

## 2019 Summary Findings

**Population Stability** – The composition and structure of Idaho’s population is vastly different than the rest of the United States in many ways. Idaho has a vast rural landscape with a few small but growing urban areas. The overall population per square mile is 21 for the state, compared to 93 nationally. Idaho’s population growth has outpaced the nation’s. Additionally, there is a migration from rural to urban areas. The disparities in population shift range from -13% to +15% growth.

**Economic Health** – Idaho has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country at 2.9%. However, the median household income (\$53,089) is significantly less than the nation’s (\$60,293). Idaho also has a low level of educational attainment compared to the nation. Only 18.2% of Idahoans 25 and older have a bachelor’s degree, compared to 31.5% in the nation.

**Mental Health** –The National Survey of Drug Use and Health consistently ranks Idaho at the bottom of the nation for indicators of mental illness. For example, Idaho’s ranking for having a major depressive episode in the past year is #49 for those aged 12 – 17 and # 48 for those 18 – 25. Those aged 18 -25 report significantly worse outcomes than those 26 and older in all indicators.

**Prescription Drugs** – Sales of retail oxycodone are higher than the national average, but Idaho’s numbers have decreased 16% from 2016 to 2018. The percentage of Idaho high school students that misused prescription drugs decreased by 29% between 2011 and 2019. Between 2016 and 2018, the percent decrease for those aged 18-25 was 35% and 20% for those over 25.

**Alcohol** – Underage drinking is identified as a problem across Idaho. Almost 15% of Idaho’s 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders drank alcohol (other than a few sips) prior to age 13 and 27% had at least one drink in the past 30 days. Less than half of Idahoans perceive binge drinking as a great risk. Adults 26 and older and those aged 12 – 17 are more likely to think that having five or more drinks once or twice a week is a great risk, at 46.1% and 43.4% respectively, compared to 37.7% of those aged 18 - 25.

**Marijuana** – Both medical and recreational marijuana are legal in Oregon and Washington on Idaho’s western border and Utah southeast of Idaho has decriminalized it. The normalization of marijuana has led to an increase in use among Idaho’s adult and youth population. Marijuana use within the past 30 days has increased from 6.9% to 8.2% in Idaho since 2011. The YRBS reports that 17% of Idaho youth used marijuana in the past 30 days, and 30% at least once in their lifetime.

**Tobacco or Nicotine** – Approximately 5% of young Idahoans aged 12 – 17 report using tobacco in the past month, while those aged 18-25 and 26 and older report rates of 27% and 23% respectively. However, vaping has skyrocketed in the nation and in Idaho. Although it is technically not a tobacco product, the nicotine content in vape products makes it equally or more addicting. The YRBS reported nearly 23% of Idaho’s high school students used a vaping product in the past 30 days.

**Other Drugs** – The use and trafficking of methamphetamines and heroin remain problematic for Idaho’s law enforcement and medical personnel. The five-year arrest rate for methamphetamines was 111.3%, while the heroin arrest-rate trend is 395.6%. However, the percent of people reporting illicit drug use other than marijuana has decreased since 2016. The decreases are from 3.0% to 2.4% for those aged 12-17, 7.1% to 4.9% for those 18-25, and 2.7% to 2.3% for those 26 and older.