

Broward Briefings

Substance Abuse

Information for Action



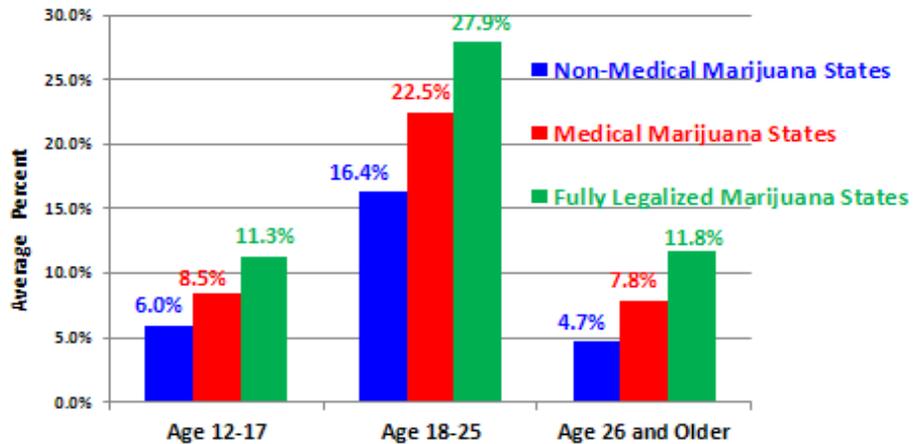
August 2016

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Use of Marijuana Among Youth by States With and Without Medical Marijuana Laws

As Floridians debate a proposed State Constitutional Amendment expanding the use of marijuana for medical purposes on the November 2016 ballot, a key point of contention will be what impact would such a measure have on non-medical use of pot among adolescents to get high. There have been conflicting studies reporting changes in marijuana use among youth following enactment of medical marijuana laws and ballot initiatives. Yet, it appears that marijuana use and state medical marijuana laws are related. Data from the *National Survey on Drug Use and Health* are shown in the graph below. It illustrates the higher average percent of marijuana use reported by (1) youth aged 12-17, (2) young adults aged 18-25, and (3) adults aged 26 and older in states with legal medical marijuana as compared to non-medical marijuana states.

Average Percent of Past 30-Day Marijuana Use By State's Medical and Full Legal Status Among Youth, Young Adults, and Adults: 2013 and 2014



Source: SAMHSA - National Surveys on Drug Use and Health 2013 & 2014 State Estimates

Within each of the three age groups marijuana use in the past 30 days is higher in states with legal medical marijuana and even higher still in the two states (Colorado and Washington) with full legalization for both medical and non-medical use. Most reviews on the impact of adopting legal medical marijuana show an increase in non-medical use in the first year following the enactment of such laws and then stabilization in prevalence rates in the years thereafter. None-the-less an important issue to address in considering any changes in marijuana laws is the potential lifelong mental health and drug dependency implications of the drug's use among adolescents and particularly among those who initiate use by age 14 or younger.

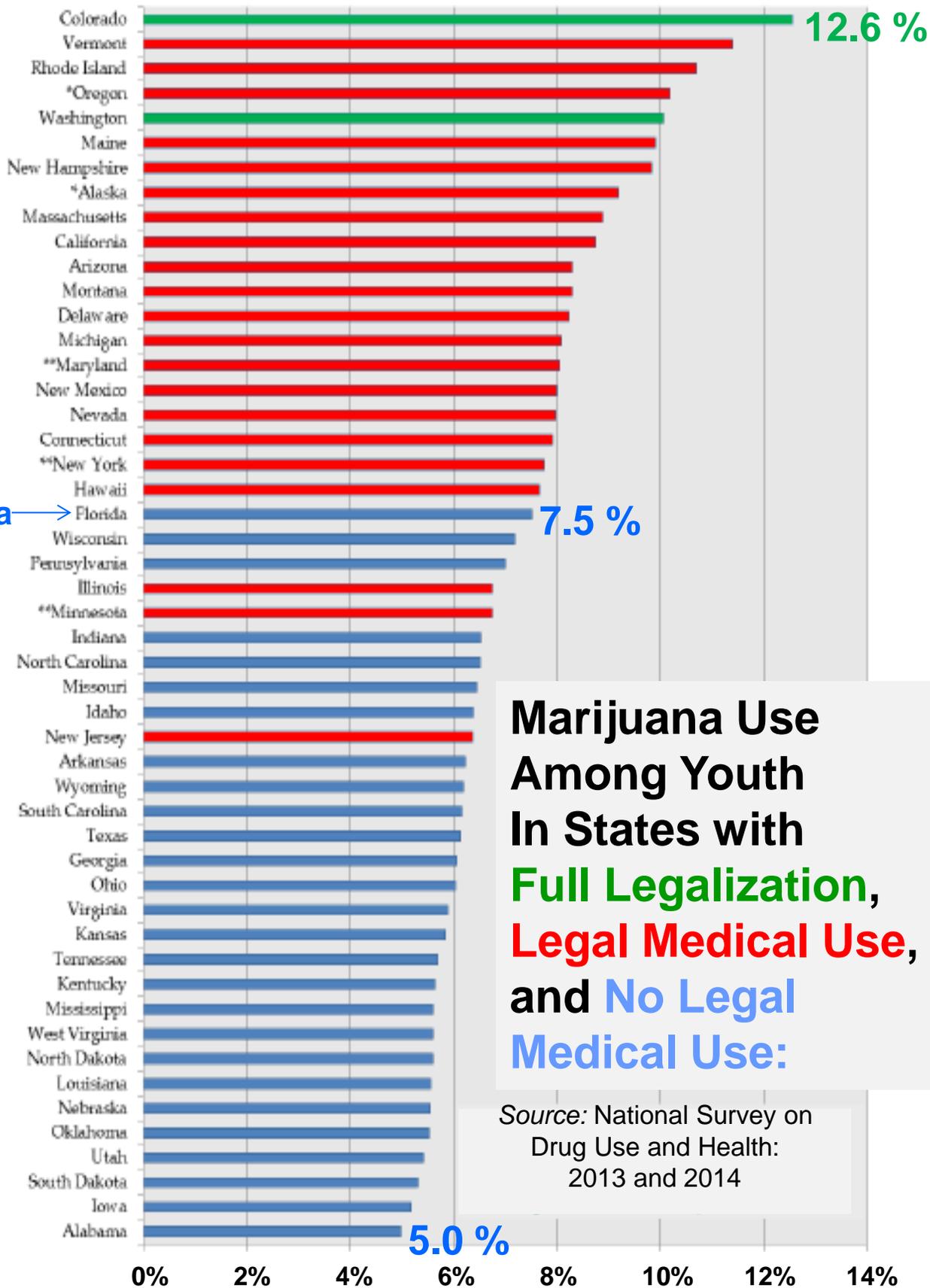


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Past Month Usage by 12 to 17 Years Old, 2013/2014



Florida →

**Marijuana Use
Among Youth
In States with
Full Legalization,
Legal Medical Use,
and No Legal
Medical Use:**

Source: National Survey on
Drug Use and Health:
2013 and 2014