

# CANNABIS AND YOUTH USE

coalition for cannabis policy, education, and regulation

## WHAT WE FOUND

Ensuring youth prevention must be part of cannabis policy reform. As more studies on youth consumption and cannabis reform are conducted, there is growing evidence that under certain regulated models legalized adult-use does not increase underage use and may actually lower cannabis use among adolescents.

Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Dr. Nora D. Volkow, a leading research psychiatrist and scientist whose work studying the toxic effects and addictive properties from drug addiction has been referenced in numerous articles, recently said in an interview “that legalization has not led to increased youth use” despite previous statements.

CPEAR believes that a federal cannabis framework should draw upon all available best practices from state cannabis systems, tobacco, alcohol, opioids, and other substances to prevent non-medical underage cannabis use.

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**[CPEAR.org](https://cpear.org).**





## STUDIES SUGGEST THAT LEGALIZATION DOES NOT LEAD TO INCREASED YOUTH USE

- Recreational marijuana laws (RML) adoption was associated with an **8% decrease** in the odds of marijuana use among high school students. [JAMA Network, 2021](#)
- Medical marijuana legalization (MML) was associated with a **6% decrease** in the odds of current marijuana use and a **7% decrease** in the odds of frequent marijuana use among high school students. [JAMA Network, 2021](#)
- Researchers found that marijuana legalization was associated with a **9% decline in frequent use** among teens. [American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2020](#)
- The U.S. Dept of Education concluded there has been **“no measurable difference”** in the percentage of those in grades 9–12 who reported consuming cannabis. [National Center for Education Statistics, 2021](#)

## LIFETIME USE AMONGST TEENS HAS DECREASED

- Lifetime marijuana use among high school students **decreased** during 2013–2019. [CDC, 2020](#)
- The prevalence of lifetime marijuana use **decreased** during 2013–2019 (40.7%–36.8%). [CDC, 2020](#)
- 2018 Canadian study found **few changes** in cannabis use patterns after legalization. The rate of high-frequency cannabis use, polysubstance use, social circles of use, and mental health and substance use challenges showed no change and **no associations with age**. [Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 2021](#)