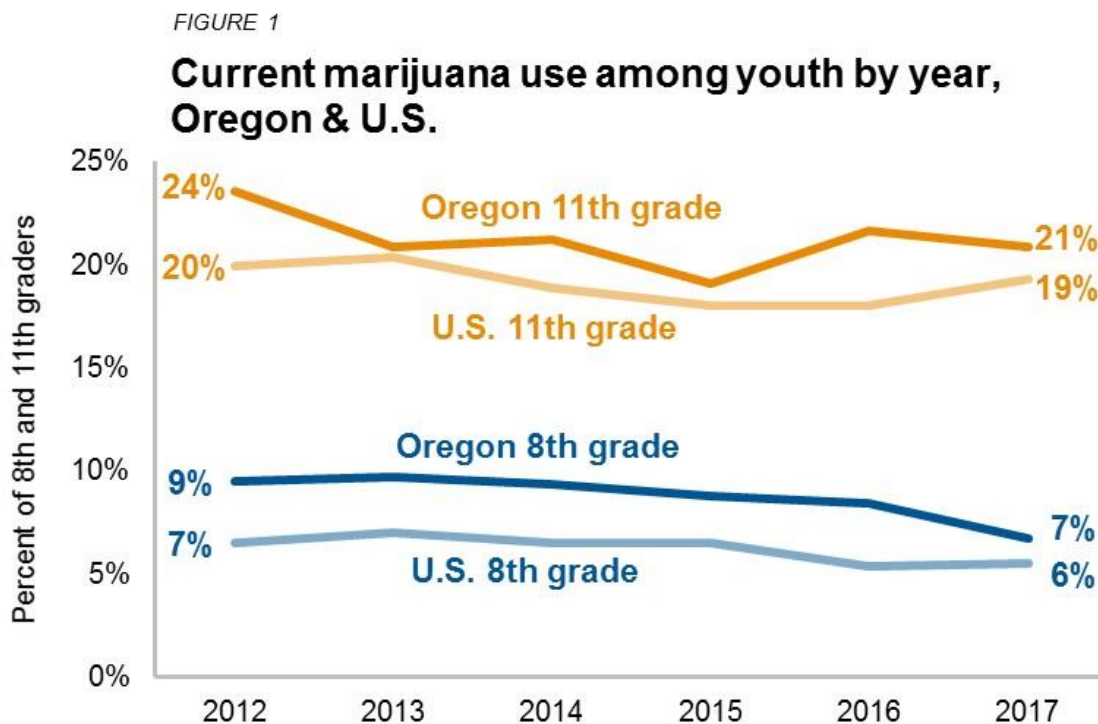


## Prevention and Health Promotion

# Marijuana use

Oregon has had a legal medical marijuana system since 1998. In November 2014, voters approved legalized retail (non-medical) marijuana with licensing of retailers to begin in October 2016. The Oregon Public Health Division has a role in protecting children and vulnerable populations from marijuana exposure and preventing youth from starting to use marijuana. To fulfill this role, it is necessary to monitor marijuana use among Oregon youth and adults, including populations that may be disproportionately affected by marijuana use and its effects.

Current marijuana use among Oregon eighth- and 11th-graders is higher than national estimates (Figure 1). Since 2012, about one in 10 eighth-graders and about one in five 11th-graders reported current marijuana use each year. In 2017, 7% of Oregon eighth-graders and 21% of Oregon 11th-graders reported currently using marijuana.

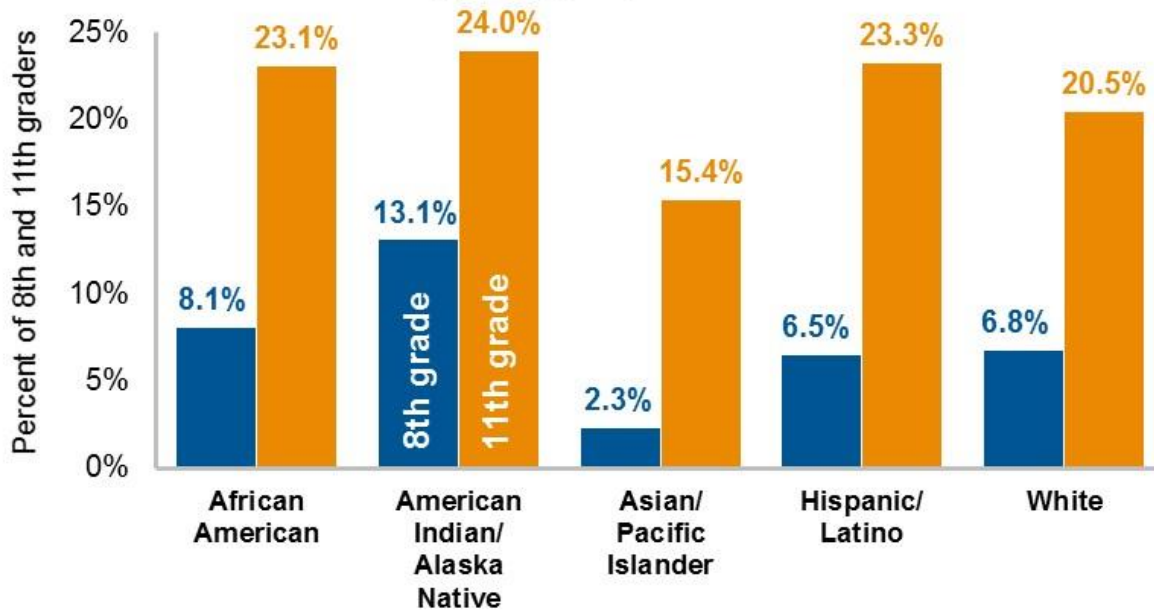


Source: Student Wellness Survey (2012, 2014 & 2016) and Oregon Healthy Teens Survey (2013, 2015 & 2017); Monitoring the Future Current Drug Use Trends

In 2017, marijuana use rates were similar between male and female students in both eighth and 11th grades (not shown). Among both eighth and eleventh-graders, current marijuana use was lowest among students who identified as Asian/Pacific Islander than any other group (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2

**Current marijuana use among youth by race/ethnicity, Oregon, 2017**



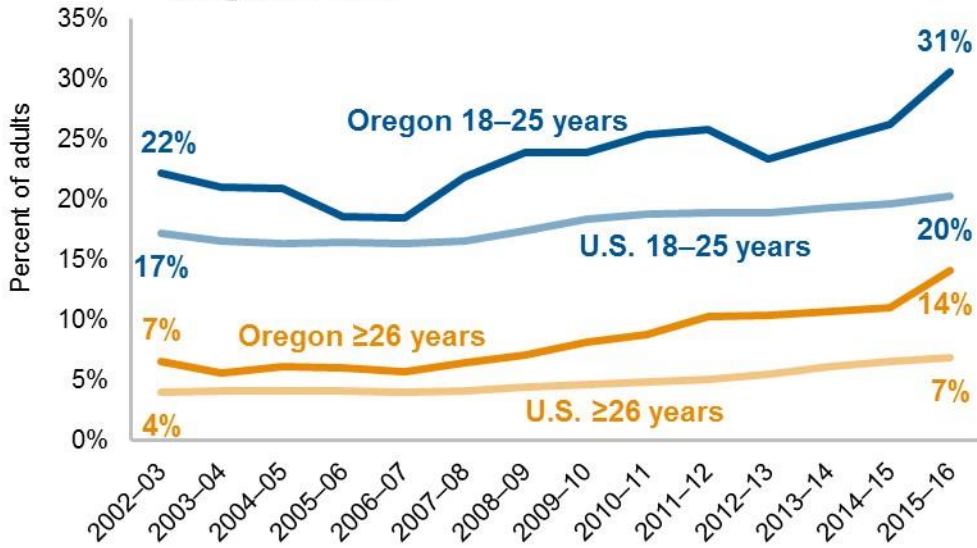
Notes: All other groups exclude Hispanic ethnicity

Source: Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Current marijuana use is consistently higher among young adults (ages 18–25 years) than older adults (ages 26 years or older) in both Oregon and the United States (Figure 3). Oregon marijuana use has been higher than national use among both age groups for the last decade. In 2015-2016, 31% of Oregon adults aged 18-25 years and 14% of adults aged 26 years or older reported current marijuana use.

FIGURE 3

**Current marijuana use among adults by year, Oregon & U.S.**

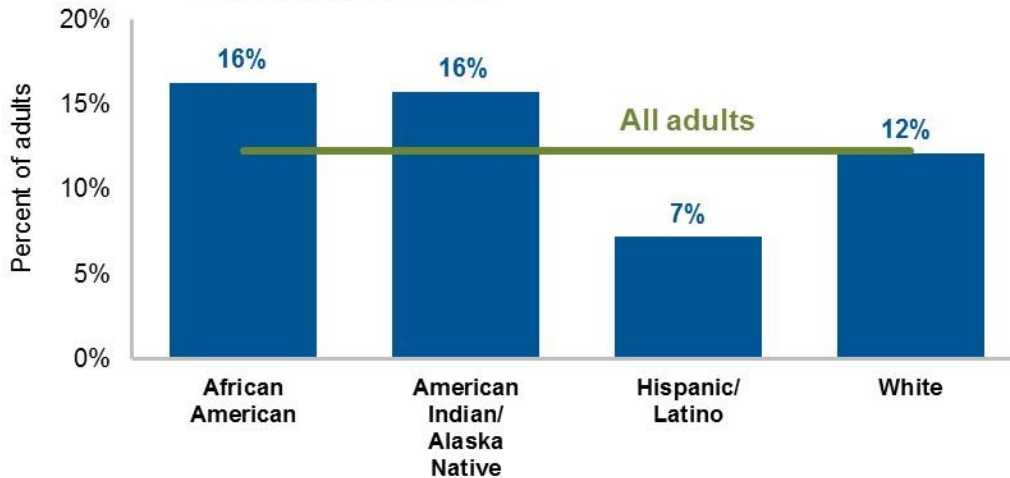


Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

In 2014-2015, current marijuana use was highest among those who identified as Black or African American (16%) and American Indian or Alaska Native (16%); however, current use was not significantly different between racial and ethnic groups (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4

**Current marijuana use among adults by race/ethnicity, Oregon, 2014-2015**



Notes: All other groups exclude Hispanic ethnicity. The Asian or Pacific Islander racial group is not shown because it has fewer than 100 respondents.

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

**Additional Resources:** Additional marijuana data available in [Oregon Marijuana Report](#).

Follow the accompanying links for more information on the following data sources:

[Oregon Healthy Teens](#)

[Student Wellness Survey](#)

[Monitoring the Future Survey](#)

[National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#)

[Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#)

#### **About the Data:**

Oregon Healthy Teens Survey (2013 and 2015)

Student Wellness Survey (2012, 2014 and 2016)

Monitoring the Future Survey (2012-2016)

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2002-2015)

Oregon Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (2014-2015)

Oregon's Student Wellness Survey (SWS) and Oregon Healthy Teens (OHT) survey are anonymous, school-based surveys conducted by the Oregon Health Authority. Both surveys contain multiple marijuana-related measures, including patterns of use. National youth data were obtained from Monitoring the Future (MTF), a similar school-based survey of U.S. secondary school students. Oregon's surveys collect data among eighth-graders and 11th-graders. MTF results for 10th-graders and 12th-graders were averaged to provide a national comparison for Oregon's 11th-graders. On SWS 2016, Oregon eighth- and 11th-graders were asked, "During the past 30 days, how many times did you use marijuana?" As with national surveys, youth were defined as "current marijuana users" if they reported using one or more times in the past 30 days.

The trend of current marijuana use among Oregon eighth- and 11th-graders used data from both SWS (2012 and 2014 school years) and OHT (2013 and 2015 school years). Additional analyses were conducted using SWS 2016 data.

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing random-digit-dialed telephone survey of adults ages 18 or older concerning health-related behaviors. The BRFSS was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and is conducted in all states in the United States. Each year, between 5,000 and 15,000 adult Oregonians are interviewed. The data are weighted to represent all adults aged 18 and older. Marijuana use questions were added to Oregon's BRFSS beginning in 2014. Oregon adults were asked, "During the past 30 days, on how many days did you use marijuana or hashish (grass, hash or pot)?" As with national surveys, adults were defined as "current marijuana users" if they reported using on one or more of the past 30 days.

BRFSS data from 2014 and 2015 were combined for analysis of current marijuana use among racial and ethnic groups. Despite combining years of data, the Asian racial group is not shown because it had fewer than 100 respondents.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual nationwide survey involving interviews with approximately 70,000 randomly selected individuals in the U.S. civilian, noninstitutionalized population, age 12 and older. The NSDUH provides national

and state-level data on the use of tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs (including non-medical use of prescription drugs) and mental health in the United States. NSDUH is state-based, with an independent, multistage area probability sample within each state and the District of Columbia. SAMHSA produces state-level estimates from a two-year rolling average. NSDUH biennial state-level reports published online were used for this report.

**For More Information Contact:** Julie Maher, Program Design & Evaluation Services, Oregon Public Health Division, at [julie.e.maher@state.or.us](mailto:julie.e.maher@state.or.us)

**Date Updated:** March 27, 2018

[Oregon State Health Profile](#)

---

*OHA 9153-D (Rev) 09/13: This document can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request this publication in another format or language, contact the Publications and Design Section at 503-378-3486, 711 for TTY, or email [dhs-oha.publicationrequest@state.or.us](mailto:dhs-oha.publicationrequest@state.or.us).*