

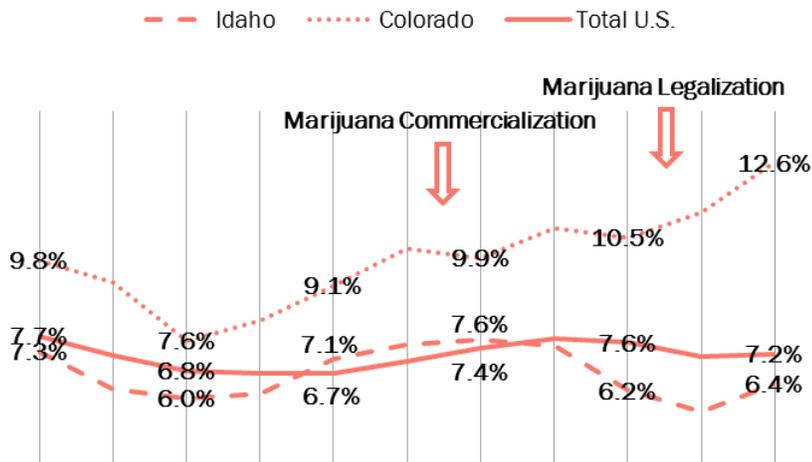
The Truth about Marijuana

Fact Sheet, 2016



Marijuana Legalization is Associated with Increased Use

Past Month Marijuana Usage, Ages 12-17

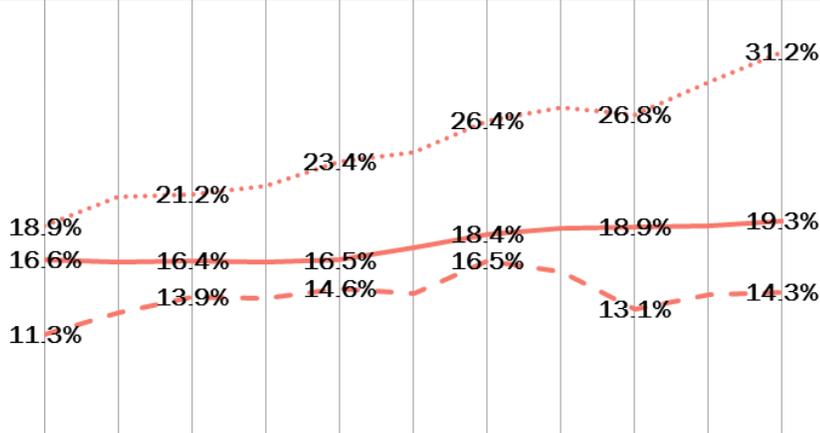


The top 20 states with the highest rates of marijuana usage among youth aged 12-17 have legalized “medical” or recreational marijuana.²⁵

Colorado now leads the country in past month marijuana usage among all age groups.²⁵

Past month marijuana usage in Colorado for 12-17 year olds is 75% higher than the national average.²⁵

Past Month Marijuana Usage, Ages 18-25



In 2013-2014, Washington state ranked 6th in the nation for highest use among youth aged 12-17. Other states that have since legalized marijuana occupy 4th place (District of Columbia) and 5th place (Oregon).²⁵

States with “medical marijuana” laws occupy 2nd and 3rd place (Vermont and Rhode Island, respectively).²⁵

Since 2010-2011, past year marijuana usage among Coloradans has increased from 16.2% to 20.7% in 2013-2014.²⁵

Past Month Marijuana Usage, Ages 26+



2003-2004 2005-2006 2007-2008 2009-2010 2011-2012 2013-2014

According to a **WIC study** in Colorado, **35.8%** reported using marijuana **during** their most recent **pregnancy**, **41.1%** of mothers said they used marijuana after pregnancy, and **13.7%** said they used marijuana while breastfeeding.¹⁴

Marijuana is Harmful

- » Between 1999 and 2010, the percentage of fatally injured drivers testing positive for marijuana **almost tripled**.⁹
- » Smoking marijuana results in approximately **5 times** the carbon monoxide concentration, **3 times** the tar, and the retention of **one-third more** tar in the respiratory tract than tobacco smoke.^{8,21,26,28}
- » Marijuana use is linked to **depression, schizophrenia, suicidal thoughts, and paranoia**.²⁰
- » Marijuana has been shown to **significantly impact** brain structure. People who smoke marijuana recreationally, meaning fewer times than once a week, **develop differences** in the shape of brain structures responsible for **learning, reward, fear, addiction, decision-making, and emotional reactions**.¹⁷
- » Approximately **9%** of people who use marijuana will become addicted.¹⁰ The risk of addiction for marijuana is **5-6 times higher** for individuals that begin using before age 14.¹⁹
- » In 2013, **49.3%** of Idahoans entering publically funded treatment for marijuana, primarily, were between the ages of **12 and 17**.¹³

The potency of seized marijuana has more than **tripled** in 20 years.²²

Marijuana Legalization is Harmful

- » Since 2013, the number of explosions in Colorado from marijuana concentrates has **almost tripled**.²³
- » In Colorado one year after retail marijuana sales, marijuana-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations **increased 29% and 38%**, respectively.²³

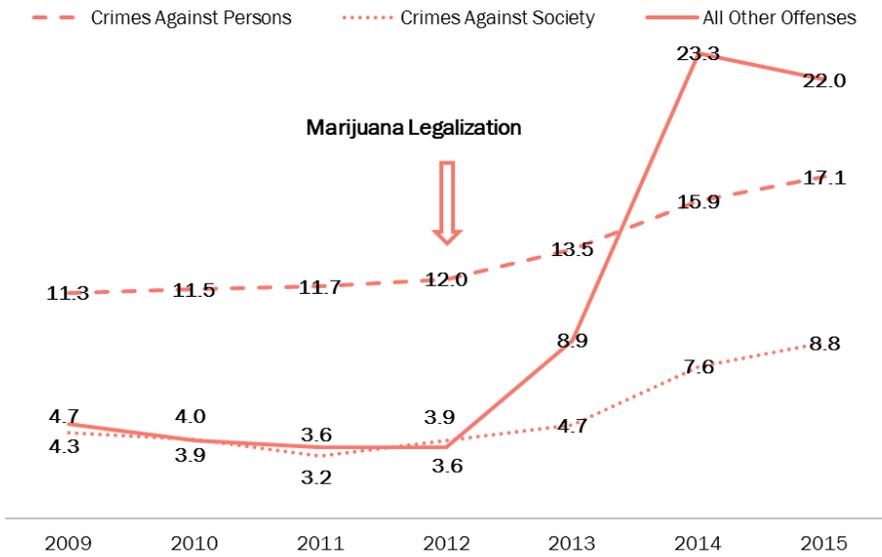
Legal Marijuana Does NOT Eliminate the Black Market

- » Marijuana legalization provides an opportunity for¹²:
 - ◇ Fraudulent physician recommendations
 - ◇ Underage sales
 - ◇ Reselling legal marijuana to the black market
 - ◇ Profit-making (dispensaries are non-profit)
 - ◇ Having more marijuana than the allotted amount
- » **40%** of marijuana consumed in Colorado is sold illegally.¹¹
- » “In Colorado, **more than 70%** of doctor recommendations were written by fewer than **15 physicians**.¹²”

“Illegal drug dealers are simply **hiding in plain sight**, attempting to use the legalized market as a cover.¹²”

Legalizing Marijuana Does NOT Reduce Crime

Crime per 1,000 Population, Denver (2009-2015)



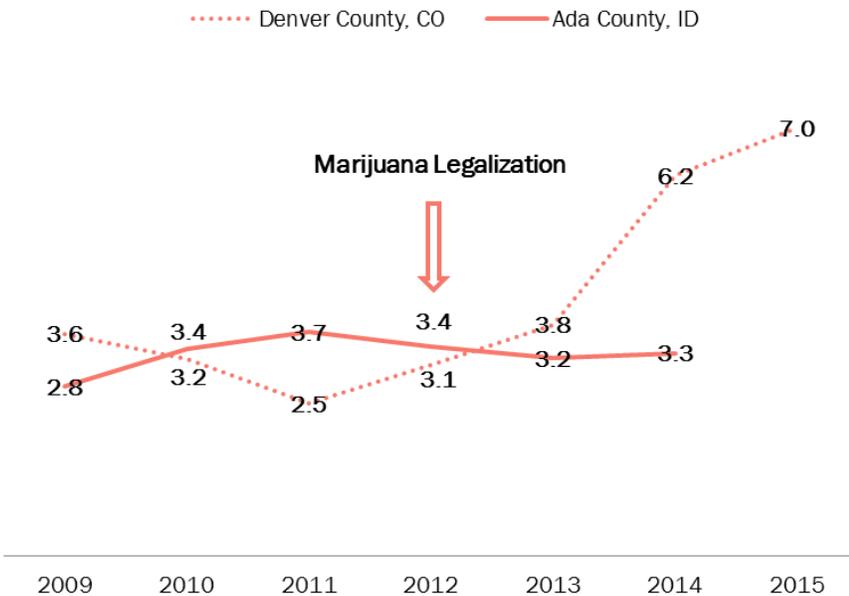
Crimes against persons[†] increased by **46%** from 2011 to 2015.^{16,27}

Crime against society[‡] increased by **175%** from 2011 to 2015.^{16,27}

All Other Offenses[§] increased by more than **5-fold** from 2011 to 2015.^{16,27}

Before marijuana legalization, Ada County, Idaho, and Denver County, Colorado, had similar rates of drug/narcotic violations.^{16,18,27*}

Drug/Narcotic Violations per 1,000 Population, Ada County and Denver County (2009-2015)



Between 2011 and 2015, Denver's rate of drug/narcotic arrest **almost tripled**.^{16,27}

The El Paso Intelligence Center National Seizure System reported **greater than 6-fold increase** in highway interdictions resulting in seizures of Colorado marijuana from 2008 to 2014.²³

Since marijuana commercialization, the rate of marijuana trafficking arrests in Idaho have **more than tripled**.²⁴

*Data are adjusted for estimated population size²⁷ in Denver during the corresponding years. The U.S. Census Bureau's estimate for 2014 population size was also used for 2015, due to the unavailability of population estimates for 2015 at this time.

[†]Crimes against persons include murder, aggravated assault, forcible sex offenses, non-forcible sex offenses, kidnapping/abduction, simple assault, and intimidation.¹⁶

[‡]Crimes against society include drug/narcotics violations, gambling, child pornography, prostitution, and weapon law violations.¹⁶

[§]Other Offenses include fraud, curfew, disorderly conduct/disturbing the peace, non-violent family offenses, liquor law/drunkenness, other sex offenses, violation of a restraining order/court order, harassment, criminal trespassing, all other offenses.¹⁶

Medical Organizations Do NOT Endorse Marijuana Legalization

American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine
 “The AOAAM is concerned by the current trend of state law legalizing the prescribing of “medical marijuana” as it is an illegal substance at a federal level and there is no standardized dosing or mechanism of administration.⁶”

American Academy of Ophthalmology
 “. . . the American Academy of Ophthalmology Complementary Therapy Task Force finds no scientific evidence demonstrating increased benefit and/or diminished risk of marijuana use in the treatment of glaucoma compared with the wide variety of pharmaceutical agents now available.⁴”

The American Epilepsy Society
 “AES’s call for rescheduling is not an endorsement of the legalization of marijuana, but is a recognition that current restriction on the use of medical marijuana for research continue to stand in the way of scientifically rigorous research into the development of cannabinoid-based treatments.³”

The American Academy of Pediatrics
 “The AAP opposes legalization of marijuana because of the potential harms to children and adolescents.¹⁵”

American Society of Addiction Medicine
 “ASAM does not support the legalization of marijuana and recommends that jurisdictions that have not acted to legalize marijuana be most cautious and not adopt a policy of legalization until more can be learned from the “natural experiments” now underway in jurisdictions that have legalized marijuana. ⁷”

The American Medical Association
 “This should not be viewed as an endorsement of state-based medical cannabis programs, the legalization of marijuana, or that scientific evidence on the therapeutic use of cannabis meets the current standards for a prescription drug product.⁵”

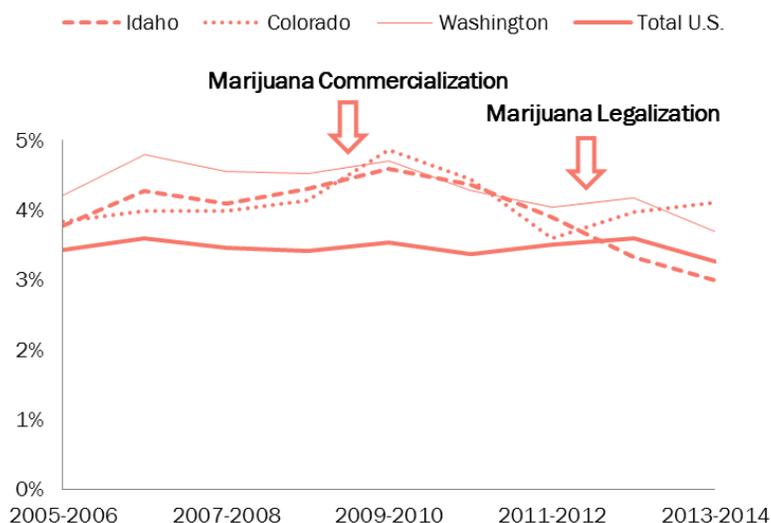
The American Academy of Family Physicians
 “The AAFP also recognizes that some states have passed laws approving the medical use of marijuana; the AAFP does not endorse such laws.¹”

American Cancer Society
 “The ACS does not advocate the use of inhaled marijuana or the legalization of marijuana.²”

Legalizing Marijuana Does NOT Reduce Prescription Drug Abuse

- » Colorado ranked **2nd in the nation** for past year nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers, **up from 16th** in 2011. Colorado ranked **3rd, 7th, and 1st** for the nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers among individuals 12-17, 18-25, and 26 and over, respectively.²⁵

Past Year Nonmedical Use of Prescription Pain Relievers, Ages 26+



- » Nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers among adults 26 and over **increased after commercialization and legalization in Colorado.**²⁵
- » Since marijuana legalization in Colorado, the percentage individuals 26 and older reporting the nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers **increased by 14%**. During the same time frame, past year nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers **decreased by 26% in Idaho.**²⁵

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