Rhode Island Youth Marijuana 2015

Samantha R. Rosenthal

Johnson & Wales University - Providence, Samantha.Rosenthal@jwu.edu

Stephen L. Buka

Brown University School of Public Health
Rhode Island Youth Marijuana 2015

Marijuana use affects the actively developing teen brain. It can result in difficulty thinking, memory problems, and lead to impaired driving. One in six people who start using marijuana as a teen become addicted to it.¹

![High School Marijuana Use RI vs. US: Past Month, Initial Use and Ever Synthetic Use](image)

**Figure 1. Source: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)**

Rhode Island high school students consistently report higher rates of marijuana use in the past month than the United States’ average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>RI</th>
<th>CT</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>NH</th>
<th>VT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1. Source: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)**

More than 1 in 10 Rhode Island middle school students report having ever used marijuana by 8th grade. The likelihood of ever using marijuana increases almost 7 times between 6th and 8th grade. On average, 6.6% of middle school students in Rhode Island have ever used marijuana.

![Rhode Island Middle School Ever Marijuana Use](image)

**Figure 2. Source: Rhode Island Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)**

Youth who begin using marijuana before age 18 are 4 to 7 times more likely than adults to develop a marijuana use disorder.²
In the YRBSS, synthetic marijuana is “also called K2, Spice, fake weed, King Kong, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, or Moon Rocks.”

Data unavailable for Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

All differences between subgroups referenced in this text are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.


