



August 14, 2024

Hi Kid Champion,

One Chance To Grow Up has carefully monitored Colorado youth marijuana statistics to educate and inform parents, trusted adults, and policymakers. The Healthy Kids Colorado Survey is a sample of middle and high school students from Colorado taken every two years on several topics important to understanding youth behaviors. The survey is voluntary and anonymous and this year 120,236 students from 344 schools were surveyed. Some schools elected to survey all their students to get a full picture of their school's population, which we find very encouraging. Here are a few takeaways from the [2023 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey](#).

Did you know...

The good news:

Comparing 2021 to 2023 - High School and Middle school use -There was no significant change in the percentage of students who reported they have "Ever Used Marijuana" and no change in "Past 30 Day Use". That is great news!

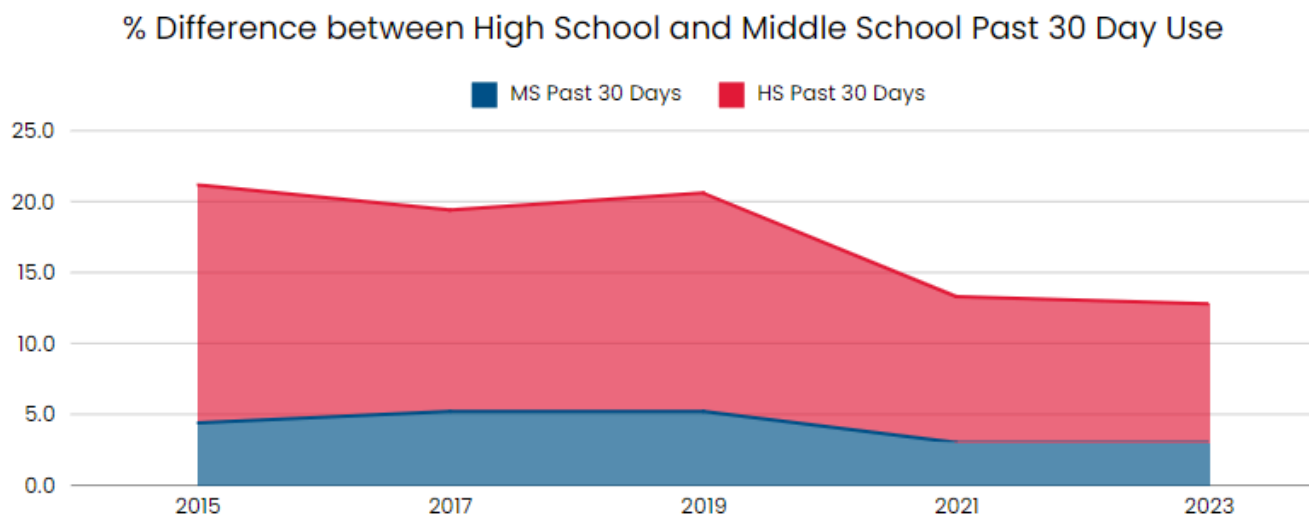
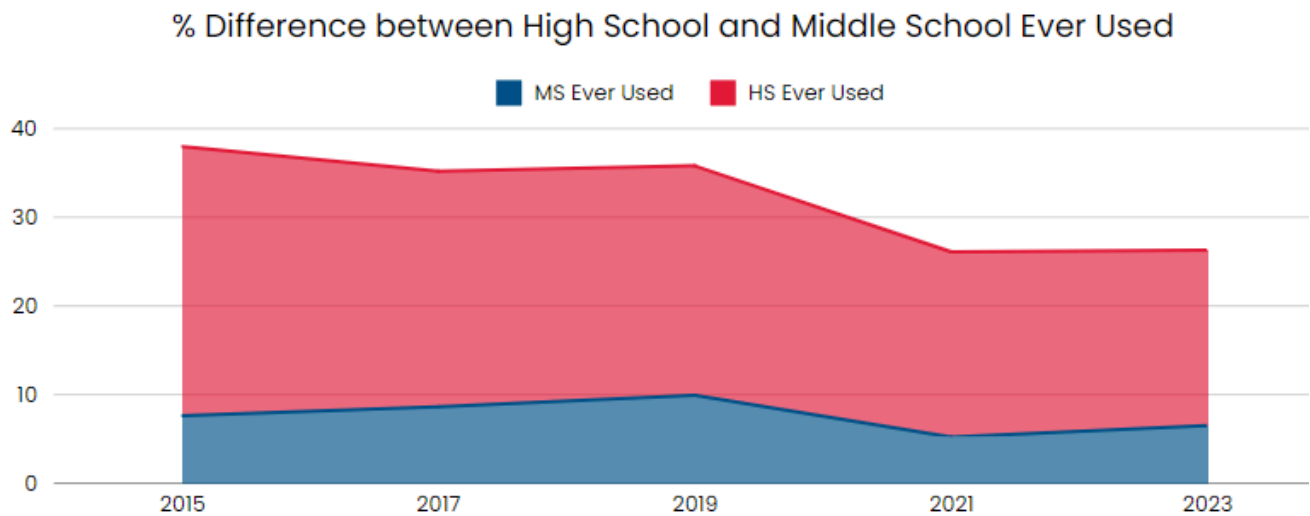
The perception of harm has increased to 71.2% of high school students who think it is wrong or very wrong for someone of the same age to use marijuana.

The concerning news:

We looked at the same data comparing High School use to Middle School use and we see that the percentage of Middle School use is creeping closer to High School percent of use over time.

-The percentage **difference** between High School Ever Used and Middle School Ever Used went from 30.4 in 2015 down to 19.8 in 2023.

-The percentage **difference** between High School Past 30-day Use and Middle School Past 30-day Use went from 16.8 in 2015 down to 9.8 in 2023.



The gap seems to be closing but many variables go into the survey so the reasons are not clear. Does this show that older students are getting the message to abstain or is overall use starting at an earlier age? While one reason is good news the other is concerning.

More Middle School Data:

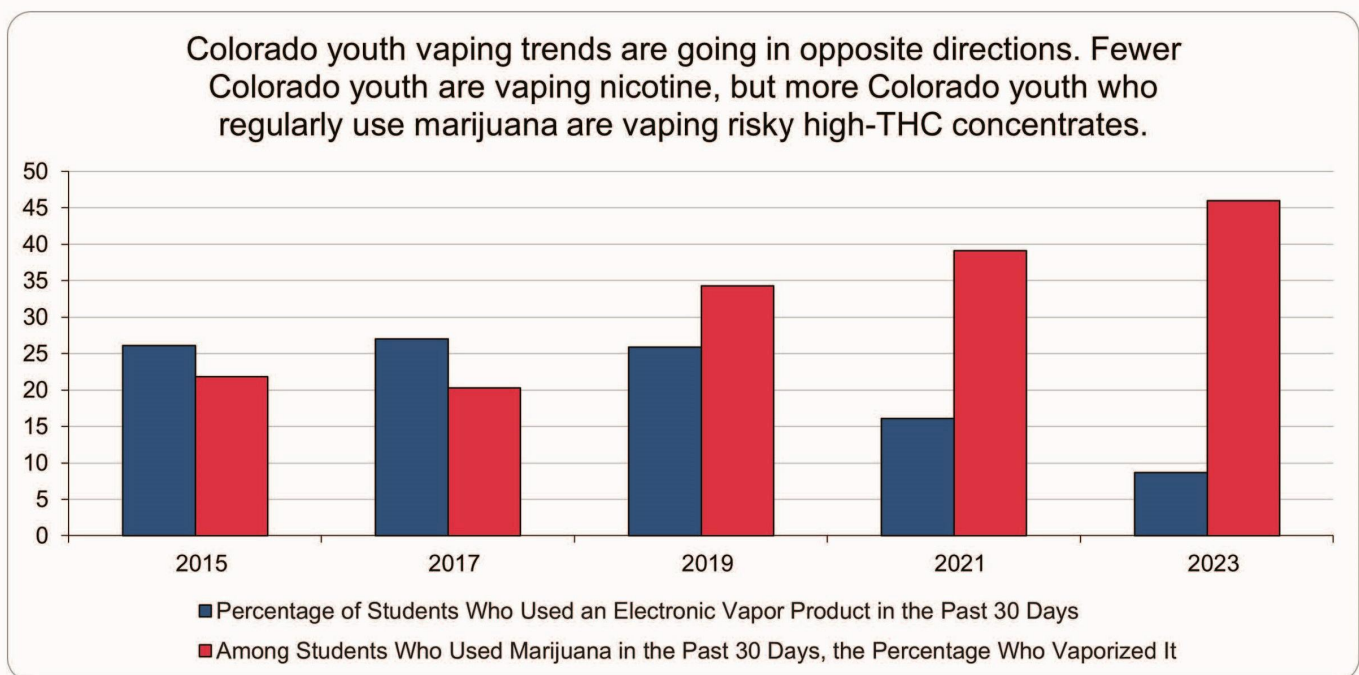
-Middle school students who used marijuana **20 to 39 times** in the past 30 days showed a significant increase from 1.1% in 2021 to 6.8% in 2023.

-Middle School students that used marijuana **40 or more times** in the past 30 days also appear to be increasing from 12.8% in 2019 to 18.6% in 2023.

We often hear anecdotally, that kids are growing up faster every day and the introduction to marijuana/THC is bound to be a part of that. It is something that we should continue to watch as research shows that early use has a greater potential for continued use and the possibility of transitioning into a cannabis use disorder (CUD). An [NIH Report](#) notes that "Initiation of cannabis use before 16 years of age increases the risk of developing CUD" - "The risk of progression from cannabis use to CUD increases with frequency of use."

THC concentrate use:

Dabbing high concentrate products dropped from 49.2% in 2021 to 31.2% in 2023. We would normally be grateful for the decline however, vaping marijuana went up from 39.1% in 2021 to 46% in 2023. Some of these vape products contain more than 90% THC. The below chart shows how vaping trends are also changing when it comes to nicotine and THC.



In our Healthy Kids Colorado Survey [media release](#) on June 12, 2024 - Rachel O'Bryan highlighted this area of concern. "The increase in high school marijuana vaping gets to the heart of problems that remain in the commercialized marijuana market and still threaten the health of Colorado youth. In 2015, only 21.8% of high school students who used marijuana reported that they vaped it, compared to 46% now. During those eight years, we saw an explosion in discreet, flavored marijuana vaping products, including fruity and sweet flavors.

These flavors are attractive to kids and can provide extremely high amounts of concentrated THC, which harms growing brains. Dabbing and vaping are two sides of the same coin and are now just different ways to consume high-concentrate marijuana. This growth area in youth consumption must be a public health priority.”

Update on Implementation of Colorado’s Proposition 122 (Psychedelics):

The state is contemplating allowing the commercialization and manufacturing of psychedelic edibles including chocolate and candy. One Chance strongly opposed this policy as reckless and a threat to young people. See our OpEd [Perspective - A Bad Trip Ahead for Colorado](#)

The Science...

American Journal of Psychiatry -[The Developmental Trajectory to Cannabis Use Disorder](#) -Cannabis Use Disorder Risk

NIH -[Young men at highest risk of schizophrenia linked with cannabis use disorder](#) -“authors estimated that as many as 30% of cases of schizophrenia among men aged 21-30 might have been prevented by averting cannabis use disorder”

To Protect Kids...

Encourage your legislator to err on the side of caution. Before intoxicating ingredients and products are allowed to be sold, they should be proven safe. We are in the position now of fixing the wrongs that were done without oversight instead of implementing a robust system to verify that ingredients and products are safe for all consumers, and policies are put in place to protect youth before they are allowed to be marketed and normalized in our communities.

Educate and inform others that marijuana is “[Not Just a Plant](#)”. [THCPhotos.org](#) contains photos of legal products purchased in 9 states along with hemp products purchased in Colorado and online. These photos portray today’s marijuana and are licensed and free to use for educational purposes.

Our [website](#) has resources and information for parents and trusted adults. We are a resource for communities concerned about THC commercialization and its impact on kids. Educating regulators and lawmakers on the harms of THC and

the products continues as we strive to implement laws and regulations that prioritize protecting all youth who only have [One Chance to Grow Up](#). Please share this newsletter with your networks and ask that they sign up [here](#).

Thank you for your commitment and support!

The team at One Chance To Grow Up

Resource Highlight...

[DEA -Drug Fact Sheet](#)

[New York Post](#) - San Diego ERs seeing up to 37 marijuana cases a day — mostly psychosis

[Ethan Andrew - PBS Story](#) -One man's message about cannabis-induced psychosis

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One Chance to Grow Up protects kids from THC through transparency, education, empowerment, and policy. We don't take sides on the politics of legalization for adults but instead serve as a reliable resource for parents, media, policymakers, and all those who care about kids.

Started by concerned parents and supported entirely by charitable contributions, One Chance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit project of the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center.

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