



An Introduction to Adolescent Substance Use

Partnership for Awareness

October 25, 2021

Lorena Velasquez & Nancy Hernández

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the most commonly used substances among youth
- Identify at least 3 reasons why youth engage in substance use
- Learn different ways to reduce the harm caused by substance use
- Discuss effective strategies to prevent use and motivate change



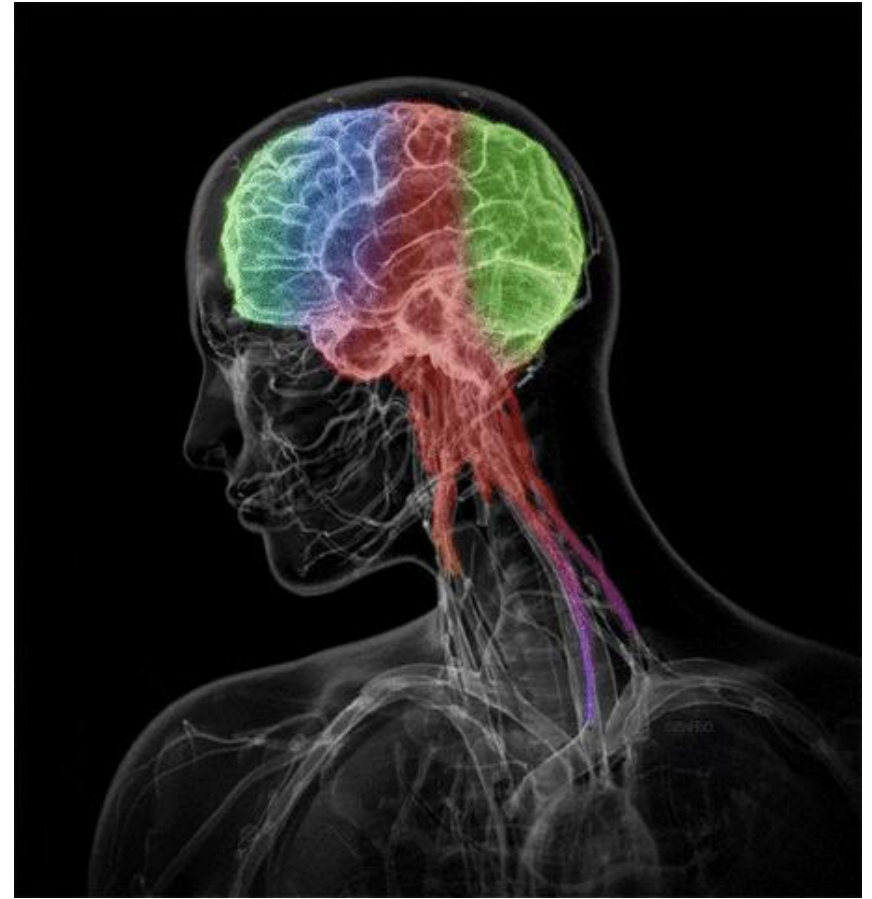
Jay Z: "The War on Drugs is an Epic Fail" <https://youtu.be/Kk1ioyjMZZY>

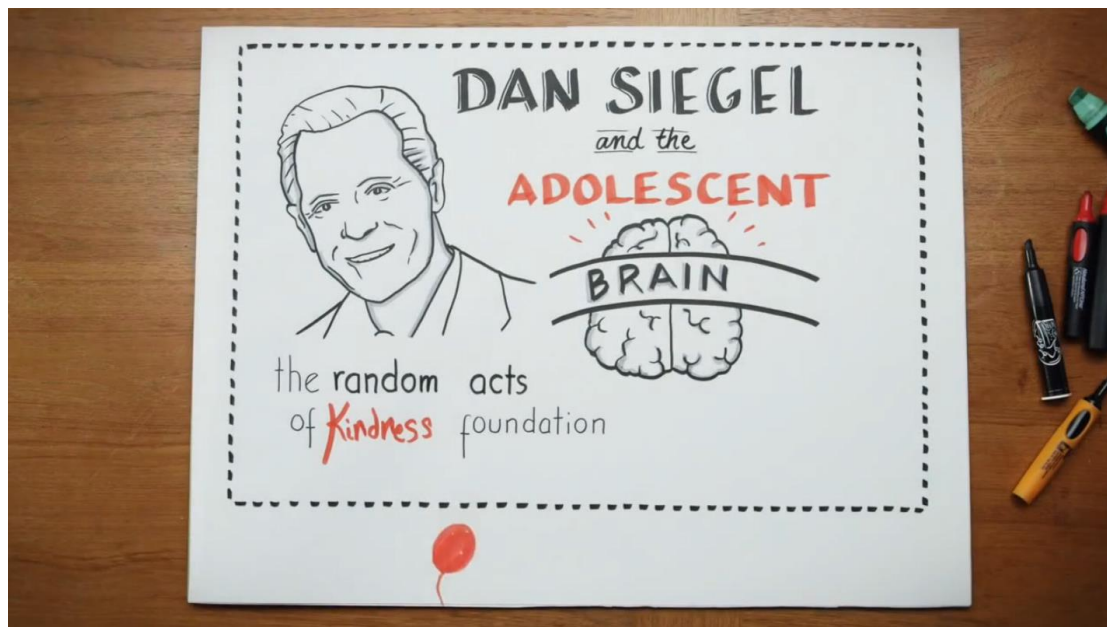
WHY DO YOUTH USE ANYWAY?

- Experimentation
- Depression, anxiety or other mental health problems
- Inability to cope with trauma
- Stress
- Isolation
- Increased dependence and/or desire for it
- Life transitions
- Bolster self-esteem and reduce isolation
- Peer pressure
- Influenced by media



- Openness to new experiences VS. Risk taking behaviors/impulsiveness
- Increased dopamine release
- Pre-frontal cortex/frontal lobe-
Development of differentiation between short-term and long-term consequences.





<https://vimeo.com/191398666>

Adolescents experience 2 **major** brain activities:

- Pruning: leads to specialization of the brain; becomes what your most passionate about (ex. “Use it or lose it”).
- Myelination: leads to neurons ability to send messages 100x faster and connections are more effective. (ex. *Express lane on fwy*)
- An integrated brain is **key** to the wellbeing of our youth
 - Can be practiced with mindsight/mindfulness exercises (ex. empathy and insight)
- Risk taking/impulsiveness vs. Openness to new experiences
- Increased dopamine release
 - feels good!
- Pre-frontal cortex/frontal lobe development
 - judgement & forecasting in progress.

- ES - emotional spark, a powerful passion to live life fully
- SE - social engagement, central importance of supportive relationships in our lives
- N - novelty, having the courage to leave the familiar, certain, and safe home nest
- CE - creative exploration, imagining how things could be, not simply accepting them for what they are

Types of Trauma

- Complex
- Community
- Domestic Violence
- Early Childhood
- And more

Seen Years After Events Occurred and Affects How Someone Interprets Events

- “It is what it is”
- “Why do bad things always happen to me?”
- No response

Having Triggers They Might Not Be Aware Of

- Desensitized
- Extreme reactions

Adverse and Unhealthy Coping Skills

- Irritable or easily agitated
- Avoiding topics, places, people, or things
- Using substances



A DRINK IS A DRINK IS A DRINK

A STANDARD DRINK IS EQUAL TO 14.0 GRAMS (0.6 OUNCES) OF PURE ALCOHOL. THAT EQUALS:



12 OZ
BEER



5 OZ
WINE



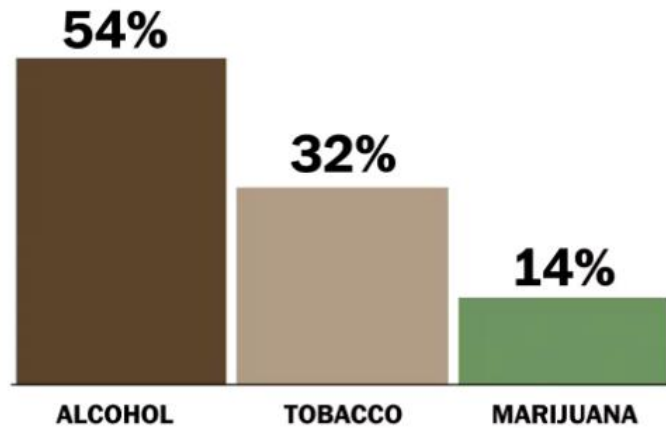
1.5 OZ
SHOT

- Short-term consequences: More sociable, more relaxed, decreased anxiety, impaired judgment, impaired memory, impaired coordination, risky sexual behavior, alcohol poisoning

*Center for Disease Control website : <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm>

Alcohol: the true gateway drug

First drug of use, among 12th graders who had ever used alcohol, tobacco or marijuana:



“people who are more vulnerable to drug-taking are simply more likely to start with readily available substances such as marijuana, tobacco, or alcohol”

WAPO.ST/WONKBLOG

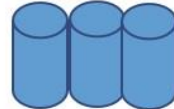
Source: Prioritizing Alcohol Prevention: Establishing Alcohol as the Gateway Drug and Linking Age of First Drink With Illicit Drug Use

- 72% of youth report getting alcohol w/o paying for it
 - Family members
 - Parties
 - Taking it without permission





Estimated binge drinking levels for youth

Boys		Girls	
Ages 9-13		3 drinks	
Ages 14-15		4 drinks	Ages 9-17 
Ages 16+		5 drinks	

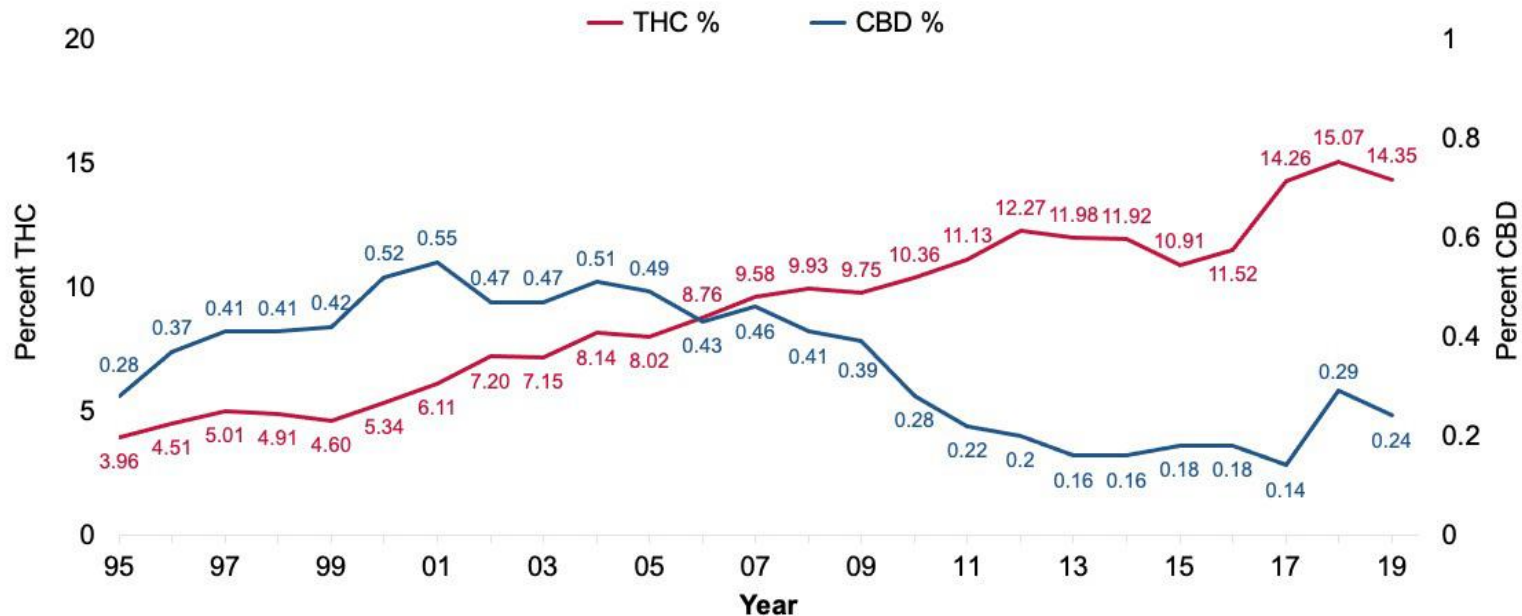
Alcohol Screening and brief intervention for Youth, A Practitioners Guide. (2015, October). Retrieved from <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Practitioner/YouthGuide/YouthGuide.pdf>

- Youth drink less often than adults do, when they do drink, they drink more amounts of alcohol.
- Youth consume more than 90% of their alcohol by binge drinking.

MARIJUANA/CANNABIS



Percentage of THC and CBD in cannabis samples seized by the DEA from 1995-2019



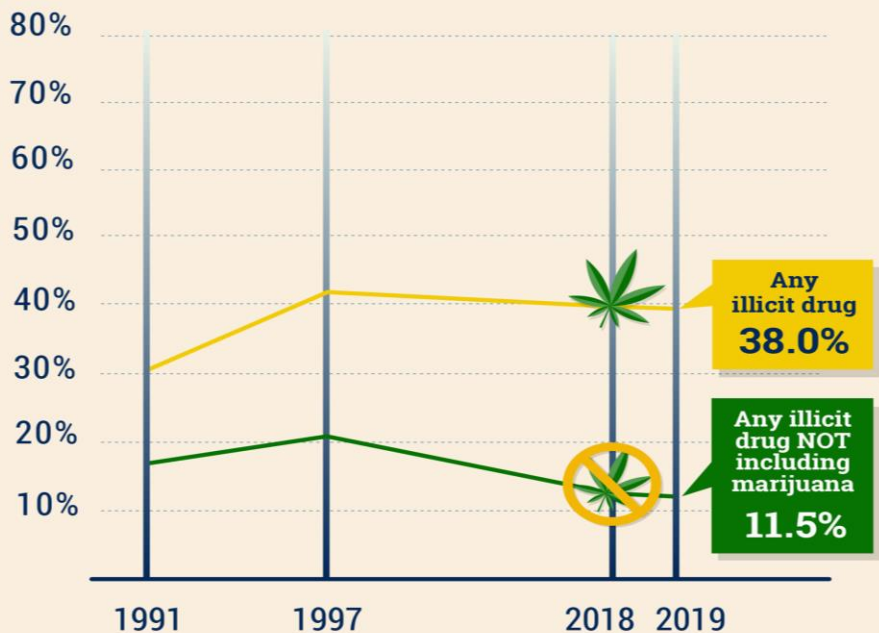
- Euphoria, Slowed thinking, Confusion, Impaired balance, Frequent respiratory infection, Panic attacks, Impaired memory and learning, Increased heart rate

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/marijuana/marijuana-potency>

ILLICIT DRUG USE

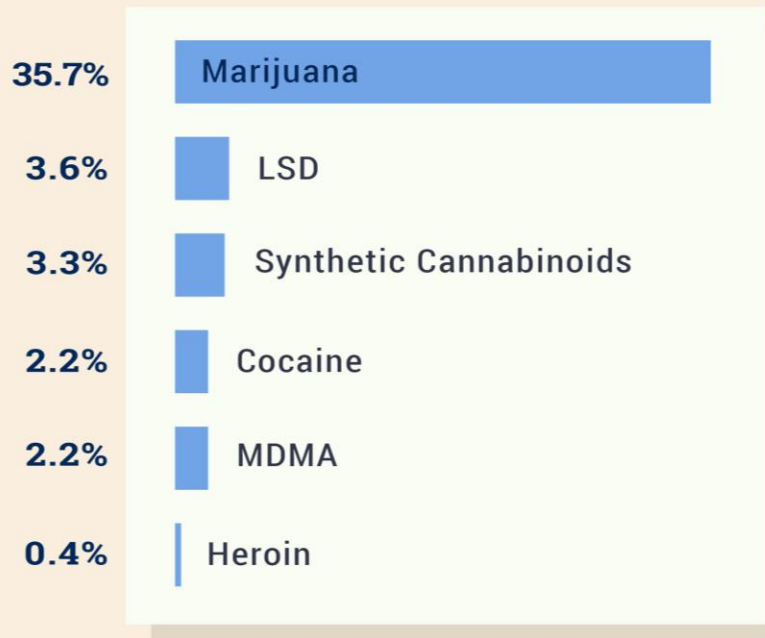
ILLICIT DRUG USE STEADY

Past year use among 12th graders



PAST YEAR ILLICIT DRUG USE

Past year use among 12th graders



National Institute
on Drug Abuse

DRUGABUSE.GOV

CANNABIS PARAPHERNALIA



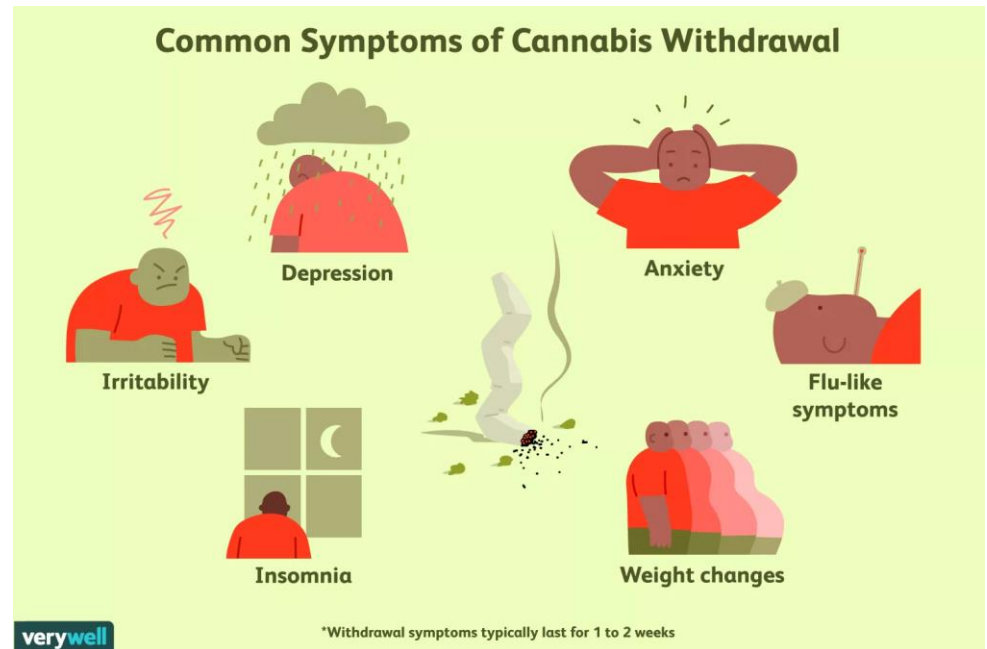
- The major difference is in the absorption of the [edible] product into the blood stream.
THC IS METABOLIZED IN YOUR SYSTEM !
- Smoking: peak blood levels happen within 3-10 minutes
Eating: 1-3 hours
 - Note that both are about a 3X difference, but most users are willing to wait 10 minutes, not 3 hours before re-using.

! Because there can be an hours-long lag before experiencing the high, you might accidentally consume an overdose amount while waiting.



Research shows that people who regularly smoke marijuana have **withdrawal** symptoms:

- Cravings
- Lower appetite
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Stomach pain
- Aggression and anxiety



Smoking marijuana hurts your ability to ...

- **Concentrate**
- **React quickly**
- **Remember what you learned**
- **Focus on assignments or commitments**
- **Do things that require coordination**



- Delta-8 THC is a cannabinoid that's found in small traces in hemp and cannabis
- Extremely popular due to similarity with Delta 9
- Found at CBD stores, convenience stores, gas stations, online sales, weed and vape shops, (“hemp products”)
- No prescription necessary
- 21 years old



E-Cigarette, or Vaping, Products



The Evolution of E-Cigarette, or Vaping, Products



1st
GENERATION

Disposable
e-cigarettes



2nd
GENERATION

E-cigarettes
with pre-filled
or refillable
cartridge



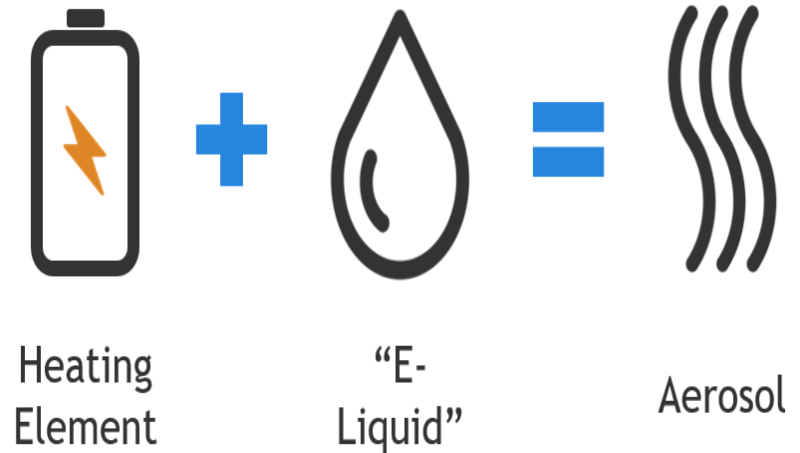
3rd
GENERATION

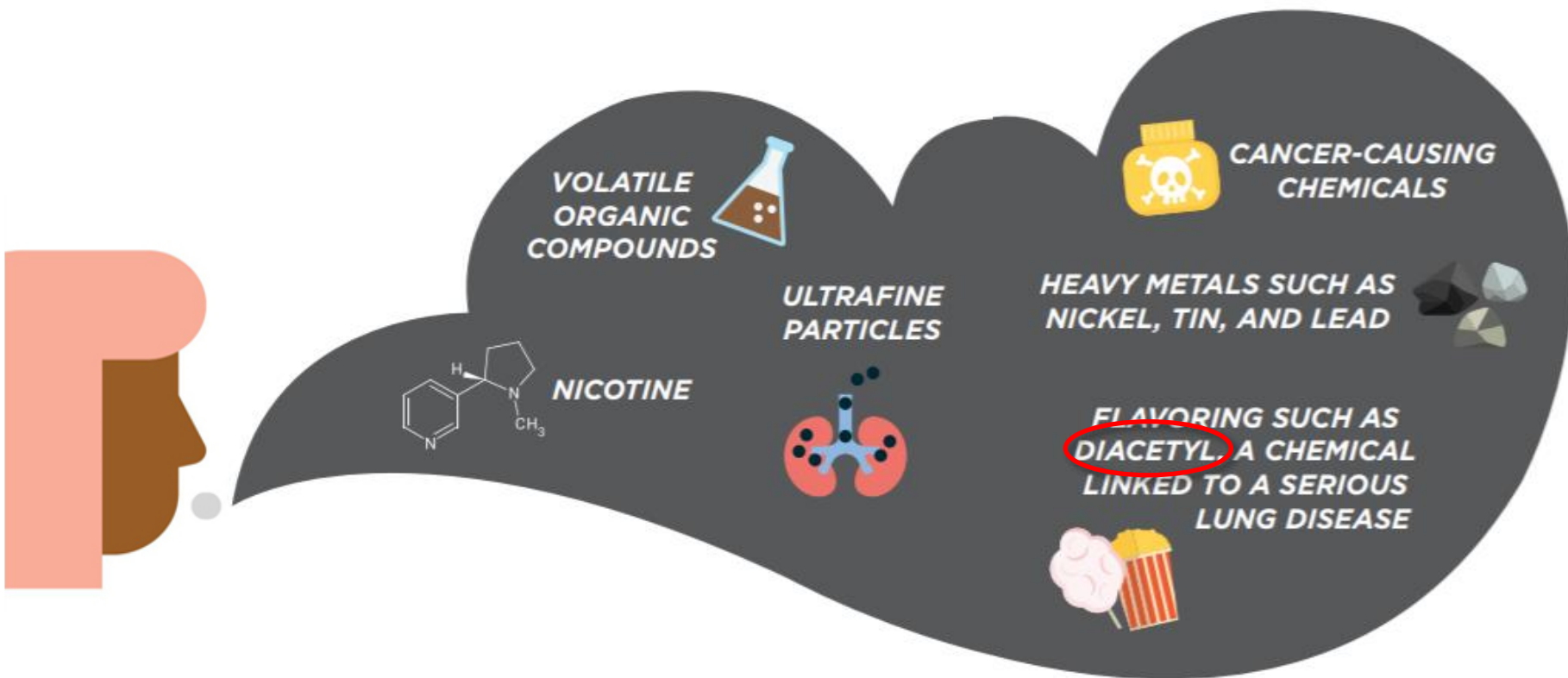
Tanks or Mods
(refillable)



4th
GENERATION

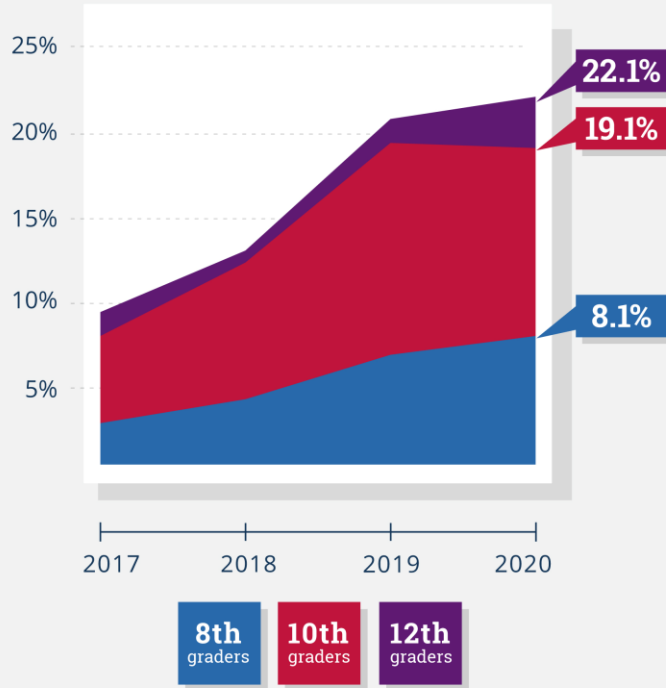
Pod Mods
(pre-filled or
refillable)



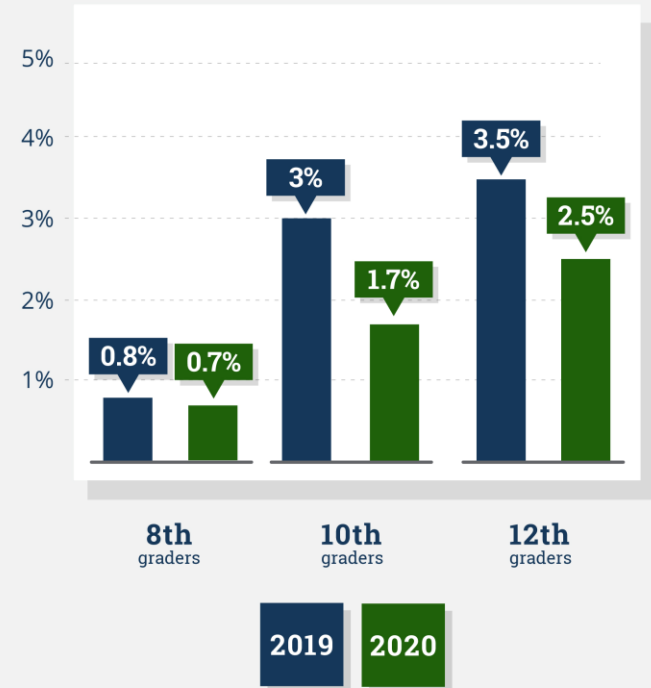


Past-Year Marijuana Vaping Holds Steady

Past-Year Marijuana Vaping

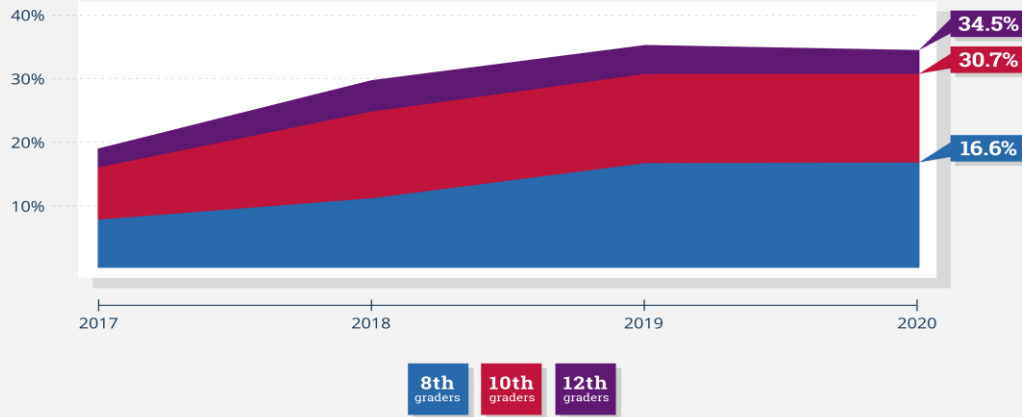


Daily or Near-Daily Marijuana Vaping Decreases Significantly Among 10th Graders

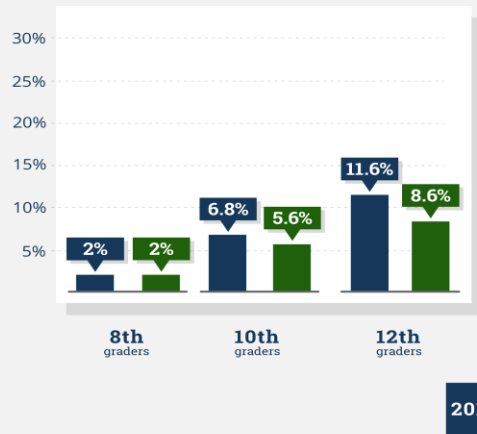


Surge of Nicotine Vaping Levels Off, but Remains High

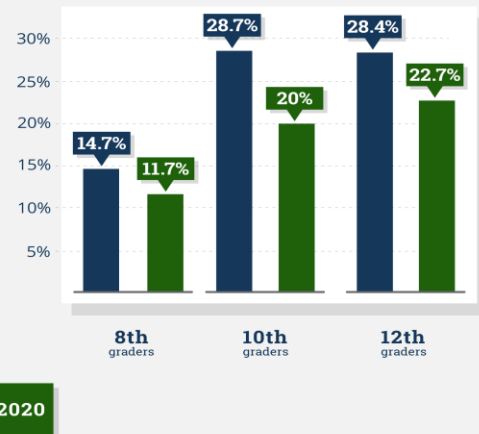
Past-Year Nicotine Vaping Held Steady



Daily or Near-Daily Nicotine Vaping



Past-Year JUUL Use Dropped Significantly Among Older Grades





World's
Greatest Stretch



Seated Thoracic
Extension



The W



Standing
Cat-Cow



Wrist Stretch



Wall Lay



The Hinge



Standing Hip
Flexor Stretch

SHAPE



Q: What is **misuse** and **abuse** of prescription drugs?

- **Misuse:** When a person does not follow recommendations for example, if instructions for pain is to take 1 but he or she takes 2.
- When a person takes a medication not prescribed to him or her to get relief.

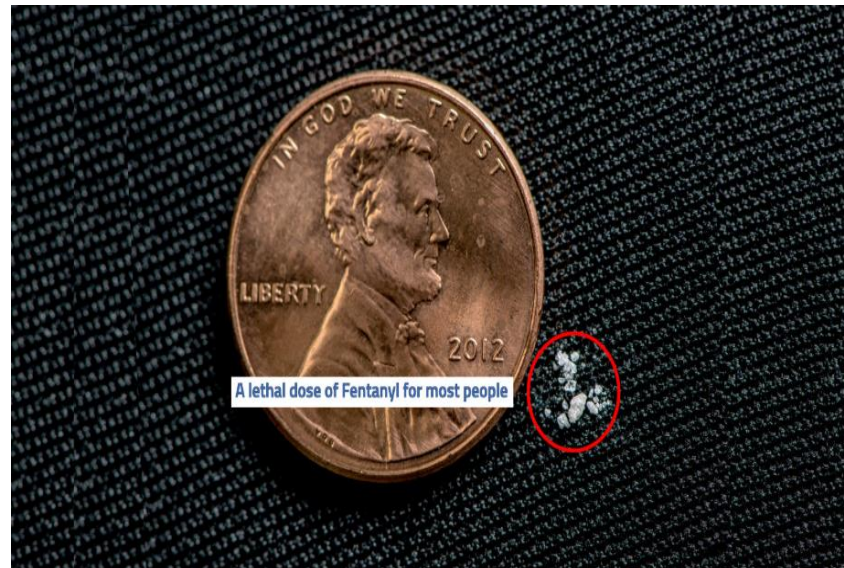
➤ **Abuse:** When a person takes a legal medication for any other reason other than it's intended purpose.

Example: To get high, to sell, or combine with alcohol to get higher effects.

- Commonly misused/abused prescription meds:
 - Opioids—pain relievers like Vicodin, OxyContin, or codeine (LEAN)
 - Depressants—like those used to relieve anxiety or help a person sleep, such as Valium or Xanax
 - Stimulants—like those used for treating attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), such as Adderall and Ritalin



- Synthetic opioid-100x more potent than morphine
- Sold as powder
- Counterfeit pills
- Most common drugs involved in overdose death in U.S.



- Signs of overdose:

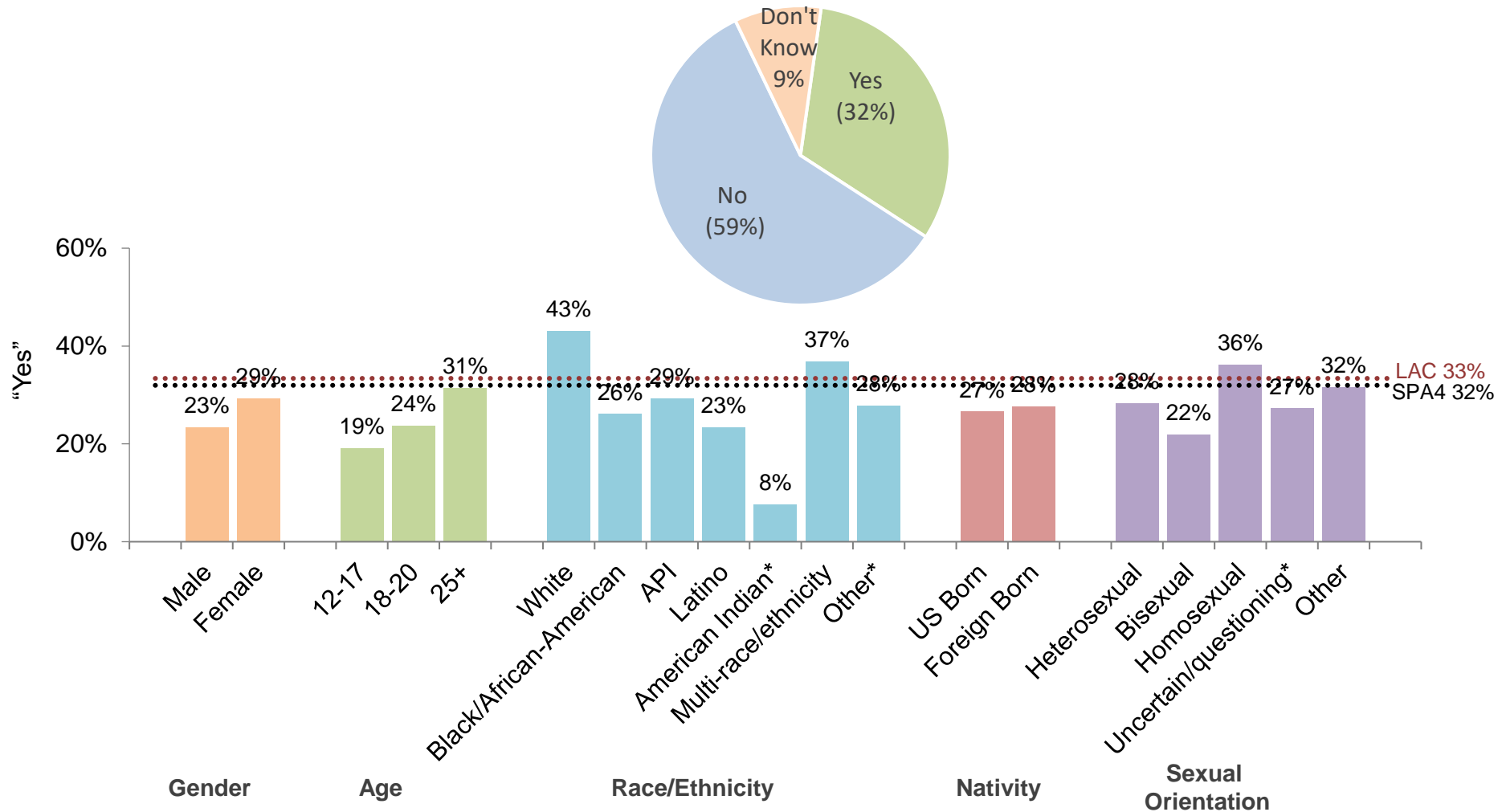
- Sedation or loss of consciousness
- Decreased respiratory rate
- Shallow breaths
- Constricted (pinpoint) pupils



- Treatment of an overdose:

- Naloxone - a short-acting opioid antagonist, and airway management
- Emergency care

Do you currently have unused or expired (left-over) prescription medications where you live?



*Sample size ≤ 5. Interpret with caution.



SUBSTANCE USE
PREVENTION AND
TREATMENT PROGRAM



KOREATOWN YOUTH +
COMMUNITY CENTER



National Rx Take Back Day

Saturday, October 23, 2021

10 am - 2 pm

In partnership with Los Angeles Police Department
- Northeast Police Station and KYCC

3353 N San Fernando Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90065



- Dilated pupils
- Lost Sense of time
- Coordination is off
- Visine, rolling papers, pipes, bong, pill bottles, incense, mouth wash, air fresheners, etc.
- A sudden change in friends
- Signs of depression or isolation from the family/peers
- A sudden drop in academic performance
- No longer participates in activities they used to find very enjoyable and rewarding



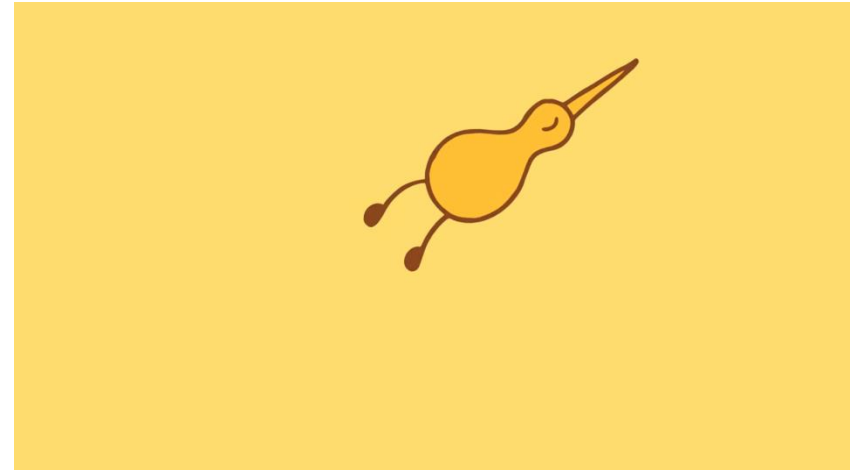
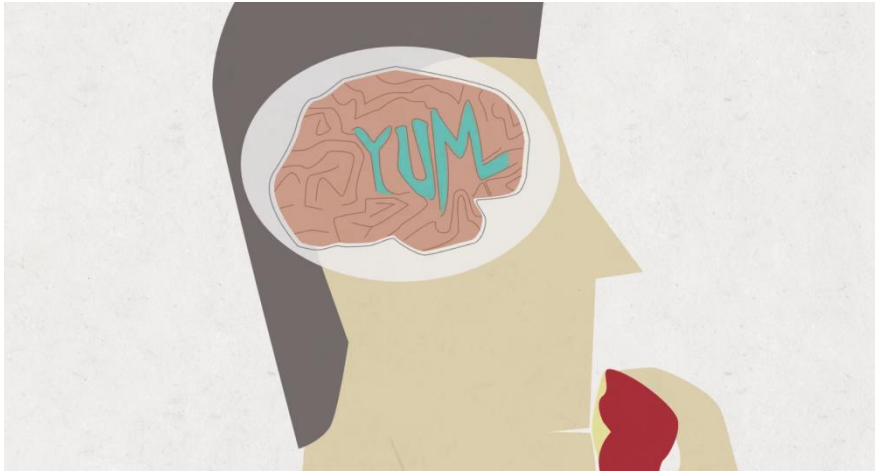
- Change in mood: changes in mood is normal in adolescents, but it is important to pay close attention to extreme changes in mood.
- Secretive Behavior: If your child becomes much more reserved in terms of his/her activities and with their belongings.
- Change in school habits: Is your child skipping class? Are they suddenly failing a class?

“They’re making a choice to keep smoking...they can stop whenever they want to”



“Understanding Addiction as a Disease(Wait 21)”

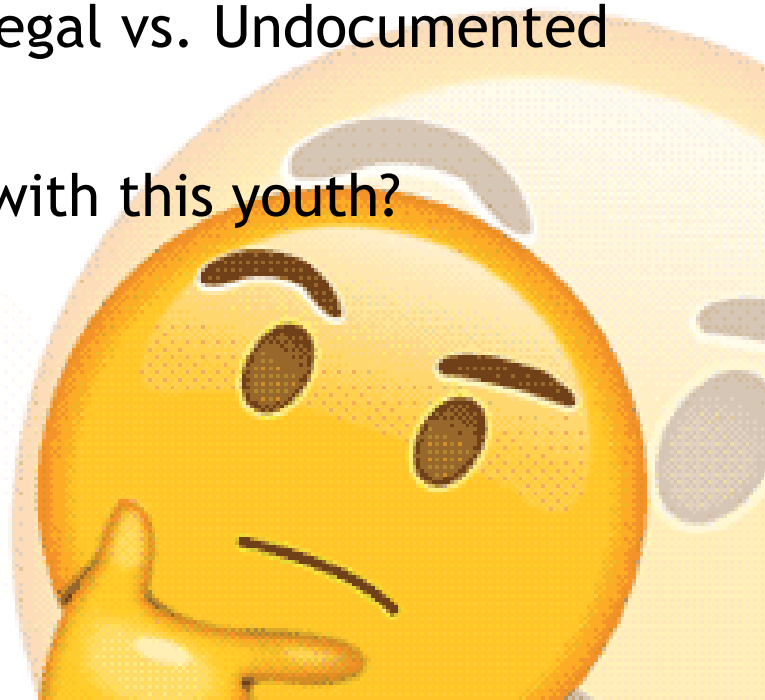
<https://youtu.be/-w8n9UOiBxE>



“Nuggets”

<https://youtu.be/HUngLgGRJpo>

- Why does it affect the way we treat youth?
- Kid vs. Youth; Addict vs. User; Illegal vs. Undocumented
- Are you the right person to talk with this youth?



“It’s time to change how we view addiction.
Not as a moral failing but as a chronic illness
that must be treated with
skill,
urgency
& compassion.

The way we address this crisis is a test for America.”

- Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, Surgeon General, Nov 2016

WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?


A different way of dealing with issues because we understand that things are not black and white (we know things get complicated).

- Gives everyone a *voice*
- Gives people a chance to see the *impact* of their actions
- A way to *repair* the harm
- An opportunity to *learn* from the mistake to not do it again



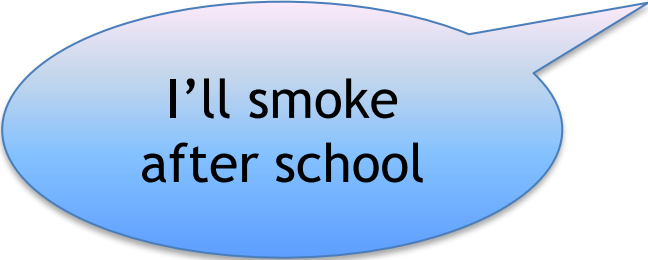
- Harm Reduction vs. Abstinence

- Safer use
- Managed use
- Abstinence



Eat. Drink water. Designated driver.
Trusted adult.
Be with friends.
Watch your drink.
Listen to your gut.

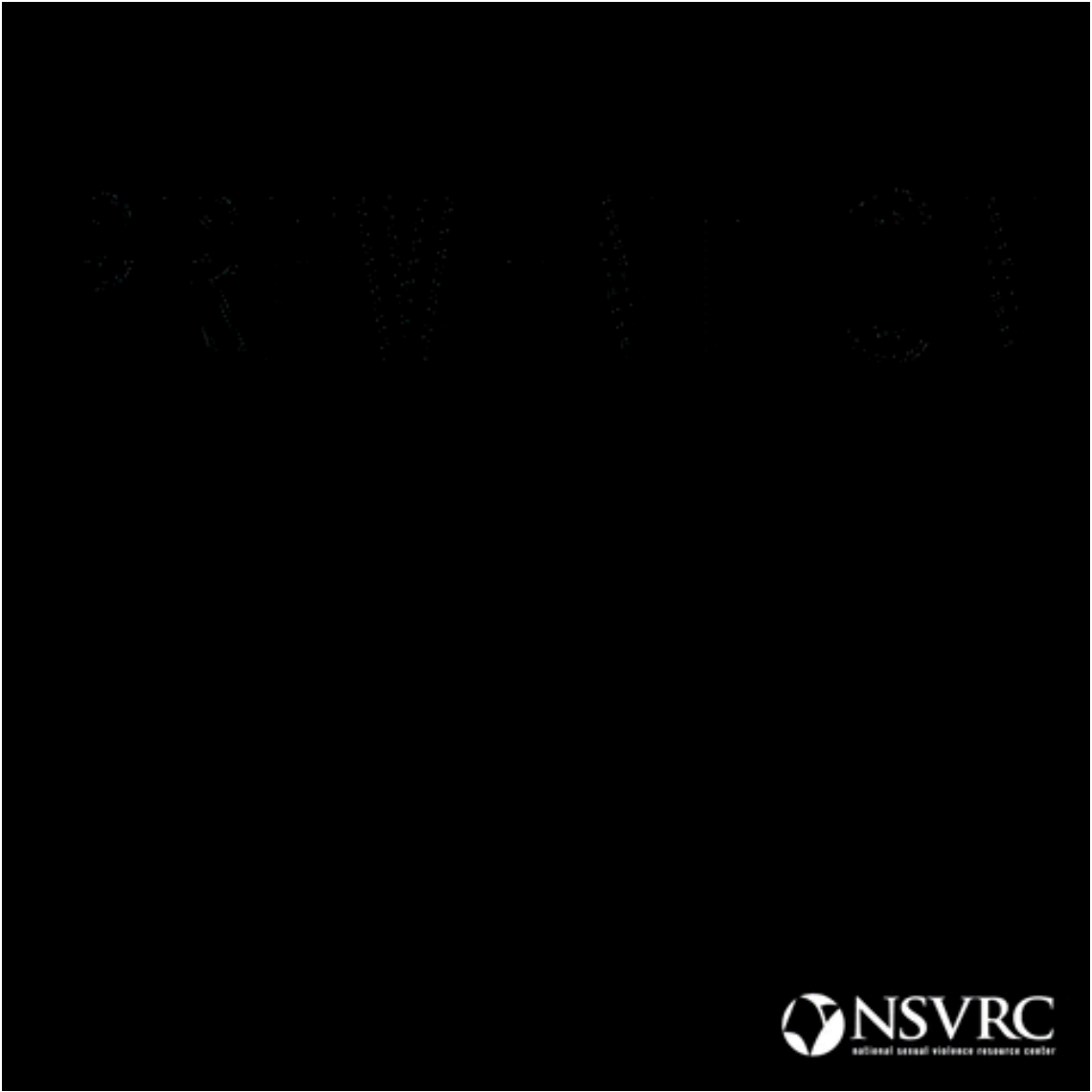
- Youth is in control: “Meet them where they’re at”
 - Youth defines the goals...not the provider



I'll smoke
after school

- Reducing risk by switching from a more harmful substance (crystal) to less a harmful substance (marijuana).
- Changing the mode of use such as smoking instead of injecting.
- Changing when they use, not using before or during school.
- Using less or using less often.
- Understanding triggers and trying to minimize





Risk Factor

- Lack of parental/caregiver involvement
- Child abuse & maltreatment (ongoing and/or history of it)
- Inadequate supervision
- Neighborhood poverty & violence
- Aggressive and/or violent behaviors
- Poor or negative image of the self
- Trauma

Protectors

- “Family” involvement (chosen or by blood)
- Involvement in community and/or afterschool programs
- Limited availability to AOD
- Environments that encourage positive change to:
 - Learn new coping skills
 - Learn emotional regulation
 - Encourages positive views of the self

LISTEN TO & VALIDATE YOUTH

- Listen: The key to communicate effectively with your children is to be a good listener AND validate.
- With adolescents, it is important to have free time to listen, especially when they are in the mood to talk.
- Have free time. Set an agenda where you have time to be with your children. This is an important factor in establishing good communication with your child.





<https://youtu.be/C8AHODc6phg>

- **Los Angeles County Substance Abuse Service Helpline SASH:**
(844) 804-7500
 - Toll-free for both youth and adults
 - Open 24/7/365
 - Screening and referral services
- **Crisis Text Line**
 - Text **CONNECT** to 741741
 - Available 24/7
 - Live, trained Crisis Counselor receives text
- **California Youth Crisis Line - (800) 843-5200**



THANK YOU