Security Bureau designs the survey questionnaire, and engages an outside contractor to refine the questionnaire and conduct the survey by telephone. The data so collected form the basis of the analyses and compilation of relevant reports.

METHODOLOGY

3. The methodology for the 2023 Survey was same as that of the 2022 Survey. Individuals with valid mobile telephone numbers¹ and land-based domestic households with residential telephone lines were enumerated in the 2023 Survey, at the ratio of 60% : 40%.

¹ According to information from the Office of the Communications Authority, as at December 2023, the mobile subscriber penetration rate in Hong Kong was 317% (which means on average there were about three phone accounts per Hong Kong resident). The corresponding residential fixed line penetration rate in Hong Kong was 68%.

4. The 2023 Survey was conducted between 27 February and 28 March 2024, mainly between 2:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The target population was Hong Kong residents² aged between 11 and 60 (both ages inclusive) who were able to speak and communicate in Cantonese or Chinese and either (a) belonged to households with a residential telephone line; or (b) had a mobile telephone number. Through random sampling, the contractor successfully enumerated 1 212 respondents (489 from households with residential telephone lines and 723 with mobile telephone numbers) by telephone interviews, with an overall cooperation rate of 49%³. The sample size and cooperation rate were considered statistically sufficient for meaningful analyses.

5. Respondents were categorised into the following four subgroups for detailed analyses –

<u>Subgroup</u>	<u>No. of samples⁴</u>
(a) General youngsters (aged from 11 to 20)	200 (17%)
(b) Young adults (aged from 21 to 35)	337 (28%)
(c) High-risk group (those who knew someone was drug abuser and / or who had been offered drugs before)	248 (20%)
(d) Parents	591 (49%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to share to all samples.

6. The results pertaining to the target population and the four subgroups are estimated based on the views collected from the sampled respondents. The sampling error for all results (in percentages) using the total sample was within plus/minus 3% points at 95% confidence level. For subgroup analyses based on smaller sample size, the sampling errors would be larger and thus the results may need to be interpreted with caution.

² Excluding foreign domestic helpers.

³ The cooperation rates of respondents from residential telephone lines and mobile telephone numbers were 37% and 64% respectively.

⁴ The total number of sets of responses received from the four subgroups of respondents do not add up to 1 212 because a respondent can fall under more than one subgroup. On the other hand, some of the respondents do not fall under any of the four subgroups.

KEY FINDINGS

I. Effectiveness and Extent of Penetration of ND’s Current Anti-drug Messages and Measures

7. The ND held a large-scale anti-drug publicity programme in September 2022 to launch the brand-new anti-drug slogan “Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out!”, and the anti-drug ambassadors Beat Drugs Squad formed by Agent Don’t and Agent Hope, which respectively means “don’t take drugs” and the hope of a positive life.

8. The awareness rate of the slogan remained high, at 92%, with that among young adults the highest, at 94%. Encouragingly, the awareness rate of Agent Don’t and Agent Hope increased from 38% in 2022 to 59% in 2023, showing that the public were getting familiar with the two anti-drug ambassadors. The awareness rate was the highest (69%) among high risk group. Details are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Awareness Rates of the New Anti-drug Slogan and Ambassadors

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out!	92% (91%)	93% (94%)	94% (91%)	91% (92%)	92% (91%)
Agent Don’t and Agent Hope	59% (38%)	61% (33%)	60% (41%)	69% (42%)	60% (38%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

9. All respondents were asked whether they had seen or heard about the following anti-drug messages and, if yes, the platform(s) they received the anti-drug messages.

Anti-drug Messages

A. *Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out*

Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out! To join hands to stay away from drugs
(一齊企硬唔take嘢 攜手遠離毒品)

B. *CBD controlled as a dangerous drug*

CBD has been listed as a drug (CBD已被列為毒品)

C. *Cannabis is a drug*

Cannabis is a drug (大麻係毒品)

D. Ketamine can harm your bladder

Ketamine can harm your bladder (K仔會令你膀胱受損)

10. The awareness of Message A (Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out) was gauged for the first time. The awareness rate was high at 93%, with that for subgroups ranged from 91% to 94%.

11. The anti-drug Message B (CBD controlled as a dangerous drug) was first publicised in November 2022. The awareness rate was 86%, broadly similar to that in 2022 (84%). This high awareness rate might be attributable to the wide range of publicity efforts made by ND, including the themed announcement in the public interest (API) on CBD, aggressive online promotion and broad advertising in various physical avenues, such as public transport, cinemas, external walls on buildings and cross-harbour tunnels.

12. The awareness rate of Message C (Cannabis is a drug) continued to be high, at 95%, broadly similar to that in 2022 (94%). This might be attributable to the themed API on cannabis featuring a rehabilitated person “Ah Sze” since February 2022 and ND’s highlight of the iconic message (Cannabis is a Drug 大麻係毒品) in a range of physical and online publicity initiatives (e.g. social media posts, external wall banners, public transport advertisements) over the past few years.

13. The awareness rate of Message D (Ketamine can harm your bladder) was 83%, broadly similar to that in 2022 (87%).

14. ND would continue with its publicity efforts on various anti-drug messages, and accord priority to promoting the dire consequences on drug trafficking.

Table 2: Awareness of Anti-drug Messages

		Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
A	Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out	93% (N/A)	93% (N/A)	94% (N/A)	94% (N/A)	91% (N/A)
B	CBD controlled as a dangerous drug	86% (84%)	88% (80%)	89% (85%)	86% (88%)	84% (82%)
C	Cannabis is a drug	95% (94%)	95% (93%)	95% (95%)	96% (94%)	95% (94%)
D	Ketamine can harm your bladder	83% (87%)	82% (87%)	84% (88%)	79% (89%)	82% (87%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

(2) N/A means “Not Available”.

15. As to the current platforms for receiving anti-drug messages, public transport (i.e. MTR and bus), TV as well as web-based and mobile platforms (i.e. social media platforms, webpages and mobile apps) were the top three common media across all subgroups. Advertisements placed on TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor (a new option included in this survey round) and radio were also common media to receive anti-drug messages. The addition of the aforementioned TV screens as an option in the current survey may affect the respondent's choice and comparison with previous years should be considered carefully. Details are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Top Five Media Platforms and Avenues for Receiving Anti-drug Messages

Ranking	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
1	Public transport 81% (90%)	TV 83% (81%)	Public transport 83% (92%)	Public transport 83% (91%)	Public transport 82% (88%)
2	TV 80% (90%)	Public transport 80% (91%)	TV 80% (89%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 74% (91%)	TV 79% (93%)
3	Web-based and mobile platforms 74% (88%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 75% (92%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 77% (91%)	TV 74% (90%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 73% (84%)
4	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 48% (N/A)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 50% (N/A)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 51% (N/A)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 53% (N/A)	Radio 45% (58%)
5	Radio 45% (53%)	Radio 46% (39%)	Government offices and community centres 44% (58%)	Radio 52% (51%)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 45% (N/A)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.
(3) N/A means "Not Available".

16. The effectiveness of public transport as well as web-based and mobile platforms for all the age groups analysed decreased in 2023. As for TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor, the percentages of different age groups to receive anti-drug messages via these platforms ranged from 46% to 51%. Details are given in Table 4.

Table 4: Top Five Media Platforms and Avenues for Receiving Anti-drug Messages – breakdowns by Different Age Groups

Media Platforms/Avenues	Age group		
	Aged 11-20	Aged 21-35	Aged 36-60
Public transport	80% (91%)	83% (92%)	81% (89%)
TV	83% (81%)	80% (89%)	80% (93%)
Web-based and mobile platforms	75% (92%)	77% (91%)	73% (85%)
TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor	50% (N/A)	51% (N/A)	46% (N/A)
Radio	46% (39%)	42% (53%)	46% (57%)

- Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.
(3) N/A means “Not Available”.
(4) Other options of media platforms and avenues include the following:
- anti-drug activities and schools,
 - commercial buildings,
 - cross boundary ports,
 - external walls on buildings and banners on bridges,
 - government offices and community centres,
 - newspapers and magazines,
 - parks and sport venues and
 - The Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre.

17. Awareness of the harms of several common drugs was also gauged. The awareness rate remained high for ketamine, cocaine, “Ice”, heroin and cannabis (ranged from 95% to 97%). The awareness rate of harms of CBD improved from 75% in 2022 to 84% in 2023.

18. For general youngsters, the awareness rate of drug harms was the highest for ketamine, heroin and cannabis (all were 95%). The awareness rate of CBD improved from 73% in 2022 to 83% in 2023. Yet, it is noted that the awareness rate of cocaine dropped from 94% in 2022 to 86% in 2023. Details are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Awareness Rates of Drug Harms

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Ketamine	97% (96%)	95% (99%)	96% (95%)	95% (97%)	98% (96%)
Cocaine	97% (94%)	86% (94%)	98% (93%)	93% (92%)	99% (94%)
“Ice”	96% (93%)	94% (94%)	96% (92%)	94% (93%)	97% (93%)
Heroin	96% (95%)	95% (94%)	95% (95%)	92% (97%)	95% (96%)
Cannabis	95% (90%)	95% (88%)	95% (91%)	95% (91%)	95% (92%)
Ecstasy	91% (92%)	89% (93%)	92% (93%)	92% (97%)	92% (92%)
Cough Medicine	90% (83%)	87% (87%)	90% (84%)	91% (86%)	90% (83%)
CBD	84% (75%)	83% (73%)	83% (74%)	84% (73%)	83% (76%)
Tranquillizers	74% (74%)	73% (68%)	66% (75%)	81% (75%)	77% (75%)
LSD	59% (49%)	59% (43%)	55% (53%)	62% (52%)	59% (49%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

19. The awareness rate of ND’s 24-hour helpline “186 186” or the instant messaging service “98 186 186” decreased from 71% in 2022 to 61% in 2023. The awareness rate among parents was the highest at 63%. Details are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Awareness Rates of the Help Seeking Hotlines and Instant Messaging Services

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Help seeking hotlines and instant message services	61% (71%)	57% (76%)	60% (74%)	57% (74%)	63% (71%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

20. The general impression of ND’s four TV APIs which were broadcast in 2023 was also gauged. The APIs were –

- (a) CBD, Not for me! (Commencement of Law)
(CBD 唔啱我! (法例生效篇))
- (b) Cannabis is a drug (大麻係毒品)
- (c) Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out! (一齊企硬 唔take嘢!)
- (d) Don’t be K.O.’d by Ketamine! (咪畀K仔K.O.你!)

21. As set out at Table 7, the awareness rate of any one of the four themed APIs broadcast maintained at a high level of 97%. A similar pattern was observed across different groups.

Table 7: Awareness Rate of Themed APIs

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Any one of the four themed APIs	97% (97%)	96% (97%)	99% (96%)	99% (99%)	96% (97%)

Note: Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

22. As to the reasons of why the themed APIs were being recalled, the most commonly quoted ones were “slogans are simple/catchy (口號精簡/容易上口)” (78%) and “anti-drug messages delivered are clear (傳達嘅抗毒訊息明確清晰)” (72%). Details are given in Table 8.

Table 8: Reasons of Themed APIs Being Recalled

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Slogans are simple/catchy (口號精簡/容易上口)	78% (87%)	79% (86%)	78% (89%)	74% (88%)	77% (87%)
Anti-drug messages delivered are clear (傳達嘅抗毒訊息明確清晰)	72% (86%)	68% (83%)	74% (87%)	62% (85%)	71% (87%)
Plots are creative (橋段具有創意)	47% (47%)	42% (49%)	48% (48%)	48% (48%)	48% (48%)
Characters and plots are attractive (角色同情節吸引)	38% (46%)	35% (37%)	39% (44%)	41% (45%)	37% (50%)
Visual effects are rich, screens are colourful and eye-catching (視覺效果豐富，畫面鮮豔奪目)	37% (42%)	42% (33%)	36% (47%)	37% (45%)	36% (42%)
Plots have a fresh feeling (橋段有清新感覺)	29% (35%)	31% (30%)	28% (36%)	27% (33%)	33% (36%)
Background music is easy to remember (背景音樂令人容易記得)	10% (36%)	4% (30%)	10% (35%)	3% (38%)	11% (38%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

II. Preference on Receiving Anti-drug Messages

23. Views on the effectiveness and extent of penetration of ND’s current anti-drug messages, as well as the preference on receiving anti-drug messages were collected.

24. On the effectiveness of various platforms in disseminating anti-drug messages, web-based and mobile platforms (90%) were the most effective means, followed by TV (81%) and public transport (69%). Details are given in Table 9.

Table 9: Top Five Media Platforms and Avenues
Considered Effective in Disseminating Anti-drug Messages

Ranking	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
1	Web-based and mobile platforms 90% (97%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 90% (98%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 93% (99%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 90% (97%)	Web-based and mobile platforms 89% (96%)
2	TV 81% (92%)	TV 83% (94%)	TV 78% (93%)	TV 78% (93%)	TV 82% (90%)
3	Public transport 69% (84%)	Public transport 65% (86%)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 66% (N/A)	Public transport 64% (85%)	Public transport 70% (85%)
4	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 66% (N/A)	Venues of entertainment 64% (74%)	Public transport 66% (85%)	Venues of entertainment 62% (81%)	Venues of entertainment 67% (77%)
5	Venues of entertainment 66% (77%)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 63% (N/A)	Venues of entertainment 64% (78%)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 58% (N/A)	TV screens at cinema, airport, side of tunnel or outdoor 65% (N/A)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.
(2) Multiple answers are allowed.
(3) N/A means “Not Available”.

25. Views on the anti-drug messages that should be strengthened would be useful for ND to consider the anti-drug messages to be disseminated in future PE&P initiatives. In general, 77% of the target population would like the message “Drug trafficking is a serious offence and will be fined and imprisoned” to be strengthened, followed by “Drugs can be addictive and harmful to your body” (75%). Details are given in Table 10.

Table 10: Anti-drug Messages That Should Be Strengthened

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Drug trafficking is a serious offence and will be fined and imprisoned (販毒係嚴重罪行，會被罰款同監禁)	77% (91%)	70% (88%)	73% (88%)	74% (90%)	78% (91%)
Drugs can be addictive and harmful to your body (吸食毒品會上癮同埋對身體造成傷害)	75% (91%)	66% (86%)	76% (89%)	73% (91%)	78% (93%)
Live a healthy life and stay away from drugs (要過健康嘅生活，遠離毒品)	73% (87%)	70% (86%)	72% (85%)	69% (86%)	73% (88%)
Drug users or people suffering from drug problems can easily seek assistance, such as counselling services or drug rehabilitation services (吸毒者或受毒品問題困擾嘅人能夠容易尋求協助，例如諮詢服務或戒毒服務)	66% (84%)	60% (87%)	68% (83%)	58% (83%)	66% (85%)
Cannabis is a drug (大麻係毒品)	63% (86%)	59% (87%)	62% (81%)	58% (88%)	67% (87%)
Cannabidiol in cannabis, which is also known as CBD, may be harmful to health and has been classified as a drug (大麻中嘅大麻二酚，即係CBD，有可能損害健康，已被列為毒品)	63% (87%)	62% (82%)	61% (89%)	61% (84%)	62% (88%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

(2) Multiple answers are allowed.

26. Views on the most effective message to discourage drug taking would be useful for ND to consider key messages to be used in future PE&P. 34% of the target population opined that “Drugs can cause serious harm to your body” was the most effective message to discourage persons from taking drug. Details are given in Table 11.

Table 11: Most Effective Message to Discourage Drug Taking

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Drugs can cause serious harm to your body (吸毒會對身體造成嚴重損害)	34% (40%)	38% (33%)	32% (38%)	33% (40%)	35% (40%)
Drug addiction can cause physical and mental pain, drug rehabilitation can regain the freedom of health (毒癮發作會造成身心痛苦，戒毒可以重獲健康自由)	15% (14%)	15% (13%)	12% (16%)	13% (20%)	14% (12%)
Drug taking or possession of drugs are serious offences (吸毒或管有毒品屬嚴重罪行)	14% (20%)	10% (20%)	12% (19%)	10% (18%)	16% (20%)
Healthy living, positive emotions can resist the temptation of drugs (健康生活、正面情緒能抗拒毒品誘惑)	11% (N/A)	11% (N/A)	12% (N/A)	15% (N/A)	10% (N/A)
Avoid worrying family (避免令家人擔心)	9% (10%)	8% (10%)	10% (8%)	8% (5%)	8% (11%)
Drugs do not help solving real problems (吸毒對解決現實問題沒有幫助)	9% (9%)	8% (15%)	9% (10%)	11% (7%)	8% (8%)
Drugs waste money (吸毒浪費金錢)	6% (8%)	8% (10%)	6% (9%)	5% (9%)	6% (8%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.

(2) Only one answer is allowed.

(3) N/A means “Not Available”.

III. Action taken to advise others not to take drugs or involve in drug trafficking after receiving anti-drug messages

27. A question was used to estimate whether the target population would take action to advise others against drug abuse or drug trafficking after receiving anti-drug messages. This would be useful to evaluate the effect of anti-drug messages for PE&P initiatives. 31% of the target population had advised others against drug abuse or drug trafficking after receiving anti-drug messages. The percentage was highest among the high risk group (those who knew someone was drug abuser and/or who had been offered drugs before), in which 43% had taken actions. Details are given in Table 12.

Table 12: Any Action to Advise Others
Against Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking After Receiving Anti-drug Messages

	Target population	General youngsters	Young adults	High risk group	Parents
Action taken	31% (37%)	29% (40%)	35% (37%)	43% (42%)	31% (39%)

Notes: (1) Figures in brackets refer to the results of the 2022 Survey.
(2) Only one answer is allowed.

**Narcotics Division
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