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HHS: Pot Use Way Up in "Legal" States

1 message

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Mon, Dec 3, 2018 at 9:09 AM

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
December 2, 2018**CONTACT:**
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Study Finds First State to Commercialize Marijuana Continues to Feel the Harsh Effects of Pot Use

***Colorado leads the nation when it comes to first time pot
users among 12 to 17 year olds***

(Alexandria, VA) - More young people are trying marijuana for the first time in Colorado, the first state to allow recreational marijuana, than anywhere else in the nation. A new study conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration ([SAMHSA](#)) also finds the state is at the top of the list for the lowest perception of risk of using pot in the 12 to 17 year old age group.

Key findings of the study:

- Past month use of marijuana is noticeably greater in states that have legalized among those 12+ by 7.6% (legal: 16%; non: 8.5%), 12-17 by 2.8% (9.1%; 6.3%), and 18+ by 8.7% (17.4%; 8.7%).
- Past year use of marijuana is noticeably greater in states that have legalized among those 12+ by 10% (legal: 23.48%; non: 13.43%), 12-17 by 3.7% (15.7%; 12%), and 18+ by 10.5% (24.1%; 13.6%).
- In 2017, past month marijuana use among 12-17 year-olds was highest in Vermont (10.75%), followed by Oregon (10.35%).
- In 2017, past year marijuana use among 12-17 year-olds was highest in Vermont (17.88%), followed by Oregon (17.01%).
- In 2017, perception of great risk from smoking marijuana once a month among 12-17 year-olds was lowest in Colorado (16.21%), followed by Oregon (16.84%).
- Washington saw a significant increase among 12+ and 18+ year-olds reporting both past month and year use in 2017, compared to 2016
- Oregon saw a significant increase among 12+ and 18+ year-olds reporting both past month and year use in 2017, compared to 2016.
- D.C. saw a significant increase among 12+ and 18+ year-olds reporting past month use in 2017, compared to 2016
- California saw a significant increase among 12+ and 18+ year-olds reporting both past month and year use in 2017, compared to 2016.

Dr. Kevin Sabet, president and founder of [Smart Approaches to Marijuana](#) (SAM) released the following statement : "This is one in a long list of studies that proves Big Marijuana is targeting and subsequently harming our most vulnerable populations. Its profits-over-people business model is designed to hook people when they're most susceptible and make lifetime users out of them. When will we learn the marijuana industry isn't our friend, rather a social disease just like Big Tobacco was decades ago?"

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About SAM:

[Smart Approaches to Marijuana](#) (SAM) is a nonpartisan, non-profit alliance of physicians, policy makers, prevention workers, treatment and recovery professionals, scientists, and other concerned citizens opposed to marijuana legalization who want health and scientific evidence to guide marijuana policies. SAM has affiliates in more than 30 states. Evidence shows that marijuana - which has skyrocketed in average potency over the past decades - is addictive and harmful to the human brain [is addictive and harmful to the human brain](#) especially when used by adolescents. In states that have already legalized the drug, there has been an increase in [drugged driving crashes](#), [youth marijuana use](#), and [costs that far outweigh pot revenues](#). These states have seen a black market that continues to thrive, [a black market that continues to thrive](#), sustained disparities in marijuana [arrest rates](#), and tobacco company investment in [marijuana](#).

For more information about marijuana use and its effects, visit www.learnaboutsam.org.

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