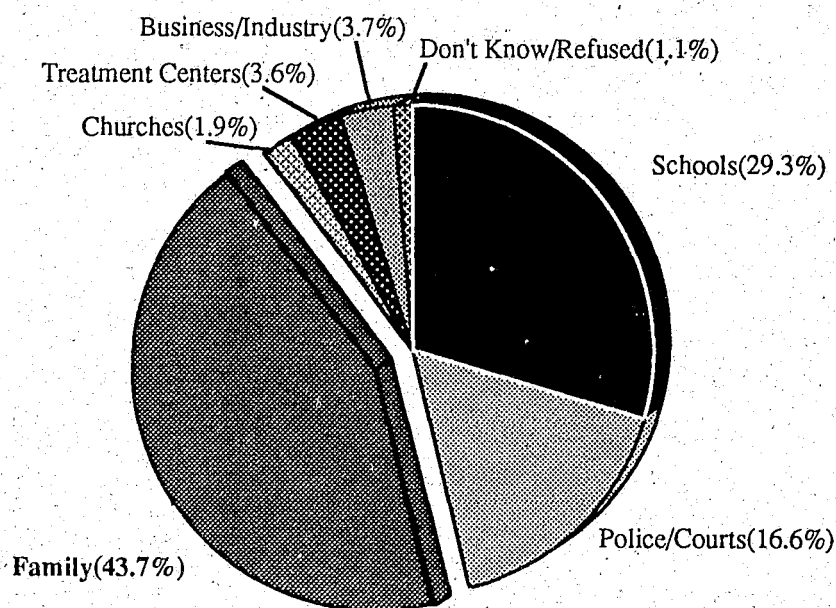


Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance Statistical Analysis Center

1991 Household Anti-Drug Abuse Survey

The Social Institution Most Able
To Be Effective in the War on Drugs



Jerome D. Lacke
Executive Director

Tommy G. Thompson
Governor



Tommy G. Thompson
Governor

Jerome D. Lacke
Executive Director

February 1992

Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to provide you with a copy of the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance 1991 Household Anti-Drug Abuse Survey. This report presents the responses of over 500 Wisconsin residents on a variety of Anti-Drug and other crime issues. The survey was commissioned in the Spring of 1991, and was made possible by a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice.

The report finds that Wisconsin residents are very concerned about the dangers that illegal drugs pose to our society. They strongly support a variety of Anti-Drug efforts, whether they take place in the home, in schools, on the streets, or at our borders. This information on the beliefs and attitudes of our citizens adds an important new dimension to our understanding of the drug problem and its effect in our communities.

The report is designed for ease of reference, with important findings for each part of the survey summarized both in an Executive Summary and at the beginning of each report section. Additional detail is also provided on the responses to each question.

I hope you find this report to be informative and helpful. Please contact our office if you need further survey information or information regarding other crime-related statistics throughout the year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jerome D. Lacke".

JEROME D. LACKE,
Executive Director

136225

Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance

NCJRS

APR 20 1992

ACQUISITIONS

1991 Household Anti-Drug Abuse Survey

February 1992

Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance
Statistical Analysis Center
222 State Street, 2nd Floor
Madison, WI 53702

136225

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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Executive Summary

The individuals surveyed provided a broadly typical representation of Wisconsin's overall population. Less than ten percent of those surveyed had failed to complete high school, while just over 41 percent said they had earned a two-year vocational degree or higher. The sample reported a median 1990 family income range of between \$30,000 and \$39,000, with nearly 20 percent of all respondents falling into this category. Just three percent of the sample reported earning less than \$5,000.

Wisconsin residents view drug abuse as a very serious issue that is interwoven with other ongoing social problems such as poverty. At the time of the survey in Spring of 1991, the survey respondents viewed crime and drug abuse as the top two issues facing the State. The survey results also suggest that Wisconsin residents are very aware of the risks associated with the abuse of Marijuana, Cocaine and Alcohol. With the exception of an occasional drink or two, there seems to be very little acceptance of any level of drug usage, especially the use of Cocaine. It appears that most Wisconsin residents believe not only that drug use leads to other crime, but also that it is related to more than one-half of all serious crimes. The survey revealed different attitudes in different regions of the State, with survey respondents from Milwaukee typically holding a more pessimistic attitude about progress against drug abuse than respondents from other parts of the State. The survey results indicate that more than two-thirds of Wisconsin residents believe that no real progress can be made against drug abuse unless other serious social problems are dealt with.

Taken as a whole, the attitudes held by the survey respondents towards law enforcement, drug abuse and prevention issues were complex. Although the survey respondents strongly favored aggressive sanctions, drug testing and other legal steps against drug abuse, they also tended to believe that these kinds of institutional activities are less effective than family influences in the effort to reduce drug abuse. The survey suggests that Wisconsin residents overwhelmingly oppose the legalization of any currently illegal drugs. Also, Wisconsin residents appear to favor aggressive law enforcement action against the drug "Kingpins," and importers, although they consider selling drugs to be slightly more serious than importing and manufacturing. The survey suggests that Wisconsin residents favor medical treatment rather than prosecution as the best way to deal with users of illegal drugs, while at the same time they prefer prosecution over counseling when dealing with student drug dealers.

Introduction

The following Survey was made possible by funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, provided through the Criminal Justice Statistics Association, now known as the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA). The Wisconsin Survey Research Laboratory located at the University of Wisconsin-Madison was contracted by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) to implement the survey. A portion of the survey was based on a battery of standardized questions for use in several states as part of a national drug assesment being conducted by JRSA. The survey was expanded by OJA to include questions covering the drug abuse-crime relationship, opinions on drug legalization, and several other areas of interest.

The survey was conducted by telephone, with the sample determined by random-digit dialing techniques. The sample proved to be generally representative of Wisconsin's overall population. There was a slight oversampling of women in the survey, as well as a marginal oversampling of African-Americans based on demographic estimates prior to the 1990 census, but the deviation was relatively small.

Exploratory analysis was conducted by the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) of the Office of Justice Assistance. This report was prepared by David Varana, Anti-Drug Abuse Evaluation Specialist, with consultation from Steve Grohmann and Tom Eversen of OJA, as well as Bill Walluks of the Wisconsin Department of Justice.



Characteristics of the Sample

The individuals surveyed provided a broadly typical representation of Wisconsin's population.

Just over 41 percent of the sample said they had earned at least one degree beyond high school, while nine percent said they never finished high school. The median income range fell between \$30,000 and \$39,000 for 1990, with nearly one fifth of the sample reporting this income level. Just three percent of the sample reported earning less than \$5,000.

Characteristics of the Sample

The individuals surveyed provided a broadly typical representation of Wisconsin's population.

The survey was designed to estimate the attitudes of Wisconsin's residents on a number of anti-drug abuse issues. The survey design included the ability to determine a person's sex, age, socioeconomic status, race, and other characteristics that would make comparison across such groups possible. For example, it was found that women were more likely than men to say that social problems such as poverty or lack of education prevented any real progress in the war on drugs (see Tables 4 & 5), and that residents of Milwaukee County were more likely than individuals from rural Counties to believe that the easy access to guns leads to a high crime rate (see Chart 9). This section presents the basic demographics of the sample.

- **535** people were surveyed.
- **56.1 %** were female, **43.9 %** were male.
- **2.8 %** were 18-20 years old, **22.8 %** were between ages 21-30, **23.4 %** were 31-40, **17.6 %** were 41-50, **11.2 %** were 51-60, **11.2 %** were 61-70, **8.2 %** were 71-80, and **2.2 %** were more than 80 years old (**0.6 %** refused the question).
- **93.5 %** were White, **3.4 %** were African-American, **0.9 %** were Hispanic, **0.9 %** were American Indian, **0.7 %** were Asian-American, and **0.5 %** reported "Other" or refused the question.
- **17.8 %** lived in Milwaukee County, **42.2 %** resided in other urban Counties (per acre population density between .30 and .86), and **40 %** lived in rural Counties (per acre population density less than .30).

Considering that women comprise an estimated 51% of the general population, our survey had around 5% more women than may be the case for Wisconsin's actual population. Beyond this, the characteristics of the sample were broadly consistent with the basic population characteristics of Wisconsin residents.

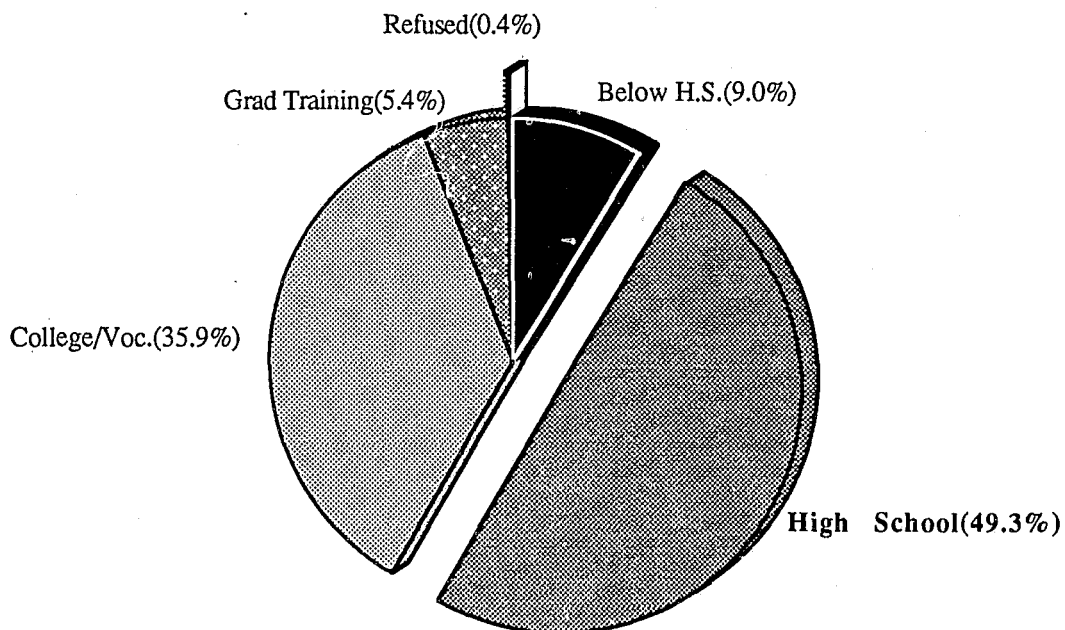
Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Sample

Just over 41 percent of the sample said they had earned at least one degree beyond high school, while nine percent said they never finished high school. The median income range fell between \$30,000 and \$39,000 for 1990, with nearly one fifth of the sample reporting this income level. Just three percent of the sample reported earning less than \$5,000.

The respondents were asked to report the highest level of formal education that they had achieved, as well as to report an estimate of their 1990 family income. The results are presented on the next two pages in Charts 1 and 2.

Q. "What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?"

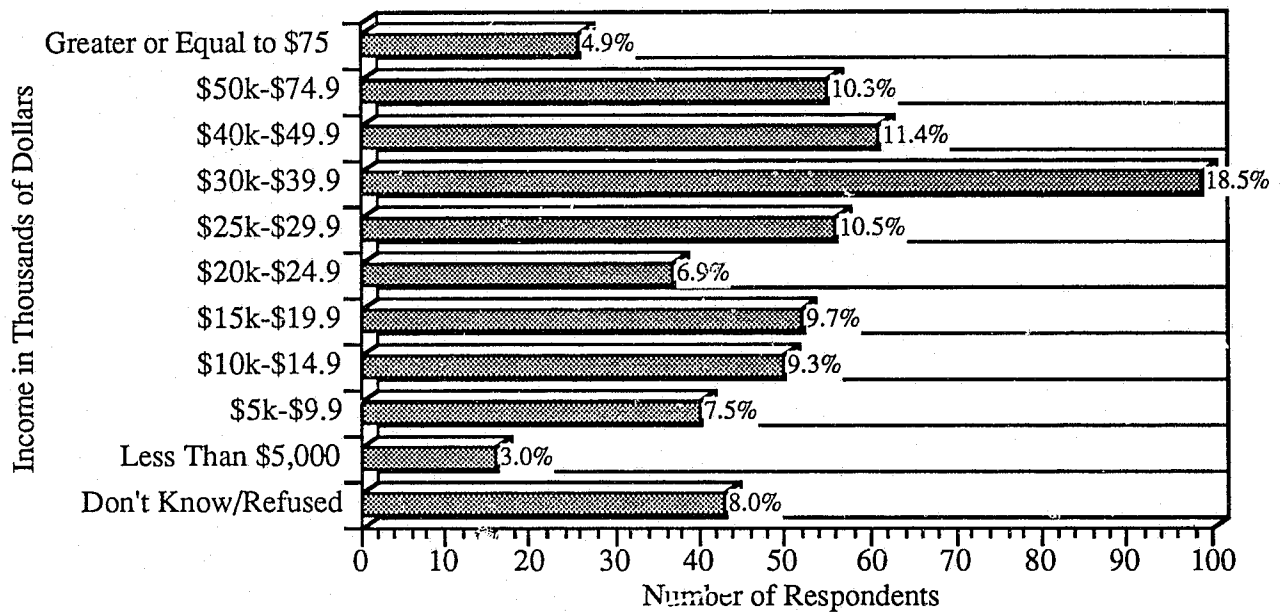
**Chart 1: Sample Characteristics:
Level of Education**



Nearly half of the sample respondents (49.3%) had completed high school but had earned no further degrees. In all, 41.3% of the sample reported having earned a degree from vocational school, college or graduate school. Just over five percent of the sample went on to graduate training. Nine percent of the sample said they had never finished high school.

Q. "Was your total 1990 family income from all sources and before taxes, less than \$5,000; 5 to \$10,000; 10 to \$15,000; 15 to \$20,000; 20 to \$25,000; 25 to \$30,000; 30 to \$40,000; 40 to \$50,000; 50 to \$75,000; or \$75,000 and over?"

Chart 2: Sample Characteristics:
Breakdown by Income



The median income level fell in the \$30-\$39,000 range, with 18.5% of all respondents reporting this income category. The smallest number of respondents, three percent of the total, reported lowest income category. In general, the distribution of income levels appears to have two "peaks," with the lower peak in the \$10-\$19,900 range and the higher peak in the \$30-\$39,000 range. Eight percent either didn't know or didn't report an income level.

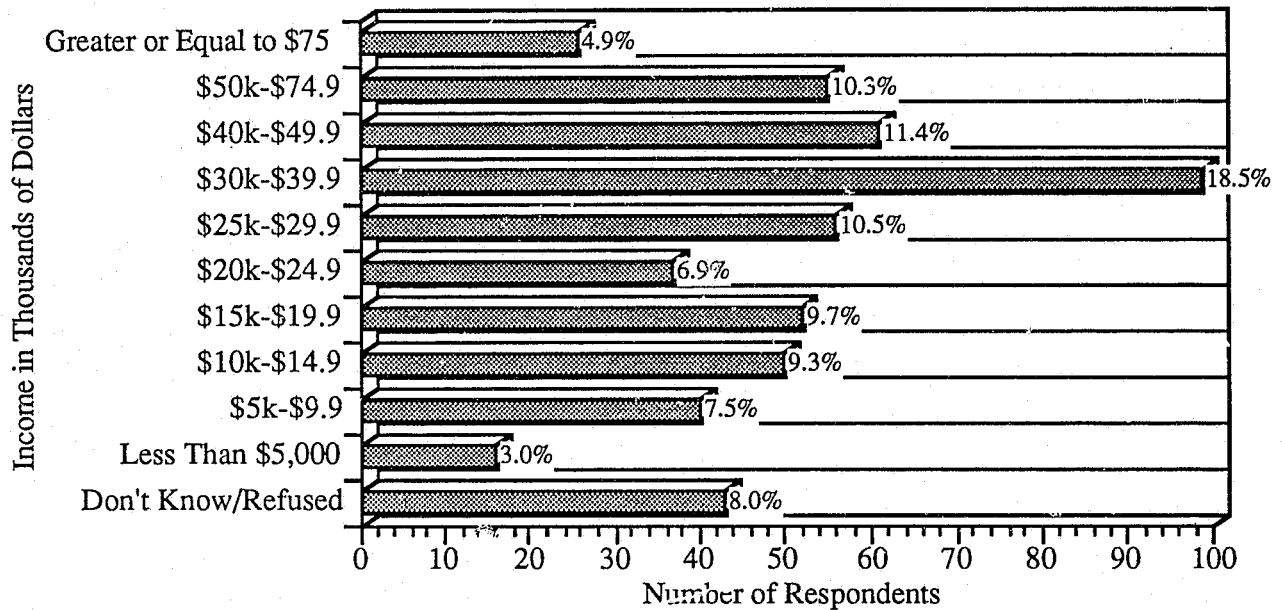
Additional Characteristics

The sample had the following additional characteristics:

- 59.2% were married, 20.9% had never married, 9.4% were divorced, 9.2% were widowed, 1.1% were separated and 0.2% refused the question.
- 60.4% were employed full time, 21.9% were not in the labor force, 14% were employed part time, 2.4% were unemployed seeking work, 1.1% were unemployed, not seeking work and 0.2% refused the question.

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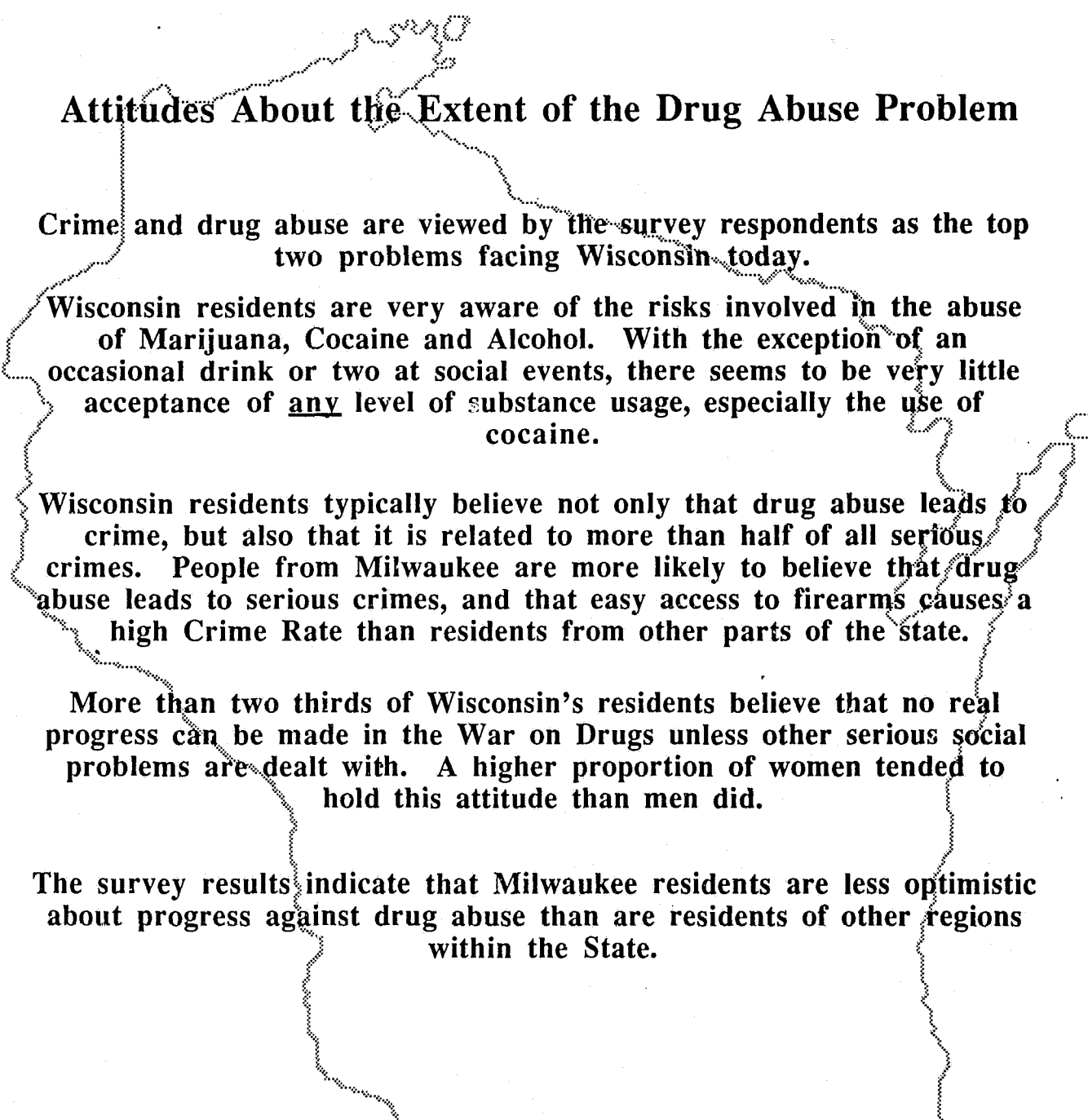


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Attitudes About the Extent of the Drug Abuse Problem

Crime and drug abuse are viewed by the survey respondents as the top two problems facing Wisconsin today.

Wisconsin residents are very aware of the risks involved in the abuse of Marijuana, Cocaine and Alcohol. With the exception of an occasional drink or two at social events, there seems to be very little acceptance of any level of substance usage, especially the use of cocaine.

Wisconsin residents typically believe not only that drug abuse leads to crime, but also that it is related to more than half of all serious crimes. People from Milwaukee are more likely to believe that drug abuse leads to serious crimes, and that easy access to firearms causes a high Crime Rate than residents from other parts of the state.

More than two thirds of Wisconsin's residents believe that no real progress can be made in the War on Drugs unless other serious social problems are dealt with. A higher proportion of women tended to hold this attitude than men did.

The survey results indicate that Milwaukee residents are less optimistic about progress against drug abuse than are residents of other regions within the State.

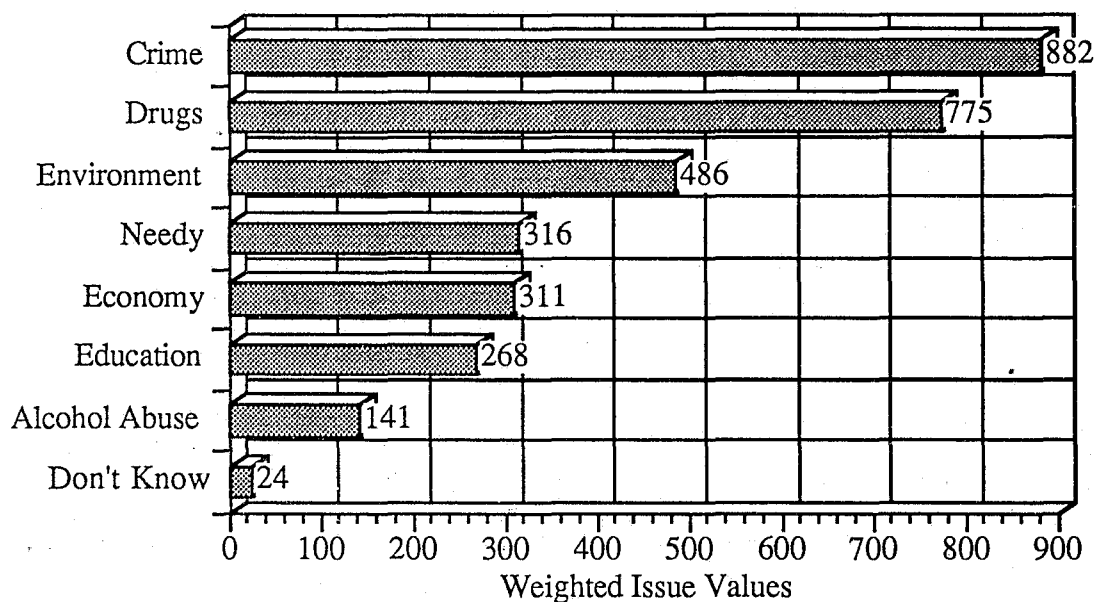
Attitudes About Crime and Drug Abuse

Crime and drug abuse are viewed by the survey respondents as the top two problems facing Wisconsin today.

The survey from the Spring of 1991 suggests that concern over crime and drug abuse was much higher at that time than for other social issues and problems including education, the economy, and alcohol abuse. Charts 3 and 4 on the next two pages present the results.

Q. "I'll read seven issues which people may consider to be problem areas in the United States right now. Please listen to all seven problem areas, then tell me which three, in order, you consider to be the most serious. They are: Crime; Damage to the Environment; Taking Care of the Needy; Drug Abuse; Public Education; Alcohol Abuse; Problems Relating to the Economy."

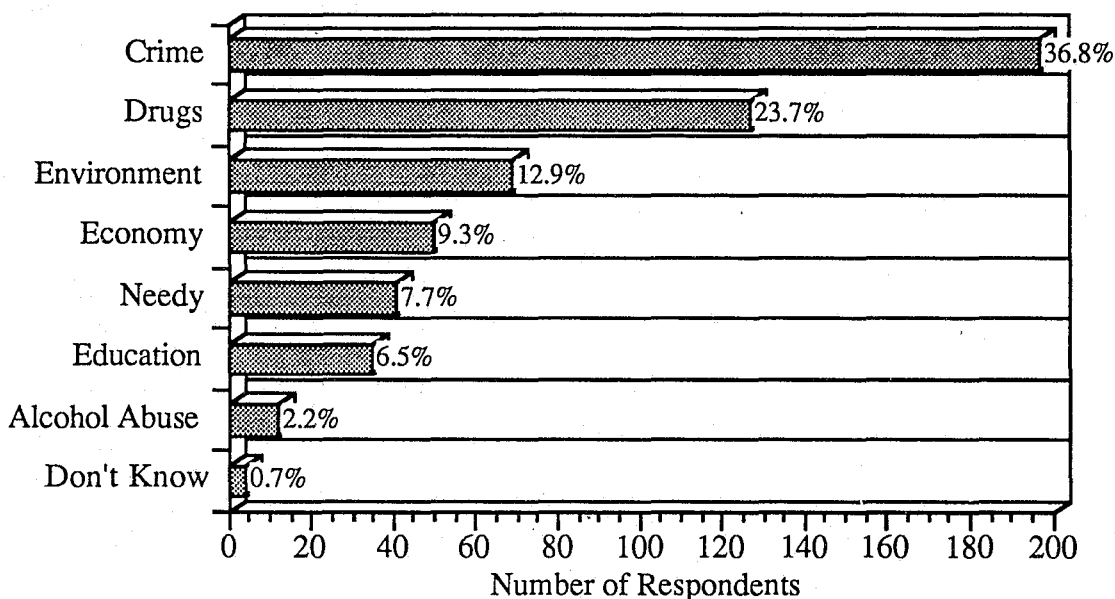
Chart 3: A Measure of Concern:
A Weighted Scale of Problems/Priorities
Cited by Wisconsin Residents



The respondents were presented with a list of seven issue areas and asked to pick the three most pressing issues in descending order of importance. This generated three different rank scales (most pressing, second most pressing, third most pressing) for the seven issue areas, which were assigned a "weight" which decreased in value from "most pressing" to "third most pressing," and then finally added together to produce the overall scale presented in Chart 3. Thus, Chart 3 measures the respondents' overall concern for each of the seven issue areas, and shows that crime and the drug problem were ranked consistently higher than all other listed issue areas. Chart 3 also shows a moderately strong score for "damage to the environment," which indicates that although most respondents didn't indicate the environment as being the most critical area, large numbers viewed it as the second or third most pressing problem.

Chart 4 presents the results for the (first) "most pressing" issue only. When the responses for the "most pressing" issue are examined independent of other scales, we see a much wider gap between crime and all other responses. Although other issues are important to Wisconsin residents, especially drug abuse and to a lesser extent the environment, crime is viewed by more people as being the biggest problem.

**Chart 4: The Most Pressing Problem:
The Sample's Viewpoints on the Primary
Problem Facing Wisconsin**



The survey results suggest that crime was viewed by the average Wisconsin resident as the number one problem in the state at the time of the survey. With seven possible issue areas to choose from, more than one third of all those surveyed felt that crime was the "most serious." Significantly, over 60% of those surveyed chose either crime or drug abuse as the number one problem. Another item of interest displayed in Chart 4 is the relatively low percentage of respondents choosing "problems related to the economy" or "education."

The Risk of Harm: Marijuana, Cocaine and Alcohol

Wisconsin residents are very aware of the risks involved in the abuse of marijuana, cocaine and alcohol. With the exception of an occasional drink or two at social events, there seems to be very little acceptance of any level of drug usage, especially the use of cocaine.

One of the primary reasons this survey was commissioned by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance was to develop an estimate of the day-to-day impact of the drug problem on Wisconsin's residents. Are people generally optimistic or pessimistic about the drug problem? What are the most dangerous drugs and which are the most serious illegal drug acts in most people's view? This section addresses the attitudes of Wisconsin residents about specific drugs and the risks involved in their use.

Two of the most commonly abused dangerous drugs are cocaine and marijuana. In one part of the interview, the respondents were asked to rate the risk of harm to users of these two drugs. By way of comparison, the survey respondents were also asked to rate the risks to abusers of alcohol. Table 1 presents the number of survey respondents choosing the risk of harm at each level of marijuana usage, while Tables 2 and 3 present comparable data for risk levels associated with cocaine and alcohol.

Q. "How much do you think people risk harming themselves--physically or in other ways--if they try marijuana once or twice...would they be at no risk, slight risk, moderate risk or great risk? If they smoke marijuana occasionally? Regularly?"

**Table 1: Level of Risk Associated with
Level of Marijuana Usage: Percentage Responses**

	Try Once or Twice	Occasional Use	Regular Use
No Risk	22%	7%	2%
Slight Risk	47%	31%	7%
Moderate Risk	17%	36%	20%
Great Risk	14%	26%	71%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Table 1 shows that although a majority of the respondents felt that regular Marijuana users faced a "great risk" of harm due to the effects of the drug, they also felt that occasional or experimental users faced only "moderate" or "slight risk."

**Table 2: Level of Risk Associated with
Level of Cocaine Usage: Percentage Responses**

	Try Once or Twice	Occasional Use	Regular Use
No Risk	3%	1%	0%
Slight Risk	9%	4%	0%
Moderate Risk	21%	12%	1%
Great Risk	67%	83%	99%
Total	100%	100%	100%

In comparison to Marijuana, it is clear that the respondents feel there is very little variation in the risks involved in using Cocaine. The respondents overwhelmingly felt that the risk of harm from using Cocaine is "great," no matter how infrequently the drug is used.

**Table 3: Level of Risk Associated with
Level of Alcohol Usage: Percentage Responses**

	Occasional Drink	5+ Drinks/ Weekend	1-2 Drinks/ Day	4-5 Drinks Regularly	6+ Drinks Regularly
No Risk	35%	10%	7%	0%	0%
Slight Risk	48%	24%	17%	3%	0%
Moderate Risk	14%	41%	34%	16%	3%
Great Risk	3%	25%	42%	81%	97%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 3 shows that the respondents had a more varied view of the risks involved for people who use alcohol. Most of the respondents said that the occasional drinker ran "no" or a "slight risk," while very heavy drinkers (6+ drinks nearly every day) claimed almost as many "great risk" responses as regular cocaine users.

A comparison of the results presented in Tables 1 through 3 would seem to indicate that Wisconsin residents are very aware of the dangers involved in using any of the drugs listed above. With the exception of an occasional drink or two, there seems to be very little acceptance of any level of drug usage, especially the use of cocaine.

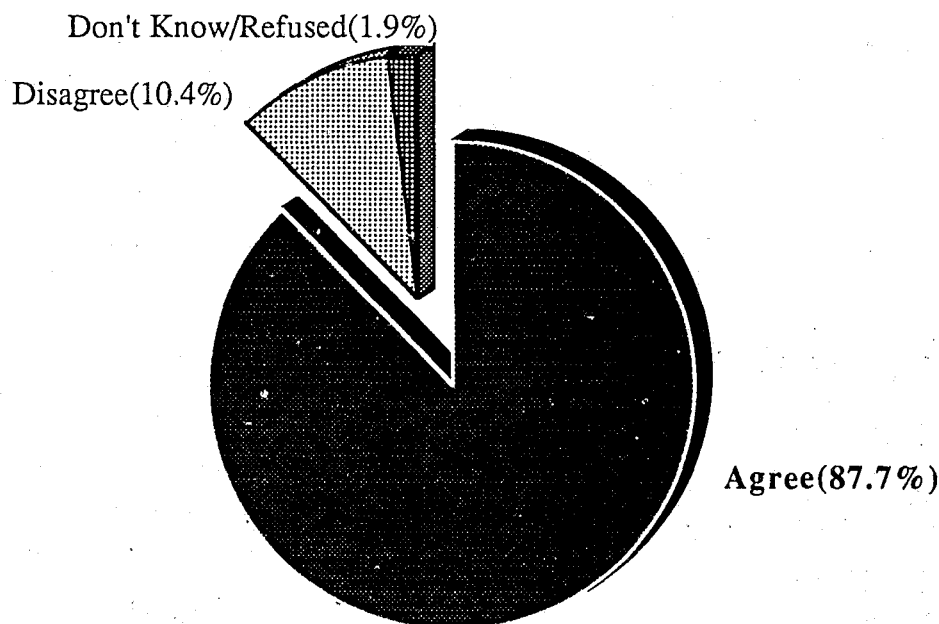
The Relationship Between Illegal Drugs and Other Crime

The survey results suggest that Wisconsin residents typically believe not only that drug abuse leads to crime, but also that it is related to more than half of all serious crimes. People from Milwaukee are more likely to believe that drug abuse leads to serious crimes, and that easy access to firearms causes a high Crime Rate than residents from other parts of the state.

The National Institute of Justice's 1990 Drug Use Forecasting Annual Report suggests that illegal drug use is often associated with other crime, especially with property-related crimes. The Office of Justice Assistance Household Survey sought to discover if Wisconsin residents tended to see a connection between drug use and other crime. Chart 5 presents the responses to a general question on the relationship between illegal drugs and the crime rate, while Charts 6 and 7 present overall and regional data on perceptions concerning drugs and serious crimes. Charts 8 and 9 complete this section by presenting overall and regional data on opinions concerning the connection between guns and crime.

Q. "Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: the easy access to drugs in this country is a big reason for our high crime rate."

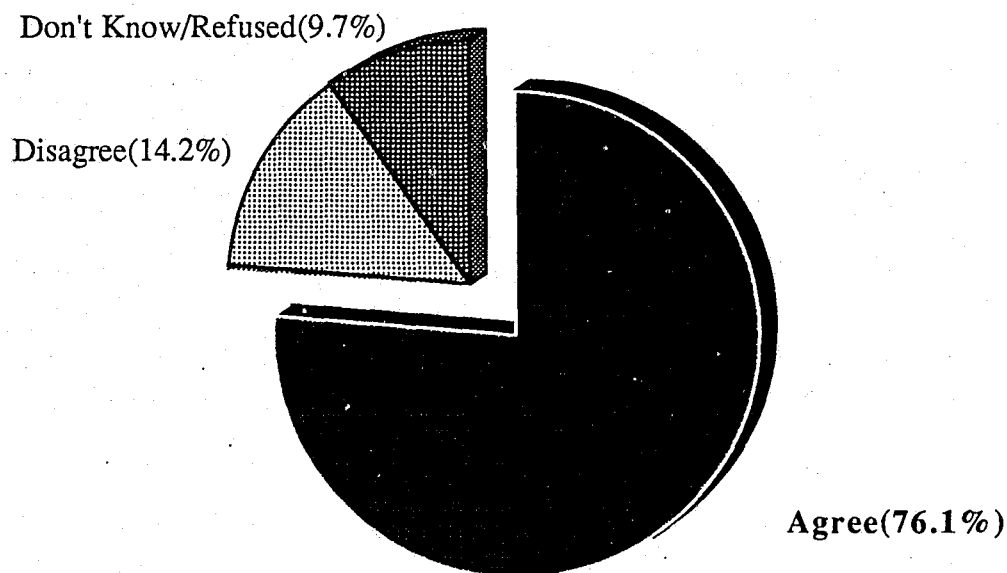
**Chart 5: Does Easy Access to Drugs
Lead to High Crime Rate?**



The survey results suggest a very large measure of agreement among Wisconsin residents with the notion that the "easy access" to drugs leads to a high crime rate. Almost 88% of those surveyed agreed with this statement, with only slightly more than 1 in 10 disagreeing. Further analysis of this question revealed that there was only a marginal variation in the response pattern across groups living in different parts of the state, which suggests that Wisconsin residents in all regions of the State feel there is a strong connection between drugs and crime.

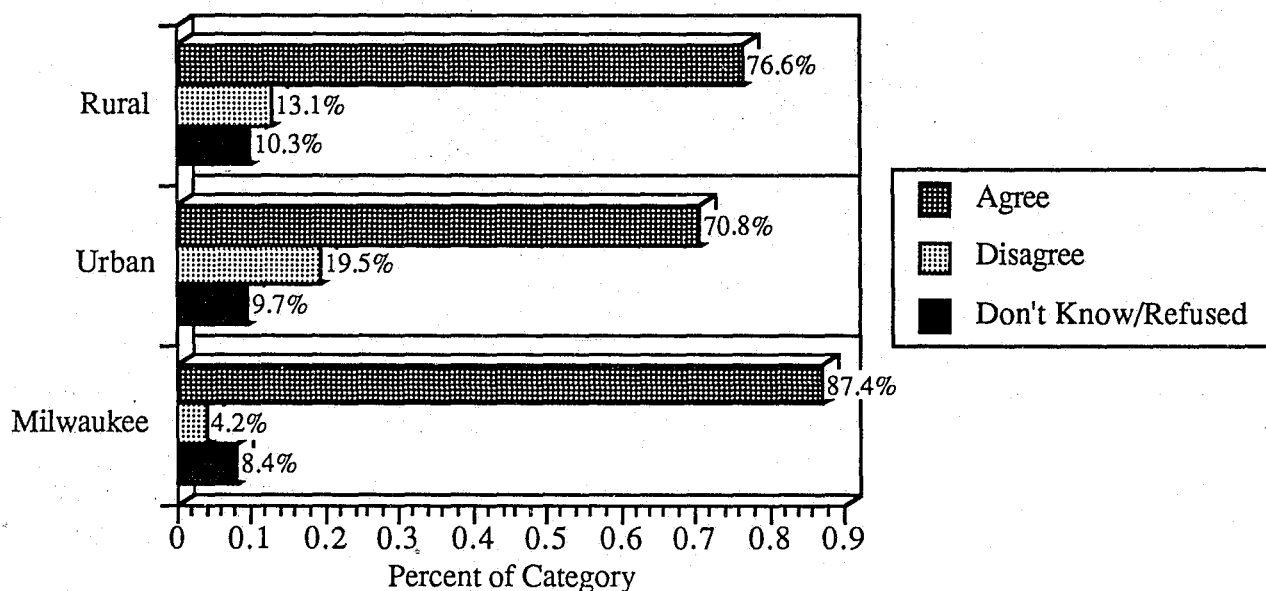
Q. "Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: more than Half of the serious crime in this State is related to drug abuse in some way."

Chart 6: Is More Than Half of Serious Crime Drug Related?



A very large majority of the respondents agreed with the idea presented in the question, which suggests that not only do most Wisconsin residents believe drugs and crime are linked together, but also that drugs are largely responsible for the more serious types of crimes. Further analysis of this question revealed some differences in attitudes from region to region.

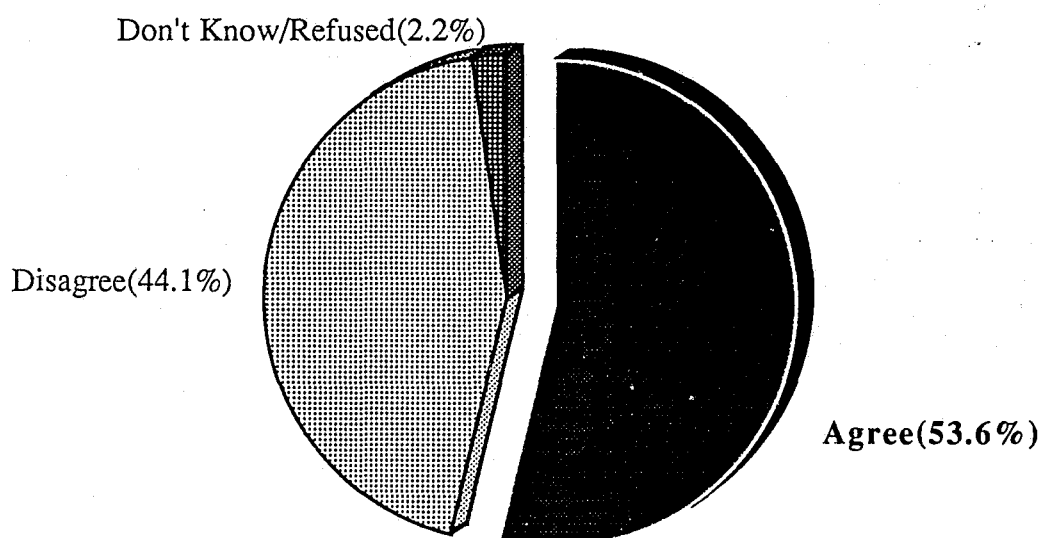
Chart 7: Is More Than Half of Serious Crime Drug Related?: Breakdown by Residence



People from Milwaukee are more likely to link drug abuse to a high volume of serious crime, with over 87% agreeing with the statement. Those from other urban counties were less likely to agree with the statement, with just over 70% believing that more than half of serious crime is related to drug abuse. This is nearly 17% less than the response level for respondents from Milwaukee. Overall, a large majority of the sample agreed with the statement, suggesting that although regional differences may be present, the overall majority is large enough make the differences less distinct.

Q. "Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: the easy access to guns in this country is a big reason for our high crime rate."

Chart 8: Does Easy Access to Guns Lead to High Crime Rate?



In contrast to the preceding two questions, only a slight majority, or 53.6% of the sample respondents agreed with the idea that the easy access to firearms was one of the causes of a high crime rate, suggesting the absence of an overall consensus such as was present when the issue revolved around drug abuse.

In fact, on the issue of firearms and crime, further analysis suggested marked region-by-region differences in the sample's response pattern. Chart 9 on the next page presents the breakdown.

Chart 9: Does Easy Access to Guns Lead to High Crime Rate?: Breakdown by Residence

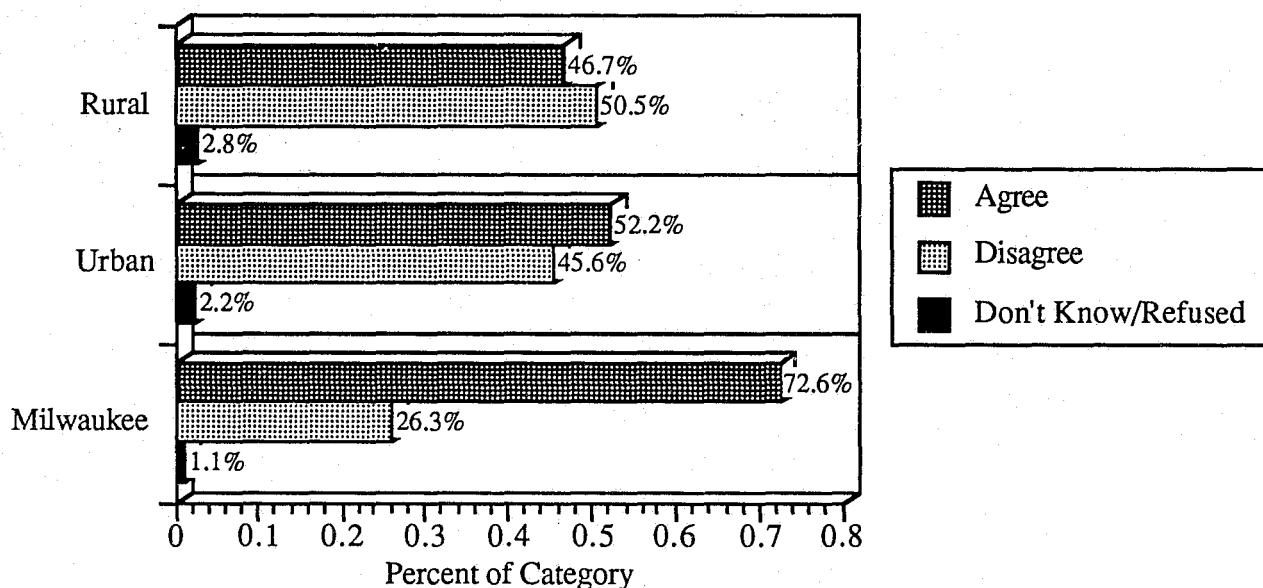


Chart 9 displays the major differences in response patterns for the three regions on the gun-crime issue. A slight majority of respondents from rural Counties disagreed with the statement, a slight majority from other urban Counties agreed, but a substantial majority of respondents from Milwaukee County agreed that the easy access to guns in this country is one of the reasons for our high crime rate.

Other Social Problems and the War on Drugs

More than two-thirds of Wisconsin's residents believe that no real progress can be made in the War on Drugs unless other serious social problems are dealt with. A higher proportion of women tended to hold this attitude than men did.

The survey asked the sample respondents whether they believed that social problems such as poverty prevented real anti-drug progress. Tables 4 and 5 present the results.

Q. "Please tell me if you agree with the following statement: No major progress in the fight against drug abuse can be made until poverty, lack of education, and other social problems are dealt with."

Table 4: Do Other Social Problems Prevent Major Anti-Drug Progress?

Percent of Sample	
Agree	67.3%
Disagree	27.1%
Don't Know	5.6%

More than twice the number of respondents agreed rather than disagreed with the notion that social problems such as poverty and lack of education are standing in the way of real progress in the war on drugs. Unlike many of the anti-drug issues explored by the survey up to this point, there might be a gender-based difference in attitudes on this issue. Table 5 presents the results for the question in Table 4, broken down by gender.

Table 5: Gender Gap: Do Other Social Problems Prevent Major Anti-Drug Progress?

	Women	Men	Total
Agree	71.0%	62.6%	67.3%
Disagree	24.3%	30.6%	27.1%
Don't Know/ Refused	4.7%	6.8%	5.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Whereas roughly twice as many men agreed with the statement as disagreed, nearly three times as many women agreed as disagreed with it. However, since there were more women than men in the sample, the margin of error for the two groups ($\pm 5.14\%$ for women and $\pm 6.19\%$ for men) does not allow us to say for certain whether there really is a gender gap. Further research on attitudinal differences between Wisconsin men and women on this issue is needed, but generally speaking, a substantial majority of Wisconsin residents hold the perception that other social problems are blocking real progress in the War on Drugs.

Perceptions of the Drug Problem in the Community

The survey results indicate that Milwaukee residents are less optimistic about progress against drug abuse than are residents of other regions within the State.

One of the survey's goals was to try and gauge the effects of the drug problem on Wisconsin's day-to-day life. Accordingly, the sample was asked to voice their opinion on questions which would reflect a general overview of the drug problem in the community. One such question attempted to gauge the mood of Wisconsin residents today by asking them about what they thought might happen in the future. The question is displayed below and Table 6 presents the results.

Q. "Which ONE of the following statements best summarizes your feelings about where the U.S. will be with the drug problem 20 to 25 years from now: drug abuse will be eliminated as a social problem; drug abuse will decline, but still be a problem; drug abuse will continue to be a problem, about as serious as it is now; drug abuse will increase, becoming an even more serious problem; drug abuse will be out of control and will seriously threaten our way of life."

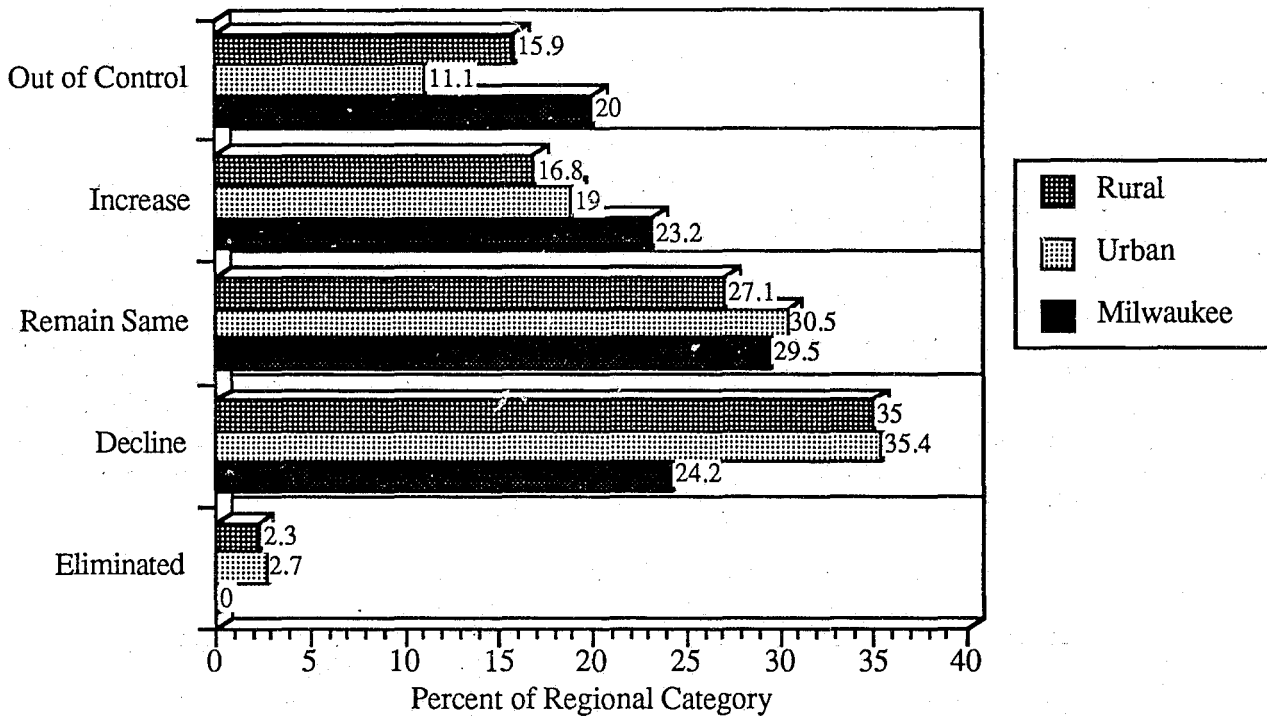
Table 6: The Drug Problem in 20 Years

Percent of Sample	
Eliminated	2.5%
Decline	33.2%
Remain Same	28.9%
Increase	18.8%
Out of Control	14.5%
DK/Refused	2.1%
Total	100%

The most frequent response was that drug abuse will decline, with one third of the entire sample choosing this category. 62.5% of the respondents felt that the drug problem wouldn't get any better, while 64.9% felt that the problem wouldn't get any worse. In comparison to the 2.6% who felt the problem will be eliminated, fully 14.6% on the other end of the spectrum felt that the drug problem would be raging out of control and threatening our way of life.

Further analysis revealed a moderate divergence in response patterns across regional groups. Chart 10 on the next page breaks down the proportions shown in Table 6 by region.

Chart 10: The Drug Problem in 20 Years: Broken Down By Region



The results presented in Chart 10 suggest that residents of Milwaukee County have the most pessimistic attitude in regards to the drug war, when compared to residents of other areas of Wisconsin. No Milwaukee residents felt that the Drug Problem will be "eliminated", and fully one fifth felt that the problem will be "out of control." Significantly fewer Milwaukee residents than respondents from other regions felt that the problem would "decline". There appeared to be only slight variations in the attitudes about the drug problem 20 years from now in the responses from other urban counties and rural counties. One possible interpretation of these results might be that the drug problem is not as openly severe in rural and other urban counties as it is in Milwaukee.

In the survey design, another method of estimating the breadth of the drug problem was to develop questions that gauged the level of drug use in the community. One such question is displayed below and Table 7 presents the overall results.

Q. "Do you personally know an individual who regularly uses illegal drugs?"

Table 7: Do You Personally Know a Drug User?

Percent of Sample	
Yes	27%
No	73%
Total	100%

A little over one quarter of those surveyed said that they personally knew an individual who uses illegal drugs. The survey results suggest that a large majority of Wisconsin residents are personally unaware of drug users and therefore derive their perceptions of the drug problem from somewhere else, perhaps from the media or from local hearsay.

By way of comparison, the survey asked a very similar question to estimate the breadth of alcohol abuse. The question is displayed below and Table 8 presents the results on the next page.

Q. "Do you personally know an individual who regularly abuses alcohol?"

Table 8: Do You Personally Know Someone Who Abuses Alcohol?

Percent of Sample	
Yes	60%
No	40%
Total	100%

Three out of five Wisconsin residents personally know someone who regularly abuses alcohol. In contrast to Table 7, a majority of Wisconsin residents have first-hand knowledge of alcohol abuse and its effects.

The survey further explored the illegal drug-alcohol problem by asking the respondents to compare these two problems in their communities. Table 9 presents the results for the question displayed below.

Q. "Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: The abuse of alcohol is a worse problem than the abuse of drugs in my community."

Table 9: Is the Abuse of Alcohol Worse than Drugs in Your Community?

Percent of Sample	
Yes	51%
No	40%
Don't Know/Refused	9%
Total	100%

The responses suggest that a slight majority of Wisconsin residents believe that alcohol abuse is worse in their communities than illegal drug abuse. The results presented in Table 9 are noteworthy considering that at several earlier points in the survey, Wisconsin residents seemed to downplay the alcohol abuse issue, or at least the consequences of alcohol abuse (see Charts 3, 4; Tables 1 through 3) in comparison to the drug problem.

Attitudes About Law Enforcement, Prevention and Treatment Approaches to the Drug Abuse Problem

Although more Wisconsin residents feel that dealing drugs is the "most serious" illegal drug activity, they also favor devoting more resources towards action against importers and manufacturers than against dealers of illegal drugs. The survey also revealed that Wisconsin residents tend to believe that the Family is the most effective social institution in the war on drugs.

Wisconsin residents overwhelmingly oppose the legalization of all currently illegal drugs.

A majority of Wisconsin residents believe that medical treatment is a more effective policy in dealing with users of illegal drugs than arrest and prosecution. Overall, women living in Milwaukee County had the highest proportion favoring medical treatment for illegal drug users, while men from rural counties were the most likely to favor arresting and prosecuting.

Wisconsin residents are more likely to favor the law enforcement and court system as the best way of dealing with student drug dealers.

A majority of Wisconsin residents agree that drug offenders should lose their driver's license and an even larger percentage feel that the proceeds from drug activity should be seized as an appropriate sanction. The survey results suggest that Wisconsin residents favor revoking drug offenders' professional licenses, albeit not as strongly as revoking drug offenders' driver's licenses. More Wisconsin residents oppose evicting drug offenders from public housing as a sanction than favor it, but there is no clear majority either way.

Wisconsin residents favor random drug testing of public employees by a large majority. The sample as a whole generally favored the practice of random drug testing in the private sector, albeit by a smaller majority. A slight majority of those individuals with a graduate level education oppose drug testing in either the public or private sector.

Allocating Resources in the War on Drugs

Although more Wisconsin residents feel that dealing drugs is the “most serious” illegal drug activity, the survey showed that the sample favored devoting the most resources towards action against importers and manufacturers of illegal drugs. The survey also revealed that Wisconsin residents tend to believe that the Family is the most effective social institution in the war on drugs.

Just as the respondents felt that different drugs and frequencies of use had different levels of risk associated with them, they also felt that certain kinds of illegal drug acts were more serious than others. Tables 10 through 12 present the responses for survey questions that asked the respondents to identify the “most serious” illegal drug activity, and the “best” groups to target for enforcement as well as the “best method” for combating the overall problem. Chart 11 breaks down the sample responses for the social institution best able to be effective in the war on drugs.

Q. “Which of the following do you feel is the most serious illegal drug activity...importing or manufacturing drugs, dealing in or selling drugs, or using drugs?”

**Table 10: Most Serious
Drug Activity**

Percent of Sample	
Importing/Manufact.	36.7%
Dealing/Selling	44.3%
Using drugs	16.7%
Don't Know	2.1%
Refused	0.2%
Total	100%

44.3% of the respondents felt that “dealing/selling” drugs was the worst illegal drug activity than any of the other activities listed. Wisconsin residents tended to believe that drug dealers are the most serious part of the overall drug problem.

Q. "In your opinion, which of the following approaches would have the best chance of reducing drug abuse in our society...identifying and arresting drug importers and manufacturers, identifying and arresting drug dealers and sellers, or identifying and arresting drug users?"

Table 11: The Best Target Group for Enforcement Efforts

Percent of Sample	
Importers/Manufact.	49.5%
Drug Dealers	41.1%
Drug users	6.5%
Don't Know	2.5%
Refused	0.4%
Total	100%

The responses shown in Table 11 indicate a tendency on the part of the respondents to favor action against the sources of drug production, with 49.5% of the sample choosing "importers and manufacturers" as being the best target for enforcement efforts. Of many possible hypotheses, one that might explain this result is that Wisconsin residents view "Drug Kingpin" figures as the source of the problem, and therefore believe that striking at the source would have more of an effect on the drug problem than trying to reduce the number of lower-level pushers.

The anti-importer/manufacturer tendency was supported by the responses presented in Table 12 on the next page, where the sample was asked to choose an area of anti-drug activity that they felt should get the most money and resources.

Q. "There are a number of possible methods for combating drug abuse. Which ONE of the following do you think should receive the MOST money and effort? Drug treatment and rehabilitation; arrest and prosecution of drug law violators; drug abuse education and prevention; or stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country."

Table 12: Which Anti-Drug Method Should Get the Most Resources?

	Percent of Sample
Treatment/Rehab.	10.5%
Arrest/Prosecute	12.7%
Drug Education/Prevention	32.7%
Stopping Flow of Drugs	42.6%
Don't Know	1.3%
Refused	0.2%
Total	100%

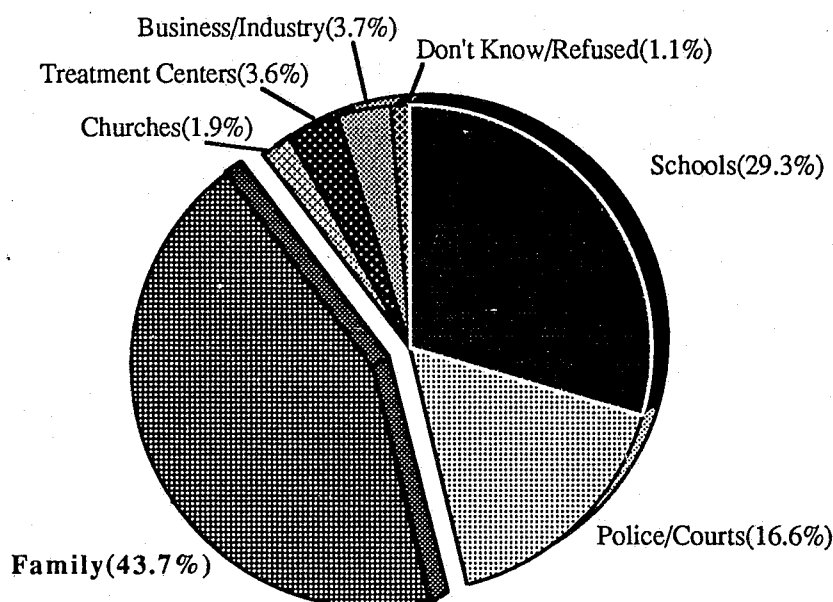
A plurality of respondents (42.6%) considered "stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country" as being the most promising area to invest anti-drug abuse money and effort, although a substantial number (32.7%) felt that "drug abuse education and prevention" was the best area of concentration. Law enforcement and drug treatment /rehabilitation together were cited by less than one quarter of the sample.

Taken together, the response patterns for Tables 11 and 12 seem to indicate a tendency among Wisconsin residents to believe that attacking the sources of illegal drug production will do the most towards bringing progress in the war on drugs, although there is recognition of the negative roles played by local dealers on the one hand, and the positive role to be played by drug abuse prevention efforts on the other.

Besides opinions on anti-drug strategies and targets for enforcement, the survey also sought Wisconsin residents' views on institutions which may be utilized in combating the drug problem.

Q. "Which ONE of the following groups do you think can do the MOST to help in the fight against drugs? Would it be the Schools; the Police and the Courts; the Family; Churches; Treatment Centers; or Business and Industry?"

Chart 11: The Social Institution Most Able To Be Effective in the War on Drugs



As displayed by Chart 11, 43.7% of the total indicated the "Family" was the social institution that could do the most to control drug abuse, followed by "schools," cited by 29.4% and "police and courts," cited by 16.6%. These results seem to be supported by the trends presented in Tables 4 & 5, which suggested that, in the perceptions of the survey respondents, persistent social problems such as poverty and lack of education prevent major progress in the war on drugs. Given these results, it appears that Wisconsin residents feel that the drug problem is a broad social issue, not just a law enforcement problem.

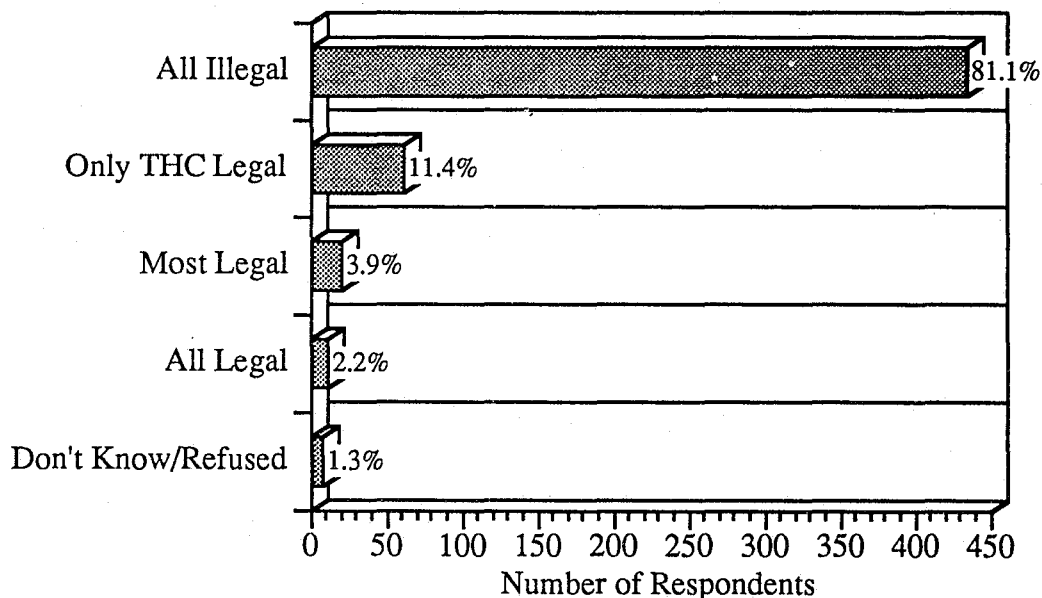
The Legalization of Drugs

Wisconsin residents overwhelmingly oppose the legalization of all currently illegal drugs.

Tables 1 and 2 suggest a lack of tolerance for the illegal drugs Cocaine and Marijuana, which seems to imply a strong anti-drug feeling among Wisconsin residents. However, there are some who argue for the legalization of all or certain kinds of currently illegal drugs. Accordingly, the survey asked the respondents what they thought about the issue.

Q. "Which one of the following statements best fits your own beliefs on this issue: The sale of ALL drugs should be legal on the open market; the sale of all drugs should be legal, except for the two or three most dangerous; the sale of all drugs should remain illegal, except for Marijuana (THC); the sale of ALL drugs should remain illegal."

Chart 12: Should Drugs Be Legal? Survey Responses to Four Policy Stances



The survey results suggest that Wisconsin residents oppose the legalization of any currently illegal drugs by an overwhelming margin. Of those that felt that one or more of the drugs in question should be legalized, 11.4% of the total sample said that only marijuana (THC) deserved such a change in status, with a total of just over six percent believing most or all drugs should be legalized.

“User Accountability”

A majority of Wisconsin residents believe that medical treatment is a more effective policy in dealing with users of illegal drugs than arrest and prosecution. Overall, women living in Milwaukee County had the highest proportion favoring medical treatment for illegal drug users, while men from rural Counties were the most likely to favor arresting and prosecuting.

A component of both National- and State-level anti-drug Strategies that has received increasing attention is the policy of “user accountability,” which stresses increased enforcement and sanctions for users of illegal drugs. However, only 17% of the survey respondents felt that using illegal drugs was the “most serious illegal drug activity” (See Table 10), and only six and one-half percent felt that identifying and arresting illegal drug users would have “the best chance of reducing drug abuse” (See Table 11). In another question, the sample was asked what they thought was the best way to handle users of illegal drugs. Table 13 presents the overall results, and Charts 13 through 15 break down the response proportions by region.

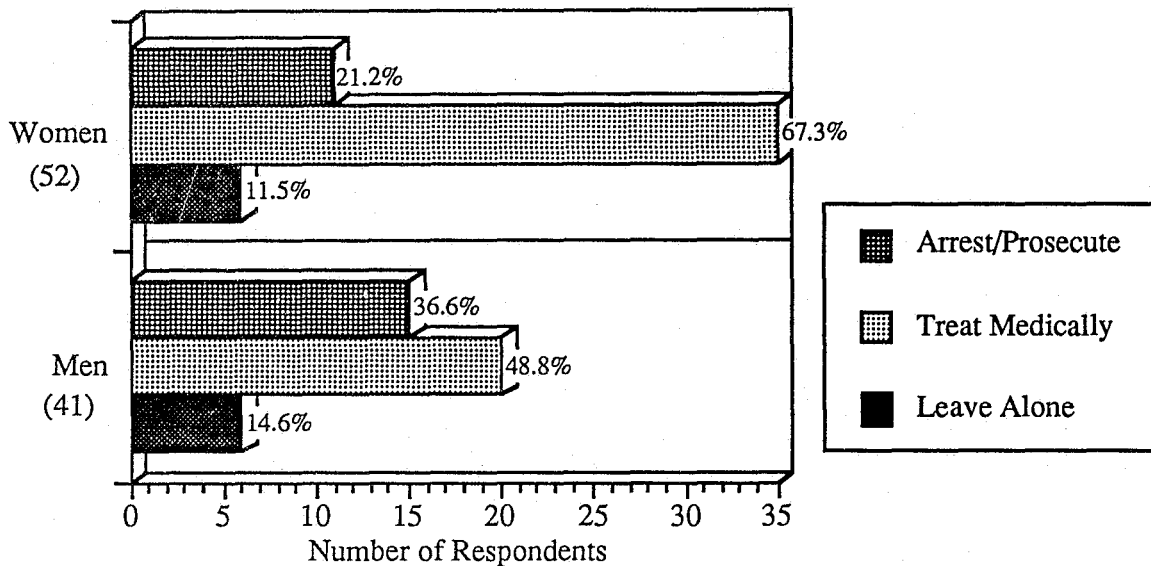
Q. “Which ONE of the following statements best reflects your views on how to handle people who use illegal drugs. Would you say...they should be arrested and prosecuted; they should be treated medically, like any other person with physical or emotional problems; or they should be left alone unless they are bothering somebody?”

Table 13: Handling Illegal Drug Users

Percent of Sample	
Arrest and Prosecute	38.2%
Treat Medically	54.1%
Leave Alone Unless Bothering	6.6%
Don't Know	1.1%
Total	100%

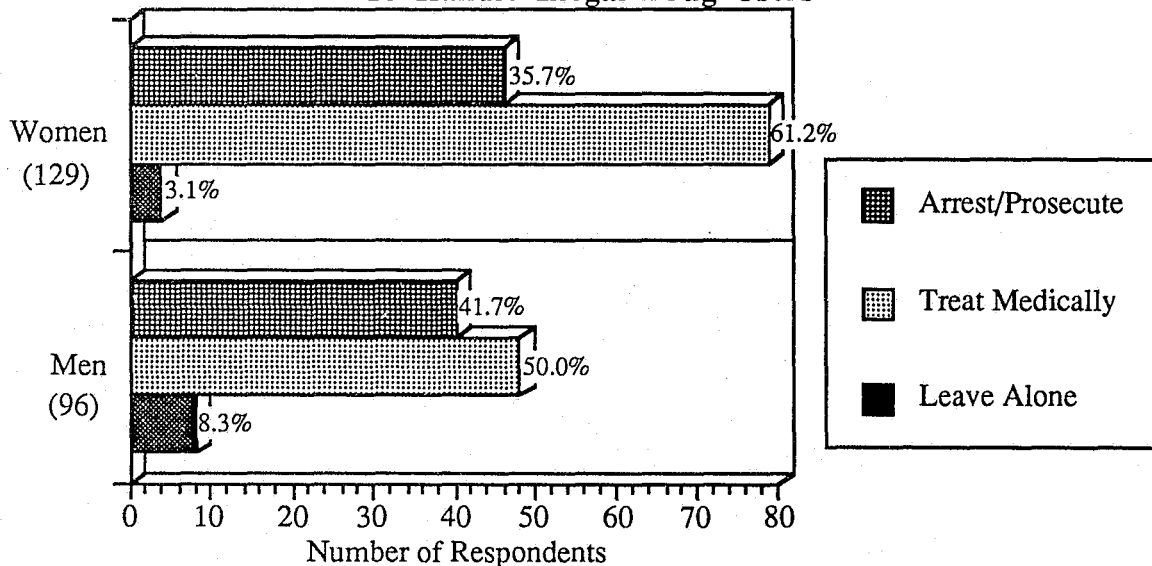
Overall, a majority of the respondents felt that “treating illegal drug users medically” was the best course to take in this area, although prosecution was cited by high numbers also. However, it was found that there were significant differences in how the sample responded based not only on their gender, but also on whether the respondent lived in Milwaukee County, another urban County (population density between .30 and .86 persons per acre) or a rural County (population density less than .30 persons per acre). For a complete list of Wisconsin’s counties grouped in this fashion, see Appendix 1.

Chart 13: Milwaukee County Residents: How To Handle Illegal Drug Users



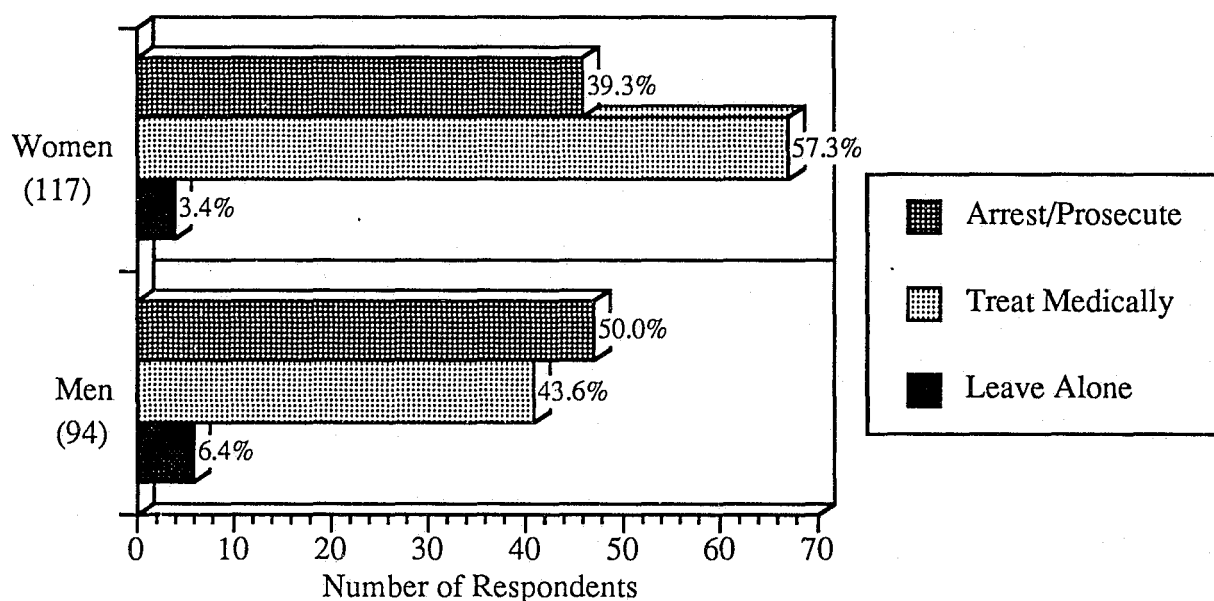
Of the 52 Milwaukee County women in the sample, 67.3% favored medically treating illegal drug users, whereas only 48.8% of the 41 Milwaukee men felt that way. Both Milwaukee men (36.6%) and women (21.2%) were less likely to favor "arrest/prosecute" as the best method of handling illegal drug users than men and women in the rest of the sample, in which 38.3% of the overall total chose the "arrest/prosecute" option. Milwaukee men were the most likely members of the sample to favor leaving illegal drug users alone unless they were a nuisance, with over 14% of all Milwaukee men favoring this option. Overall, less than seven percent of the total sample favored leaving illegal drug users alone.

Chart 14: Other Urban County Residents: How To Handle Illegal Drug Users



In comparison to the results presented in Chart 13, more men and women living in non-Milwaukee urban counties appear to favor the “arrest/prosecute” option than their counterparts in Milwaukee did. The 96 Men from non-Milwaukee urban Counties favored the “treating medically” option more than Milwaukee men did (50% to 48.8%) , but the non-Milwaukee urban men were also more likely to favor “arrest/prosecute” (41.7% to 36.6%). In non-Milwaukee urban counties, a solid majority of women (61.2%) favored “treating users medically,” but non-Milwaukee urban women were much more likely to favor “arrest/prosecute” (35.7%) than their female Milwaukee counterparts. Surveyed men and women from rural counties, as shown in Chart 15, were less likely to favor “leaving users alone” than those presented in Chart 13.

**Chart 15: Rural County Residents:
How To Handle Illegal Drug Users**



The 94 Men from rural counties included in the survey were the most likely members of the sample to choose the “arrest/prosecute” option, with one-half of all rural men favoring that response. By way of comparison, 41.7% of non-Milwaukee urban men and 36.6% of Milwaukee men favored “arrest/prosecute” as the best way to handle users of illegal drugs. Similarly, among women in the sample, the 177 women in the survey from rural counties were the most likely to favor “arrest/prosecute” as the most effective policy, with 39.3% choosing that response. By comparison, Milwaukee women were the least likely members of the sample to choose this option, with only 21.2% favoring “arrest/prosecute.” Overall, individuals from rural counties were somewhat less likely to choose “treat medically” as the most effective policy than their counterparts of the same gender in non-rural counties.

Given the large majorities of women favoring “medical treatment” as opposed to the other alternatives, as well as the somewhat larger sample sizes, the survey results support the general statement that Wisconsin women from all regions support “medical treatment” over the other policy choices. The relative evenness in men’s responses (treatment vs. prosecution) and the smaller regional sample sizes for men **do not** allow the same inference to be made about Wisconsin men in general.

Handling Student Drug Dealers

Wisconsin residents are more likely to favor the law enforcement and court system as the best way of dealing with student drug dealers.

Considering the special attention given the problem of drug abuse among students/children by both the media and by State law (see Wis. Stats. 161.49, 161.495), the survey attempted to gauge Wisconsin residents' opinions on the proper method of handling drug dealers who are students. The question is displayed below and Table 14 presents the results.

Q. "If a student is found to be selling drugs to other students, what do you think the proper response by school officials should be? Should they let the Police and Courts handle the matter; Expel the student from School; Keep the student in School and Provide Counseling; or Keep the student in School, but let the Parents Handle any Discipline?"

Table 14: The Best Method of Handling Student Drug Dealers

Percent of Sample	
Police/Courts Handle	45.8%
Expel Student	10.3%
Keep in School, Counseling	38.1%
Keep in School, Parents Handle	4.5%
Don't Know/Refused	1.3%
Total	100%

Although nearly 46% of those interviewed said that if a student deals drugs to other students, he or she should be handled with instruments of the police and courts, slightly more than 38% of the sample felt that keeping the student in school and providing counseling was the best way to handle the matter, rather than any of the other options listed.

Drug Offender Sanctions-Asset Seizure, Revocation of Driver's Licenses, Eviction from Public Housing, and Loss of Professional Licenses

A majority of Wisconsin residents agree that drug offenders should lose their driver's license and an even larger percentage feel that the proceeds from drug activity should be seized as an appropriate sanction. The survey results suggest that Wisconsin residents favor revoking drug offenders' professional licenses, albeit not as strongly as revoking drug offenders' driver's licenses. More Wisconsin residents oppose evicting drug offenders from public housing as a sanction than favor it, but there is no clear majority either way.

The survey also sought to discover the opinions of the respondents on various sanctions that might be applied to illegal drug law offenders. Two of the sanctions the respondents were asked about are already part of the Wisconsin Uniform Controlled Substances Act (Wis. Stats. 161), but the other two are not. Tables 15 through 18 presents the response patterns for sanctions including the loss of operating license, the seizure of drug-related assets, the loss of professional license and eviction from public housing.

Q. "Please tell me if the following penalty is appropriate for drug offenders: suspension of drivers licenses."

Table 15: Should Drug Offenders Lose Their Driver's Licenses?

Percent of Sample	
Yes	60.2%
No	34.6%
Only Minor Drug Offenders	0.5%
Only Major Drug Offenders	0.8%
Depends	2.8%
Don't Know/Refused	1.1%
Total	100%

The survey suggests that a substantial majority of Wisconsin residents approve of suspensions of drivers licenses as a punitive sanction for drug offenders. Wis. Stats. 161.495 (2) currently allows for the "revocation of the person's operating privilege...for not less than six months nor more than 2 years" for offenders convicted of possession or attempted possession of certain controlled substances in the vicinity of schools.

Q. "Please tell me if the following penalty is appropriate for drug offenders: seizure and forfeiture of assets and property used in, or resulting from, drug crimes."

Table 16: Should Drug Offenders' Illegal Proceeds and Property Be Seized?

Percent of the Sample	
Yes	86.4%
No	6.9%
Only Major Drug Offenders	1.5%
Depends	1.7%
Don't Know/Refused	3.5%
Total	100%

The survey results suggest that a vast majority of Wisconsin residents favor this punitive sanction. The seizure of drug offenders' accumulated drug-related assets is provided for in Wis. Stats. 161.55 (1) (f). Drug-related asset forfeitures are channeled to the School fund.

Unlike the two sanctions previously discussed, the revocation of professional licenses and eviction from public housing as sanctions against drug offenders are not currently allowed under State law. The survey asked the respondents to state how appropriate they felt these two sanctions would be in a similar fashion to the previous section.

Q. "Please tell me if the following penalty is appropriate for drug offenders: suspension of occupational or professional licenses."

Table 17: Should Drug Offenders Lose Their Professional Licenses?

Percent of Sample	
Yes	55.3%
No	36.1%
Only Minor Drug Offenders	0.2%
Only Major Drug Offenders	1.5%
Depends	4.9%
Don't Know/Refused	2.0%
Total	100%

Slightly over half of the sample favored the revocation of drug offenders' professional licenses as a useful sanction in the fight against drugs. This question had the highest number of respondents feeling that this sanction should be used only in certain situations ("only minor," "only major," or "depends"), but at only a little less than seven percent, the proportion was not particularly large.

**Q. "Please tell me if the following penalty is appropriate for drug offenders:
Eviction from public housing projects."**

**Table 18: Should Drug Offenders Be Evicted
From Public Housing?**

Percent of Sample	
Yes	42.4%
No	47.3%
Only Major Drug Offenders	1.5%
Depends	2.6%
Don't Know/Refused	6.2%
Total	100%

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, seven states currently mandate the eviction of drug offenders from public housing projects, including Missouri, Massachusetts and California. The survey results for this question reveal similar numbers of respondents answering "yes" and "no." The difference between these two response categories amounts to less than five percent.

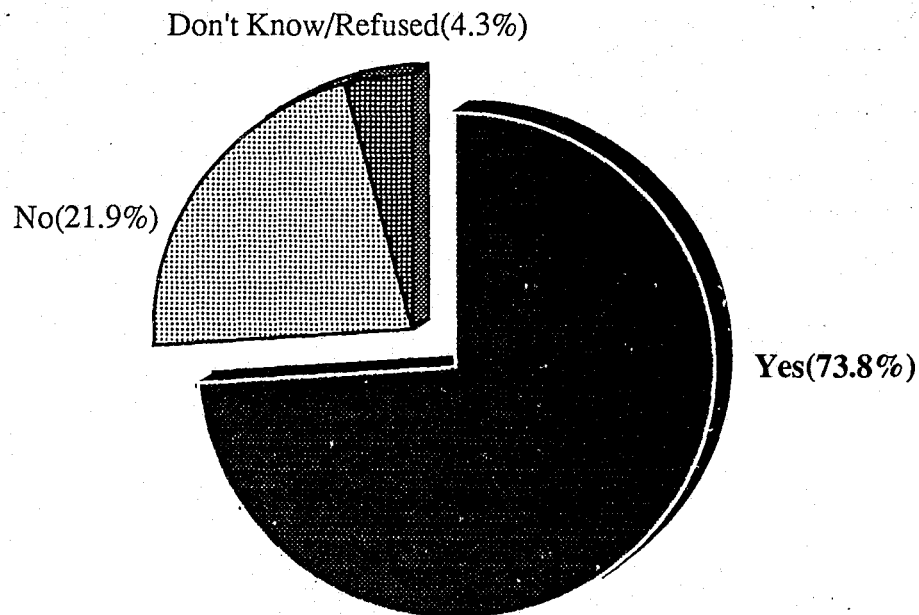
Opinions on Random Drug Testing

Wisconsin residents favor random drug testing of public employees by a large majority. The sample as a whole generally favored the practice of random drug testing in the private sector, albeit by a smaller majority. A slight majority of those individuals with a graduate level education oppose drug testing in either the public or private sector.

Drug testing in Wisconsin's Criminal Justice System is in place, ranging from routine drug testing in jails to programs such as the Intensive Supervision Program and the Treatment Alternative Programs which encourage identified individuals to stay off drugs. Drug testing in the military, the private sector and the national civil service are also common. The survey examined the opinions of Wisconsin residents on this issue. The question is displayed below and Charts 11 through 14 presents the opinions of the respondents overall and broken down by educational level for drug testing of employees in both the public and private sectors.

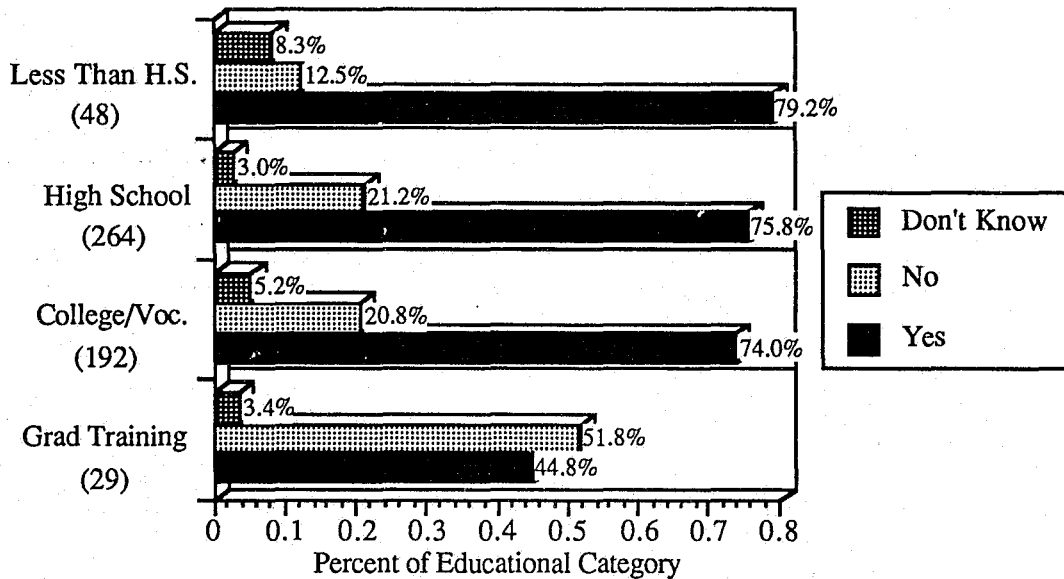
Q. "Do you favor random drug testing of public employees?"

Chart 16: Should Public Employees Be Tested For Drugs?



The survey suggests that nearly three quarters of Wisconsin residents support random drug testing of public employees. Further analysis of the responses for this question revealed differences between groups in the sample with different educational levels.

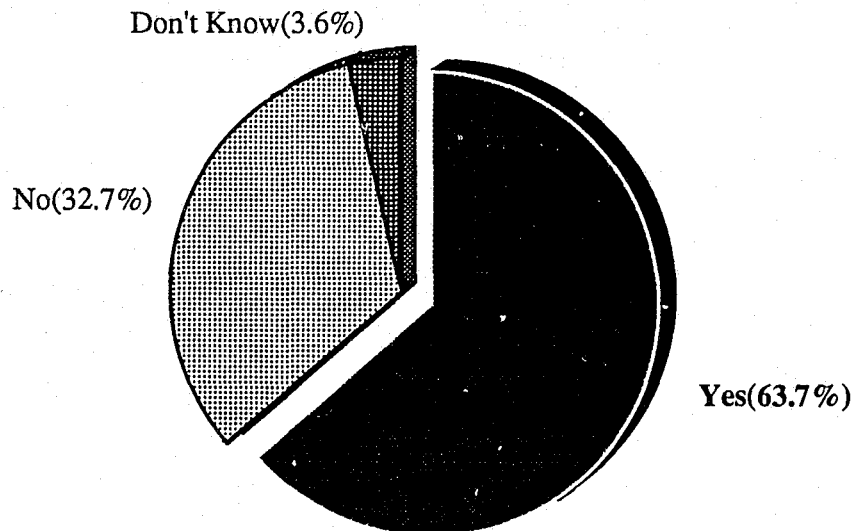
**Chart 17: Should Public Employees Be Tested For Drugs:
Broken Down By Education**



The survey results suggest that Wisconsin residents who have had graduate level training are the only group to oppose random drug testing of public employees, with a slight 51.8% majority opposing the practice. The category size is fairly small however (n=29), which makes it hard to speak with confidence about this proportion. By way of contrast, Wisconsin residents who have received their Bachelor's or Vocational degree favor the drug testing of public employees by a wide margin, with 74% in favor. Further research is needed to explore the hypothesis that the support for drug testing of public employees is somewhat negatively correlated, with support falling as education level increases.

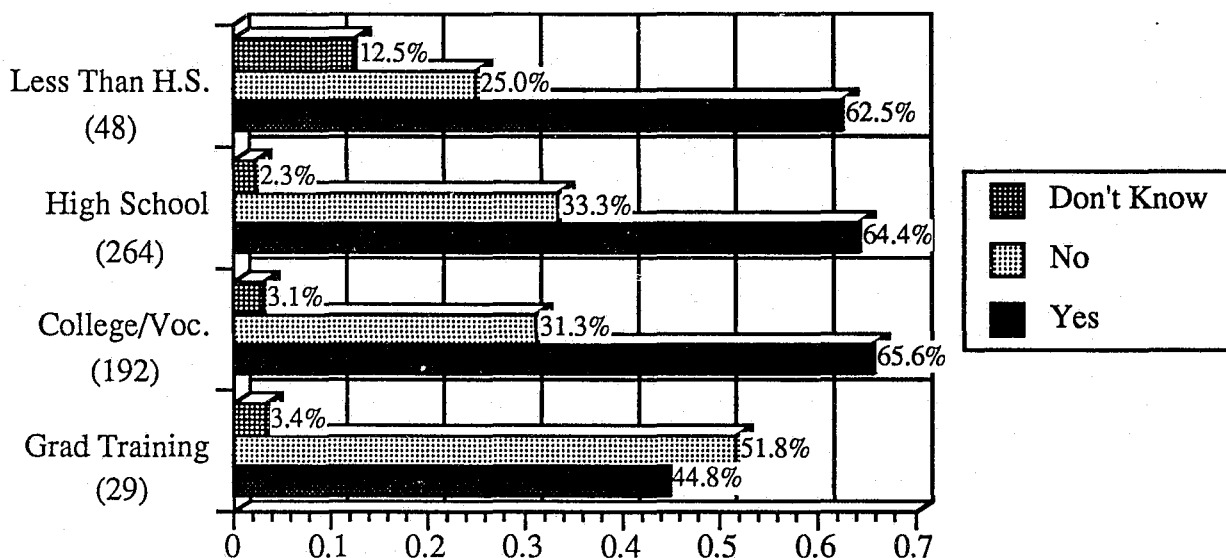
Q. "Do you favor random drug testing of private employees?"

**Chart 18: Should Private Employees Be Tested
For Drugs?**



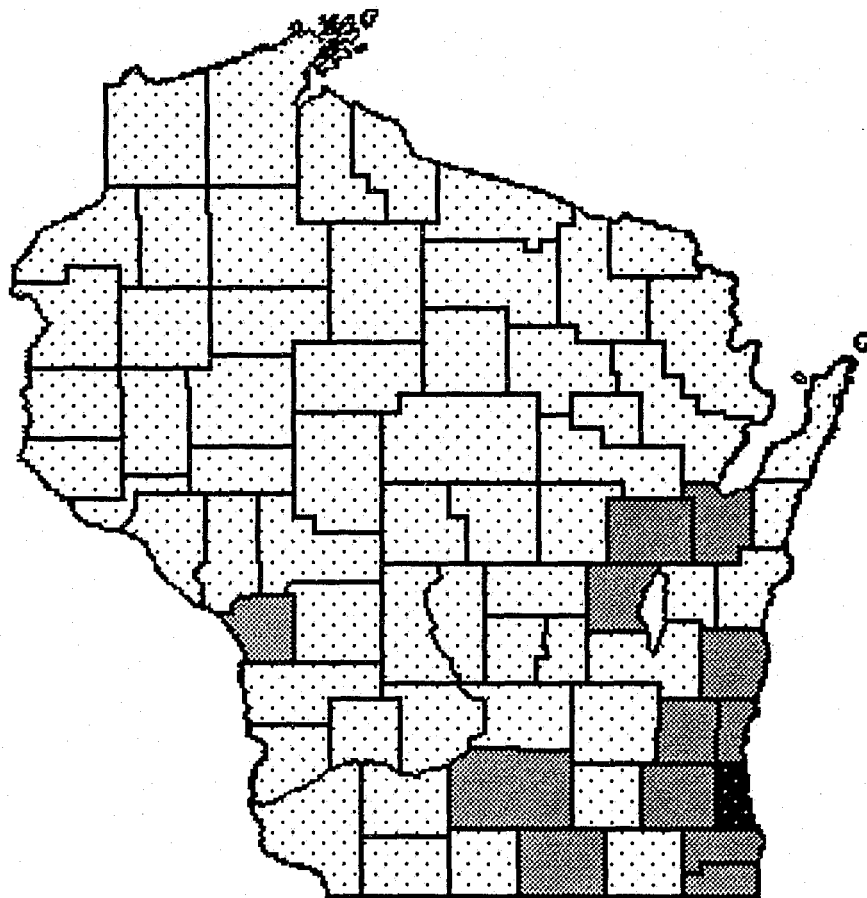
As a group, the individuals in our survey supported random drug testing of private sector employees by a substantial majority. The survey results suggest that 63.7% of Wisconsin residents favor drug testing of private sector employees. However, the level of support was over 10% lower than the 73.8% who favored testing public employees. As with the previous question, the survey revealed differences across education levels, which are presented below in Chart 19.

Chart 19: Should Private Employees Be Tested For Drugs: Broken Down By Education



The percentage of respondents with graduate level training opposed to random drug testing of private employees is exactly the same as those opposed to drug testing public employees: 51.8%. The identical percentage seems to suggest that for those with graduate training, it didn't make any difference whether the employee was public or private, although once again it should be noted that there were only a small number of graduate level individuals in the survey. For the respondents in other education categories, the public-private sector distinction seemed to make more of a difference, especially for those with the least amount of formal education. For those in this education category, the percentage favoring drug testing for public employees dropped from 79.2% to 62.5% when the employee to be tested was in the private sector, which represents a swing of over 16%.

Appendix 1. 1990 Population Density of Wisconsin Counties



Key:



Milwaukee

Density = 6.92 residents per acre



Non-Milwaukee Urban

Density = .86 through .3 residents per acre



Rural

Density = .29 or fewer residents per acre

Appendix 2. Interpretive Discussion and Areas For Future Research

This survey assessed the overall attitudes of Wisconsin residents on issues such as the seriousness of crime and drug abuse, the risk of harm involved with drugs, and the seriousness of different kinds of illegal drug activity. It also provided glimpses into the very complex attitudes that Wisconsin residents have about enforcement, treatment, and prevention priorities in the war against drug abuse. Several attitude patterns were revealed, occasionally revealing interesting differences.

An example of one difference is the tendency of those surveyed to believe that active, aggressive action against importers and manufacturers of illegal drugs is the "best" area of anti-drug enforcement, even though the response patterns for a different question suggest that most Wisconsin residents feel that drug dealing is a slightly more "serious" activity than importing/manufacturing. At the same time, most individuals surveyed felt that law enforcement was not as effective as either family influence or the schools in combating the drug abuse problem. Even fewer individuals listed "Treatment Centers" as being effective in combating the drug problem, yet most individuals surveyed believed that medical treatment was a better way to handle users of illegal drugs than prosecution or ignoring the individual.

Another contrast in attitudes was revealed in the responses about the severity of the drug problem and the risk of harm in using drugs. Those surveyed felt that drug abuse was one of the top two problems facing the state, and there was also a wide recognition of the serious risks run by illegal drug users. Alcohol was not seen as overly risky at low usage levels, nor was alcohol abuse seen as one of the top issues. Yet, when those surveyed were asked whether alcohol or drug abuse were more serious in their communities, the majority said that alcohol abuse was a bigger problem than drugs.

Some of the differences in these response patterns are almost certainly due to the wording of the survey questions. Questions phrased differently may well have elicited different responses. Nonetheless, the attitudes revealed are probably accurate in a general sense, while the apparent contrasting attitudes may indicate fruitful areas for further research.

In summary, this survey succeeded in its attempt to identify the attitudes of Wisconsin residents as a whole on anti-drug abuse issues. However, further analysis suggested several points in the survey where there might be significant attitudinal differences across State regions, across gender, across race, across income and across age. Because of survey sample size limitations, the survey results were unable to conclusively document these differences. For example, in Charts 13 through 15, we saw that Wisconsin women believed that treatment was a better policy in dealing with illegal drug users than prosecution, although there were differences in the proportion of women in each region who felt that way. Such inferences were impossible with Wisconsin men because the sample responses for that question were much more evenly split between treatment and prosecution. The response patterns discovered on this and several other questions mentioned in the report text argue for a more in-depth study of anti-drug attitudes among Wisconsin's various citizens.

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