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Marijuana Fact Check: Legalization Did Not Impact Teen Use, and Other Myths Debunked
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DENVER, CO – Alternate realities played out again on the subject of cannabis and the positions of those engaged in the issue.

Addiction, the leading peer-reviewed international journal focused on pharmacological and behavioral addictions, published [a study](#) yesterday debunking claims that the legalization of medical marijuana led to increased recreational use among teens.

“There appears to be no basis for the argument that legalizing medical marijuana increases teens’ use of the drug,” said Deborah Hasin, PhD, of Epidemiology at Columbia’s Mailman School and senior author of the study. Results indicate no significant changes occurred in adolescent recreational use following enactment of medical marijuana laws. This recent study affirms data that was previously presented by Colorado’s Healthy Kids Colorado study, and the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System Survey, both of which indicate that youth use of marijuana has remained stable following marijuana legalization. The commercialization impacts of recreational marijuana were not included in the study.

On the same day the study was published, marijuana prohibitionists under the mantle “Marijuana Accountability Coalition” hosted a media event to present their perspective about the harms of marijuana since prohibition, including claims that Colorado youth use was on the rise.

This highlights the contrasts between anti marijuana messages being proposed by activist groups, which do not accurately represent available data. Marijuana Industry Group has compiled the below based upon peer-reviewed journals, state-sourced data, and other objective resources.

The Rhetoric	The Record
Youth use is up	Youth marijuana consumption has remained stable since legalization, and is slightly lower than national averages according to CDPHE’s Retail Marijuana Public Health Advisory 2016 report.
Adolescent suicide victims testing positive for marijuana use has increased	Correlation to marijuana unclear, causation unfounded - Suicide is the #1 cause of death for children aged 10-18 in Colorado. Mental health, depression, bullying and changes to personal relationships were factors. A controlled study in Colorado published in the Journal of Adolescent Health

	<p>attributed 67% of suicides using firearms obtained in their household. It is irresponsible to try and divert attention from the resources that should be going to the prevention, education, and treatment of Colorado's youth to advance an unfounded correlation.</p>
<p>Arrests for African-American and Hispanic Youth have increased since legalization</p>	<p>There was an initial drop in arrest rates by race post-legalization, followed by stabilization across all racial categories. African-Americans are still arrested disproportionate to population-adjusted data. White and Hispanic arrests are effectively equal, according to a November 2017 report from Colorado Department of Public Safety Division of Criminal Justice Office of Research and Statistics.</p>
<p>The gallons of alcohol consumed in Colorado since marijuana legalization has increased by 8%</p>	<p>There is no causation or correlation. Alcohol sales decreased following marijuana legalization in a number of states according to a Dec. 2017 Washington Post article based on an initial report from the University of Connecticut and Georgia State University. While there are some studies that indicate the opposite, a far greater number of studies support the growing body of evidence that marijuana availability can reduce alcohol consumption. Alcohol is 114% more deadly than marijuana, according to an NCBI/NIH study on comparative risk assessment of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other illicit drugs. Further, Colorado's population has increased 11.6% since 2010, and such consumption trends are consistent with population metrics.</p>
<p>In Colorado, calls to poison control centers have risen 210% between the four-year averages before and after recreational legalization</p>	<p>In the most recent annual report published by the Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Center, marijuana exposures were slightly down from previous year. There were 231 calls for mj exposure in 2015 vs. 224 calls for mj exposure in 2016.</p>

The voters of Colorado have twice upheld their commitment to supporting legalized marijuana in the state's constitution, and the state, the community, and the industry have worked together to develop a tightly-regulated system, with requisite testing requirements, packaging and labeling regulations, security and more. Marijuana Industry Group will continue to welcome discussions and fact-based dialogue on relevant issues.

About Marijuana Industry Group (MIG)

Marijuana Industry Group (MIG), the leading trade association for Colorado's licensed business, was founded in 2010 by cannabis business owners and supporters to help craft Colorado's earliest medical marijuana regulatory framework. In participating in the development of the world's first licensed, taxed and regulated model, MIG has cultivated strong relationships at the highest levels of state and local government, allowing for real-time education, access, and advancement of practical policy. As the oldest, largest and most diverse trade association in the state, MIG represents the interests of, and



advocates on behalf of, the rapidly evolving needs of the leaders of regulated marijuana industry in Colorado.

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