



FACTUM

Some Canadian Drivers are Driving While Knowingly Impaired from Alcohol, Cannabis or an Illicit Drug

These Behaviours More Pronounced Among Men 18 to 34

Toronto, ON, June 29, 2021 —A recent poll conducted by Ipsos on behalf of MADD Canada shows that some Canadian drivers aged 18-70 with a valid driver's license (referred to as Canadian drivers hereafter) are driving while knowingly impaired from alcohol, cannabis, or an illicit drug that has not been prescribed, and that young men are even more likely to be engaging in these behaviours.

Canadian Drivers Are Driving While Knowingly Impaired And With Passengers Onboard

Among the 67% of Canadian drivers who used alcohol in the past 30 days, one in ten (10%) have driven knowingly impaired from alcohol at least once in the last 6 months, with a slight majority of these (53%) driving with passengers onboard. Among the 28% of drivers who used cannabis in the past 30 days, two in ten (19%) have driven knowingly impaired from cannabis at least once in the last 6 months, with a large majority of these (71%) driving with passengers. Among the 9% of drivers who used an illicit drug (top drugs mentioned: stimulant, depressant, hallucinogen, opioid, etc.) in the past 30 days, an even larger proportion, three in ten (29%), have knowingly driven while legally impaired from an illegal drug at least once in the last 6 months, with a vast majority of these (85%) driving with passengers onboard.

Among drivers who have driven while legally impaired from alcohol with passengers onboard, two-thirds (67%) have driven with at least one passenger below 18 years of age and nine in ten (91%) have driven with at least one passenger 18 years or older. Among those who have driven while legally impaired from cannabis with passengers onboard, six in ten (60%) have driven with at least one passenger below 18 years of age and nine in ten (90%) have driven with at least one passenger 18 years or older. Among those who have driven while legally impaired from an illicit drug with passengers onboard, three-quarters (75%) have driven with at least one passenger below 18 years of age and nine in ten (91%) have driven with at least one passenger 18 years or older.

Men Are The Most Frequent Offenders, Admittedly

The Ipsos poll indicates that men 18 to 34 are more likely to knowingly drive while impaired from alcohol, cannabis or an illicit drug. Among those who used alcohol in the past 30 days, almost two in ten (17%) have driven knowingly impaired from alcohol at least once in the past 6 months, with a large majority of these (72%) driving with passengers onboard. Among those who used cannabis in the past 30 days, three in ten (30%) have driven knowingly impaired from cannabis at least once in the past 6 months, with a majority of these (64%) driving with passengers. Among those who used an illicit drug (top drugs mentioned: stimulant, hallucinogen, depressant, etc.) in the past 30 days, an even larger proportion, four in ten (39%), have knowingly driven while legally impaired from an illicit drug at least once in the past 6 months, with a vast majority of these (87%) driving with passengers onboard.

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Not Feeling Impaired, Not Having To Drive Far Or Thinking They Could Drive Carefully Top Reasons for Driving After Using Alcohol, Cannabis, Or Illicit Drug

Regardless of product consumed, the main reasons for driving within two hours of consuming alcohol, using cannabis (2 hours after smoking/vaporizing cannabis/4 hours of ingesting cannabis), or within two hours of consuming an illicit drug are: they don't feel impaired, they don't have to drive far, or they think they could drive carefully. Looking at the proportions who mention these reasons by the product consumed:

- Among those who consumed alcohol in the past 30 days and drove a vehicle within 2 hours of consuming alcohol, the top reasons are: I did not feel impaired (56%), followed by I did not have to drive very far (29%) and I thought I could drive carefully (27%).
- Among those who consumed cannabis in the past 30 days and drove a vehicle within 2 hours of smoking/vaporizing cannabis/4 hours of ingesting cannabis, the top reasons are: I did not feel impaired (54%), followed by I did not have to drive very far (28%) and I thought I could drive carefully (27%).
- Among those who consumed an illicit drug in the past 30 days and drove a vehicle within 2 hours of using an illicit drug, the top reasons are: I did not feel impaired (35%), I did not have to drive very far (35%) and I thought I could drive carefully (34%).

Misconceptions About The Seriousness of Impaired Driving Impacting Behaviour

The results from the poll indicate that Canadian drivers express some level of nonchalance regarding impaired driving, and this is influencing behaviour. Three in ten (30%) Canadian drivers think there is a big difference between driving after consuming alcohol and driving after consuming cannabis. About one in ten, each, think it is "no big deal" to drive after consuming a few drinks (15%), consuming marijuana/cannabis (14%), or consuming an illicit drug (10%). Perhaps accordingly, a quarter, each, have knowingly ridden as a passenger in a car with a driver that was legally impaired (26%), while a quarter have let friends drive after consuming alcohol when they know it isn't safe (23%).



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 28 and June 8, 2021 on behalf of MADD Canada. For this survey, a sample of 3,002 Canadians aged 18-70 with a valid driver's license was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population aged 18-70 of drinking age according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18-70 of drinking age been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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