



ILLINOIS HIGHER
EDUCATION
C E N T E R
for alcohol, other drug
& violence prevention

INSIDE

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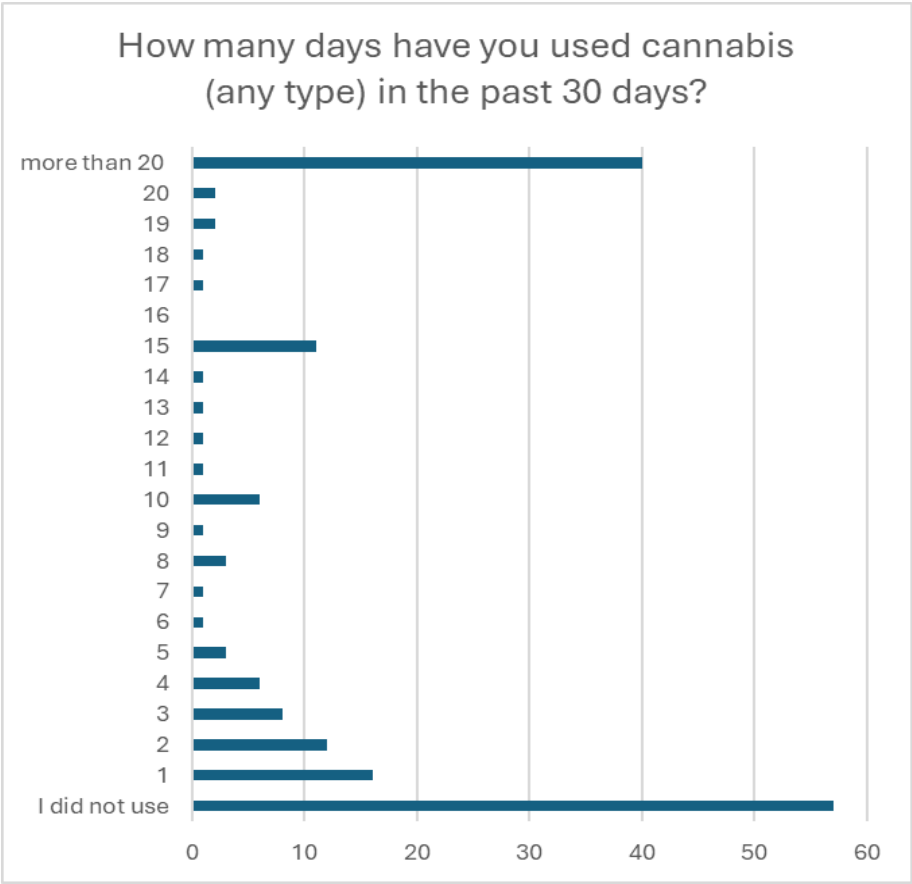
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2024 IACSUB Survey Findings on Cannabis Use in Higher Education

The Illinois Assessment of College Substance Use Behaviors (IACSUB) survey drew information from 705 participants spanning six colleges and universities across the State of Illinois. The purpose of the survey was to identify substance use behaviors among college students, such as frequency, location, and reasons for use. In this way stakeholders will be more able to identify substance use challenges in higher education and their related communities. Students were asked questions pertaining to alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco, as well as other drugs.

This brief focuses on data related to cannabis use and misuse in college students, with emphasis on past 30-day and 12-month use. It will also examine other factor of use including where students are using cannabis and how they are using cannabis, as well as perceptions that students have of cannabis use by peers. The brief will wrap up with the data the IACSUB survey found pertaining to the prevalence of and reasons for CBD usage.

Figure 2.1



Cannabis frequency usage during a 30-day period

Out of the 705 participants in the survey, 175 answered the question regarding frequency of use in the past month. A total of 32.6% of participants said that they had not used cannabis in the last 30 days ($n=57$). Another 22.9% answered that they had used cannabis more than 20 days out of the past 30 days ($n=40$).

Figure 2.2

Cannabis frequency usage during a 12-month period

Participants were then asked about their frequency of use within the past 12 months. 226 participants responded to this question. Of the total respondents 22.1% reported that they did not use cannabis in the last 12 months ($n=50$). Additionally, 30.1% of participants said that they used cannabis between 1-6 times per year ($n=68$) and 19% of participants answered that they are daily cannabis users ($n=43$).

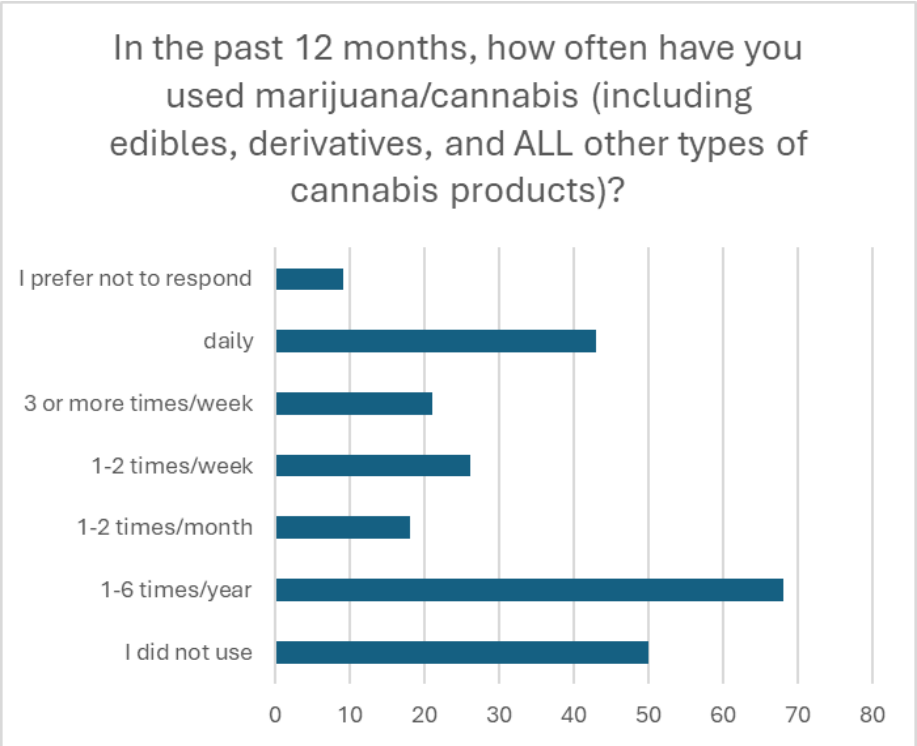
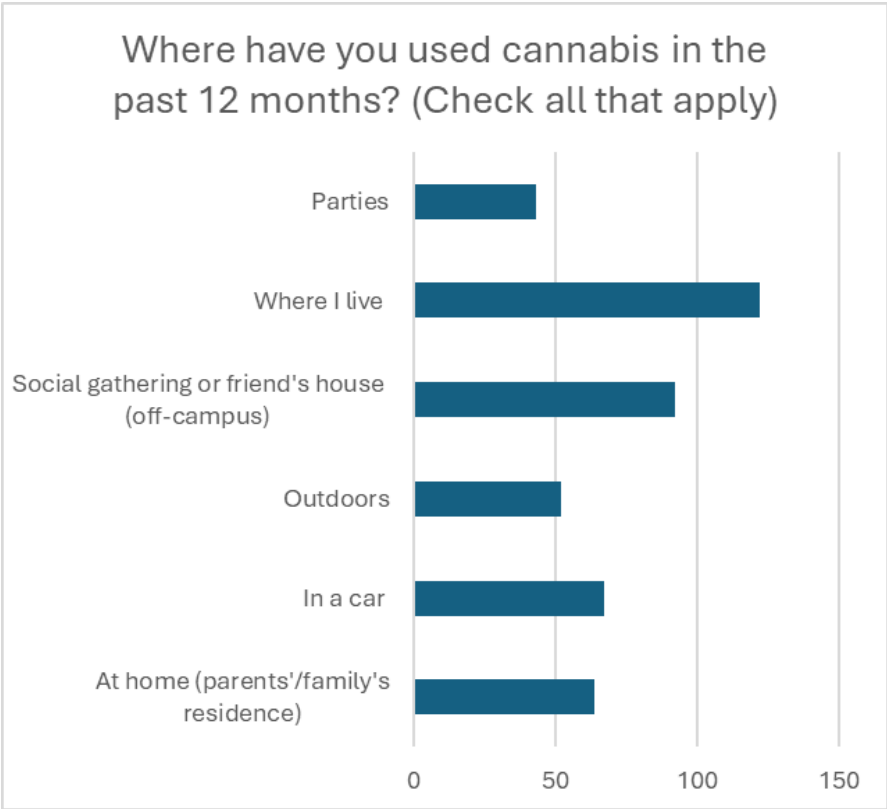


Figure 2.3



Where are students using cannabis?

Participants who disclosed cannabis use, were then asked where they chose to use. Participants were allowed to check all options that applied to them. 54% of participants ($n=122$) selected “where I live” and 40.7% ($n=92$) selected “Social gathering or friend’s house”.

Figure 2.4

What type of cannabis products are students using?

The data from this survey indicates that by and large, students are saying they don’t use marijuana/cannabis in any form with “I did not use” being the most selected category. A total of 468 made this choice. 7 participants preferred not to respond.

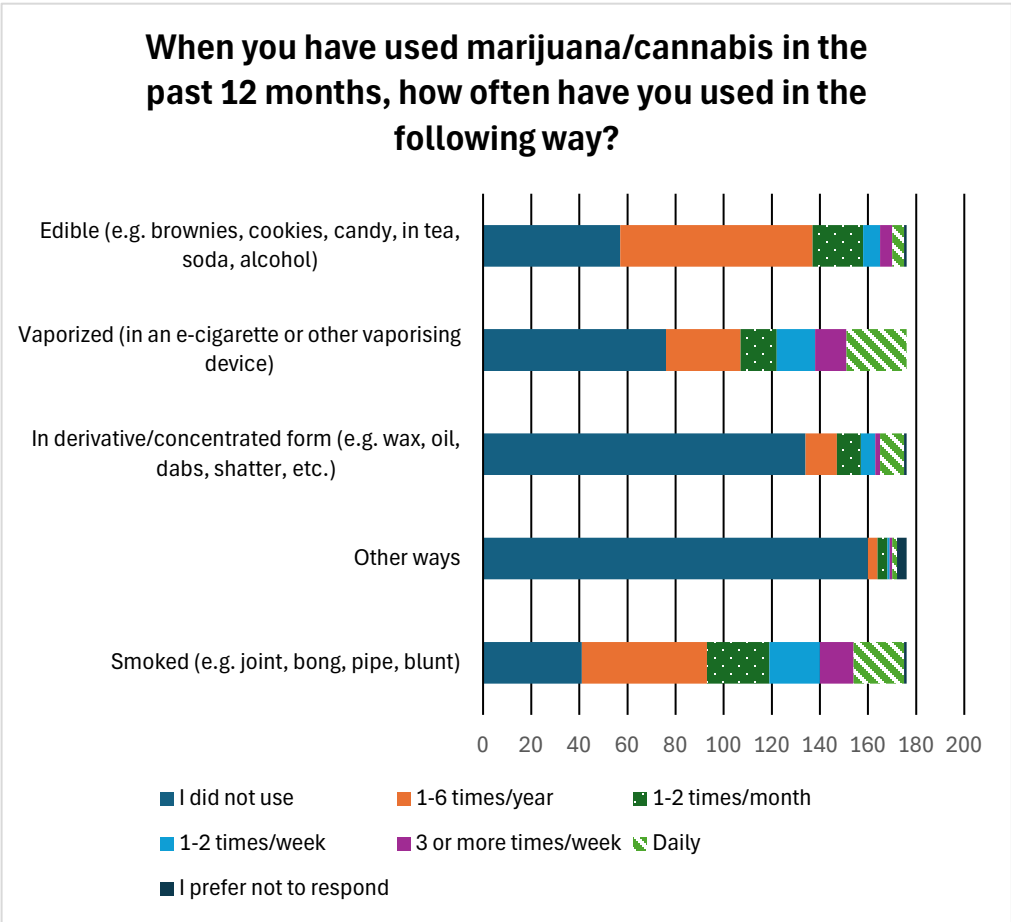
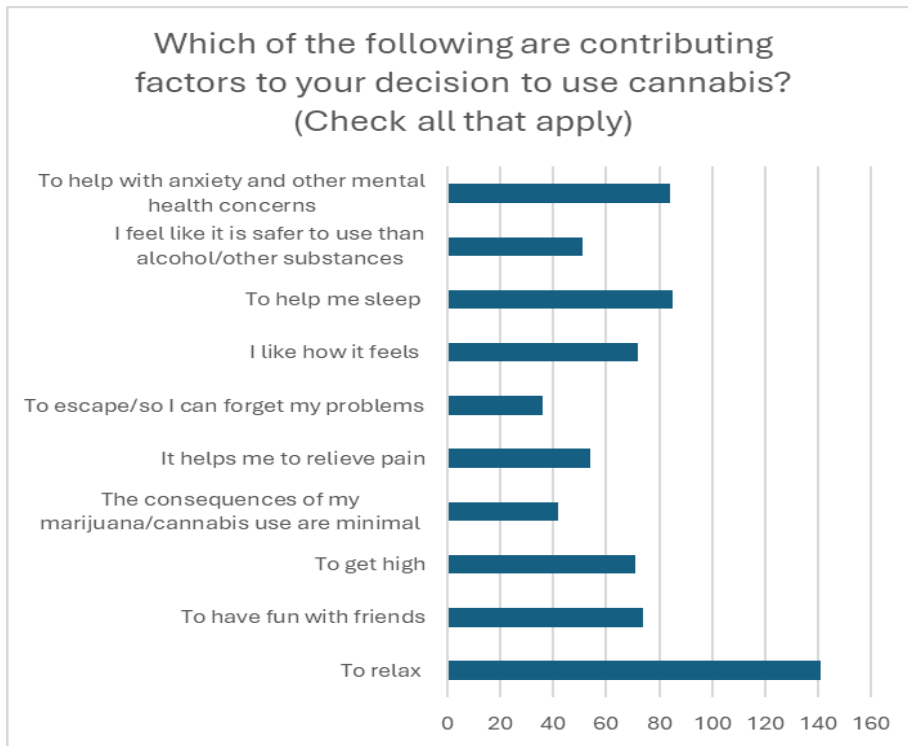


Figure 2.5



Why are students using cannabis?

Students that disclosed cannabis use in the survey were asked to explain their reasoning. Participants could choose as many options as were applicable. The most common answer given was "To relax" with a total of 61.9% of participants selecting this contributing factor ($n=140$).

Consequences related to using cannabis

180 total participants gave a response of some kind to this question. The most selected response with 37.8% of participants indicating this experience ($n=68$) was "felt in fog, sluggish, tired, or dazed the morning after using" at least once in the past year. Additionally, 28.3% of participants ($n=51$) needed to use more marijuana for the same result due to increased tolerance, and 25.6% ($n=46$) of participants disclosed that they had attended class after using. 4 participants chose not to respond.

Figure 2.6

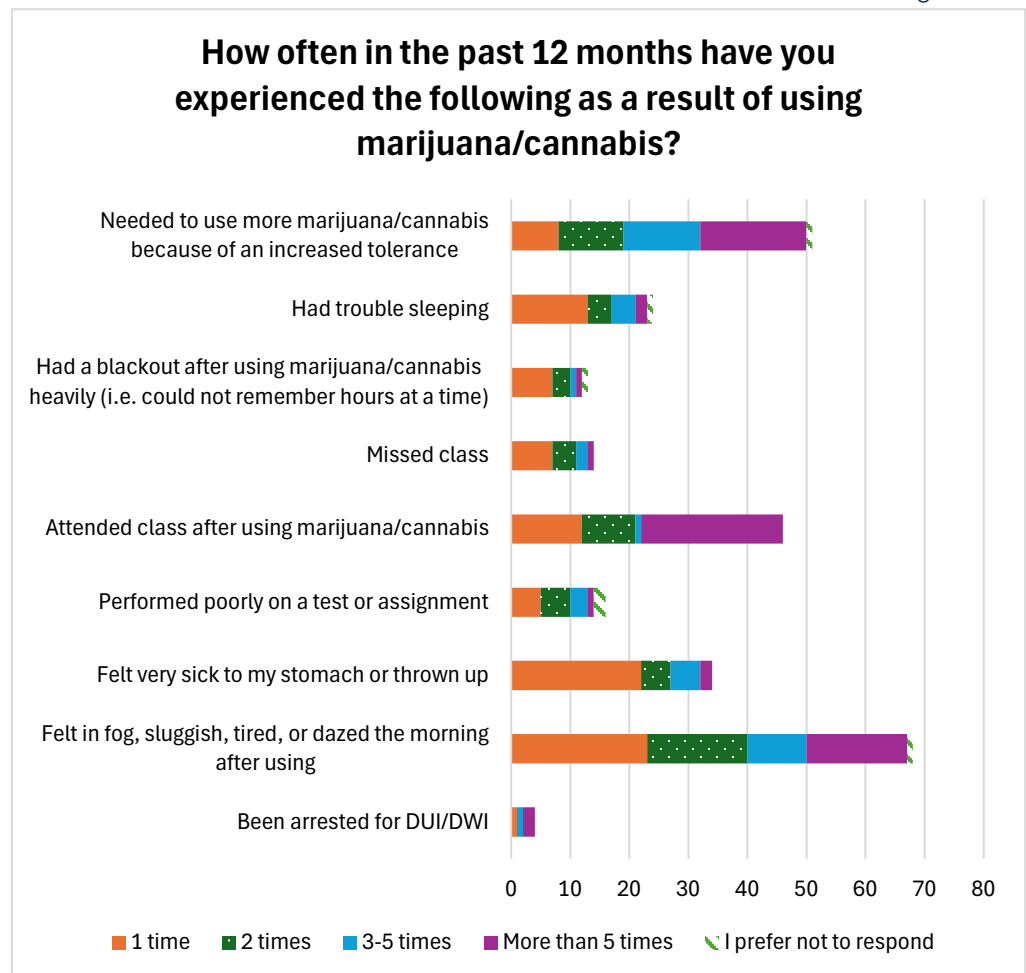
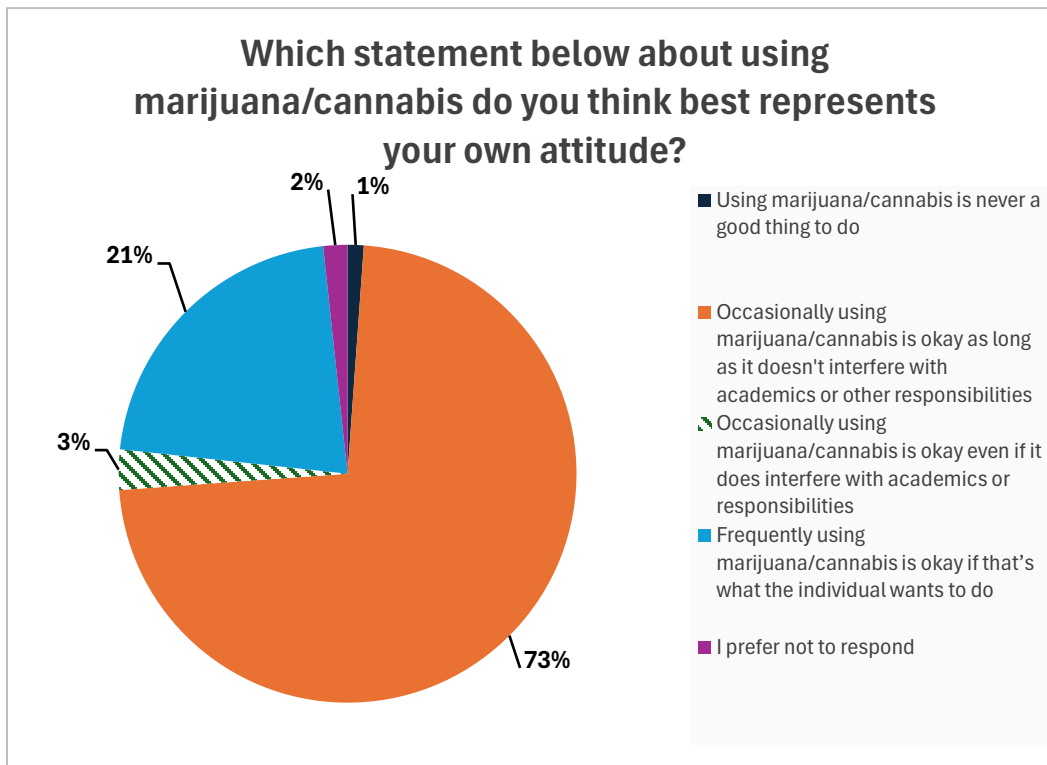


Figure 2.7



Own attitude toward Cannabis

Of the 176 participants who interacted with this question, 73% of them ($n=128$) believe that it is okay to occasionally use marijuana if it does not interfere with academics or other responsibilities while 21% of participants ($n=38$) said that frequent use of marijuana is okay if that is what the person wants to do.

Intentions to change

There were 165 participants who responded to this question and 11 who chose not to respond. The most frequently selected response was "I see no need to change my marijuana/cannabis use" with 108 participants choosing this answer. Another 36 participants said they were trying to cut back or quit using.

Figure 2.8

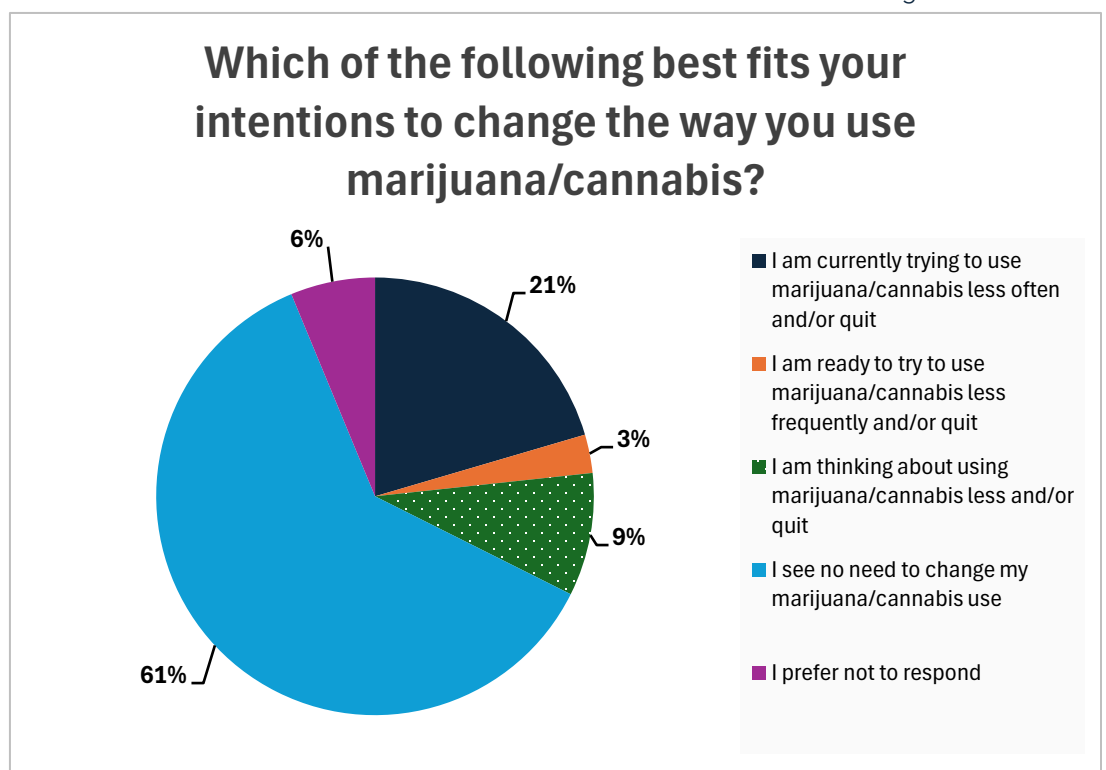
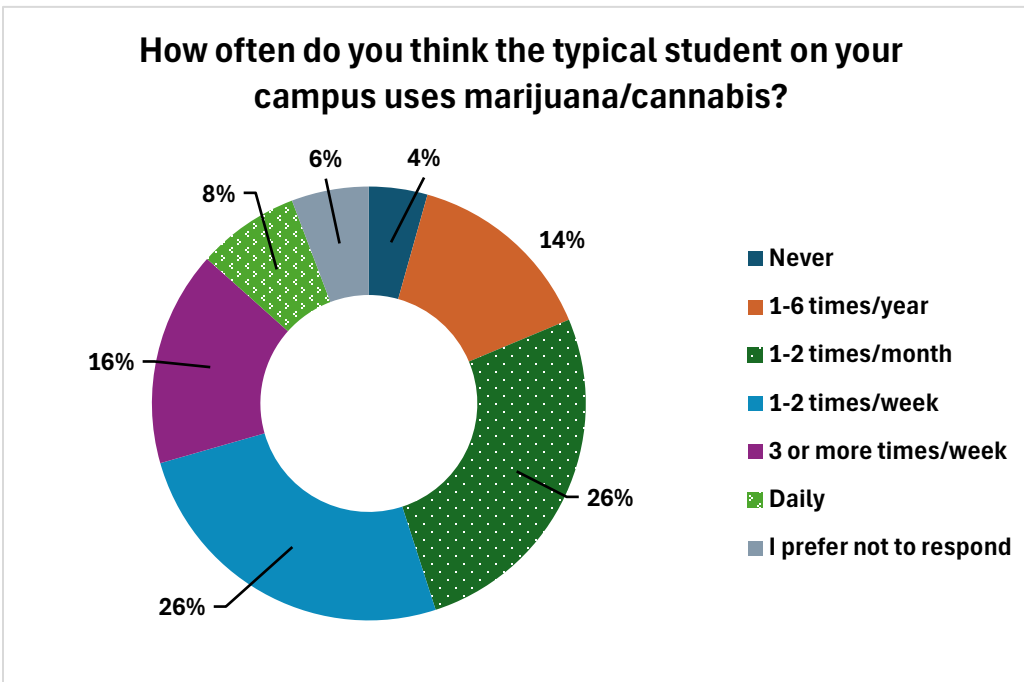


Figure 2.9



How often do students think others are using cannabis on campus?

Of the 642 people in this part of the survey, 169 think that the typical a typical student on their campus uses marijuana 1-2 per month. Another 164 students said that they think their peers are using marijuana 1-2 per week.

Figure 2.10

Does Illinois state law change a student's attitude toward cannabis?

Of the 439 respondents in this survey question, 91.6% of them answered that they did not currently use marijuana/cannabis and that they did not plan to start using ($n=402$).

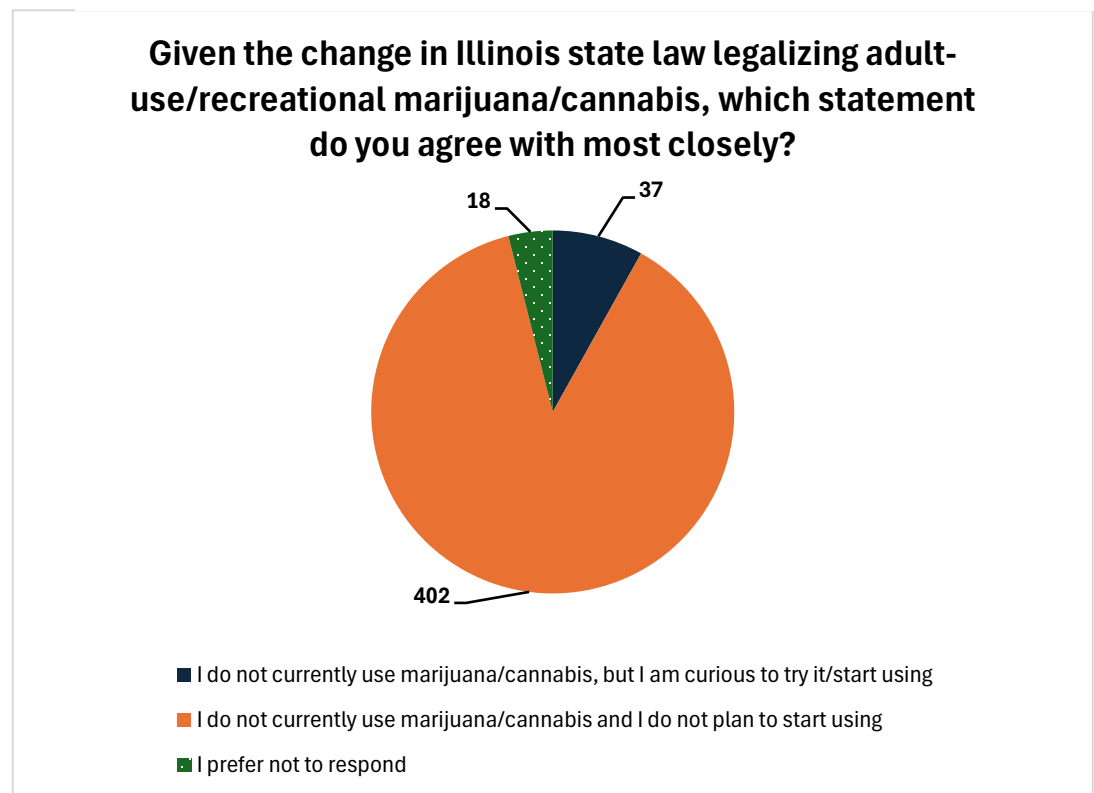
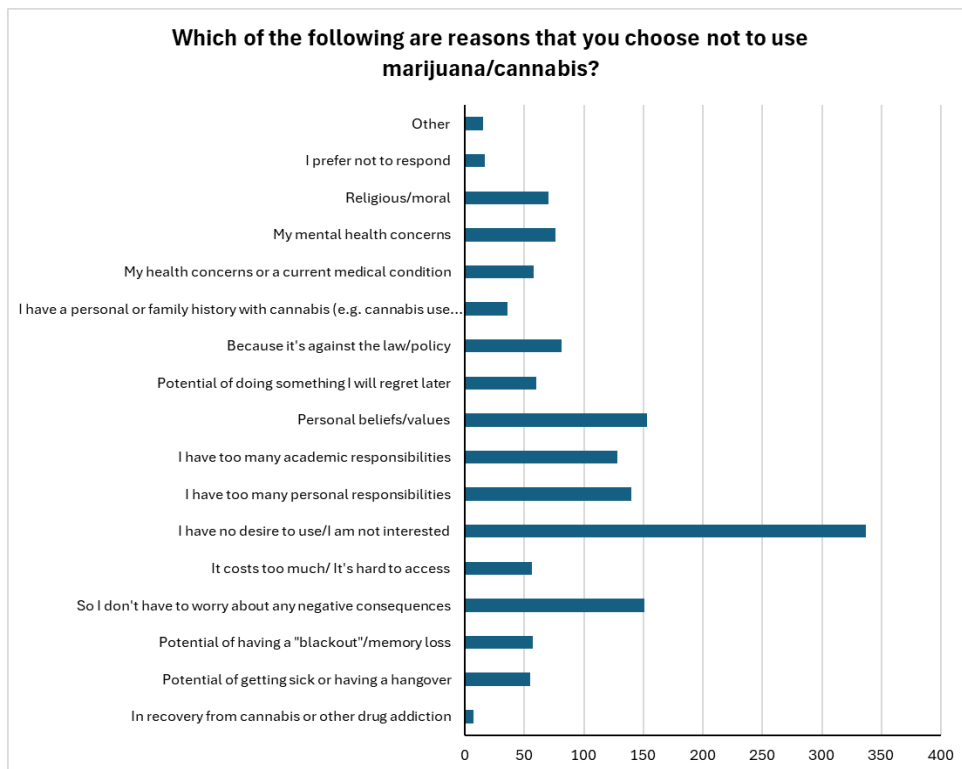


Figure 2.11



Why do students choose not to use cannabis?

For this question, 642 respondents who had previously stated they did not use cannabis were asked why. Of these students, 52.5% ($n=337$) said that they "have no desire to use/I am uninterested."

CBD use in the past 12 months

Of the 642 participants surveyed, 555 of them said that they had not used CBD products in the past 12 months. Figure 1.12 shows that in the past 12 months 73 participants have used CBD products. The remaining 2% of participants, which adds up to 14 students, preferred not to respond.

Figure 2.12

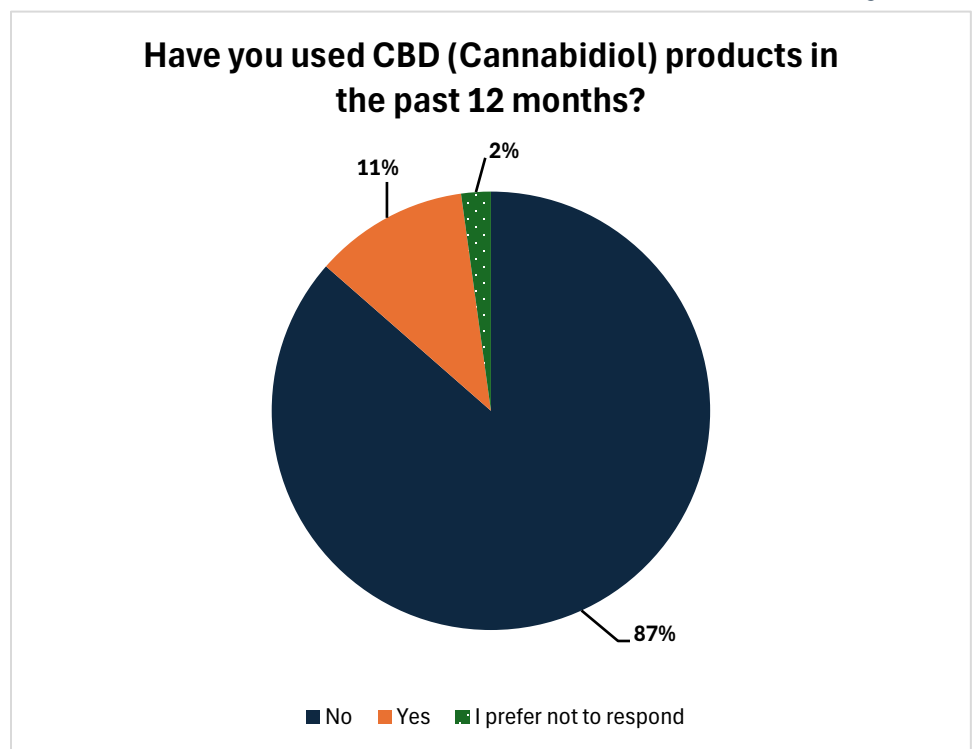
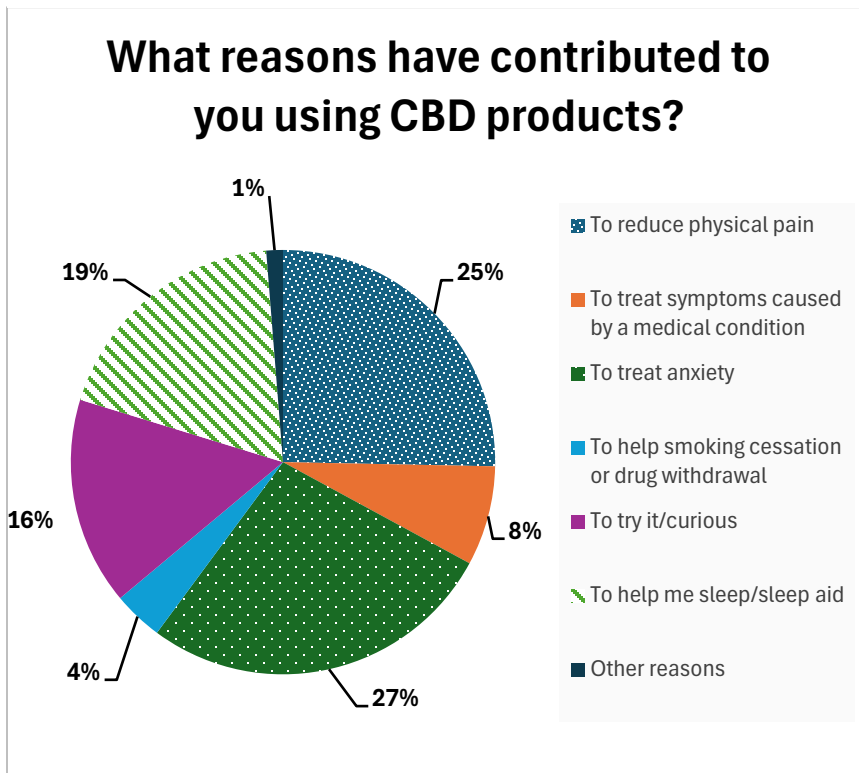


Figure 2.13



Why are students using CBD?

Students who used CBD products were a total of 73 survey participants. Of this total, 27% of respondents ($n=20$) listed “to treat anxiety” as the reason for using CBD products. Another 25% ($n=18$) of respondents said they used CBD products “to reduce physical pain”.

Summary

This brief’s data shows that everyday cannabis use is very prevalent when measuring by past month and past year data. The research indicated that the most common location for students to be using cannabis is where they live. Feeling of fog, tiredness, and sluggishness the morning after use was the most common effect of marijuana that students reported. Most students think that it is okay to use marijuana occasionally so long as it does not interfere with academic performance or other responsibilities. Students usually think that their peers are using cannabis a few times per week or month. The reasons for students choosing to start cannabis use are numerous but the most prevalent is to help them relax. Lastly, CBD product usage is not prevalent according to the survey data but when it is used, it is mostly for the treatment of anxiety and physical pain.

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Resources

[Illinois Higher Education Center \(2024\). Reprint of IACSUB Survey. Statewide AOD Survey, 1-78.](#)

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