

Youth Opioid Use in Guelph & Wellington County

In Spring 2020, research was conducted by the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy to learn about youth opioid use in Guelph and Wellington County. The research was supported by the RBC Future Community Launch Grant and the Guelph Community Foundation. The research received ethics approval from the Community Research Ethics Office at the University of Waterloo.

Who participated in the research?

 **53** youth who use opioids completed the online survey

Gender Breakdown

♀	57%
♂	39%
♂♀	2%
Prefer not to say	2%

Location

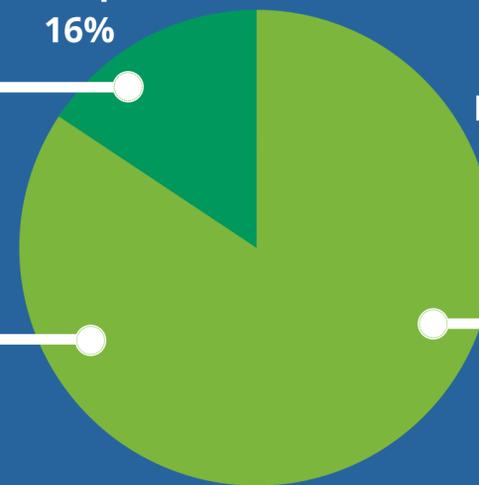
74% Guelph
26% Wellington County

What opioids are youth using?

Street Opioids

16%
Most commonly used by those in the 18-21 and 22-24 age groups

Most commonly used by those in the 14-17 age groups



Prescription Opioids

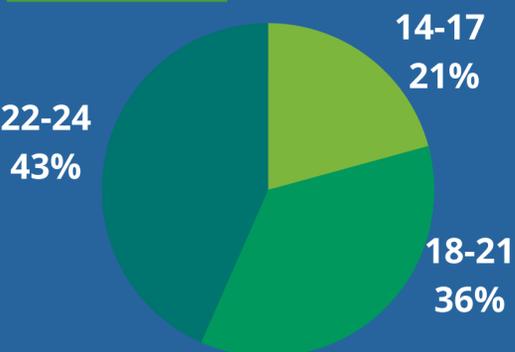
84%
Most Commonly Used

- Tylenol 3/T3
- Codeine
- Percocet

 **55% living with family**

 **45% attend school all the time**

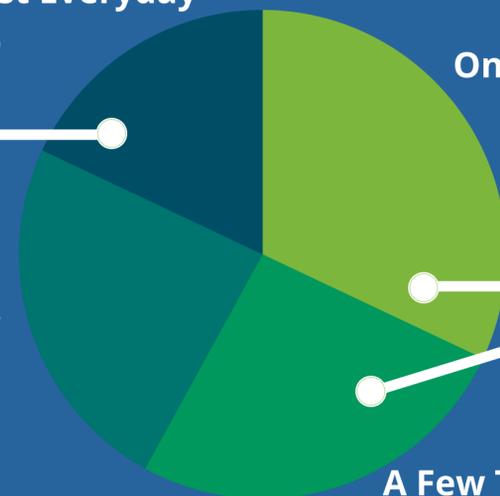
Current Age



Frequency of Use

Everyday/Almost Everyday

18%
Most common among those in the 18-21 and 22-24 age groups



Once or Twice a Year

32%
Most common among those in the 14-17 age group

Weekly/Monthly

A Few Times a Year

"Im worried that they will die before they ever get the chance to live"

Youth survey participant when asked what worried them about youth using opioids

Highlights

44% combine opioids with other substances such as alcohol, cannabis, & benzos

55% consume orally

87% report it is easy or somewhat easy to get opioids

72% consume at home

Recommendations for Action

1 Include youth in addressing youth substance use issues

2 Engage key community stakeholders to take action on youth use of opioids and other prescription substances

3 Create barrier-free harm reduction and treatment programming for youth who use substances

4 Work with local pharmacies to increase safe storage of prescription drugs, especially opioids

5 Expand the scope of existing initiatives in the community that address the needs of at-risk youth

6 Increase resiliency programming for children, youth, and families in Guelph and Wellington County