Just Say No? Public Attitudes about Supportive and Punitive Policies to

Combat the Opioid Epidemic

Supplementary Materials

# Question Wording

PREAMBLE: Next, we would like to ask you some questions about the opioid epidemic occurring in the United States.

**Dependent Variables**

*Supportive Policies*

**Good Samaritan Laws:** Some states have laws that allow people to call 911 for themselves or others during a drug overdose for care without fear that they will be arrested for having drugs on them. Other states do not have these "Good Samaritan laws" because they think they are too lenient on drug users. Do you favor or oppose these laws allowing 911 to be called during drug overdoses without fear of arrest?

1. Strongly favor
2. Somewhat Favor
3. Neutral
4. Somewhat oppose
5. Strongly Oppose

**Safe Sites:** Some cities in the United States are considering or planning on opening so-called safe injection facilities, where addicts can self-administer illicitly obtained drugs, including heroin and fentanyl, under medical supervision as a way to reduce fatal drug overdoses. How strongly do you favor or oppose the idea?

1. Strongly favor
2. Somewhat Favor
3. Neutral
4. Somewhat oppose
5. Strongly Oppose

Policymakers are considering a number of different policy changes to combat the opioid epidemic. For each of the following policy ideas, please indicate how much you favor or oppose it becoming law:

**Test Kits:** Expanding availability of drug testing kits so that people who use opioids can test the drugs they obtain for lethal substances like fentanyl.

**Diversion:** Implementing diversion programs such as drug courts for first time offenders in lieu of jail time

**Medicaid:** Allowing Medicaid to pay for substance abuse treatment for those who are addicted to opioids.

**Insurance:** Requiring insurance companies to provide coverage for treatment of substance abuse problems.

**Marijuana:** Legalizing medical marijuana in states in order to reduce the number of opioid overdoses.

*Punitive Policies*

Policymakers are considering a number of different policy changes to combat the opioid epidemic. For each of the following policy ideas, please indicate how much you favor or oppose it becoming law:

**Jail Time:** Requiring jail time for individuals who abuse drugs

**Benefits Reduction:** Taking social welfare benefits away from individuals who test positive for drugs

**Arrest Parents:** Arresting and prosecuting parents who are addicted to opioids on criminal child abuse charges.

**Arrest Pregnant Parents:** Charging women who use opioids while pregnant with criminal child abuse charges

**Independent Variables**

**Personal Choice**: Thinking about the reasons that some people become addicted to prescription opioids, do you think that it is due to the personal choices of users themselves or because of some other factor?

1. Personal choices of users themselves
2. Some other factor

**Personal Connection**: Do you personally know anyone who has ever been addicted to prescription opioids or heroin?

1. Yes
2. No

# IF YES

SA11: Who do you know that has been addicted to prescription opioids or heroin? (Check all that apply)

1. Myself
2. Parent
3. Child
4. Sibling
5. Grandparent
6. Grandchild
7. Aunt or Uncle
8. Cousin
9. Other family member
10. A close friend
11. An acquaintance

**Ideology**: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1. Extremely Liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly Liberal
4. Moderate; Middle of the road
5. Slightly Conservative
6. Conservative
7. Extremely Conservative

**Racial Resentment**: How strongly do you agree with the following statements:

ROWS:

The Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. African Americans should do the same without any special favors.

Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.

It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if African Americans would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.

Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

COLUMNS:

Agree strongly

Agree somewhat

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree somewhat

Disagree strongly

# Table A1: Comparison of Raw and Weighted Qualtrics Data to National Benchmarks

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variable | Our Data  (Raw) | Our Data  (Weighted) | Benchmark | Benchmark  Source |
| Female | 53% | 50% | 52% | CPS 2017 |
| College Degree | 38% | 35% | 30% | CPS 2017 |
| Black | 14% | 12% | 12% | CPS 2017 |
| White | 64% | 62% | 65% | CPS 2017 |
| Hispanic | 13% | 13% | 15% | CPS 2017 |
| Democrat | 34% |  | 34% | ANES (Wgt.) |
| Republican | 37% |  | 28% | ANES (Wgt.) |
| Independent | 29% |  | 32% | ANES (Wgt.) |
| Mean Age | 45 | 45 | 47 | ANES (Wgt.) |
| Median Income | $35 – 49,999 | $50 – 74,999 | $55 – 59,999 | ANES (Wgt.) |

Note: Comparison of our data to known population benchmarks. CPS = Current Population Survey (U.S. Census, 2017). ANES = American National Election Study (2016). We prefer to rely on CPS given its sample size and representativeness, but make use of weighted ANES data whenever it was not possible to use CPS (i.e. CPS does not ask questions about Party ID).Weights in column two adjust for gender, education, race, age, and income. Party ID is **not included** in our weighting formula, and is shown only due to the potential interests of those who might use or otherwise consume this data.