

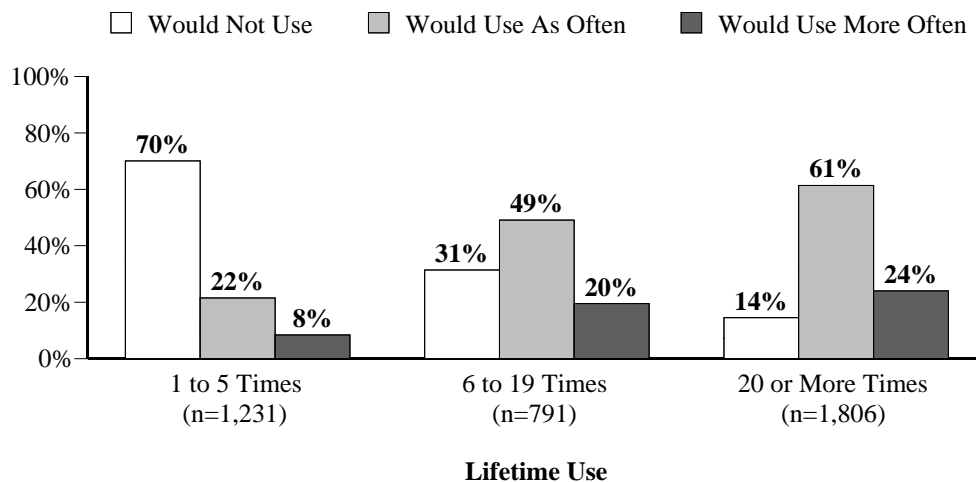
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Majority of High School Students Who Are Infrequent Marijuana Users Say They Would Not Use If Marijuana Were Legal; Frequent Users More Likely to Report They Would Use as Often or More Often

The majority of high school seniors who are infrequent users of marijuana report that they would not use the drug again if use were legalized, according to a recent analysis of combined data from the 2007 to 2011 national Monitoring the Future surveys. More than two-thirds (70%) of those who had only used marijuana one to five times in their lifetime said that they would not try the drug again if use were legalized. More frequent marijuana users, however, were more likely to report that they would use the drug as often or more often if use were legal. For example, 61% of heavy marijuana users (those who had used 20 or more times in their lifetime) reported that they would use marijuana as often as they currently do and 24% reported that they would use more often (see figure below). Similar results were found for past month and past year users (data not shown). The study also found that 10% of 12th graders who had never used marijuana said that they would try the drug if use were legalized (data not shown). The authors suggest that “[p]ublic health practitioners must continue to educate cannabis users and those at risk for initiation and/or continued use about potential harms associated with use” (p. 11).

Percentage of U.S. 12th Graders Reporting Intention to Use Marijuana If It Were Legal to Use and Legally Available, by Lifetime Use
(2007-2011 Data Combined)



*Data were collected prior to the legalization of recreational use in Colorado and Washington, but after medical cannabis legalization in many states. Data on state of residence is not collected by the survey.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Palamar, J.J., Ompad, D.C., and Petkova, E., “Correlates of Intentions to Use Cannabis Among U.S. High School Seniors in the Case of Cannabis Legalization,” *International Journal of Drug Policy*, In Press, 2014. For more information, contact Joseph Palamar at joseph.palamar@nyu.edu.