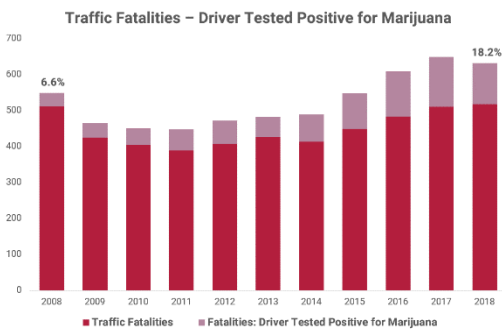
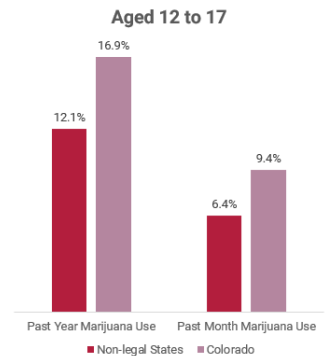


Colorado legalized marijuana for recreational use in 2012. Since then, consequences associated with marijuana legalization have played out with devastating effects for the state.

Youth marijuana use is on the rise in Colorado.

- Past month marijuana use among 12 to 17 year-olds increased 4% in Colorado from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018. In non-legal states, past year and past month use rates are significantly lower than in the state of Colorado ([NSDUH State Comparisons](#), 2019).
- In Colorado, only 15.9% of young people aged 12 to 17 years old perceive a great risk from using marijuana once a month, compared to a national rate of 23.6% ([NSDUH State Comparisons](#), 2019).
- In 2017, 34% of high schoolers reported dabbing as the means of marijuana consumption. Dabbing marijuana delivers a far more potent high than smoked marijuana flower ([Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#), 2019).
- Marijuana, which can cause depression and suicidality, particularly in young users, was found in the toxicology screens of 200 suicide victims in the state in 2017, up from 83 in 2012 ([Colorado Violent Death Reporting System](#), 2019).



Marijuana-impaired driving is on the rise in the state and as a result, so are traffic fatalities.

- A Colorado study of DUIs in the state found that a significant number of people screened for impaired driving were under the influence of marijuana. 59% of those who tested positive in the study were found to have high levels of THC in their system, at 5.0 or above ([Colorado Division of Criminal Justice](#), 2019).
- In 2018, marijuana-impaired drivers were implicated in 18.2% of traffic fatalities in the state of Colorado, marking a 109% increase since legalization was implemented ([Colorado Department of Transportation](#), 2019).

Poison control calls and emergency room visits related to marijuana are on the rise.

- In 2017, there were 21,769 emergency department visits and 16,614 hospitalizations in the state of Colorado related to marijuana ([Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#), 2019).
- The Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center reported 266 marijuana-related exposures in 2018, 147 of which were youth cases (0-18 years old) ([Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center](#), 2019).

Social justice outcomes have been inconsistent with the promises of legalization.

- Though total marijuana arrests are down in the state, people of color comprise a disproportionate percentage of arrestees for marijuana-related to charges ([Colorado Division of Criminal Justice](#), 2019).
- In 2017, 39% of marijuana-related arrests of African Americans were made without a warrant, compared to only 18% of such arrests of Caucasians ([Colorado Department of Public Safety](#), 2018).

Illegal activity is higher than ever.

- In 2018, investigations into illicit marijuana operations jumped to 257, up from 144 in 2017. 6.1 tons of bulk marijuana were seized in 2018 ([Rocky Mountain HIDTA Colorado Task Forces](#), 2019).
- In early 2019, the state reported its largest drug bust yet, which yielded 80,000 illegal marijuana plants, and \$2.1 million in cash. 42 search warrants were served ([US News](#), 2019).

Pot shops and marijuana capitalists dominate the state.

- There are 1,016 dispensaries in the state of Colorado. Medical and recreational marijuana locations outnumber all Starbucks and McDonalds in the state, combined. 52% of the state's dispensaries are concentrated within 3 counties ([Colorado Department of Revenue](#), 2019).
- Pot lobbying expenditures within the state legislature exceeded \$955,000 in 2018 ([Colorado Sun](#), 2019). As a result, laws such as the Clean Indoor Air Act or laws prohibiting marijuana companies from freely advertising on billboards across the state have been amended or entirely abandoned.

