

2008 Marijuana Sourcebook

MARIJUANA: THE GREATEST CAUSE OF ILLEGAL DRUG ABUSE



**Office of National Drug Control Policy
Executive Office of the President
Washington, DC 20503**

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INTRODUCTION

This Chartbook recognizes marijuana as a major component of the illicit drug problem. Major progress has been achieved in reducing youth marijuana use; nevertheless, the overall demand for marijuana remains strong.

The supply of cannabis is complex, involving domestic and foreign growers — both outdoor and indoor — as well as intricate networks that involve not only conventional drug traffickers, but also established social networks of friends and family. The potency of cannabis has risen dramatically in the past two decades, with concomitant abuse and dependence consequences reflected in increasing cannabis-related emergency and treatment events.

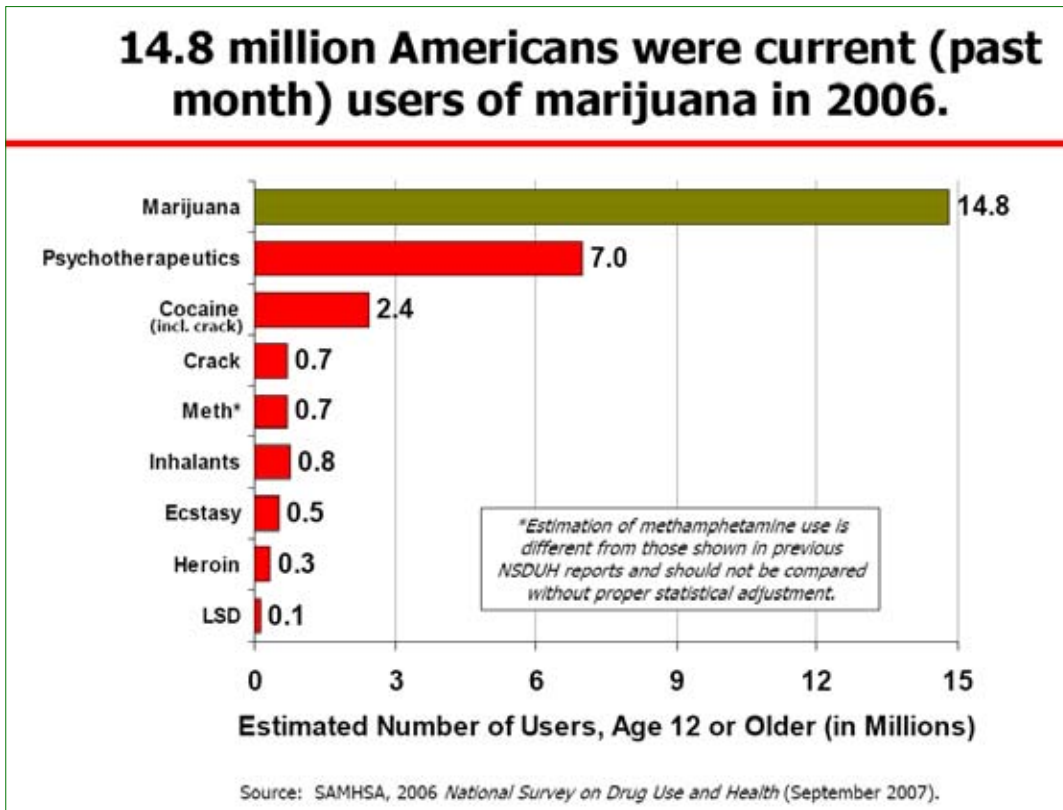
Today, in addition to traditional methods of promoting and consuming the drug, marijuana is being marketed as candy to young people, the next generation of potential buyers.

The data summary on these pages looks at marijuana use patterns and trends, health effects, criminal justice aspects, the supply network, and the issue of so-called medical marijuana.

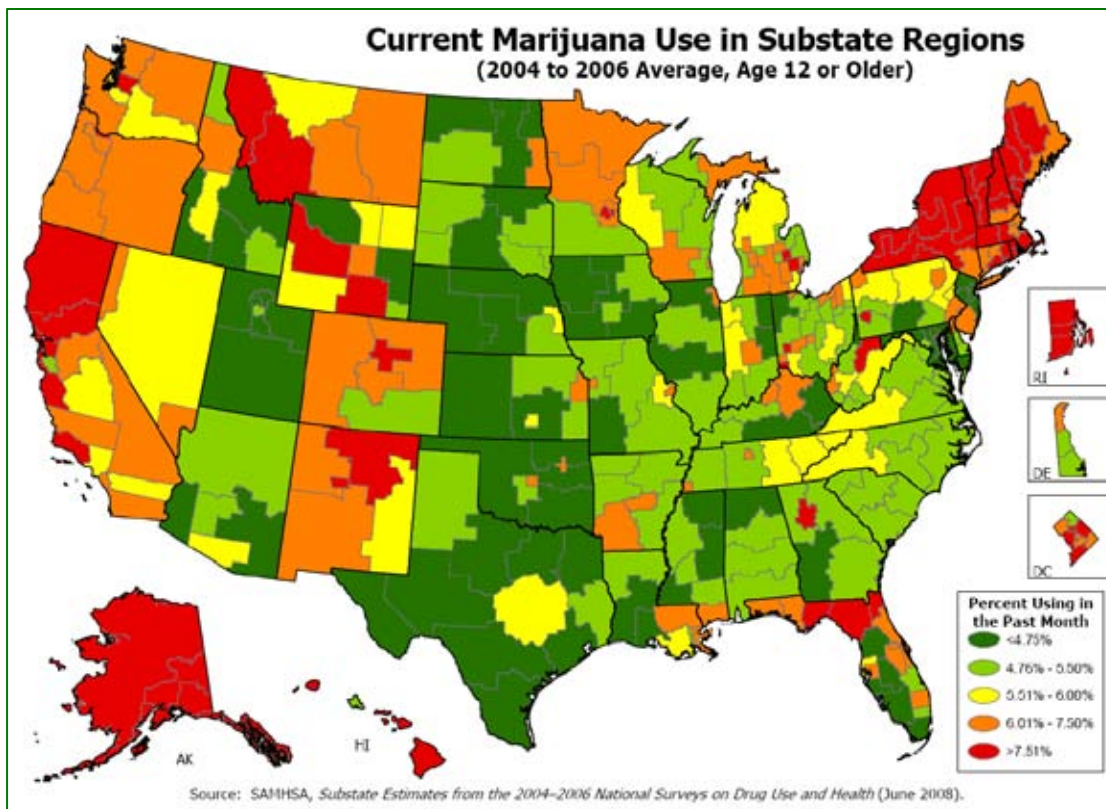


Photos: Drug Enforcement Administration.

1 Marijuana Is the Most Commonly Used Illicit Drug



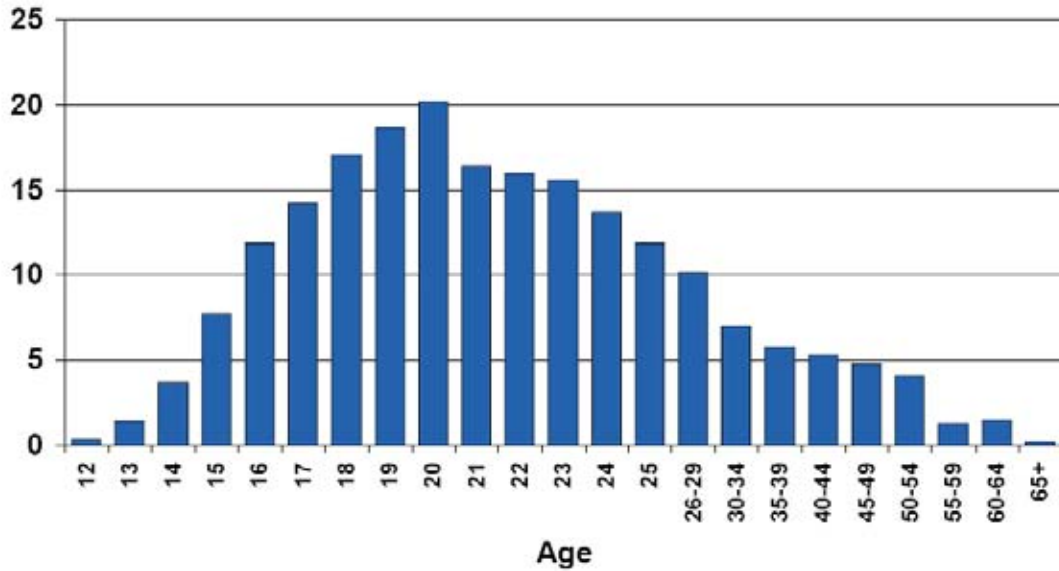
2 Marijuana Use Rates Vary Across the Country



3 Age Variability in Marijuana Use

Marijuana use rates accelerate to a peak at age 20, with one in five reporting current use of marijuana.

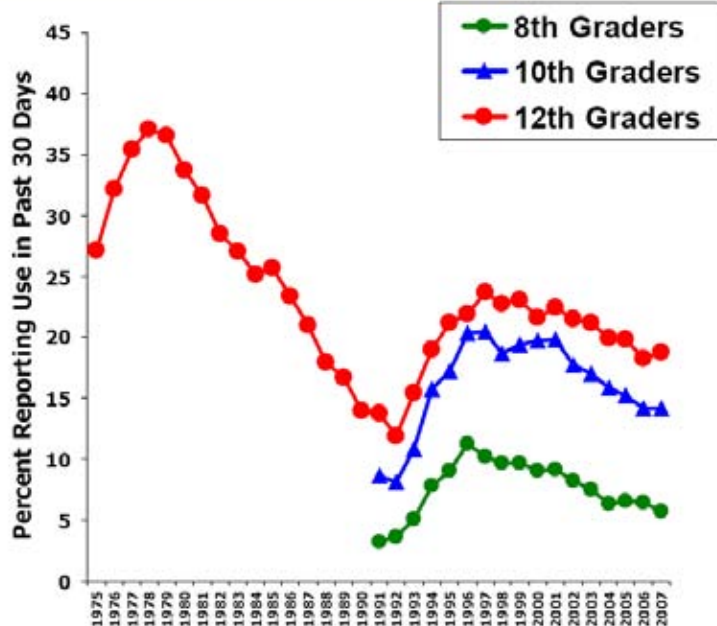
Percent Reporting Past Month Use



Source: SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).

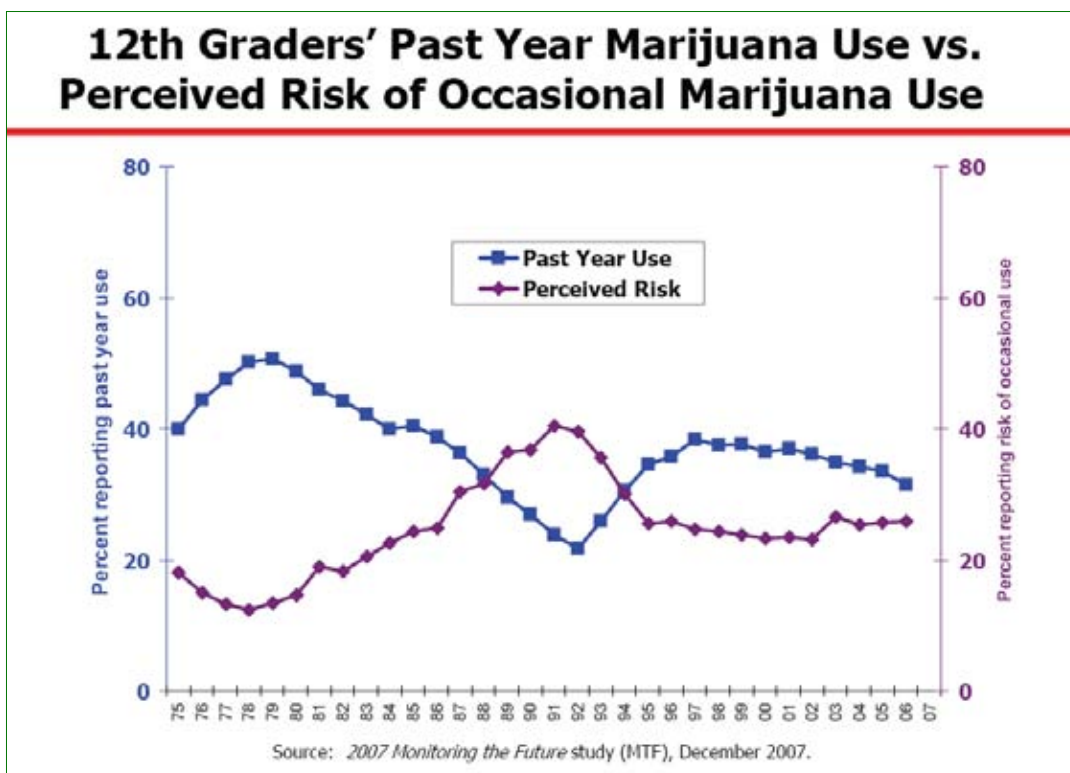
4 Marijuana Use Among Youth

Trends in Current Use of Marijuana

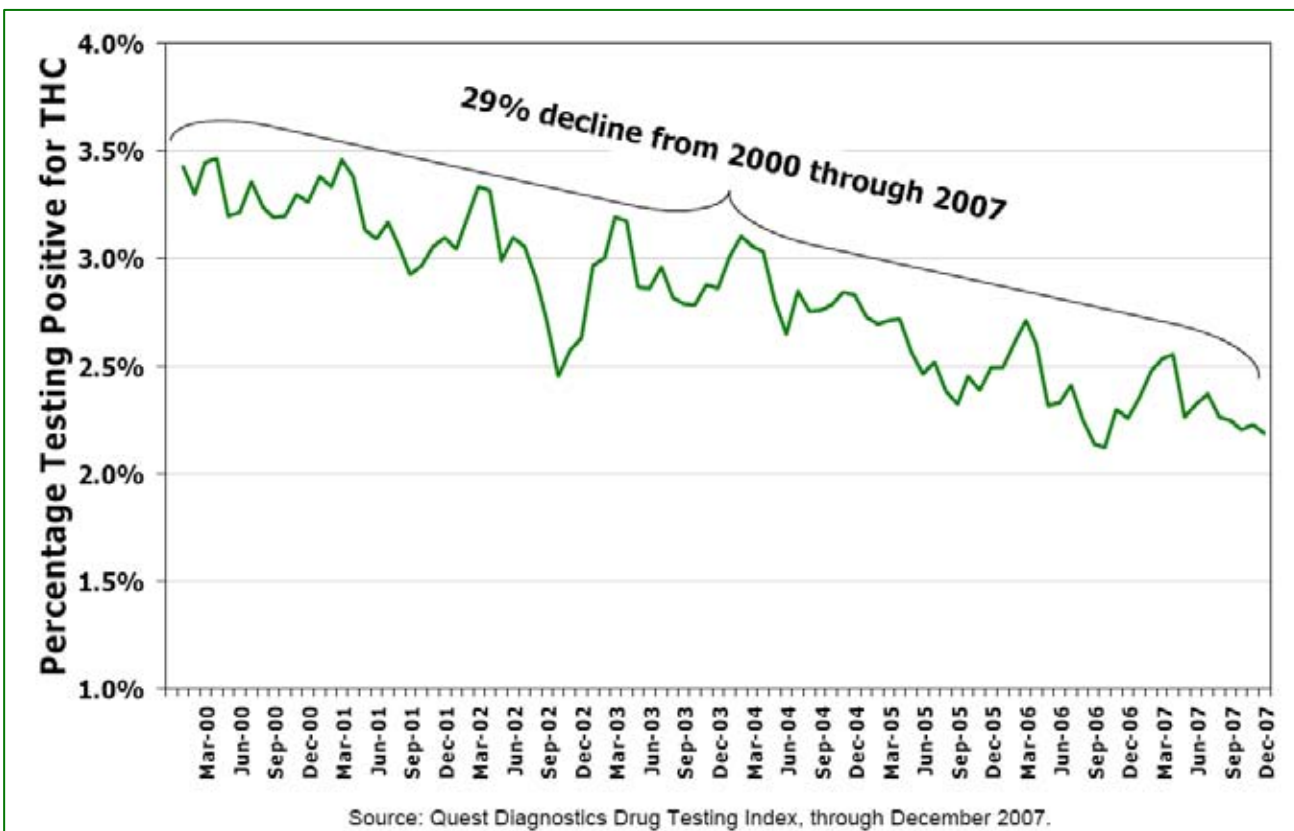


Source: 2007 Monitoring the Future (MTF) study, December 2007.

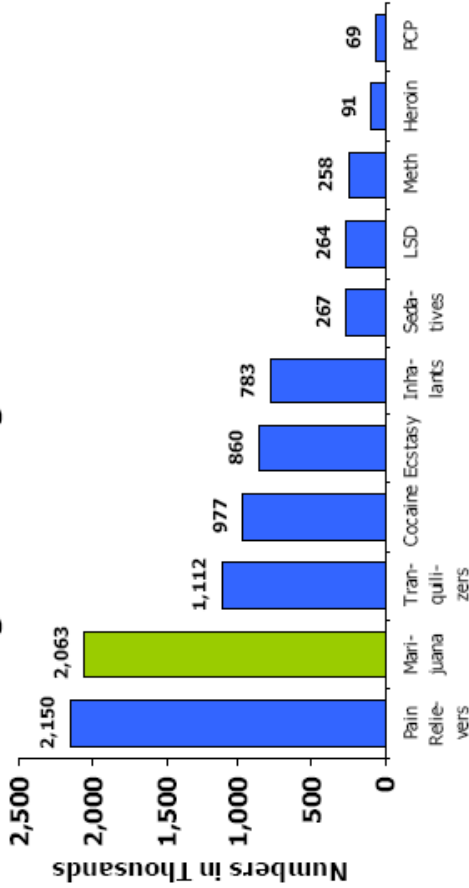
5 Higher Rates of Perceived Harmfulness of Marijuana Are Associated with Lower Rates of Use



6 Percentage of National Workforce Testing Positive for Marijuana Is Declining

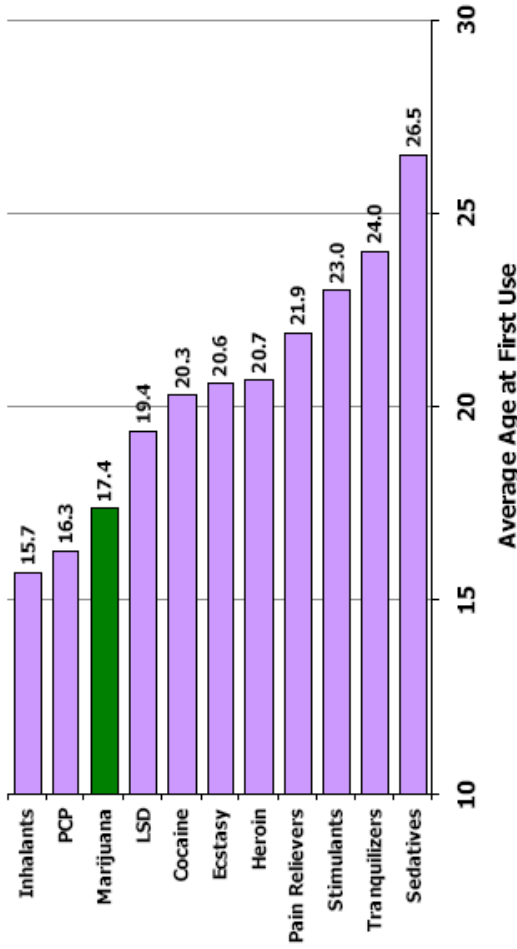


Past Year Initiates for Specific Illicit Drugs Among Persons Age 12 or Older

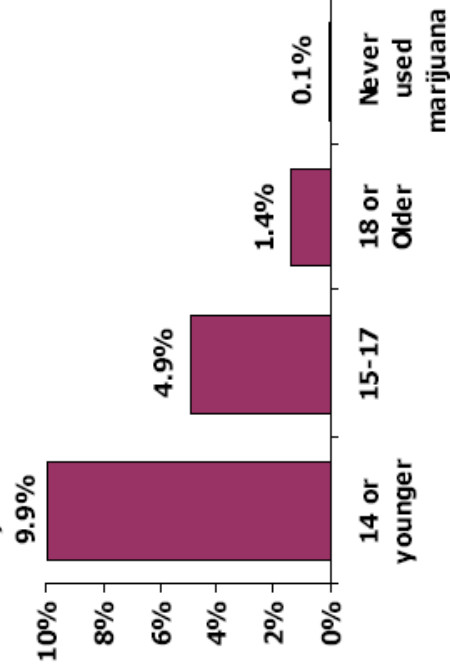


- ◆ Approximately 2 million new users began using marijuana in the past year.
- ◆ Marijuana initiation occurs at a younger age than for most drugs of abuse.
- ◆ Early initiation of marijuana use is associated with drug dependence as an adult: the younger the age at first use, the higher the likelihood of adult drug dependence.

Average Age at First Use among Past Year Initiates to Substance Use (Ages 12 to 49)



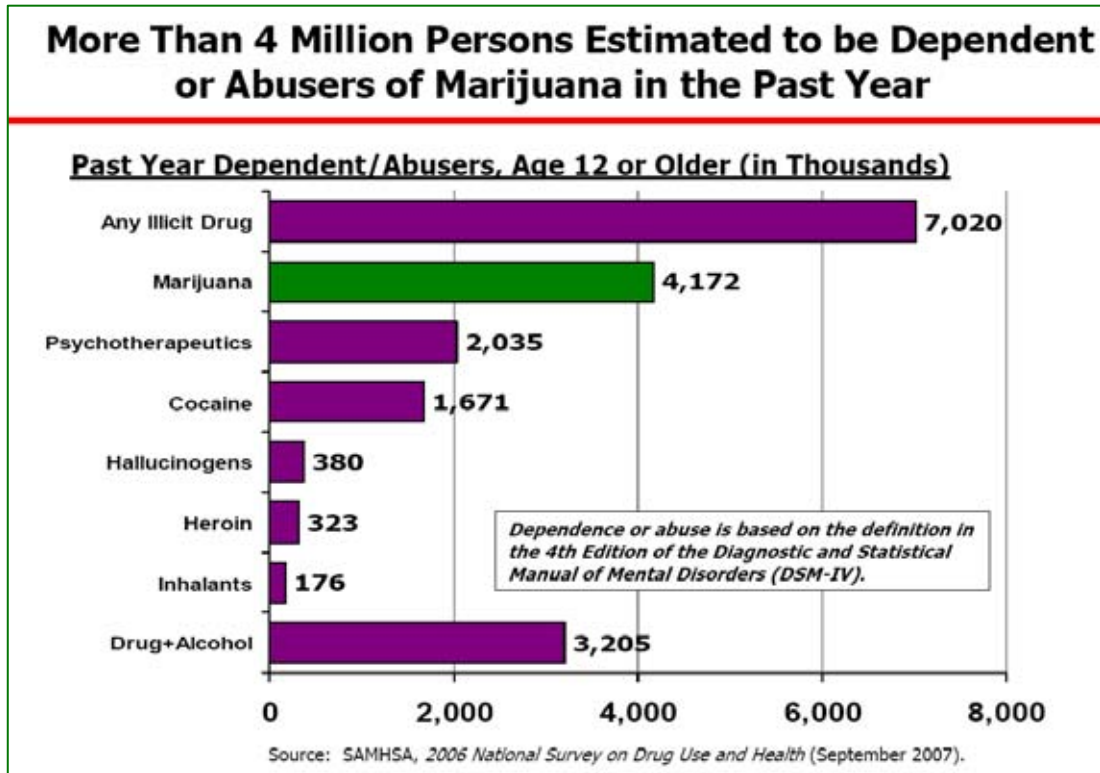
Percent with Illicit Drug Dependence (Past Year) (Drug Dependence Based on DSM-IV Diagnostic Criteria, Age 18 or older)



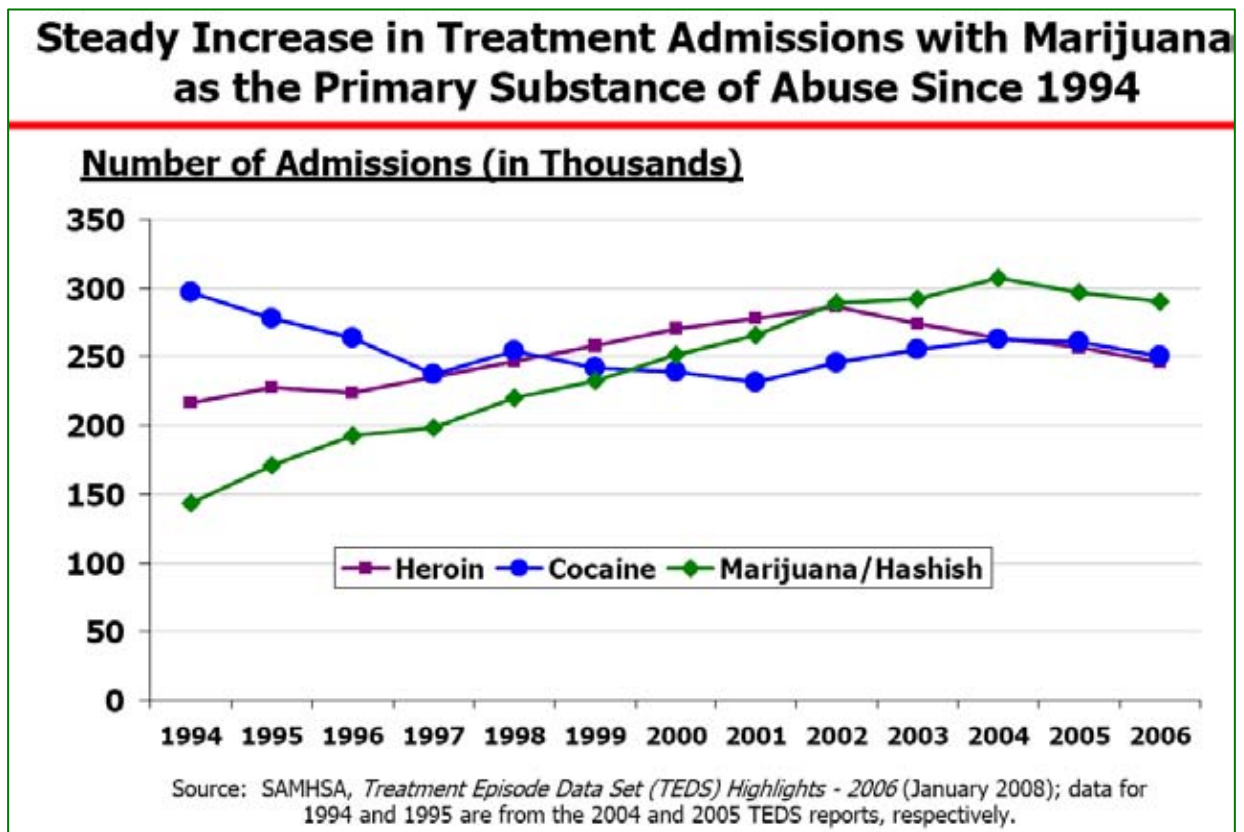
Age First Used Marijuana

Source: SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).

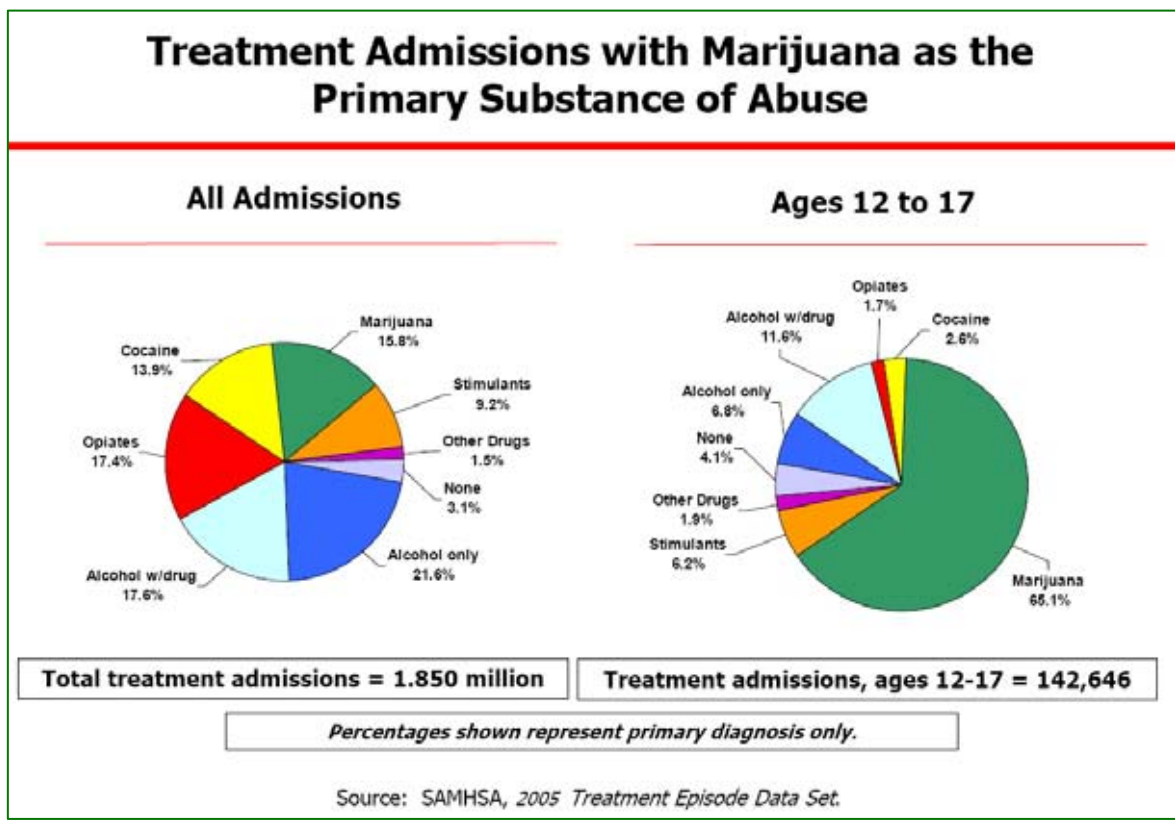
8 A Major Consequence Marijuana Use Is the Risk of Dependence or Abuse



9 Growing Need for Marijuana Treatment



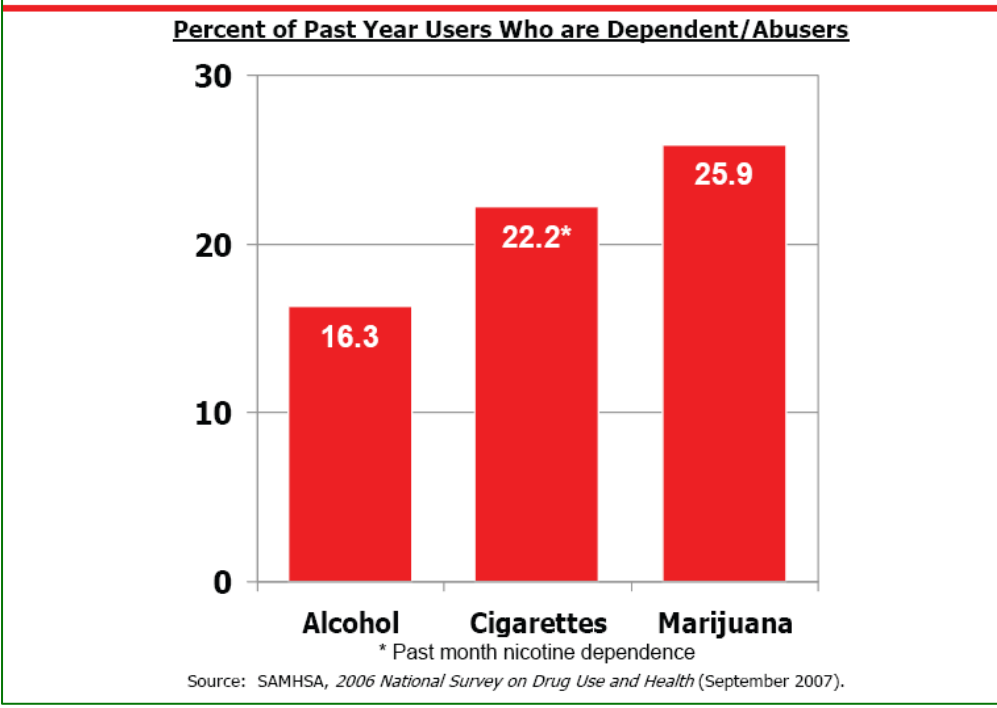
10 Youth Are in Treatment Primarily for Marijuana



11 For Younger Users, Marijuana Is More Addictive and More Dangerous

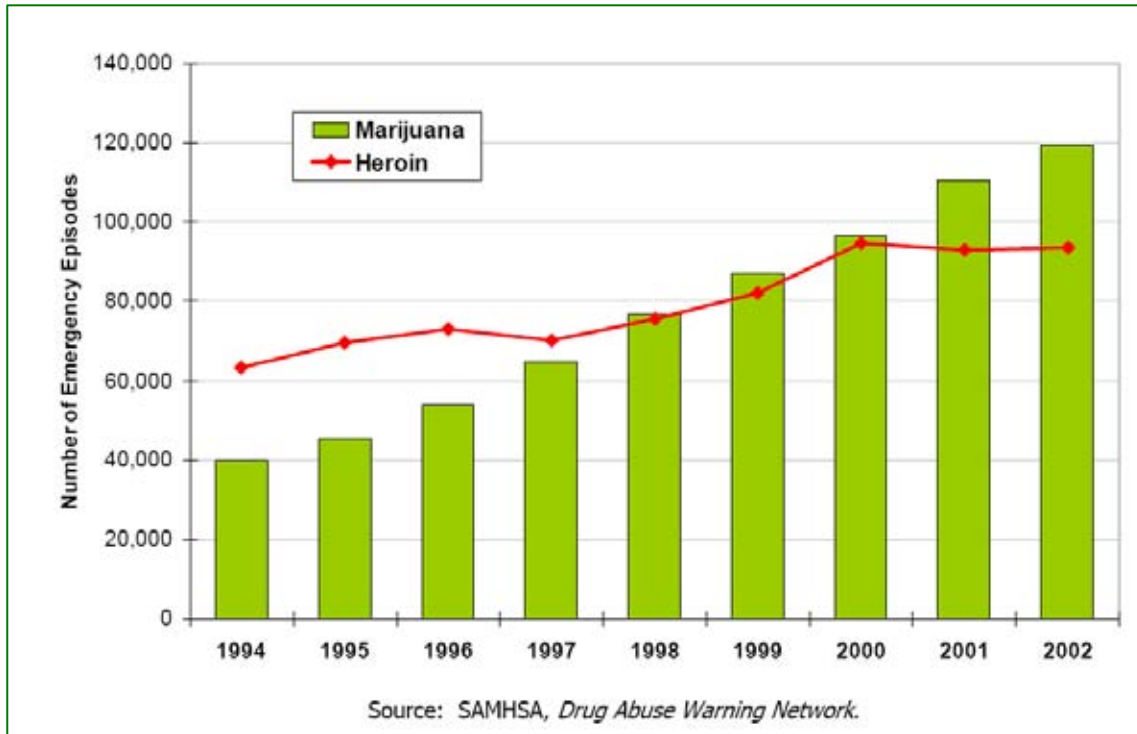
According to NSDUH, one in four 12- to 17-year-olds who report using marijuana in the past year display the characteristics of abuse or dependency. For younger users, the risk of marijuana abuse or dependency exceeds that for alcohol or tobacco. Recent research supports the "gateway" dimension of marijuana — that its use creates greater risk of abuse or dependency on other drugs, such as heroin and cocaine. Marijuana use itself is a serious risk, not only for addiction, but also is an added risk for developing psychosis, including schizophrenia.

Use and Dependence/Abuse for Ages 12 to 17



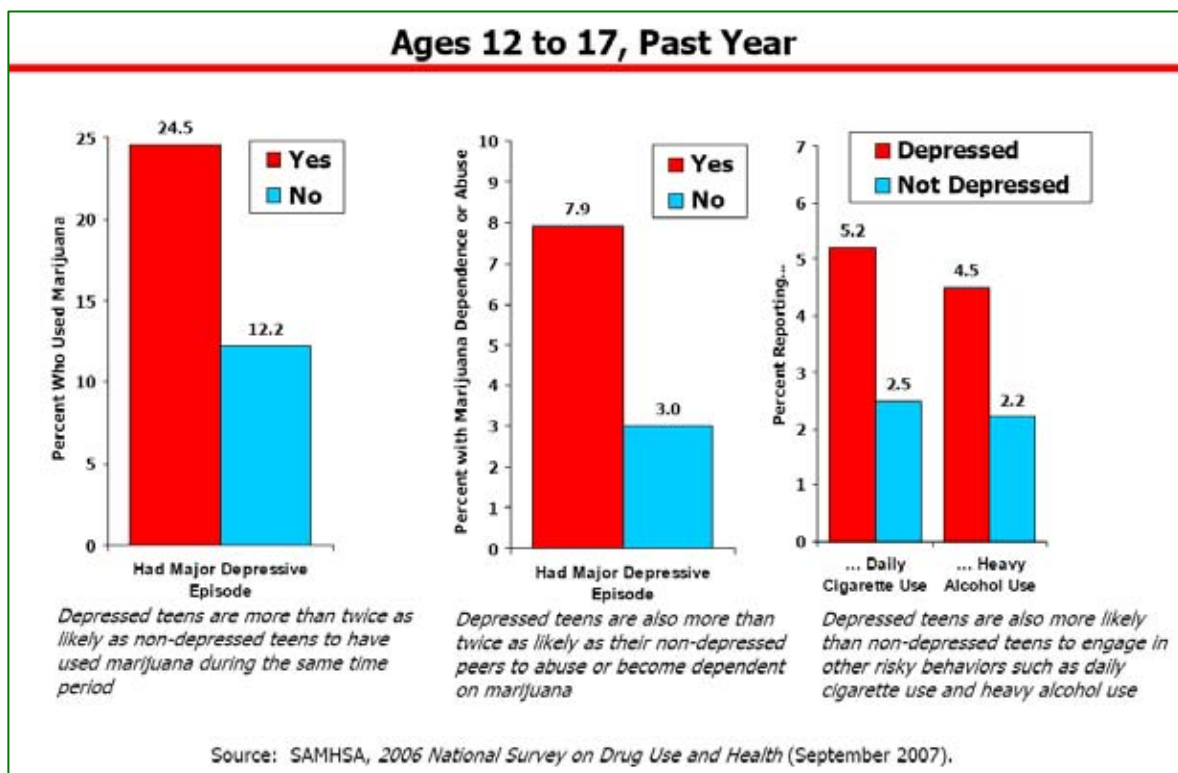
12 The Burden on Emergency Departments Has Been Increasing

Emergency department episodes involving marijuana almost tripled from 1994 to 2002. Marijuana steadily increased over that decade, surpassing heroin — which remained relatively flat — in 1998.



13 Marijuana Use Is Associated with Mental Health Disorders

Marijuana use is associated with depression, suicidal thoughts, and suicide attempts. Besides the links to depression shown below, teens who smoke marijuana at least once a month are three times more likely to have suicidal thoughts than non-users.



14 Marijuana Growers Present Environmental Hazards



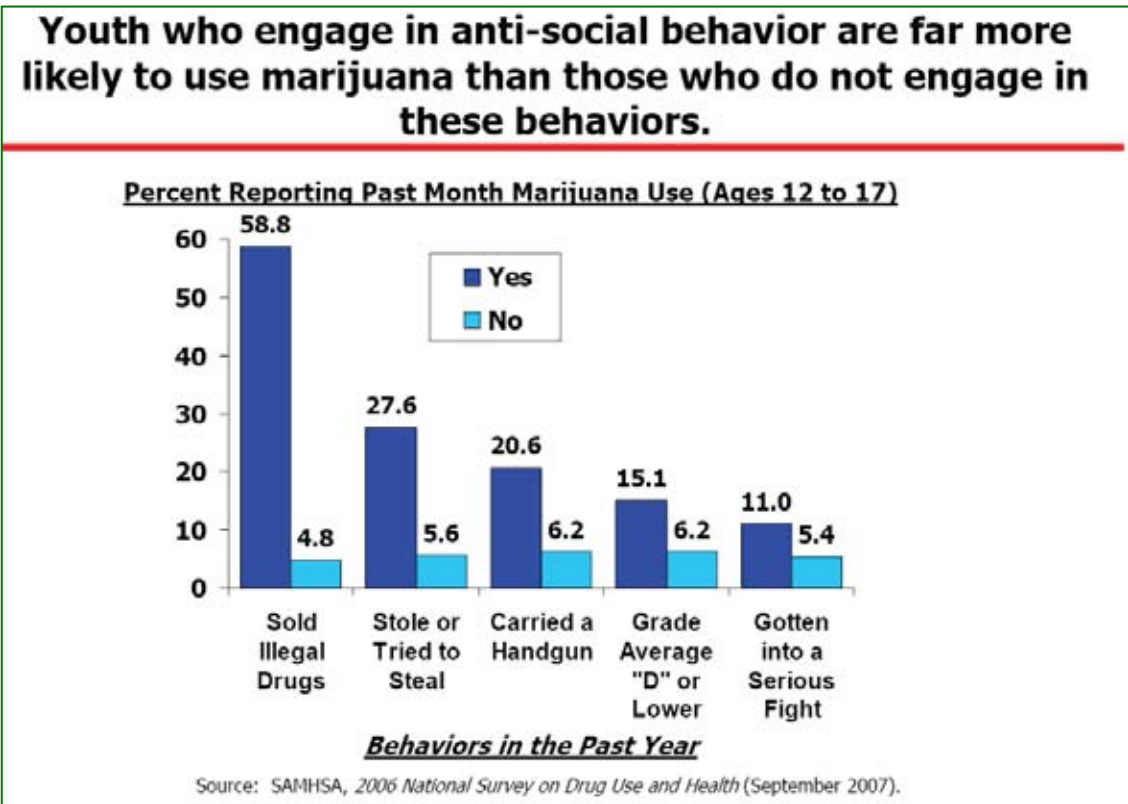
**One marijuana garden can generate:
Up to 53 30-gallon garbage bags of trash**

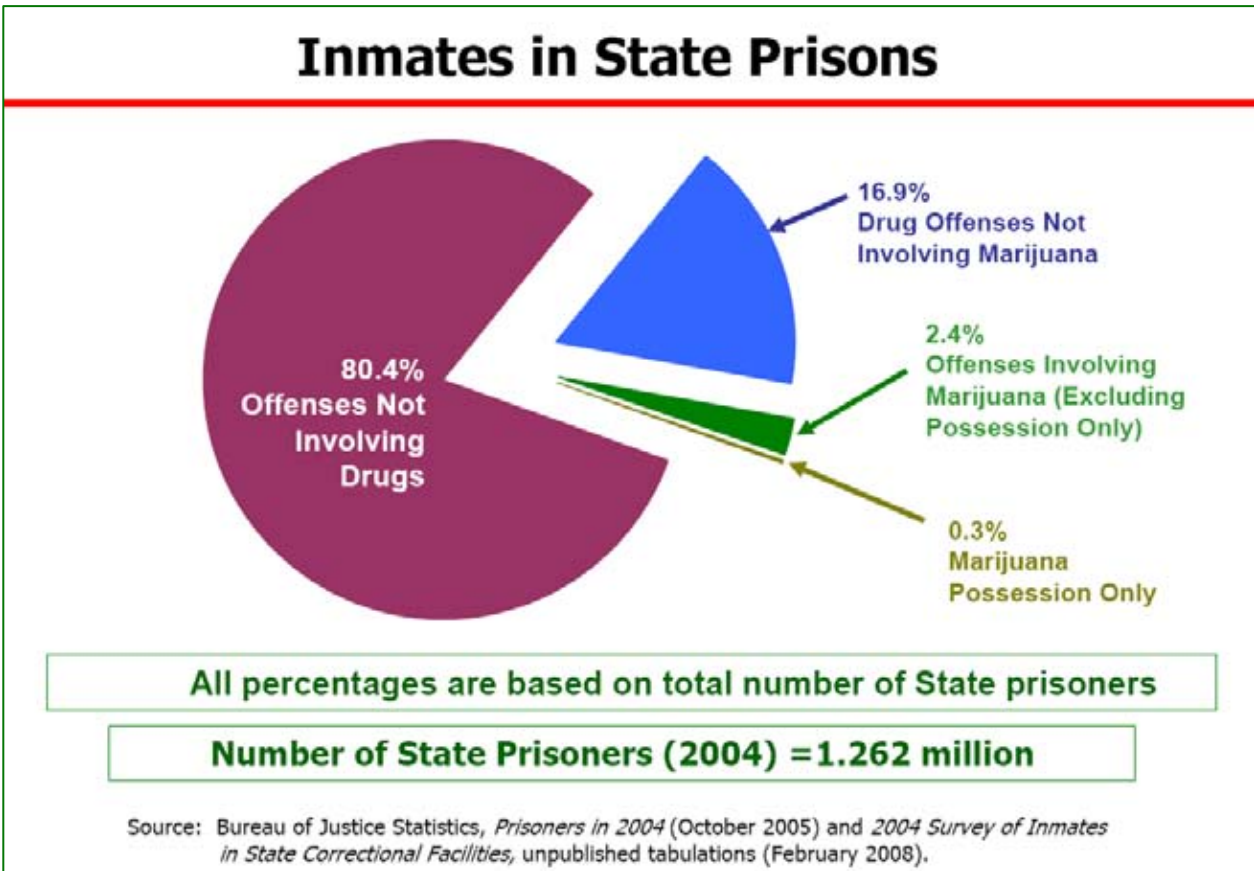
07.21.2005

Photos: Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (2005).

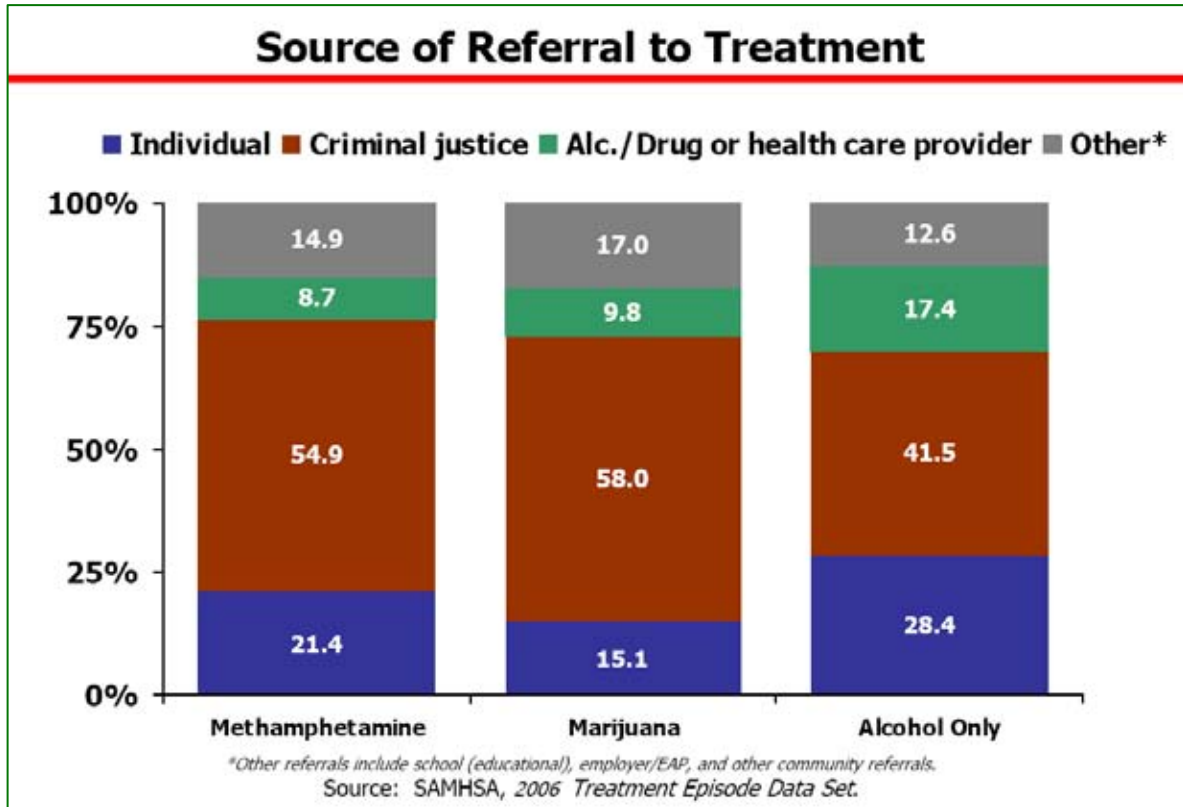
CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASPECTS

15 Juvenile Delinquent Behavior Is Closely Associated With Marijuana Use



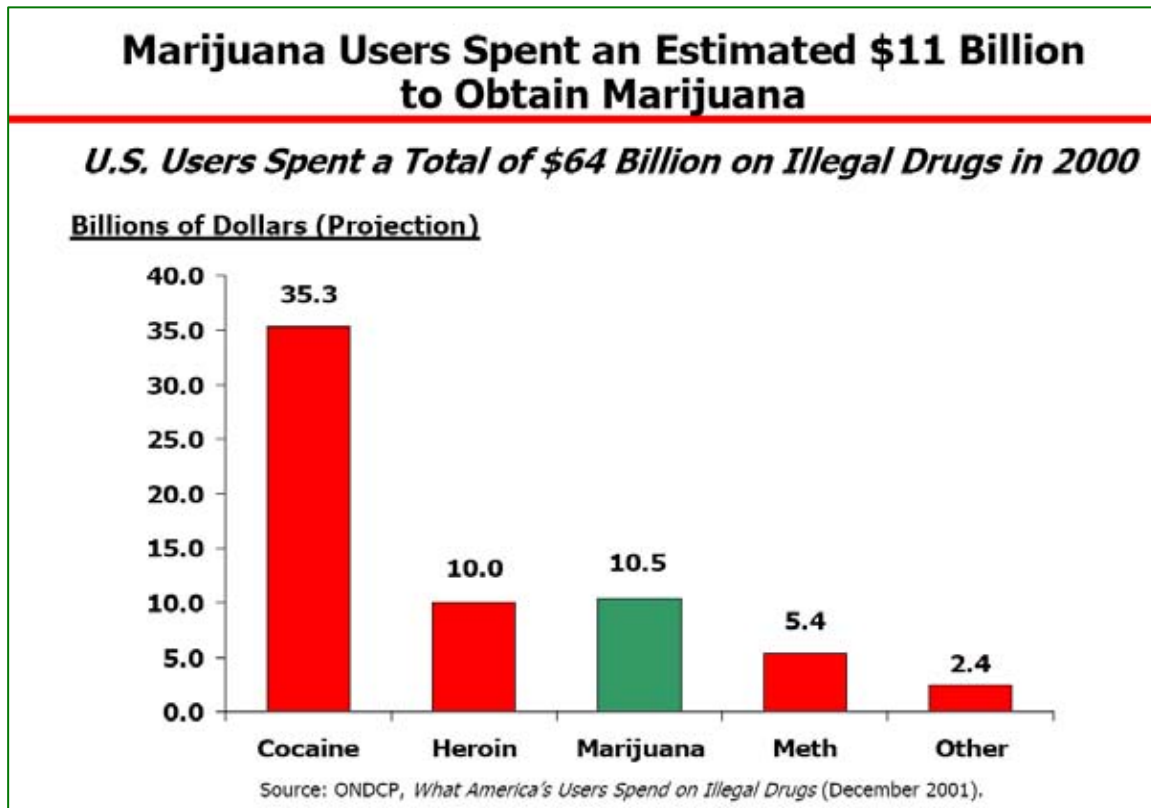


18 Substantial Proportions of Treatment Referrals for Marijuana, Methamphetamine, and Alcohol Are from the Criminal Justice System



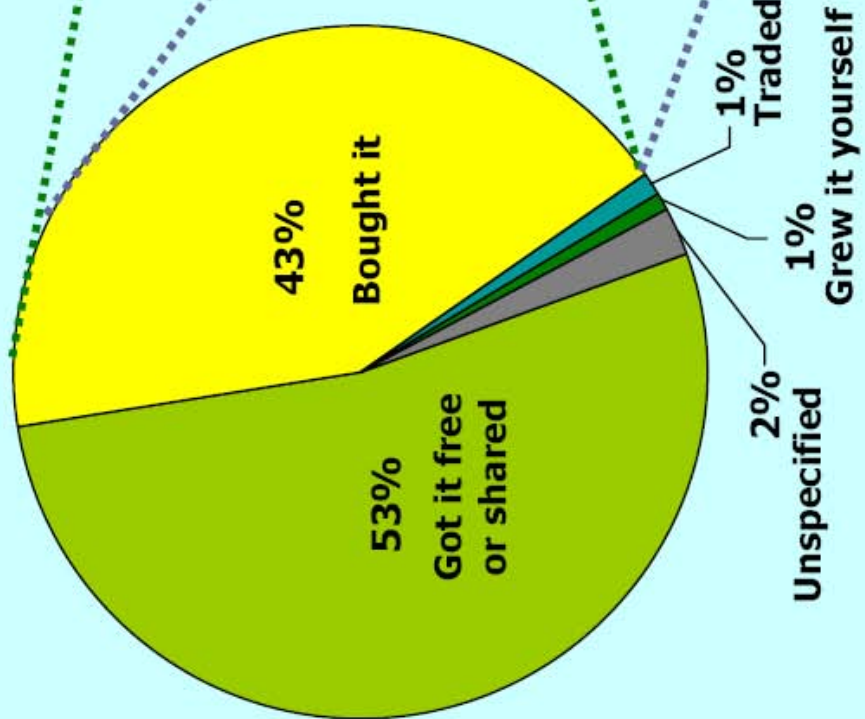
SUPPLY SITUATION

19 What Marijuana Users Spend

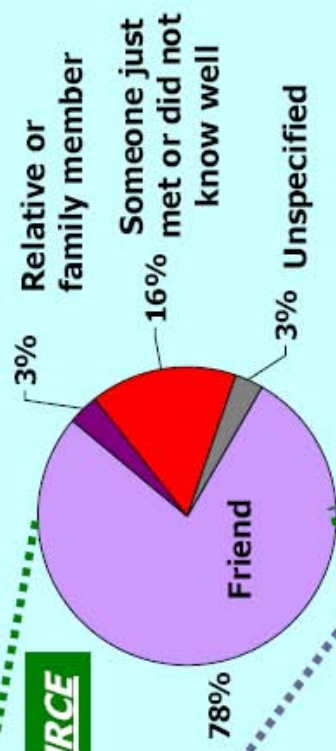


Method of Obtaining Most Recently Used Marijuana Among Past Year Users

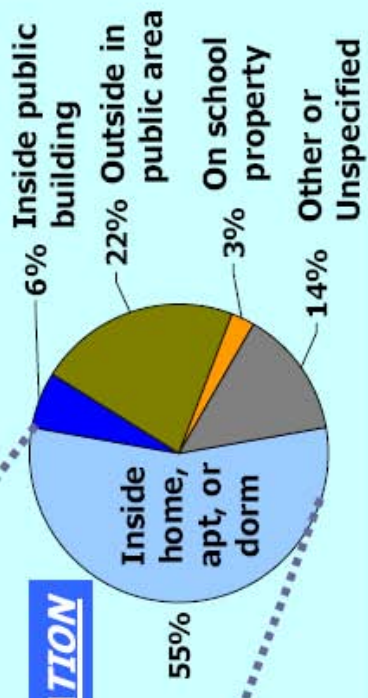
Of the 43% who bought most recently used marijuana:



SOURCE



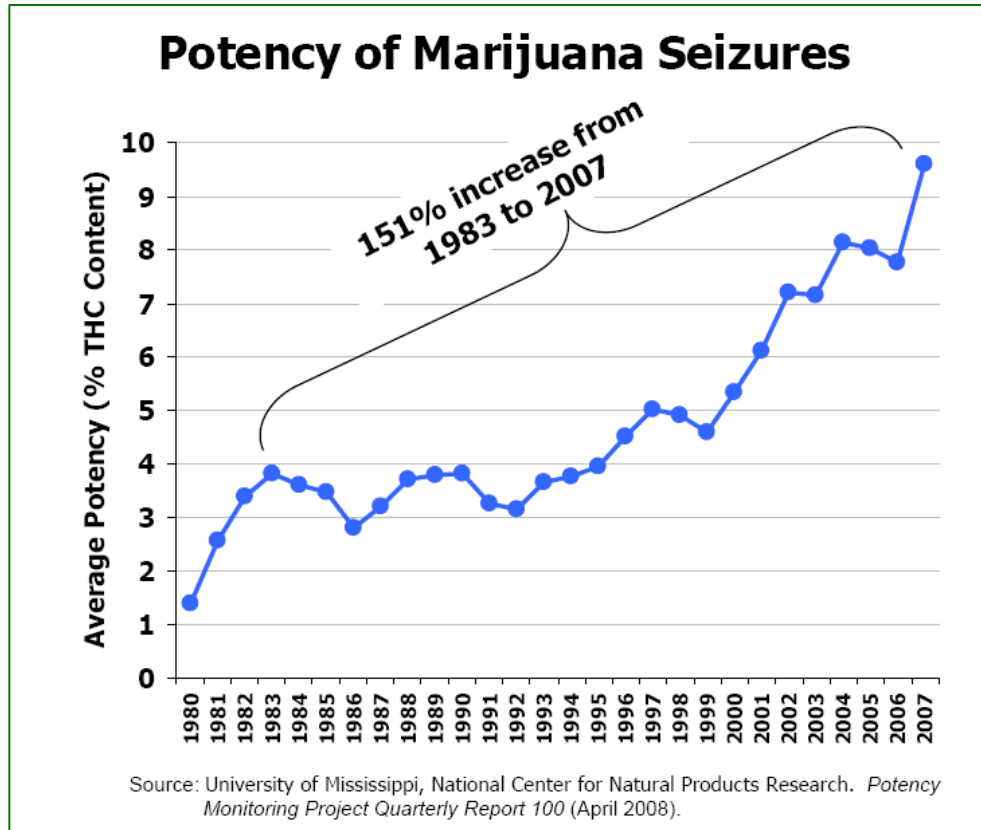
LOCATION



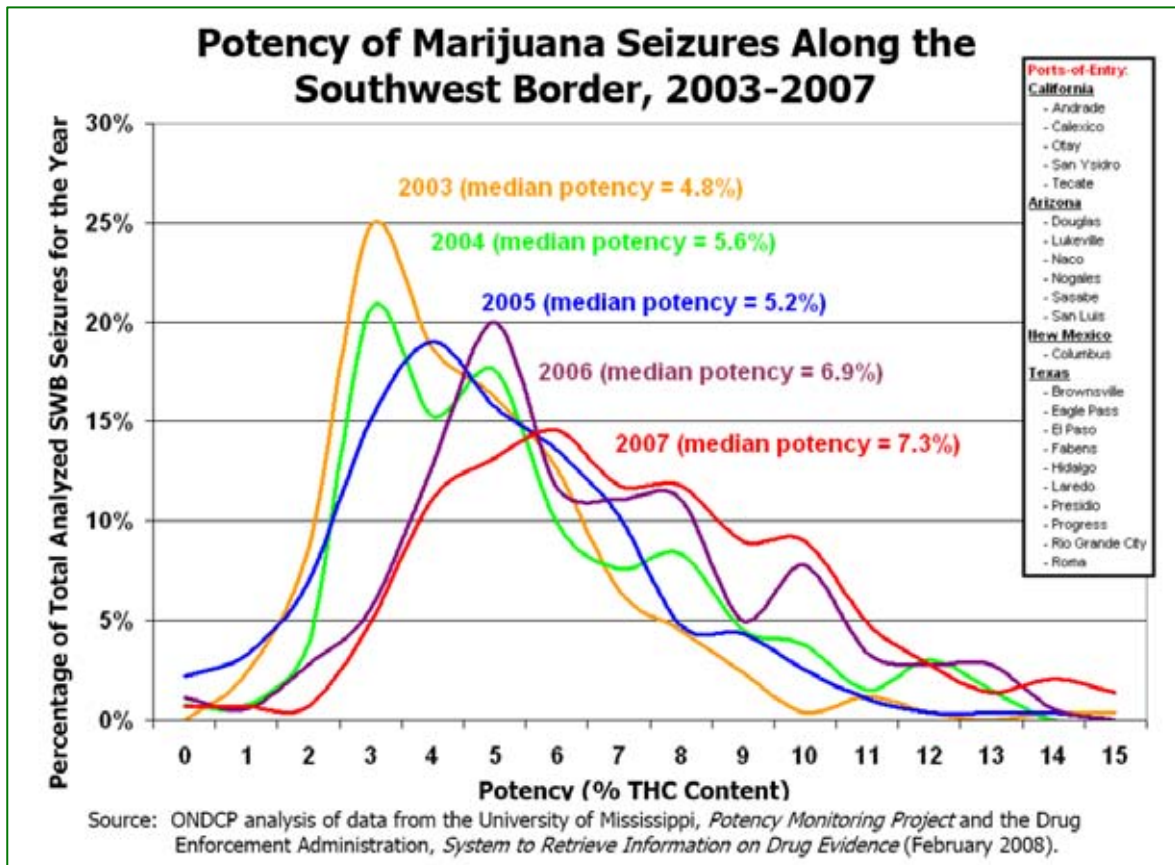
Total Past Year Marijuana Users Age 12 or Older = 25.4 million

Source: SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).

21 Marijuana Potency Has Been Increasing



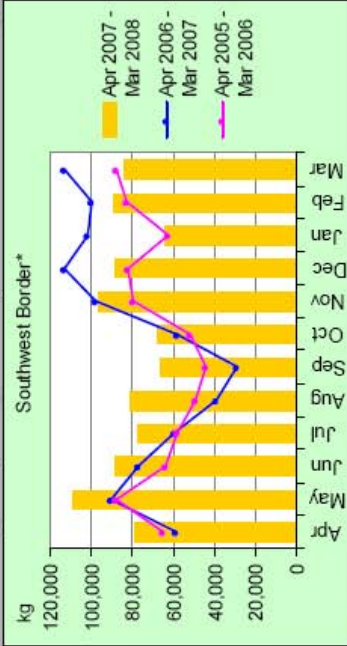
22 Marijuana Seizures Along the Southwest Border Are Increasingly More Potent



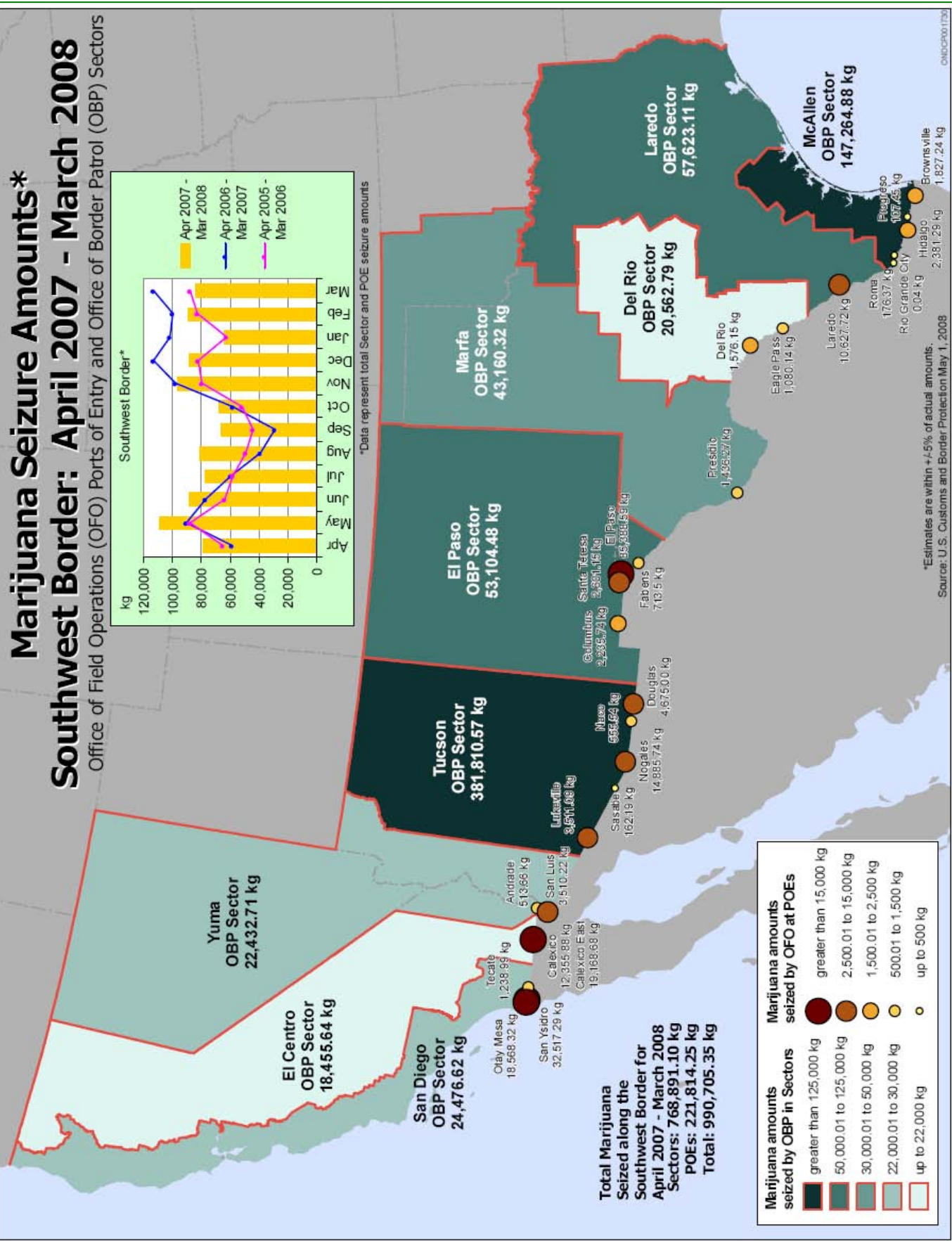
Marijuana Seizure Amounts*

Southwest Border: April 2007 - March 2008

Office of Field Operations (OFO) Ports of Entry and Office of Border Patrol (OBP) Sectors



*Data represent total Sector and POE seizure amounts



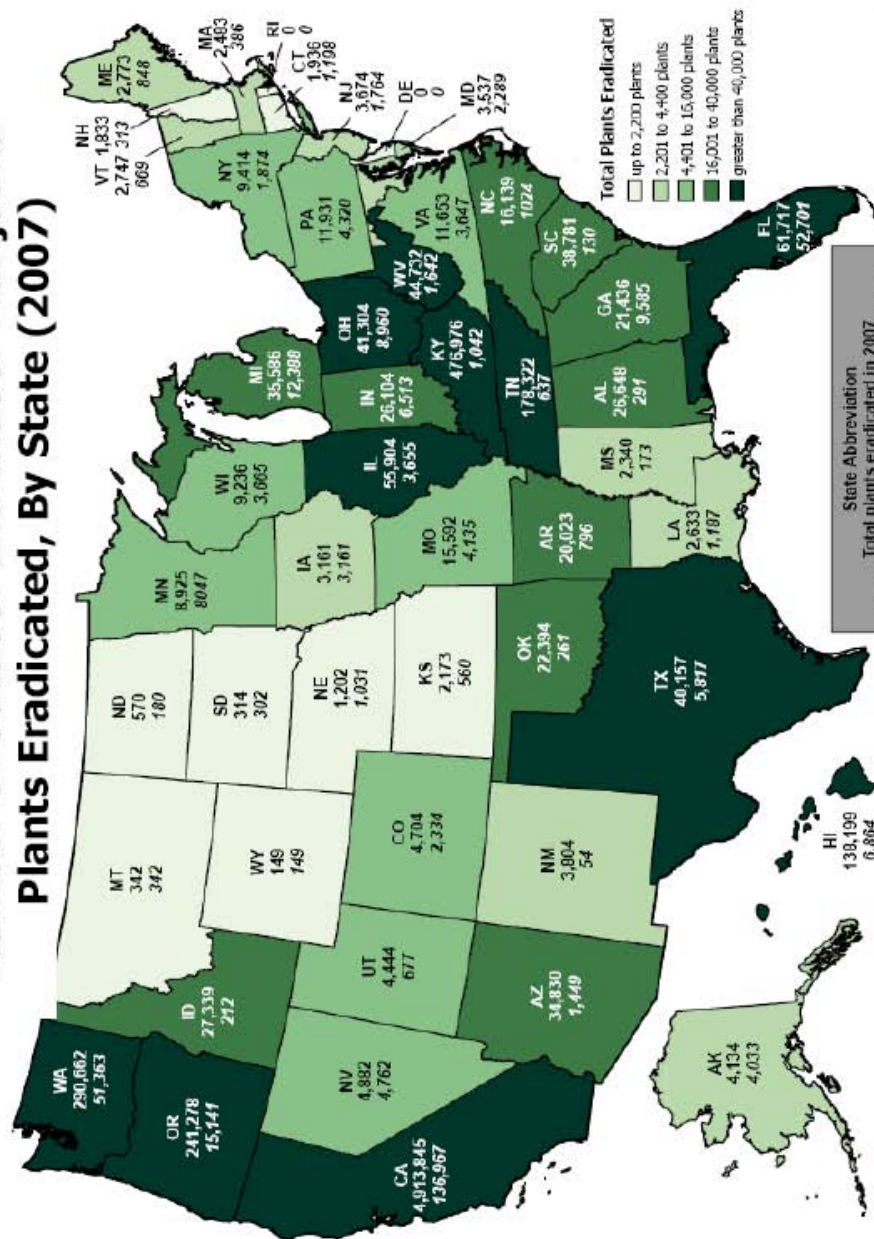
*Estimates are within +/-5% of actual amounts.

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection May 1, 2008

Domestically Grown Marijuana Is a Major Source of Supply

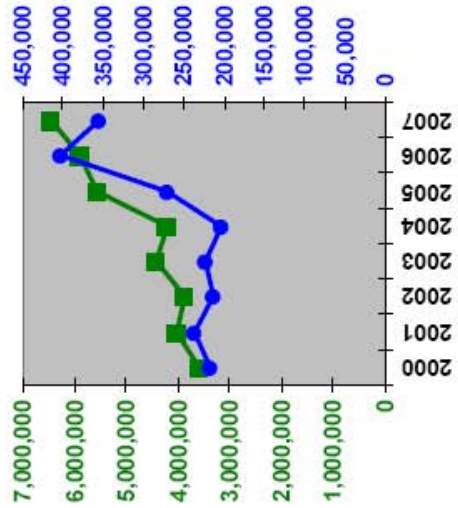
- ◆ The largest number of eradicated marijuana plants are concentrated in the West and in Appalachian states
- ◆ Although indoor-grown marijuana plants comprise less than 10 percent of total eradicated plants, the quantity is rapidly increasing

Number of Outdoor and Indoor Marijuana Plants Eradicated, By State (2007)



Source: Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program (January 2008).

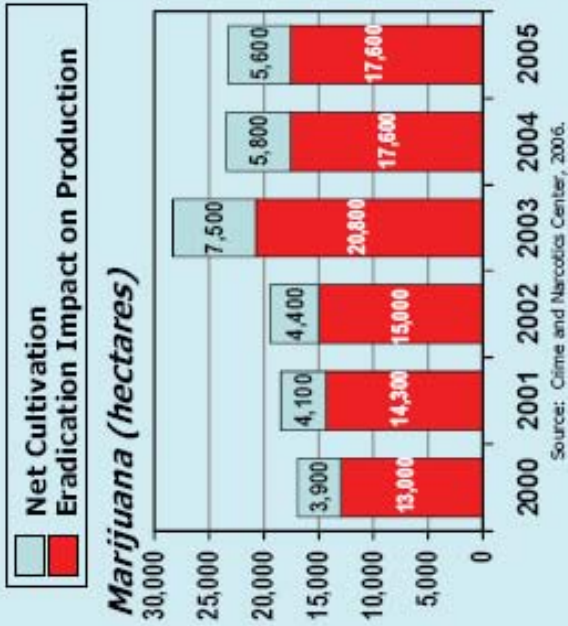
Outdoor and Indoor Marijuana Eradication 2000-2006



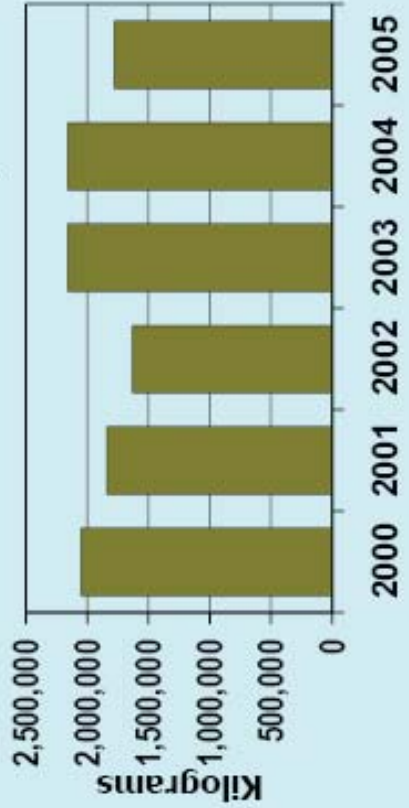
Source: Department of the Interior, US Forest Service, and Drug Enforcement Administration, unpublished data, November 2007.

Mexican Production of Marijuana

Eradication and Net Cultivation

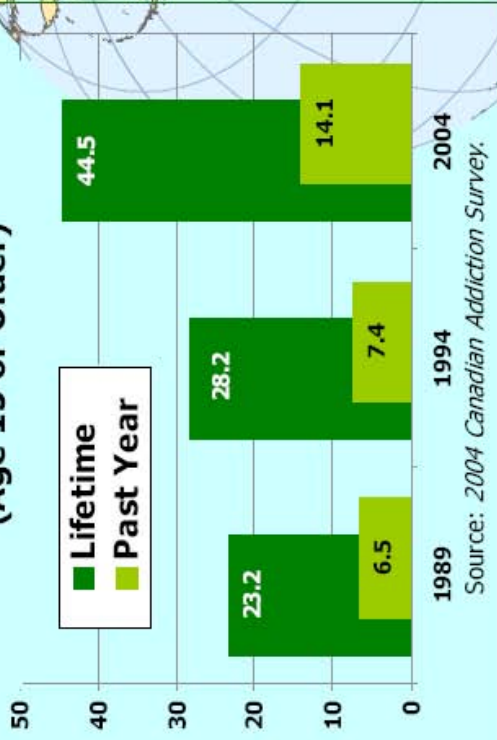


Mexican Seizures of Cannabis Herb, 2000-2005



Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007 World Drug Report, Seizures (June 2007).

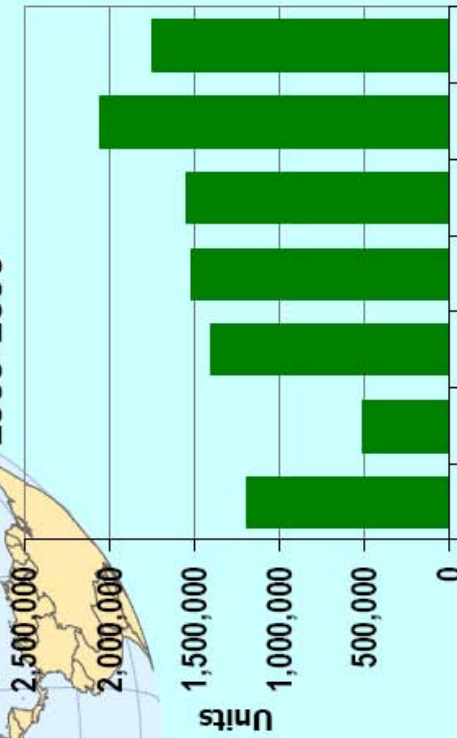
Percent Reporting Marijuana Use (Age 15 or Older)



- ◆ Canadian past-year use of marijuana almost doubled from 1994 to 2004.
- ◆ Seizures of plants have fluctuated in the past 6 years.
- ◆ Canada is a net exporter of cannabis.
- ◆ Cannabis and hashish accounted for almost all of the total value of Canadian drug seizures in 2006.



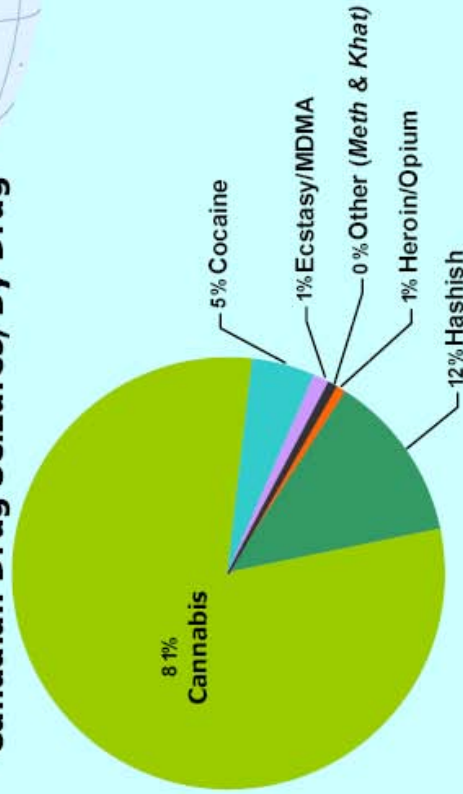
Canadian Seizures of Cannabis Plants, 2000-2006



2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006
 NOTE: In addition to number of plants, seizures by weight were reported. For 2001, 86,457 kg of seized marijuana were reported; in 2002, 2003, and 2006, an additional 83,444 kg, 127,326 kg, and 13,154 kg were reported, respectively.

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007 World Drug Report, Seizures (June 2007) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Drug Situation Report – 2006.

Street Value of Potential Proceeds of Canadian Drug Seizures, By Drug



Total value of potential proceeds of drug seizures is C\$2.335 billion in 2006
Cannabis accounts for C\$1.881 billion (81%)

Source: Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Drug Situation Report - 2006.

27 Smoked Marijuana Is Not Medicine

In April 2006, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an interagency advisory stating that it has not approved smoked marijuana for any medical condition or disease indication. FDA's drug approval process requires well-controlled clinical trials that provide the necessary scientific data upon which FDA makes its approval and labeling decisions, consistent with the standards of the *Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act*. New drugs must be shown to be safe and effective for their intended use before being marketed in this country.

Efforts that seek to bypass the FDA drug approval process might expose patients to unsafe and ineffective drug products. A growing number of states have passed voter referenda or legislative initiatives making smoked marijuana available for a variety of medical conditions upon a doctor's recommendation. These measures are deemed by FDA to be inconsistent with efforts to ensure that medications undergo the rigorous scientific scrutiny of the approval process. Accordingly, FDA, along with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Office of National Drug Control Policy, do not support the use of smoked marijuana for medical purposes.

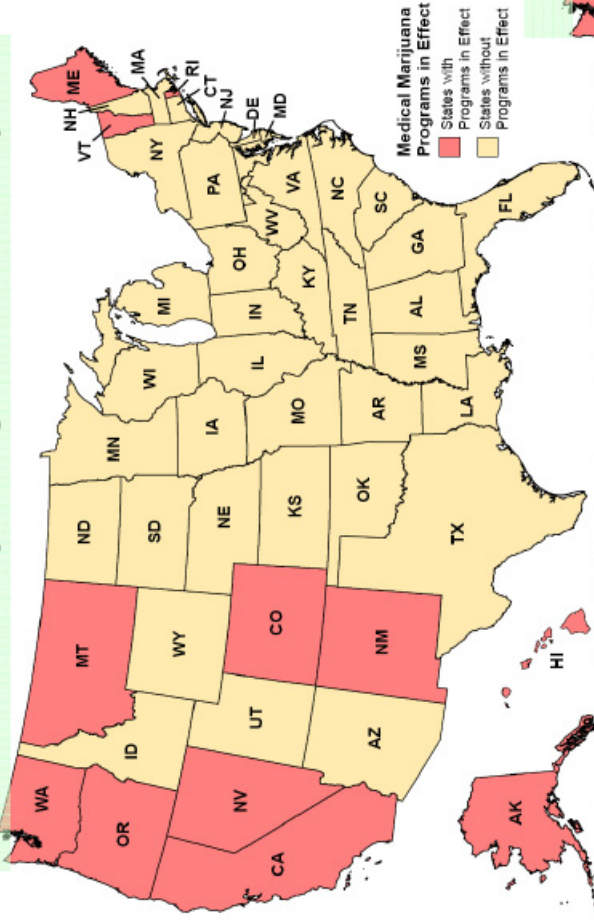


28 Compassionate Care for the Sick and Dying Or Another Front for Drug Trafficking?



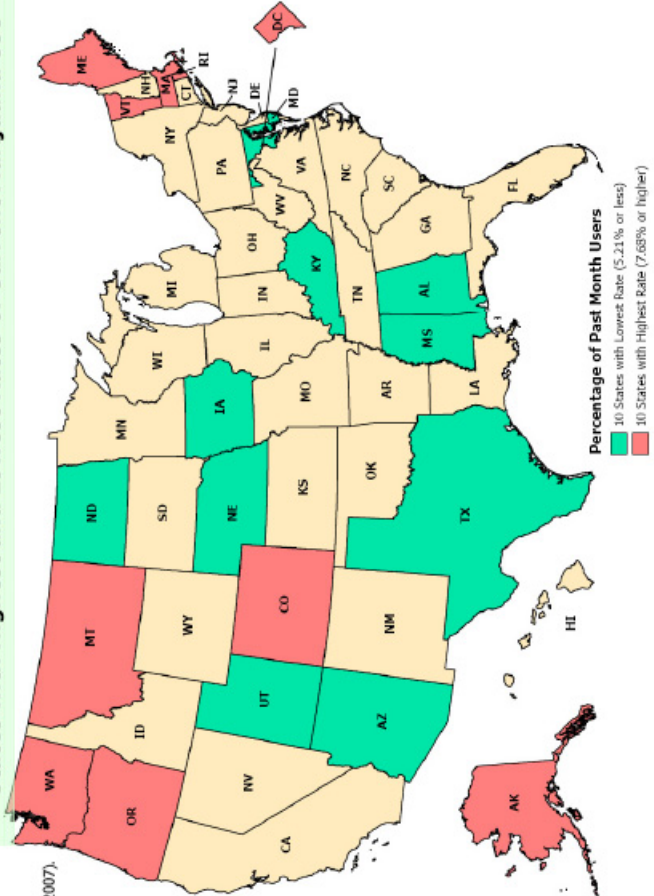
Photos: Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (2008).

States with Medical Marijuana Programs in Effect as of July 2007

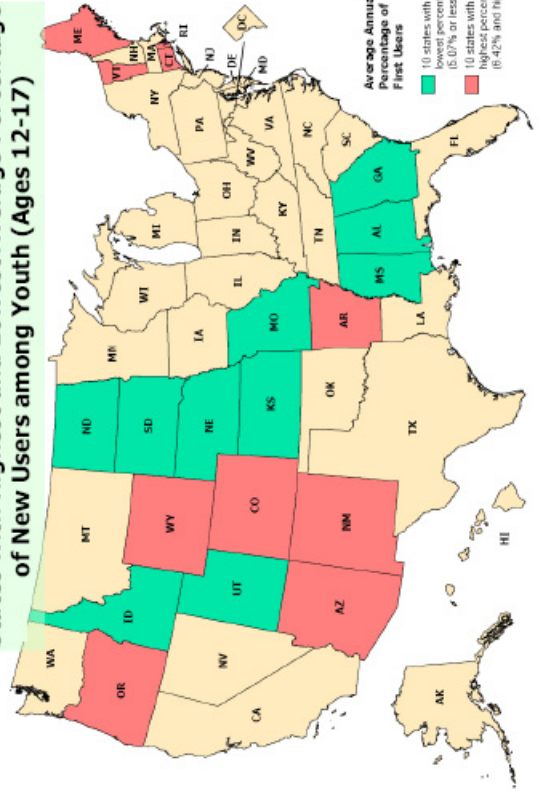


- ◆ 12 states have medical marijuana programs in effect as of July 2007
- ◆ 8 of the 10 states with the highest percentage of past month marijuana users also are states with medical marijuana programs
- ◆ 5 of the 10 states with the highest percentage of new youth marijuana users also are states with medical marijuana programs

States with Highest and Lowest Rates of Current Marijuana Use



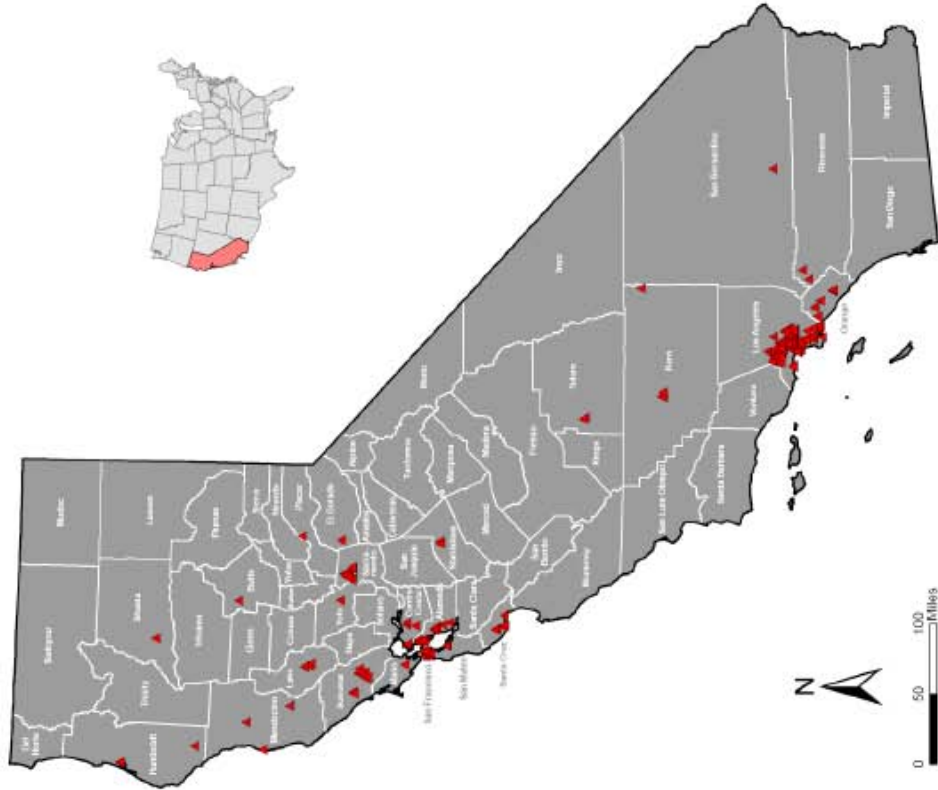
States with Highest and Lowest Average Percentage of New Users among Youth (Ages 12-17)



- ◆ Data from San Diego marijuana dispensaries provide a window into the clientele
- ◆ Only a small minority of marijuana dispensary customers have AIDS, glaucoma, or cancer – ailments for which medical marijuana is advocated by proponents
- ◆ The vast majority of dispensary customers are relatively young – almost 4 out of 5 are age 40 or younger

Marijuana Dispensary Locations in California, 2007

Medical marijuana dispensary location information was collected in 2007; some locations are approximate



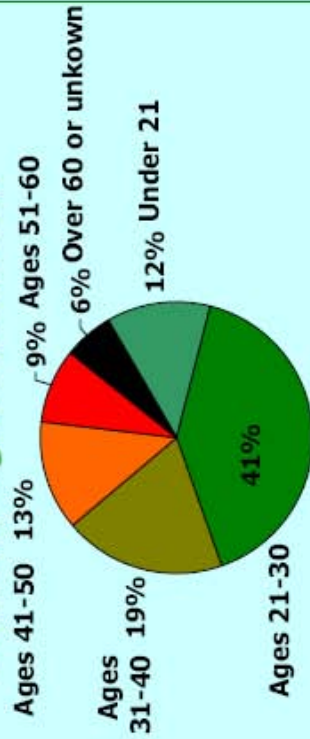
Source: Narcotics Information Network, San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center & Northern California High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (September 2007).

San Diego Marijuana Dispensaries, 2006

Customer Ailments



Customer Age Distribution



Source: Drug Enforcement Administration (San Diego). Unpublished tabulations based on 3,636 dispensary records seized from October 2005 through July 2006.

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