Consistent, Persistent, and Resistant, Marijuana Use in the United States.

A Special Report from
The Bulletin of Cannabis Reform

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September 22, 2008

The research for this report was funded by the Marijuana Policy Project Foundation.

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Executive Summary

Marijuana use in the United States remains consistent, persistent, and resistant to federal, state, and local efforts.

Overall Marijuana Use

Marijuana was used at least once in 2007 by 25.1 million, or 10.3% of the population, in 2007, a slight reduction over five years from a population estimate of 25.9 million (11%) in 2002.

During 2007 marijuana was used in the last month by 14.5 million, or 5.8% of the population, a slight decrease over six years from a population estimate of 14.6 million (6.2%) in 2002.

More accurate estimation techniques implemented in 2002 result in estimates for 2002 to 2006 that remain 20% greater than comparable estimates from 1997 to 2001.

Marijuana Use by Age

Despite modest reductions in teenage use, marijuana use by adults (age 18 and older) rival or exceed prevalence estimates for 1997 to 2001.

Population estimates for monthly use by adults age 18 to 20, 26 to 34, and 35 and older have increased from 2002 to 2007.

One in nine (12%) 14- and 15-year-olds used marijuana in 2007.

One in four (23.7%) 16- and 17-year-olds used marijuana in 2007.

Nearly one in three (30.3%) 18- to 20-year-olds used marijuana in 2007.

In 2007 almost nine out of ten (87%) of annual marijuana users were adults.

Marijuana Use by Race

Over seven out of ten (71%) of annual marijuana users are white. Blacks accounted for 14% of annual marijuana users and Hispanics accounted for 11%.

The prevalence of annual marijuana use by whites in 2006 was 10.5%, 12.2% of blacks, and 7.9% of Hispanics used marijuana annually the same year.

The prevalence of monthly use by whites in 2006 was 6.0%, 7.2% of blacks, and 4.5% of Hispanics used marijuana monthly in the same year.

While marijuana use by blacks is 16% to 17% greater than whites, this fails to account for why arrest rates for blacks are generally 200% greater than for whites.

Marijuana and Other Drug Use

Three out of five (58%) of annual marijuana users do not use other illegal drugs.

There were 35.7 million annual illicit drug users in the United States in 2007, 14.4% of the population. Individuals who only use marijuana account for 41% of all annual illicit drug users. While 10.5 million people used marijuana and at least one other illegal drug (29% of all illicit drug users), there were 10.6 million people (30%) who used illegal drugs but did not use marijuana.

There were 472,000 12- and 13-year-olds who did not use marijuana in 2006 but still used illegal drugs. Of this group 58% used inhalants and 45% of them used illegally obtained pain relief drugs.

There were 627,000 14- and 15-year-olds who did not use marijuana in 2006 but still used illegal drugs. Of this group 43% used inhalants and 54% used illegally obtained pain relief drugs.

According to 2006 data of the 12- and 13-year-olds who have not used marijuana but have used other illicit drugs, 33% have used alcohol and 24% have used tobacco. Of the 14- and 15-year-olds in this group, 47% have used alcohol and 31% have used tobacco. Of the 16- and 17-year-olds who have not used marijuana but have used illegal drugs, 57% have used alcohol and 39% have use tobacco.

Marijuana use by teenagers remains a serious problem. However, it is not the primary drug problem nor is it the primary cause of teenage drug problems. The use of powerful and dangerous drugs precedes marijuana use or even occurs in the absence of marijuana use, and the illegality of marijuana use also results in exposure of teens to far more dangerous substances.

Introduction

According to survey data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, marijuana use in the United States remains consistent, persistent, and resistant to federal, state, and local efforts. This report examines survey data on overall marijuana use, marijuana use by age, marijuana use by race, and data on other illicit drug use, especially illicit drug use by non-marijuana users. Recently released survey data for 2007 indicates that Bush Administration anti-drug policies have been unsuccessful in reducing the demand for and use of marijuana and other illegal drugs. Despite welcome reductions in teenage illicit drug use, overall both illicit drug use in general and marijuana use in particular have changed little since 2002.

The 2002 National Drug Control Strategy of the Bush Administration adopted ambitious goals of reducing current (monthly) use of any illicit drugs by both the 12-to-17 and 18-and-older age groups by 10% over two years and 25% over five years. (See Table 2.) The recent release of the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (the revised successor of the National Household Survey) provides data with which to evaluate these goals. Among the 12-to-17 age group there was a 7% population reduction in current illegal drug use from 2002 to 2004, and a 16% reduction from 2002 to 2007. Among adults age 18 or older, though, the population of current illegal drug users fell 1.5% from 2002 to 2004 and increased 4.8% from 2002 to 2007. (See Table 1 and Figure 1.) One factor in these trends was an increase in annual use of opioid pain relievers; from 2002 to 2007 the number of past year users of pain relievers, among all age groups, grew by 1.47 million individuals.

The reduction in teenage use of illicit drugs is a positive development, however one with only a marginal impact on the overall drug abuse problem in the United States. As this report will discuss in further detail, teenagers only account for a small percentage of illegal drug users, and despite the reductions evident in the survey data from 2002 to 2007 teenage drug abuse continues to represent a serious public health problem in the United States.

According to its own standards of evaluation, the policies of the Bush Administration have been a failure. The 2002 National Drug Control Strategy clearly announces that

Table 1. Current (Monthly) Use of Any Illicit Drug (2002—2007)

	Age 12 to 17				Age 18 and Older			
Year	Prevalence	Change from 2002	Population	Change from 2002	Prevalence	Change from 2002	Population	Change from 2002
2007	9.5%	-18.1%	2,409,000	-16.3%	7.9%	-0.9%	17,448,000	4.8%
2006	9.8%	-15.5%	2,481,000	-13.8%	8.1%	2.7%	17,876,000	7.4%
2005	9.9%	-14.7%	2,511,000	-12.8%	8.0%	0.3%	17,209,000	3.4%
2004	10.6%	-8.6%	2,674,000	-7.1%	7.6%	-4.6%	16,398,000	-1.5%
2003	11.2%	-3.4%	2,811,000	-2.3%	7.8%	-1.9%	16,659,000	0.1%
2002	11.6%		2,878,000		7.9%		16,644,000	

Table 2. Excerpt from:
The National Drug Control Strategy
Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)
February, 2002.

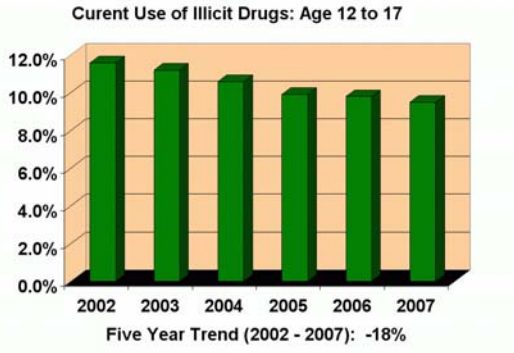
NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY GOALS

Two-Year Goals:	A 10 percent reduction in current use of illegal drugs by the 12–17 age group
	A 10 percent reduction in current use of illegal drugs by adults age 18 and older
Five-Year Goals:	A 25 percent reduction in current use of illegal drugs by the 12–17 age group
	A 25 percent reduction in current use of illegal drugs by adults age 18 and older

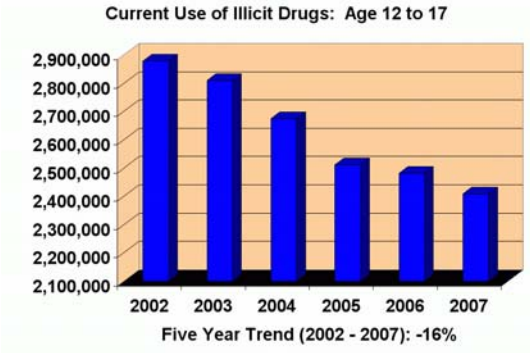
Progress toward all goals will be measured from the baseline established by the 2000 *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*. All Strategy goals seek to reduce "current" use of "any illicit drug," as defined by the *Household Survey*. Use of alcohol and tobacco products, while illegal for youths, are not included in these estimates.

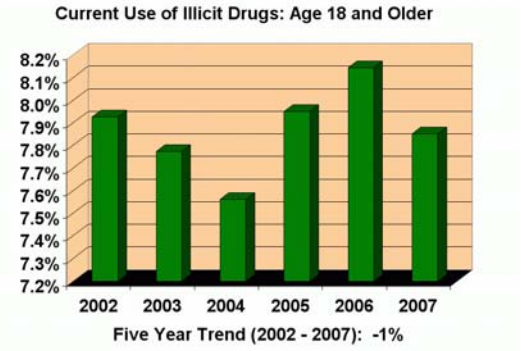
Figure 1. National Survey on Drug Use and Health Data on Current Illicit Drug Use Age 12 to 17 & Age 18 and Older (2002—2007)

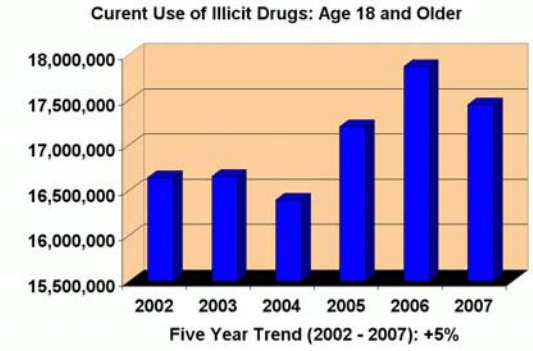
Prevalence Estimates



Population Estimates







Source: SAMSHA, 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Trend Tables

"progress toward all goals will be measured from the baseline established by the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse." This survey was improved and renamed in 2002. The improvements will be discussed below. Nonetheless, the Bush Administration has clearly failed to achieve significant reductions in adult illicit drug use. In terms of the overall population, as reported above, there had been an increase of 4.8%. In terms of prevalence -- the percentage of the population that uses illicit drugs -- there has been a minor 0.9% decrease from 2002 to 2007. Neither measure comes close to the Administration's objectives.

The Administration advanced other evaluation criteria in the 2002 Strategy report. It announced that the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) "will continue the work to bring accountability to drug control programs through the use of ONDCP's Performance Measures of Effectiveness System, which measures the results of federal drug control programs ... [and that] the Administration is committed to accountability in government. Drug policy will be no exception. By improving the system by which we manage drug programs, we will see results."

The Administration's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), to their credit, has made these and other program evaluations public through their ExpectMore.gov Web site. The primary demand reduction components of Administration policy featured in the 2002 National Drug Control Strategy and their OMB evaluations are summarized in Table 3. Of these six programs one received an "Adequate" evaluation, and the other five received evaluations of "Ineffective" or "Results Not Demonstrated."

Furthermore, according to these OMB program evaluations, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has been ineffective at curbing the availability of illegal drugs: "The Drug Enforcement Administration is unable to demonstrate its impact on the availability of drugs in the US but has shown sustained progress in disrupting and dismantling high priority drug trafficking organizations. The program consistently exceeds its performance targets for disrupting and dismantling these priority trafficking groups."

This conclusion by OMB, their evaluations of demand reduction programs, and the survey data reported above all suggest that a fundamental reassessment of federal anti-drug policies is long overdue. Drug sales and trafficking are indeed law enforcement issues. However, drug use and drug abuse, whether it involves legal drugs, illegal drugs, or both, are public health issues. No administration in the past generation has been able to successfully impact these public health issues through reliance on law enforcement. National anti-drug policies, both supply and demand oriented policies, are fundamentally flawed. One of the flaws in national policy is a compulsive obsession with justifying the illegality of marijuana, which gives priority to validating the dominant policy approach of the last generation over consideration of innovative approaches toward achievable goals. A closer examination of data on marijuana and other illegal drug use will underscore the need for a reexamination of national policy.

Early in the Bush Administration two important anomalies in federal data on marijuana in the United States cast a prominent shadow over claims federal policies have had success in reducing marijuana use. In 2002 a task force working with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) estimated that domestic marijuana production was nearly three times larger than previously estimated. [1] Prior estimates had placed domestic production near 3,500 mt. Yet the 2002 report, published by ONDCP,

Table 3. Key Demand Reduction Programs from the 2002 National Drug Control Strategy

National Drug Control Strategy Description	Program Assessment from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
Safe and Drug-Free Schools: This program funds activities that address drug and violence prevention for young people. To improve evaluation and better direct program activities, ONDCP will work with the Department of Education to develop a useful evaluation plan that will impose program accountability while alerting schools to problem areas.	**Not Performing, Results Not Demonstrated** The structure of the program is flawed. It spreads funding too broadly to support quality interventions and fails to target schools and communities in greatest need of assistance. FY 2007 $347 million FY 2008 $295 million FY 2009 $100 million
Drug-Free Communities: This program provides assistance to community groups on forming and sustaining effective community and anti-drug coalitions that fight the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco by youth. . . .Further, this request includes $2 million for the National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute. The Institute will provide education, training, and technical assistance for coalition leaders and community teams and will help coalitions to evaluate their own performance.	**Performing, Adequate:** Program management and planning are top priorities. Grant administration was recently moved from one agency to another to strengthen program management and communication with community grantees. An independent evaluation of the program did not adequately address program performance. FY 2007 $79 million FY 2008 $70 million FY 2009 $90 million
National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign: Targeted, high impact, paid media advertisements—at both the national and local levels—seek to reduce drug use through changes in adolescents' perceptions of the danger and social disapproval of drugs	**Not Performing, Results Not Demonstrated:** An independent, long-term evaluation found no connection between the Campaign advertisements and youth drug use behavior. FY 2007 $99 million FY 2008 $99 million FY 2009 $130 million
Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment: This [program] will provide additional funding to states for treatment and prevention services. States use these funds to extend treatment services to pregnant women, women with dependent children, and racial and ethnic minorities.	**Not Performing, Ineffective**: No independent evaluation of the program has been completed. An independent evaluation is needed to determine the impact of the program has on reducing substance abuse . . .The formula for distributing funds does not correspond with the prevalence of . . . abuse. FY 2007 $1,759 million FY 2008 $1,759 million FY 2009 $1,779 million
Residential Substance Abuse Treatment: This] program is a formula grant that distributes funds to states to support drug and alcohol treatment in state corrections facilities.	**Not Performing, Results Not Demonstrated:** Assessing the program's impact on substance abuse behavior has been hindered by the failure of many grantees to provide consistent, reliable data. FY 2007 $10 million FY 2008 $9 million FY 2009 $0 million
Drug Courts: The Drug Courts program provides alternatives to incarceration by using the coercive power of the court to force abstinence and alter behavior through a combination of escalating sanctions, mandatory drug testing, treatment, and strong aftercare programs.	**Not Performing, Results Not Demonstrated:** Annual goals focus on the number of active courts rather than the effectiveness of the program or how many drug courts are needed. . . The program has achieved its targets for preventing drug abuse relapse among participants, although more attention is needed to track how participants fare after they complete the program. FY 2007 $10 million FY 2008 $15 million FY 2009 $0 million

placed United States cultivation of marijuana at 10,000 mt. Soon afterward, in 2003, the results of the newly improved National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) indicated that the number of marijuana users in the United States was at least 20% larger than was estimated by prior surveys.

Before 2002 surveys had estimated that the United States had 18-to-21 million annual marijuana users. In 2002 NSDUH deployed new and more accurate data collection techniques. One of the results was that the population of annual marijuana use was determined that year to be 25.9 million individuals. [2] One conspicuous impact of this revelation was that ONDCP's subsequent reports on National Drug Control Strategy began to omit reference to NSDUH data, instead relying on more limited data from the University of Michigan's well-regarded Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey program.

Like the NSDUH, the MTF survey is one of the most professionally designed, implemented, and reliable social surveys in the United States. However, unlike the NSDUH, the MTF survey is tightly focused on marijuana use by young people, an important but incomplete standard by which to evaluate the effectiveness of national marijuana control policies. A wider focus is required, one that gives priority to policy analysis rather than political expediency.

Overall Marijuana Use

Between 1997 and 2001 the population of annual marijuana users in the United States increased by 8.3%. (See Table 4.) During this same period, the population of monthly marijuana users increased by 9.1% from 11.1 million to 12.1 million. (See Table 8.) In 2002,

Table 4. Population Estimates of Annual Marijuana Use, by Age, in 1000s, (1997—2001)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2001	235	1,197	2,130	3,707	4,164	3,900	5,733	21,065
2000	216	1,062	1,830	3,479	3,403	3,420	5,202	18,611
1999	242	1,065	1,977	3,489	3,430	3,434	5,444	19,082
1998	127	851	1,699	3,464	3,517	3,032	5,630	18,321
1997	290	1,234	2,033	2,973	3,211	3,946	5,759	19,446

Table 5. Population Estimates of Annual Marijuana Use, by Age, in 1000s, (2002—2007)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2007	161	951	2,035	4,011	4,974	4,952	8,001	25,085
2006	180	1,068	2,082	3,919	5,181	4,981	7,890	25,301
2005	218	1,031	2,104	4,209	4,996	5,241	7,627	25,426
2004	233	1,188	2,241	4,091	5,087	4,845	7,948	25,633
2003	222	1,275	2,313	4,199	4,904	5,106	7,573	25,591
2002	242	1,341	2,324	4,129	5,092	4,985	7,823	25,936

Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health

when NSDUH data collection procedures were improved, the population estimate for annual users was changed to 25.9 million. The population estimate for monthly users that year was 14.6 million. These increases suggest that survey findings prior to 2002 underestimated marijuana use by at least 20%. (See Tables 5 & 9.)

Since 2002 there have been minor reductions in both annual and monthly marijuana use. From 2002 to 2007 the estimates of annual marijuana use fell 3.3% from 25.9 million annual users to 25.1 million annual users. (See Table 5.) During this period the estimate of monthly marijuana users decreased by 1% from 14.6 million to 14.5 million. (See Table 9.)

Similar changes occurred in the prevalence of marijuana use. However, compared with earlier trends these changes are little more than marginal fluctuations at best. Annual use, after increasing from 9.0% to 9.3% of the population in the years 1997 to 2001, decreased from 11% in 2002 to 10.1% in 2007. (See Tables 6 & 7.) Monthly use increased from 5.1% to 5.4% from 1997 to 2001, and decreased from 6.2% to 5.8% from 2002 to 2007. (See Tables 10 & 11.)

Comparisons of the data from 1997 to 2001 with the data from 2002 to 2007 must be considered cautiously given the change in the survey data collection procedures, which increased the response rate for the survey. More individuals completed the entire survey after the procedural change, and it is impossible to calculate the precise impact of this improvement. Regardless of the change in data collection procedures, marijuana use increased from 1997 to 2001, and the decrease

Table 6. Prevalence Estimates of Annual Marijuana Use, by Age, (1997—2001)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2001	3.1%	14.8%	27.2%	30.8%	23.8%	11.9%	4.1%	9.3%
2000	2.8%	13.2%	24.2%	28.8%	20.1%	10.4%	3.8%	8.3%
1999	3.2%	13.6%	25.5%	28.9%	20.9%	10.2%	4.0%	8.6%
1998	2.2%	10.8%	23.0%	31.0%	21.1%	9.9%	4.2%	8.6%
1997	4.0%	15.7%	27.4%	26.9%	19.3%	11.2%	4.4%	9.0%

Table 7. Prevalence Estimates of Annual Marijuana Use, by Age, (2002—2007)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2007	2.0%	11.2%	23.7%	30.3%	25.5%	14.0%	5.2%	10.1%
2006	2.3%	12.0%	24.4%	30.8%	25.9%	14.2%	5.2%	10.3%
2005	2.6%	11.9%	24.9%	32.4%	25.6%	15.0%	5.1%	10.5%
2004	2.8%	13.8%	27.5%	32.8%	25.8%	13.9%	5.4%	10.7%
2003	2.6%	15.2%	28.2%	33.6%	25.5%	14.6%	5.2%	10.8%
2002	2.9%	15.9%	29.2%	33.1%	27.4%	14.2%	5.4%	11.0%

Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Table 8. Population Estimates of Monthly Marijuana Use, by Age, (1997—2001)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2001	111	618	1,160	2,250	2,462	2,216	3,305	12,122
2000	93	574	1,012	2,084	1,866	1,944	3,141	10,714
1999	107	542	1,027	2,100	1,949	1,802	2,932	10,458
1998	60	511	1,003	1,996	1,951	1,746	3,539	10,806
1997	181	724	1,211	1,704	1,853	2,099	3,337	11,109

Table 9. Population Estimates of Monthly Marijuana Use, by Age, (2002—2007)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2007	75	488	1,122	2,429	2,949	2,799	4,585	14,448
2006	70	499	1,087	2,357	3,004	3,002	4,892	14,911
2005	75	513	1,140	2,521	2,949	3,019	4,341	14,557
2004	104	619	1,174	2,264	3,022	2,928	4,567	14,677
2003	101	613	1,278	2,507	2,941	3,033	4,302	14,775
2002	117	667	1,240	2,406	2,969	2,721	4,463	14,584

Table 10. Prevalence Estimates of Monthly Marijuana Use, by Age, (1997—2001)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2001	1.4%	7.6%	14.8%	18.7%	14.1%	6.8%	2.4%	5.4%
2000	1.2%	7.1%	13.4%	17.3%	11.0%	5.9%	2.3%	4.8%
1999	1.4%	6.9%	13.2%	17.4%	11.9%	5.4%	2.2%	4.7%
1998	1.1%	6.5%	13.6%	17.8%	11.7%	5.7%	2.6%	5.1%
1997	2.5%	9.2%	16.3%	15.4%	11.1%	6.0%	2.6%	5.1%

Table 11. Prevalence Estimates of Monthly Marijuana Use, by Age, (2002—2007)

Year	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	TOTAL
2007	0.9%	5.7%	13.1%	18.4%	15.1%	7.9%	3.0%	5.8%
2006	0.9%	5.6%	12.7%	18.5%	15.0%	8.6%	3.2%	6.1%
2005	0.9%	5.9%	13.5%	19.4%	15.1%	8.7%	2.9%	6.0%
2004	1.2%	7.2%	14.4%	18.1%	15.3%	8.4%	3.1%	6.1%
2003	1.2%	7.3%	15.6%	20.1%	15.3%	8.7%	2.9%	6.2%
2002	1.4%	7.9%	15.6%	19.3%	16.0%	7.7%	3.1%	6.2%

Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health

in use from 2002 to 2007 has yet to offset that earlier increase. The number of Americans who have used marijuana at some point in their lives actually increased, from 95 million in 2002 to over 100 million in 2007.

Marijuana Use by Age

The population and prevalence estimates discussed above are presented for seven age groups in Tables 4 – 7 for annual marijuana use and Tables 8 – 11 for monthly marijuana use. Small but significant reductions have occurred in marijuana use among minors, those aged 12 to 17. This is a welcome development. Nonetheless, marijuana use among minors remains a persistent problem. Before discussing changes in marijuana use by age it is important to note that the 12-to-17 age group represents a small percentage of all marijuana users, just 15% of annual marijuana users in 2002 and 13% in 2007. (See Figures 2 & 3.)

Discouragement and reduction of youthful marijuana use is an important and widely supported objective of national policy. However, progress in this area has had only a marginal effect on the overall persistence of marijuana use. Minor reductions in teenage use have had no significant impact on the unregulated, untaxed, and uncontrolled market in marijuana, and the continued existence of this market has considerable economic and social ramifications. [3] More to the point, without affecting the larger market created by adult marijuana use, continued availability to teenagers is unaffected by achievement of reductions in teenage use. While welcome, the reduction of teenage use is marginal with respect to the overall issue because it is often accompanied by increases in the adult use of marijuana.

Annual marijuana use from 1997 to 2001 decreased in three key age groups. In 12- and 13-year-olds annual marijuana use dropped

Figure 2. Annual Marijuana Users (2002)

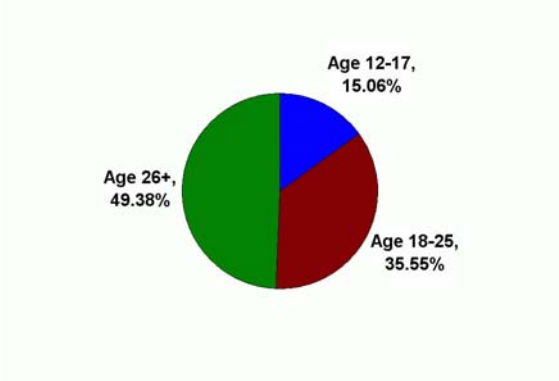
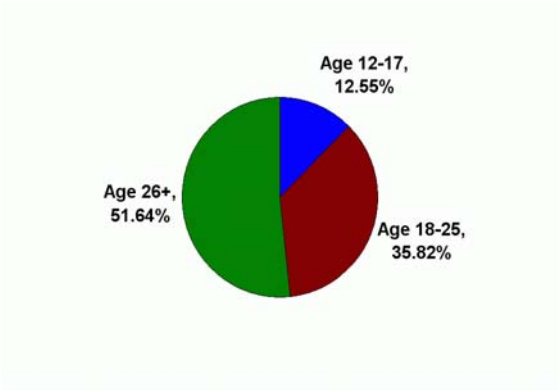


Figure 3. Annual Marijuana Users (2007)



from 4.0% to 3.1%, in 14- and 15-year-olds annual marijuana use dropped from 15.7% to 14.8%, and in 16- and 17-year-olds annual marijuana use dropped from 27.4% to 27.2% during this earlier five year period. (See Table 6.) The same trend continued in the next and recent six year period. From 2002 to 2007 annual use dropped from 2.9% to 2.0% among 12- and 13-year-olds, from 15.9% to 11.2% among 13- and 14-year-olds, and from 29.2% to 23.7% among 16- and 17-year-olds. (See Table 7.) Even so, it can hardly be a mark of successful policies that nearly one in four of the nation's 16- and 17-year-olds use marijuana on an annual basis or that one in nine 13- and 14-year-olds have used marijuana annually as well.

The same trends are evident with monthly marijuana use, which has also decreased among these age groups in both periods. For the years 1997 to 2001 monthly marijuana use

decreased among 12- and 13-year-olds from 2.5% to 1.4%, in 14- and 15-year-olds from 9.2% to 7.6%, and in 16- and 17-year-olds from 16.3% to 14.8%. (See Table 10.) In the subsequent six year period, after the survey data collection methods were improved, monthly marijuana use decreased among 12- and 13-year-olds from 1.4% to 0.9%, in 14- and 15-year-olds from 7.9% to 5.7%, and in 16 - and 17-year-olds from 15.6% to 13.1%. (See Table 11.) In these last two important age groups monthly marijuana use increased from 2006 to 2007.

While the data from 1997 to 2001 can be criticized as underestimating marijuana use by 20%, the trends of decreasing use in these young age groups are consistent in both successive periods. The usage trends in older age groups, though, lack this consistency. With older age groups the trend is for increases in use in the 1997 to 2001 data, followed in most cases by decreases of lesser magnitude in the more recent and more accurate 2002 to 2007 data, with the end result being a greater prevalence of marijuana use in the 2007 data than is apparent in the less accurate 1997 data.

Among 18- to 20-year-olds monthly marijuana use increased from 15.4% to 18.7% from 1997 to 2001, and then decreased from 19.3% to 18.4% from 2002 to 2007. (See Tables 10 & 11) Annual use among this age group increased from 26.9% in 1997 to 30.8% in 2001, and decreased from 33.1% to 30.3% from 2002 to 2007. (See Tables 6 & 7.)

Among 21- to 25-year-olds monthly marijuana use increased from 11.1% in 1997 to 14.1% in 2001, and then dropped from 16.0% to 15.1% from 2002 to 2007. (See Tables 10 & 11) Annual use among 21- to 25-year-olds increased from 1997 to 2001 from 19.3% to 23.8% and then from 2002 to 2007 decreased from 27.4% to 25.5%. (See Tables 6 & 7.)

The same trends characterize the oldest age groups. The 26- to 34-year-old group had a monthly use prevalence of 7.7% in 2002, and this increased to 7.9% in 2007; it was 6.0% in 1997. (See Tables 10 & 11) Annual use in this group was 14.2% in 2002, rose to 15.0% in 2005, and returned to 14.0% in 2007; it was 11.2% in 1997. (See Tables 6 & 7.) Monthly marijuana use in the 35 and older group was at 2.6% in 1997, 2.4% in 2001, 3.1% in 2002, and 3.0% in 2007. (See Tables 10 & 11) Annual use for this age group dropped from 4.4% in 1997 to 4.1% in 2001 and from 5.4% in 2002 to 5.2% in 2007. (See Tables 6 & 7.)

Examined in isolation these prevalence figures can be spun to indicate that anti-marijuana efforts are 'turning the corner,' an oft-repeated cliché over the last 35 years. What places these prevalence figures in proper perspective are the population estimates provided in the accompanying tables. As emphasized above, teenage marijuana users only comprise 13% to 15% of all marijuana users. The 18- to 25-year-old age group comprises about 36% of all marijuana users, and those over 25 make up half of all marijuana users. In these more populous age groups the changes in the prevalence in use over the last 10 years represents a marginal change in the overall market of marijuana consumers and their influence on the overall dynamics of supply and demand.

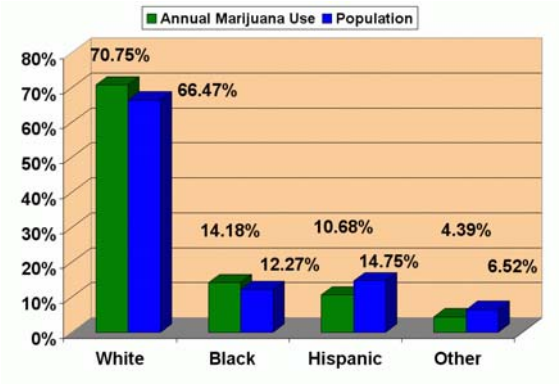
Deferral of the initiation of marijuana use from the teen to the college years, suggested by the changes in the data for 12- to 17-year-olds and 18- to 25-year-olds, remains a promising objective, but not one that will have impact on the fundamental aspects of the problems presented by an unregulated and uncontrolled market in marijuana in the United States. In any event, the number of new marijuana users annually, or "Past Year Marijuana Initiates," has remained

unchanged for the last four years. Since 2004, 2.1 million people have used marijuana for the first time each year, about 6,000 per day. In 2002 there were 2.2 million initiates, and 2.0 million in 2000. Consequently, the number of annual marijuana users has remained fundamentally unchanged in this decade.

Marijuana Use by Race

Data on the prevalence of marijuana use by race is of special interest because of concerns that arrests for marijuana-related offenses disproportionately affect minorities, specifically blacks and Hispanics. Arrest data on Hispanics is difficult to obtain because of reporting problems; "Hispanic" is a cultural rather than a racial distinction. However, the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) does report data on arrests by race. A 2005 report, for example, comparing U.S. Census, UCR, and NSDUH data from 2002 indicated that blacks comprised 12.74% of the population, 13.58% of annual marijuana users, and 26.32% of arrests for marijuana possession in the United States. The same report calculated arrest rates per 100,000 users by race and found that when controlled for the number of annual marijuana users of both races blacks were arrested at twice the rate of whites. The arrest rate for blacks per 100,000 annual marijuana users was 4,586 while the arrest rate for whites per 100,000 was 2,371. [4]

Figure 4. Percentage of Annual Marijuana Users and General Population, by Race (2006)



In 2006 whites accounted for 66% of the population and 71% of annual marijuana users, while blacks accounted for 12% of the population and 14% of annual marijuana users. (See Figure 4.) The racial composition of annual marijuana users has remained

Table 12. Population Estimates of Annual Marijuana Use, by Race, in 1000s, (1997—2007)

	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black/ Afr Am	Non-Hispanic Native Am/ AK Native	Non-Hispanic Native HI/ Oth.Pac Isl	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic more than one race	Hispanic	*TOTAL*
2007	17,699	3,556	146	41	471	460	2,712	25,085
2006	17,901	3,588	179	96	471	364	2,701	25,301
2005	17,906	3,616	207	70	402	377	2,847	25,426
2004	18,621	3,294	227	93	407	395	2,598	25,633
2003	18,621	3,289	198	63	353	465	2,601	25,591
2002	18,680	3,523	211	73	360	461	2,628	25,936
2001	16,056	2,362	199	62	289	286	1,810	21,065
2000	14,072	2,201	157	54	214	346	1,567	18,611
1999	14,068	2,452	151	81	335	246	1,749	19,082
1998	13,686	2,628	na	na	na	na	1,829	18,710
1997	14,655	2,417	na	na	na	na	1,609	19,446

relatively unchanged from 2002 to 2007. In 2002 whites accounted for 72% of annual marijuana users, blacks accounted for 13.6%, Hispanics accounted for 10.1%, and other races accounted for 4.3%. (See Figure 5.) In 2007 these percentages were similar, whites (71%), blacks (14%), Hispanics (10.7%), and other races (4.4%).

There are differences in the prevalence of marijuana use among racial groups. Marijuana use among Native Americans and Alaskan Indians has decreased from 2002 to 2006, with annual use dropping from 17.3% in 2004 to 11.5% in 2007 and monthly use dropping from 10.2% in 2005 to 7.9% in 2007. Blacks had a prevalence of 7.2% for monthly use and 12.2% for annual use in 2007. Whites reported a prevalence of 6.0% for monthly use and 10.5% for annual use the same year. Hispanics reported far lower prevalence of marijuana use in 2007, 7.9% annual use and 4.5% monthly use. (See Tables 13 & 15.) While the prevalence of annual use for blacks is 16% greater than that for whites, this does not explain an arrest rate that is 200% greater. This slight difference in the prevalence of use between whites and blacks also does not

Figure 5. Annual Marijuana Users, by Race (2002)

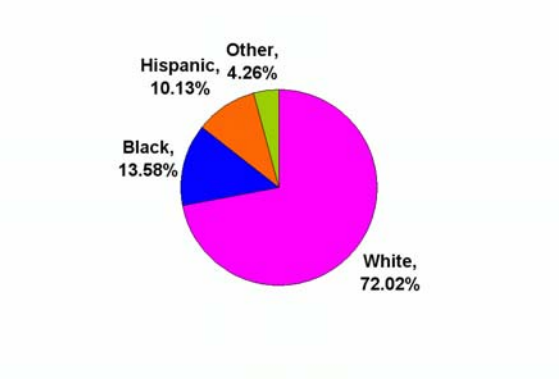


Figure 6. Annual Marijuana Users, by Race (2007)

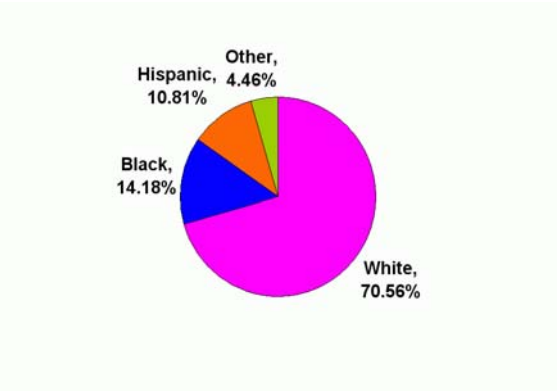


Table 13. Prevalence Estimates of Annual Marijuana Use, by Race, (1997—2007)

	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black/ Afr Am	Non-Hispanic Native Am/ AK Native	Non-Hispanic Native HI/ Oth.Pac Isl	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic more than one race	Hispanic	*TOTAL*
2007	10.5%	12.2%	11.5%	5.8%	4.4%	16.8%	7.9%	10.1%
2006	10.6%	12.3%	14.3%	9.8%	4.6%	14.1%	8.1%	10.3%
2005	10.7%	12.6%	16.2%	9.9%	4.0%	14.6%	8.9%	10.5%
2004	11.1%	11.8%	17.3%	15.1%	4.1%	15.0%	8.4%	10.7%
2003	11.2%	12.0%	16.3%	12.7%	3.6%	18.0%	8.7%	10.8%
2002	11.3%	13.1%	14.4%	9.2%	4.0%	18.1%	9.0%	11.0%
2001	9.8%	9.3%	17.9%	9.7%	3.6%	15.0%	7.3%	9.3%
2000	8.6%	8.7%	16.0%	10.1%	2.8%	18.0%	6.6%	8.3%
1999	8.7%	9.9%	13.1%	10.4%	4.5%	13.6%	7.6%	8.6%
1998	8.4%	10.6%					8.2%	8.6%
1997	9.1%	9.9%					7.5%	9.0%

account for the over-representation of blacks in the population of those arrested for marijuana possession at twice the proportion of their population percentage.

Among whites annual use increased from 9.1% to 9.8% from 1997 to 2001, and then fell from 11.3% in 2002 to 10.5% in 2007. Among blacks, though, annual use decreased from 9.9% in 1997 to 9.3% in 2001, and then decreased from 13.1% in 2002 to 12.2% in 2007. (See Table 13.)

Among whites monthly marijuana use increased from 5.2% to 5.6% from 1997 to 2001. Monthly use by whites fell only just slightly from 2002 to 2006, from 6.5% to 6.4% before dropping to 6.0% in 2007. Among blacks monthly marijuana use decreased from 6.1% in 1997 to 5.6% in 2001, and then remained unchanged at 7.4% in both 2002 and 2006, then dropping to 7.2% in 2007. (See Table 15.)

Monthly marijuana use by Hispanics rose from 4.0% to 4.2% from 1997 to 2001 and then

Table 14. Population Estimates of Monthly Marijuana Use, by Race, in 1000s, (1997—2007)

	NonHisp White	NonHisp Black/Afr Am	NonHisp Native Am/ AK Native	NonHisp Native HI/ Other Pac Isl	NonHisp Asian	NonHisp more than one race	Hispanic	***TOTAL***
2007	10,102	2,118	100	20	276	286	1,547	14,449
2006	10,824	2,152	118	60	221	190	1,346	14,911
2005	10,135	2,254	130	38	171	237	1,593	14,557
2004	10,499	2,027	115	71	196	258	1,512	14,677
2003	10,876	1,856	139	36	186	255	1,427	14,775
2002	10,819	1,983	99	34	163	230	1,256	14,584
2001	9,220	1,419	90	46	133	187	1,027	12,122
2000	8,058	1,329	99	13	116	237	861	10,714
1999	7,579	1,457	88	42	177	153	962	10,458
1998	8,073	1,627					1,000	11,016
1997	8,332	1,488					872	11,109

Table 15. Prevalence Estimates of Monthly Marijuana Use, by Race, (1997—2006)

	NonHisp White	NonHisp Black/Afr Am	NonHisp Native Am/ AK Native	NonHisp Native HI/ Other Pac Isl	NonHisp Asian	NonHisp more than one race	Hispanic	***TOTAL***
2007	6.0%	7.2%	7.9%	2.8%	2.6%	10.4%	4.5%	5.8%
2006	6.4%	7.4%	9.4%	6.1%	2.2%	7.4%	4.0%	6.1%
2005	6.0%	7.9%	10.2%	5.3%	1.7%	9.1%	5.0%	6.0%
2004	6.3%	7.2%	8.8%	11.5%	2.0%	9.8%	4.9%	6.1%
2003	6.5%	6.8%	11.4%	7.2%	1.9%	9.9%	4.8%	6.2%
2002	6.5%	7.4%	6.8%	4.3%	1.8%	9.0%	4.3%	6.2%
2001	5.6%	5.6%	8.1%	7.1%	1.7%	9.8%	4.2%	5.4%
2000	4.9%	5.2%	10.1%	2.5%	1.5%	12.3%	3.6%	4.8%
1999	4.7%	5.9%	7.7%	5.4%	2.4%	8.5%	4.2%	4.7%
1998	5.0%	6.6%					4.5%	5.0%
1997	5.2%	6.1%					4.0%	5.1%

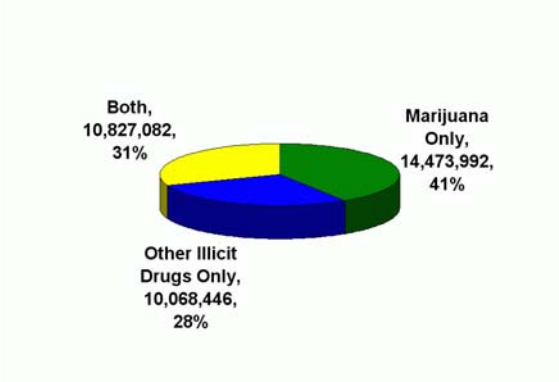
fell from 4.3% to 4.0% from 2002 to 2006, then rising to 4.5% in 2007. Annual marijuana use by Hispanics fell from 7.5% in 1997 to 7.3% in 2001, and fell from 9.0% in 2002 to 7.9% in 2007. (See Tables 13 & 15.)

An interesting and significant change in marijuana use by race is the fluctuation in monthly marijuana use by non-Hispanic whites. From 2002 to 2005 monthly marijuana use among this group fell from 6.5% to 6.0% before increasing to 6.4% in 2006 and falling again to 6.0% in 2007. Given that this is the largest subgroup, by race among monthly marijuana users, it demonstrates the overall volatility in even marginal reductions in marijuana use nationwide. This, along with the minor fluctuations in adult marijuana use, explains why small reductions in teenage use and in use by blacks have only the slightest impact on overall marijuana use in the United States.

The significant aspect of the data on marijuana use by race is not the minor fluctuations in use over time but instead the sheer and persistent size of the using populations. In 2007 marijuana was used annually by 17.7 million whites, 3.5 million blacks, and 2.7 million Hispanics. Of these groups marijuana was also used monthly by 10.1 million whites, 2.1 million blacks, and 1.5 million Hispanics. The magnitude of these population sizes has remained fundamentally unchanged from 2002 to 2007, and the persistence of marijuana's popularity across racial lines remains one of the defining characteristics of marijuana use in the United States. Regardless of changes in population estimates of marijuana use for various racial groups, overall use has remained constant. Just as annual use has persisted at about 25 million Americans in the last six years, so has monthly marijuana use, estimated at 14.6 million users in 2002 and 14.5 million in 2007.

Marijuana and Other Drug Use

Figure 7. Annual Use of Illicit Drugs (2006)



Marijuana is the most popular illegal drug in the United States, and its conspicuous popularity makes it a convenient distraction with which to deflect attention from the nation's more serious drug-related health, economic, and criminal justice problems. In short, marijuana users are easy targets for law enforcement and officials of anti-drug programs. The popularity of marijuana use provides an ample supply of busy work, which provides well-meaning police and bureaucrats with opportunities to make their well-funded anti-drug programs appear effective. When surveys show that marijuana remains popular, the government tries to focus attention away from adult marijuana use with claims that marginal reductions in teenage use indicate their programs are successful. Another distortion of the data is to focus on individual components of the problem, such as overall illicit drug use or reductions of teen use of specific drugs. The problem is that selecting favorable trends usually occurs at the expense of more serious intractable problems that bureaucrats are trying to shield from increased public and political scrutiny.

In 2007 there were 35.7 million annual drug users in the United States. Of these nearly 36

The Relationship of Marijuana Use and Other Use

Excerpt from: Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base. By Janet E. Joy, Stanley J. Watson, Jr., and John A. Benson, Editors. The Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences. National Academy Press, Washington D.C. 1999. pg 98 – pg 101. http://books.nap.edu/html/marimed/

The discussion that marijuana is a "gateway" drug implicitly recognizes the other illicit drugs might inflict greater damage to health or social relations and marijuana. Although the scientific literature generally discuss drug use progression between a variety of drug classes, including alcohol and tobacco, the public discussion has focused on marijuana as a "gateway" drug that leads to abuse of more harmful drugs such as cocaine and heroin. . . Because it is the most widely used illicit drug, marijuana is predictably the first use of drug most people encounter. Not surprisingly, most users of other illicit drugs used marijuana first. In fact, most drug users do not begin their drug use with marijuana; they begin with alcohol and nicotine – and usually when they're too young to do so legally. . .

[The theory] is that marijuana serves as a gateway to the world of illegal drugs in which youths have greater opportunity and are under greater social pressure to try other illegal drugs. This is the interpretation most often used in the scientific literature, and is supported by – although not proven by – the available data. . . [T]he gateway theory is a social theory . . . Instead it is the legal status of marijuana that makes it a gateway drug.

Psychiatric disorders are associated with substance dependence, and are likely risk factors for progression in drug use. . . . Intensity of drug use is also an important risk factor in progression. Daily marijuana users are more likely than their peers to be extensive users of other substances . . . The factors that best predict illegal drug use other than marijuana are likely the following: age of first alcohol or nicotine use, heavy marijuana use, and psychiatric disorders. However, it is important to keep in mind the progression to illicit drug use is not synonymous with heavy or persistent drug use. Indeed, although the age of onset for licit that drug alcohol and nicotine use predicts later illicit drug use, age of first use of licit drugs does *not* appear to predict persistent are heavy use of those drugs.

Data on the gateway phenomenon are frequently over interpreted. . . Many of the data on which the gateway theory is based do not measure dependence. Instead they measure use, even once-only use. Thus those data show that, compared to people who never use marijuana, marijuana users are more likely to use those drugs (maybe even only once), not that they become dependent or even frequent users. Note that the authors of the studies are careful to point out that their data should not be used as evidence of an inexorable, *causal* progression. Rather they noted that identifying stage-based user groups makes it possible to identify the specific risk factors that predate movement from one stage of drug use to the next – this is the real issue in the gateway discussion.

In the sense that marijuana use typically precedes rather than follows initiation into the use of other illicit drugs, it is indeed a gateway drug. However it does not appear to be a gateway drug to the extent that it is the most significant predictor or even the cause of heavy drug use; that is, care must be taken not to attribute cause to association. The most consistent predictors of heavy drug use appear to be the intensity of marijuana use, and co-occurring psychiatric disorders or a family history of psychopathology including alcoholism.

million users of illegal drugs, 14.5 million or 41% only used marijuana. While marijuana use is often associated with the use of other illegal drugs, 58% of the 25.1 million annual marijuana users do not use any other illegal drug, and over the last five years survey data has consistently shown that about 60% of annual marijuana users do not use other illegal drugs.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health data from 2006 provides a concise perspective on the overall use of illicit drugs. While 10.8 million people used marijuana and at least one other illegal drug (31% of all illicit drug users) in 2006, there were 10.1 million people (28%) who used illegal drugs but did not use marijuana. (See Figure 8.) A closer look at this category of drug users provides a revealing assessment of the nation's real problems with illegal drugs, problems with drugs and drug use that are far more harmful to individuals and society than the use of marijuana.

The use of illicit drugs other than marijuana has increased over the last five years. In 2002 the annual population estimate of non-marijuana using illicit drug users was 9.4 million. In 2006 this group numbered 10.1

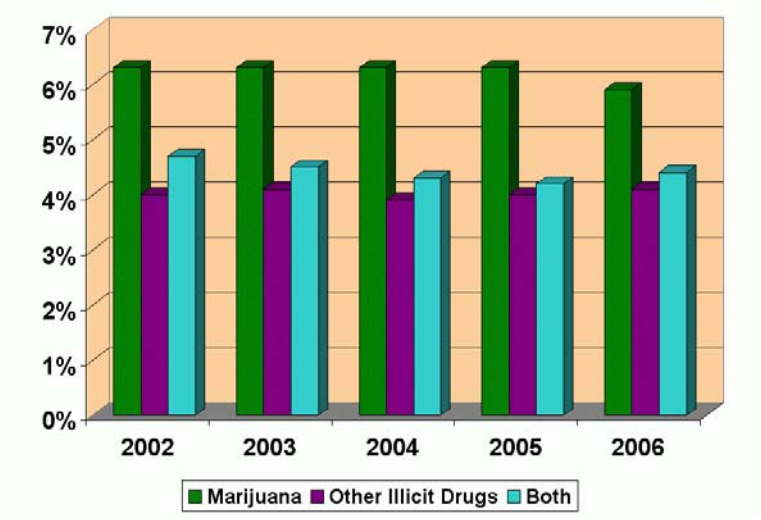
Table 16.
Annual Prevalence of Illicit Drug Use (2002—2007)

	Any Illicit Drug	Marijuana Only	Other Illicit Drugs Only	Both
2007	14.4%	5.9%	4.3%	4.3%
2006	14.4%	5.9%	4.1%	4.4%
2005	14.5%	6.3%	4.0%	4.2%
2004	14.6%	6.3%	3.9%	4.3%
2003	14.8%	6.3%	4.1%	4.5%
2002	15.0%	6.3%	4.0%	4.7%

Table 17.
Annual Population Estimates , in 1000s, of Illicit Drug Use (2002—2007)

	Any Illicit Drug	Marijuana Only	Other Illicit Drugs Only	Both
2007	35,692	14,548	10,607	10,537
2006	35,370	14,474	10,068	10,827
2005	35,193	15,208	9,767	10,218
2004	35,005	15,222	9,372	10,411
2003	35,293	14,864	9,702	10,726
2002	35,365	14,882	9,429	11,055

Figure 8. Annual Use of Marijuana Only, Other Illicit Drugs, and Both (2002—2006)



million, an increase of 7.5%. (See Table 17.) The prevalence of non-marijuana using illicit drug users increased during this period from 4.0% to 4.1% of the population. (See Table 18.) While annual marijuana use dropped slightly in 2006, the prevalence of each of these three categories remained relatively consistent from 2002 to 2006. (See Figure 7.)

Monthly illicit drug use displayed the same consistency from 2002 to 2006. The number of illicit drug users who did not use marijuana increased from 5.0 million to 5.3 million (See Table 19), while the prevalence of monthly illicit drug use by this population rose from 2.1% to 2.2%. (See Table 18.) Monthly use of illicit drugs by non-marijuana users increased from 2004 to 2006. (See Figure 9.)

Use of illicit drugs is a particularly significant problem in both the 12- to-13 and 14- to-15-year-old age groups. In these age groups annual illicit drug use by non-marijuana users far exceeds marijuana use alone or use of marijuana and other illegal drugs. (See Figure 10.) The same problem, in which marijuana use is not a factor, is evident in monthly illicit drug use by 12- to 15-year-olds. (See Figure 11.)

Table 18.
Monthly Prevalence of Illicit Drug Use (2002—2007)

	Any Illicit Drug	Marijuana Only	Other Illicit Drugs Only	Both
2007	8.0%	4.3%		
2006	8.2%	4.4%	2.2%	1.6%
2005	8.1%	4.4%	2.1%	1.5%
2004	8.0%	4.5%	1.9%	1.6%
2003	8.3%	4.5%	2.0%	1.7%
2002	8.3%	4.5%	2.1%	1.7%

Table 19.
Monthly Population Estimates , in 1000s, of Illicit Drug Use (2002—2007)

	Any Illicit Drug	Marijuana Only	Other Illicit Drugs Only	Both
2007	19,857	10,587	n/a	n/a
2006	20,240	10,870	5,329	4,042
2005	19,672	10,807	5,115	3,750
2004	19,163	10,903	4,485	3,774
2003	19,621	10,642	4,846	4,134
2002	19,544	10,681	4,960	3,902

Figure 9. Monthly Use of Marijuana Only, Other Illicit Drugs, and Both (2002—2006)

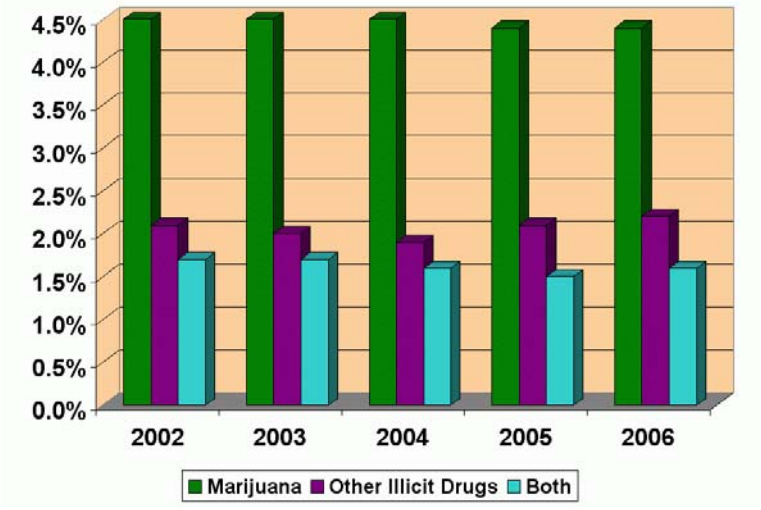
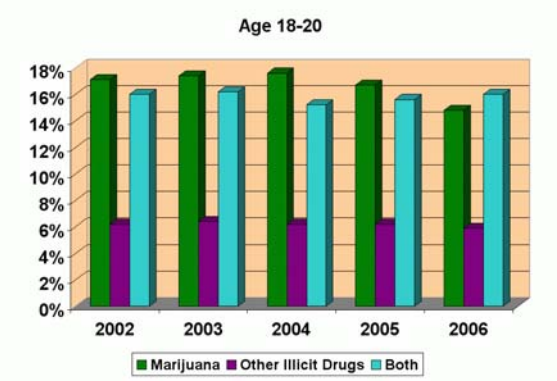
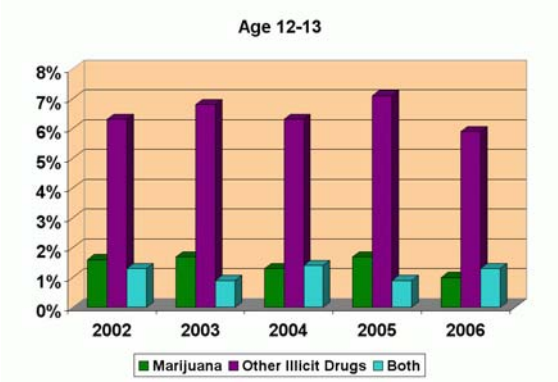
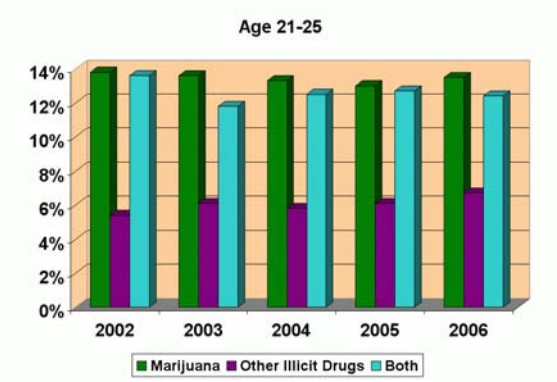
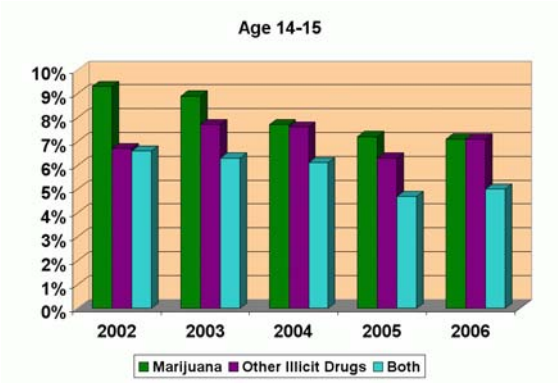


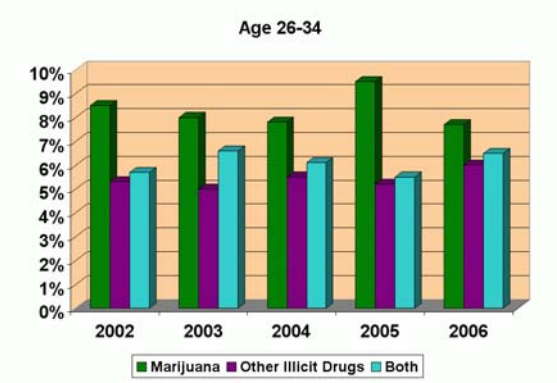
Figure 10. Annual Use of Marijuana Only, Other Illicit Drugs, and Both Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs, by Age (2002—2006)

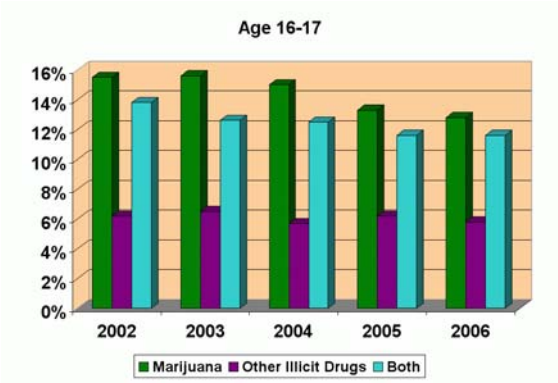












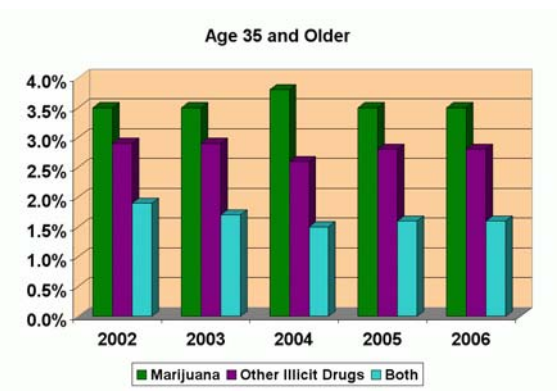
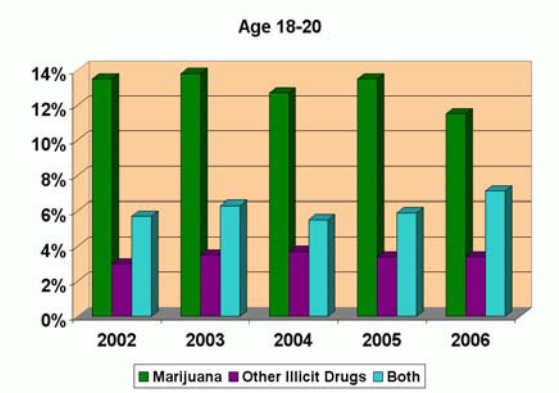
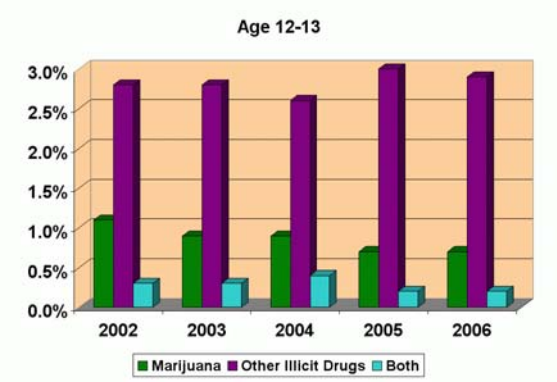
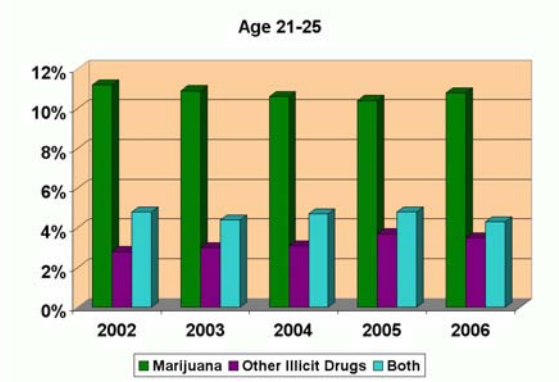
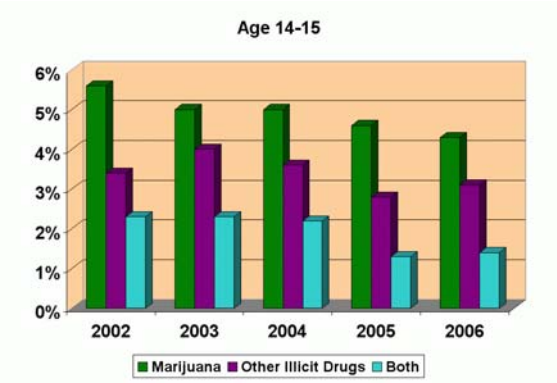


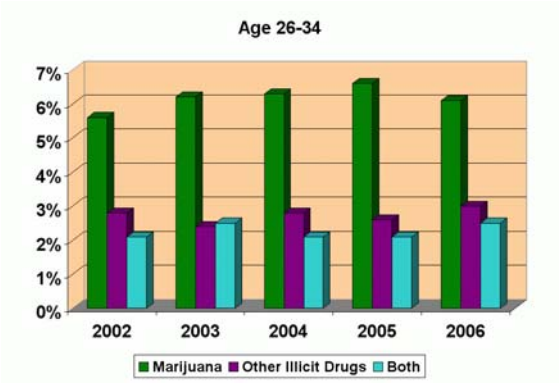
Figure 11. Monthly Use of Marijuana Only, Other Illicit Drugs, and Both Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs, by Age (2002—2006)

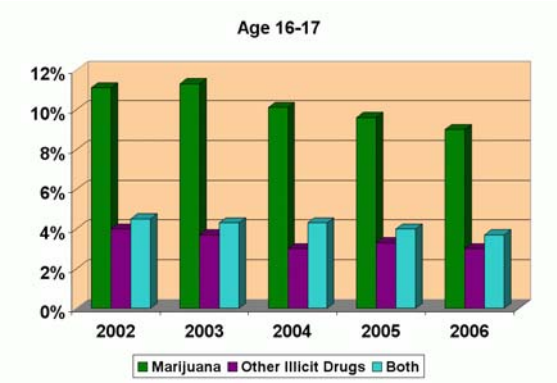


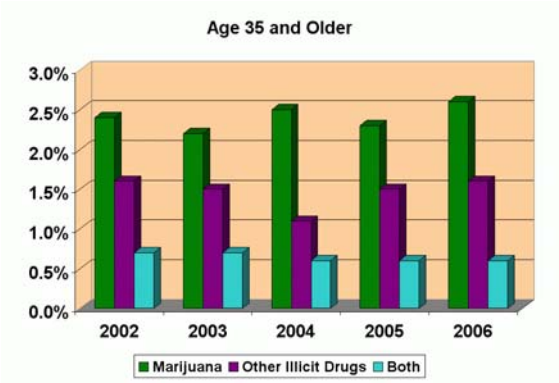












A close look at the other illicit drugs being taken by both marijuana users (Table 21) and non-marijuana users (Table 20) in 2006 underscores the specific drug problems obscured by the focus on marijuana use. There were 472,000 12- and 13-year-olds who did not use marijuana in 2006 but still used other illegal drugs. Of this group 58% used inhalants and 45% of them used illegally obtained pain relief drugs. There were 627,000 14- and 15-year-olds who did not use marijuana in 2006 but still used other illegal drugs. Of this group 43% used inhalants and 54% used illegally obtained pain relief drugs. In older groups the use of inhalants decreases and the use of pain relief drugs increases. At age 16 and 17 stimulants were used by 14% and sedatives were used by 13% of those illicit drug users who did not use marijuana. Similar trends are apparent in the marijuana users who also used illegal drugs, though one notable difference is that there is a greater prevalence of hallucinogenic drug, cocaine, ecstasy, and crack use among marijuana users than non-marijuana users.

As indicated by the analysis of the Institute of Medicine, use of marijuana by young people exposes them to illegal drug markets. Young kids who do not use marijuana are susceptible, though, to prescription drug and inhalant abuse, and those who do use marijuana are susceptible to experimenting with much more dangerous drugs than marijuana. While many young illicit drug users have not used marijuana, according to the 2006 data many have experience with alcohol and tobacco. (See Table 21.) Of the 12- and 13-year-olds who have not used marijuana but have used other illicit drugs

Table 20. Illicit Drug Use by Non-Marijuana Users, by Age (2006)

	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	*TOTAL*
				Population (in 1000s)				
Used Illicit Drugs But Not Marijuana	**472**	**627**	**494**	**756**	**1,338**	**2,121**	**4,262**	**10,068**
				Percentage of Population				
Cocaine	0.6%	1.9%	3.8%	8.4%	18.2%	19.1%	15.0%	13.8%
"Crack"	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	1.7%	2.7%	5.6%	3.2%
Ecstasy	0.5%	2.8%	2.2%	6.4%	7.0%	4.3%	0.6%	2.9%
Hallucinogens	3.5%	5.6%	5.0%	10.6%	10.9%	7.4%	2.1%	5.5%
Heroin	0.0%	0.7%	0.2%	0.8%	1.1%	3.6%	0.6%	1.3%
Inhalants	58.1%	42.8%	24.1%	8.3%	2.5%	6.3%	2.1%	9.7%
LSD	1.0%	0.7%	0.5%	0.9%	0.7%	1.1%	0.3%	0.6%
Methamphetamine	3.6%	2.7%	2.0%	4.5%	7.2%	8.2%	5.3%	5.7%
Oxycontin	0.2%	2.0%	3.3%	2.5%	5.5%	2.4%	3.3%	3.1%
Pain Relievers	44.7%	54.1%	58.2%	68.5%	62.0%	62.3%	67.1%	63.2%
PCP	0.4%	1.7%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	1.4%	0.0%	0.5%
Any Pschotherapeutics	52.5%	61.4%	77.4%	82.3%	80.6%	82.7%	85.5%	80.6%
Sedatives	4.8%	2.7%	2.7%	1.6%	3.9%	5.2%	5.6%	4.6%
Stimulants	9.6%	8.8%	14.1%	10.4%	15.6%	13.1%	11.4%	12.1%
Tranquilizers	4.4%	6.7%	12.8%	11.0%	20.6%	23.3%	20.0%	18.2%

33% have used alcohol and 24% have used tobacco. Of the 14- and 15-year-olds in this group 47% have used alcohol and 31% have used tobacco. Of the 16- and 17-year-olds who have not used marijuana but have used illegal drugs 57% have used alcohol and 39% have used tobacco.

Marijuana use by teenagers remains a serious problem. However, marijuana use is not the primary drug problem nor is it the primary cause of teenage drug problems. The use of powerful and dangerous drugs precedes marijuana use and even occurs in the absence of marijuana use. The illegality of marijuana use results in exposure of teens to far more dangerous substances. Access to powerful, dangerous, addictive pain relief drugs and the use of inhalants by 12- to 15-year-olds is a significant public health issue, for example, that is often obscured by the government's longstanding characterization of marijuana as the nation's primary illegal drug problem.

Table 21. Prior Alcohol and Tobacco Use by Illicit Drug Users Who Have Never Used Marijuana (Annual—2006)

	Alcohol	Tobacco
12-13 Years Old	32.8%	24.3%
14-15 Years Old	47.4%	31.4%
16-17 Years Old	57.5%	39.0%
18-20 Years Old	48.7%	32.0%
21-25 Years Old	30.8%	22.2%
26-34 Years Old	26.2%	19.8%
35 or Older	26.0%	20.6%
TOTAL	31.6%	23.3%

Table 22. Illicit Drug Use by Marijuana Users, by Age (2006)

	12-13 Years Old	14-15 Years Old	16-17 Years Old	18-20 Years Old	21-25 Years Old	26-34 Years Old	35 or Older	*TOTAL*
				Population (in 1000s)				
Used Illicit Drugs And Marijuana	102	443	989	2,036	2,484	2,284	2,488	10,827
				Percentage of Population				
Cocaine	0.2%	3.7%	4.7%	6.1%	5.4%	9.0%	24.3%	10.4%
"Crack"	5.7%	16.9%	30.5%	42.8%	41.0%	52.9%	50.3%	43.7%
Ecstasy	5.0%	15.0%	22.1%	27.3%	21.6%	15.9%	4.8%	17.2%
Hallucinogens	18.9%	31.6%	40.7%	46.9%	38.9%	30.0%	10.2%	31.6%
Heroin	1.4%	2.2%	1.9%	3.3%	2.6%	5.3%	5.5%	3.9%
Inhalants	65.7%	39.1%	21.0%	14.2%	6.2%	7.4%	6.1%	11.2%
LSD	4.8%	5.7%	6.9%	9.0%	6.8%	6.1%	1.4%	5.8%
Methamphetamine	3.9%	9.1%	10.5%	9.3%	9.0%	13.9%	19.7%	12.6%
Oxycontin	8.1%	14.7%	10.1%	11.8%	9.4%	5.7%	6.7%	8.7%
Pain Relievers	53.7%	60.3%	65.8%	60.4%	59.3%	49.8%	45.5%	54.9%
PCP	3.8%	3.2%	1.7%	2.2%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	1.3%
Any Psychotherapeutics	62.0%	73.0%	76.2%	73.1%	74.9%	65.9%	67.6%	70.9%
Sedatives	0.7%	5.3%	2.6%	2.4%	2.5%	3.1%	6.4%	3.6%
Stimulants	9.5%	24.0%	22.5%	22.3%	20.5%	15.7%	17.1%	19.3%
Tranquilizers	12.1%	23.3%	26.4%	31.2%	31.3%	24.5%	24.9%	27.4%

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