

# Law enforcement and the public in rural TN report stigma toward people who use drugs.

Their attitudes in dangerousness, blame, social distance, and fatalism show both similarities and differences across stigma domains, with the public's views changing notably over time.



Going to add map of TN and Wilson Location

## Temporal and comparative analysis of drug use stigma among rural law enforcement and community members in rural Tennessee

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### Setting and Methods

**Sample Sizes:** The study included 48 law enforcement officers (LEOs) surveyed in 2022, and 393 community members in 2022, with 387 community members surveyed in 2023.

**Survey Tool:** The survey used a 5-point Likert scale to measure attitudes across four stigma domains: dangerousness, blame, social distance, and fatalism. Additional questions assessed perceptions of the typical drug user's demographics (e.g., race, gender, socioeconomic status).

**Data Collection:** Community data were collected at the Wilson County and Tennessee State Fair during August 2022 and August 2023. Survey options included paper forms and digital formats accessed via QR codes.

**Geographic Focus:** Most respondents were from Middle Tennessee, with a significant number from Wilson County, providing insights into local attitudes toward substance use.

### Results

