

More access to marijuana and its harms

Item 3 - Lippitt
Additional Information



Marijuana advocate written or promoted means a significant increase in access and harm

Watch the documentary **Chronic State** to see what accepting the marijuana/cannabis industry into your city will mean. This documentary illustrates the devastation of legal pot in cities and counties in Colorado and Washington. We know without a doubt that regulating and taxing commercial marijuana/cannabis does not work well.



Trailer - <https://vimeo.com/285486451>

Full Documentary - <https://vimeo.com/280127474>

Societal and personal harms increase AND the costs associated with them increase when the marijuana industry comes to town. Here are a few things that follow marijuana commercialization:

- Emergency room visits to increase,
- Youth access and use to go up,
- Traffic fatalities caused by marijuana-intoxicated drivers to increase,
- The need for addiction services – already in short supply – to increase,
- Accidental poisonings among 0-5 year-olds to go up,
- The need for mental health services to increase,
- Homelessness to increase,
- The need for police protection in domestic and petty crimes to go up,
- The presence of enterprise criminal organizations to increase and the need for law enforcement to manage them to increase.

Cities and counties had the land use authority to ban commercial marijuana/cannabis businesses at the local level – 85% of California cities and counties have banned the marijuana industry. They understand allowing commercial marijuana business is costly – costlier than the taxes it might bring in. Banning commercial marijuana businesses helps protect the health, safety and welfare from the normalization, commercialization and promotion of marijuana products to youth and young adults.

Personal grows and personal use of marijuana are protected under Prop 64. Marijuana initiatives do not change personal use in anyway.

California is currently saturated with marijuana by a factor of 8 – conservatively, 8 times more marijuana is grown today in California than is sold in our state.

All marijuana tax revenue projections have been overstated (typically by 50% - 90%). This means tax revenue from sources other than marijuana sales, i.e. general sales tax, property taxes, etc must be used to cover the costs of regulating marijuana and addressing its harms. County services like healthcare, education and environmental protection may be underfunded at a time when they are needed the most.

California cities and counties do a disservice to their constituents by partnering with commercial cannabis and the marijuana industry.

Welcoming Big Tobacco 2.0 – the Marijuana Industry - will change community politics forever. The marijuana industry has very deep pockets. Once in, they quickly work to remove or reduce all marijuana-limiting regulation and elect pot-friendly supervisors, council people and representatives to protect their interests.

Surgeon General issues rare advisory calling for price changes, indoor vape-free policies

The U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory Tuesday urging new local restrictions including taxes and indoor vaping bans to combat youth e-cigarette use, a pivotal development given the office's global stature on tobacco enforcement.

The move by Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams comes a day after the National Institute for Drug Abuse issued new data showing [nearly 21 percent of high school seniors say they vaped a nicotine product within the past 30 days](#), up from 11 percent a year ago. The increase, part of the annual Monitoring the Future survey on drug use among adolescents, was the largest for any substance use in the survey's 43-year history.

"There's no more credible or influential voice on nicotine and tobacco than that of the U.S. Surgeon General," says Dr. Josh Sharfstein, a former Maryland health secretary who is now a public health professor and vice dean at Johns Hopkins University. "Today's advisory is an alert to the nation that e-cigarettes are leading millions of youth into nicotine addiction and placing them at unacceptable risk of harm."

More than 2 million middle school, high school and college teens use these battery-powered devices to heat liquid-based nicotine into an inhalable vapor. More than one in three high school seniors and nearly one in three sophomores say they vaped at least once in the past year, the new report found. Up to 30 percent vaped for 20 or more days in the previous 30 days, a "clear sign of addiction," says Matthew Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids.

Nicotine is "very and uniquely harmful" to the developing brain, Adams said in an interview. It can impair learning and memory for people under 25, "prime the brain" for addiction to other substances and increase the risk they will turn to combustible tobacco just as smoking is at a record low. He cites research showing vaping makes youth two to eight times more likely to use cigarettes in the future. Worse yet, it's turning children who were the least likely to start smoking into potential smokers, Myers says.

The data prompted Adams — the father of two middle school students and an 8-year-old — to issue the second Surgeon General advisory in his 16-month tenure. The first, in April, urged [people to carry the overdose antidote naloxone](#). It is [also only the fourth advisory](#) since the Surgeon General issued two in 2005, against drinking alcohol during pregnancy and a warning about the health risk from exposure to radon in indoor air.

The advisory follows [stringent proposals and rules last month from the Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA), but Adams urged state and local governments, including tribes and territories, to go farther. Specifically, he asked officials to consider banning vaping indoors at public venues, making e-cigarettes more expensive through pricing policies that could include taxes and minimum price requirements and limiting access to flavored tobacco products by young people.

Adams also pushed parents, teachers and the health care industry to become more active in the fight against youth vaping, particularly the use of the [easily hidden USB-sized devices sold by Juul](#). About three quarters of youth who smoke e-cigarettes use Juul, which quickly developed a huge following on social media. The JUUL vaporizer have become very popular with kids. Now Juul plans to pull back their flavors and advertising ahead of possible FDA regulations. USA

About two-thirds of Juul users aged 15-24 don't know Juul always contains nicotine, according to [an April study by the non profit advocacy group Truth Initiative](#). Along with recognizing what vape devices look like, Adams says parents should beware of the use of tobacco or e-cigarettes in their homes or vehicles by children and quit smoking themselves. He also urged them to ask doctors to discuss the risk of smoking and vaping with their children.

He also says teachers need to recognize the tiny devices and develop and enforce tobacco-free school policies and prevention programs at their schools that don't industry influence.

In less than two years, Juul changed the trajectory in a way that threatens to undermine all the work in reducing youth tobacco use over the last three decades," says Myers. Myers doesn't mince words when he blames Juul for

what is near-universally considered an epidemic of youth vaping. The company "cannot be taken seriously when it says it had no idea its product would appeal to kids," says Myers.

[HTTPS://WWW.WSJ.COM/ARTICLES/MARIJUANA-IS-MORE-DANGEROUS-THAN-YOU-THINK-11546527075 \](https://www.wsj.com/articles/marijuana-is-more-dangerous-than-you-think-11546527075)

Marijuana Is More Dangerous Than You Think

As legalization spreads, more Americans are becoming heavy users of cannabis, despite its links to violence and mental illness

1631 COMMENTS

By Alex Berenson

Updated Jan. 4, 2019 2:19 p.m. ET

Over the past 30 years, a shrewd and expensive lobbying campaign has made Americans more tolerant of marijuana. In November 2018, Michigan became the 10th state to legalize recreational cannabis use; New Jersey and others may soon follow. Already, more than 200 million Americans live in states that have legalized marijuana for medical or recreational use. Yet even as marijuana use has become more socially acceptable, psychiatrists and epidemiologists have reached a consensus that it presents more serious risks than most people realize.

Contrary to the predictions of both advocates and opponents, legalization hasn't led to a huge increase in people using the drug casually. About 15% of Americans used cannabis at least once in 2017, up from 10% in 2006, according to the federal government's National Survey on Drug Use and Health. By contrast, almost 70% of Americans had an alcoholic drink in the past year.

But the number of Americans who use cannabis heavily is soaring. In 2006, about 3 million Americans reported using the drug at least 300 times a year, the standard for daily use. By 2017, that number had increased to 8 million—approaching the 12 million Americans who drank every day. Put another way, only one in 15 drinkers consumed alcohol daily; about one in five marijuana users used cannabis that often.

And they are consuming cannabis that is far more potent than ever before, as measured by the amount of THC it contains. THC, or delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, is the chemical responsible for the drug's psychoactive effects. In the 1970s, most marijuana contained less than 2% THC. Today, marijuana routinely contains 20-25% THC, thanks to sophisticated farming and cloning techniques and to the demand of users to get a stronger high more quickly. In states where cannabis is legal, many users prefer extracts that are nearly pure THC.

Cannabis advocates often argue that the drug can't be as neurotoxic as studies suggest because otherwise Western countries would have seen population-wide increases in psychosis alongside rising marijuana use. In reality, accurately tracking psychosis cases is impossible in the U.S. The government carefully tracks diseases such as cancer with central registries, but no such system exists for schizophrenia or other severe mental illnesses.

Some population-level data does exist, though. Research from Finland and Denmark, two countries that track mental illness more accurately, shows a significant increase in psychosis since 2000, following an increase in cannabis use. And last September, a large survey found a rise in serious mental illness in the U.S. too. In 2017, 7.5% of young adults met the criteria for serious mental illness, double the rate in 2008.

None of these studies prove that rising cannabis use has caused population-wide increases in psychosis or other mental illness, although they do offer suggestive evidence of a link. What is clear is that, in individual cases, marijuana can cause psychosis, and psychosis is a high risk factor for violence. What's more, much of that violence occurs when psychotic people are using drugs. As long as people with schizophrenia are avoiding recreational drugs, they are only moderately more likely to become violent than healthy people. But when they use drugs, their risk of violence skyrockets. The drug they are most likely to use is cannabis.

The most obvious way that cannabis fuels violence in psychotic people is through its tendency to cause paranoia. Even marijuana advocates acknowledge that the drug can cause paranoia; the risk is so obvious that users joke about it, and dispensaries advertise certain strains as less likely to do so. But for people with psychotic disorders, paranoia can fuel extreme violence. A 2007 paper in the Medical Journal of Australia looked at 88 defendants who had committed homicide during psychotic episodes. It found that most of the killers believed they were in danger from the victim, and almost two-thirds reported misusing cannabis—more than alcohol and amphetamines combined.

The link between marijuana and violence doesn't appear limited to people with pre-existing psychosis. Researchers have studied alcohol and violence for generations, proving that alcohol is a risk factor for domestic abuse, assault and even murder. Far less work has been done on marijuana, in part because advocates have stigmatized anyone who raises the issue. Still, there are studies showing that marijuana use is a significant risk factor for violence.

A 2012 paper in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, examining a federal survey of more than 9,000 adolescents, found that marijuana use was associated with a doubling of domestic violence in the U.S. A 2017 paper in the journal *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, examining drivers of violence among 6,000 British and Chinese men, found that drug use was linked to a fivefold increase in violence, and the drug used was nearly always cannabis.

Before states legalized recreational cannabis, advocates predicted that legalization would let police focus on hardened criminals rather than on marijuana smokers and thus reduce violent crime. Some advocates even claim that legalization has reduced violent crime: In a 2017 speech calling for federal legalization, Sen. Cory Booker (D., N.J.) said that “these states are seeing decreases in violent crime.”

But Mr. Booker is wrong. The first four states to legalize marijuana for recreational use were Colorado and Washington in 2014 and Alaska and Oregon in 2015. Combined, those four states had about 450 murders and 30,300 aggravated assaults in 2013. In 2017, they had almost 620 murders and 38,000 aggravated assaults—an increase far greater than the national average.

Knowing exactly how much of that increase is related to cannabis is impossible without researching every crime. But for centuries, people all over the world have understood that cannabis causes mental illness and violence—just as they’ve known that opiates cause addiction and overdose. Hard data on the relationship between marijuana and madness dates back 150 years, to British asylum registers in India.

Yet 20 years ago, the U.S. moved to encourage wider use of cannabis and opiates. In both cases, we decided we could outsmart these drugs—enjoying their benefits without their costs. And in both cases, we were wrong. Opiates are riskier than cannabis, and the overdose deaths they cause are a more imminent crisis, so public and government attention have focused on them. Soon, the mental illness and violence that follow cannabis use also may be too widespread to ignore.

—*Mr. Berenson is a former New York Times reporter and the author of 12 novels. This essay is adapted from his new book, “Tell Your Children: The Truth About Marijuana, Mental Illness and Violence,” which will be published by Free Press on Jan. 8.*

More than 1.3 million high school students started vaping nicotine in the past year

Monitoring the Future is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health.

The proportion of U.S. high school seniors who are vaping tobacco products nearly doubled in the past year, with more than **1 in 5 saying they have vaped to get a hit of nicotine in the past 30 days**, according to a new study. The prevalence of nicotine vaping nearly doubled among **10th-graders as well, with nearly 1 in 6 using the electronic devices**, researchers reported Monday in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The findings suggest that the total number of high school students using tobacco surged by 1.3 million between 2017 and 2018.

“This increase was driven solely by nicotine vaping,” the researchers wrote. The figures are based on a nationwide survey of eighth-, 10th- and 12th-graders who participated in the Monitoring the Future study, which has tracked teen use of tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs and other substances every year since 1975. **In all that time, the researchers who conduct the survey have never seen a drug’s popularity explode the way vaping did in the past year.** “The absolute increases in the prevalence of nicotine vaping among 12th-graders and 10th-graders are the largest ever recorded by Monitoring the Future in the 44 years that it has continuously tracked dozens of substances,” wrote a team led by Richard Miech, who leads the study at the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research.

When electronic cigarettes first took hold among U.S. teens nearly a decade ago, public health experts fretted that the slick devices would lure a new generation of kids into tobacco use. The new report vindicates their fears. Makers of vaping devices say their products are intended for use by adults, particularly smokers who would like to cut back on regular cigarettes by switching to a less-toxic alternative. **Juul, the company that now dominates the market, says its mission is to create “a world where fewer people use cigarettes, and where people who smoke cigarettes have the tools to reduce or eliminate their consumption entirely, should they so desire.”**

Unlike traditional cigarettes, which burn tobacco, e-cigarettes use a battery to heat a liquid that is inhaled in an aerosol form. That liquid usually contains nicotine along with a mixture of chemicals and flavorings. **Juul’s starter pack includes “pods” with flavors like mango, mint and crème. Other e-liquid flavors seemed to be squarely aimed at kids, with packages that resembled frosted cookies and sour candies.** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration ordered online retailers to stop selling such products in September as part of a broad initiative to reduce teen vaping. At the time, FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said vaping had produced an “epidemic of nicotine addiction” among America’s youth. The Monitoring the Future researchers agreed that stronger action was needed to keep vaping devices beyond the reach of minors.

Miech applauded the FDA’s recent focus on kid-friendly flavors of vaping liquids. He also praised the agency for paying particular attention to Juul; the company’s devices have become so popular among middle and high school students that “juuling” is now synonymous with vaping. The sharp increase in teen vaping was revealed in surveys completed by a nationally representative group of 13,850 students. The eighth-, 10th- and 12th-graders completed their questionnaires at school during a normal class period. The 2014 edition of the Monitoring the Future study was the first to report that vaping had replaced smoking as the most popular way for teens to consume tobacco. Even as other forms of tobacco use declined among students, e-cigarettes continuously bucked that trend. **Still, the increase in the past year was striking.**

Among **12th-graders**, the proportion of students who said they had vaped a nicotine product in the 30 days before they took the survey soared **from 11 % in 2017 to 20.9 % in 2018**. Among **10th-graders**, it jumped from 8.2 % in 2017 to 16.1 % in 2018, and among eighth-graders it rose from 3.5 % last year to 6.1 % this year. **The survey also asked about vaping of liquids that contained “just flavoring,” in order to track students who may have consumed nicotine without realizing it. When both categories of vaping were combined, the researchers found that 25 percent of high school seniors, 20.3 % of sophomores and 9.7 % of eighth-graders used e-cigarettes in 2018.**

The use of any kind of nicotine-containing product — including traditional cigarettes, cigars and smokeless tobacco — by 12th-graders grew from 23.7 % in 2017 to 28.9 % in 2018. **“This increase was driven solely by nicotine vaping, given that the use of each of the other six nicotine products declined,”** the researchers wrote in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. In other words, the rise of vaping has reversed recent progress in turning kids away from nicotine, Miech said. **Researchers have found that high school students who vape are much more likely to become cigarette smokers than their classmates who don’t vape.** “These results suggest that vaping is leading youth into nicotine use and nicotine addiction, not away from it.”

*****Students' growing attraction to vaping extended to marijuana, which increased by at least 50 percent across the board. In 2018, 7.5 percent of seniors, 7 percent of sophomores and 2.6 percent of eighth-graders said they had vaped marijuana in the past 30 days.**

Use of other illicit drugs — including cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, ecstasy and hallucinogens — did not change substantially in the past year, and according to the survey results.

Although overall alcohol use didn't change, high school seniors were less likely to engage in binge drinking in 2018. The proportion of students who said they downed five or more drinks in a row at least once in the previous two weeks fell to 14 percent, from nearly 17 percent in 2017.