

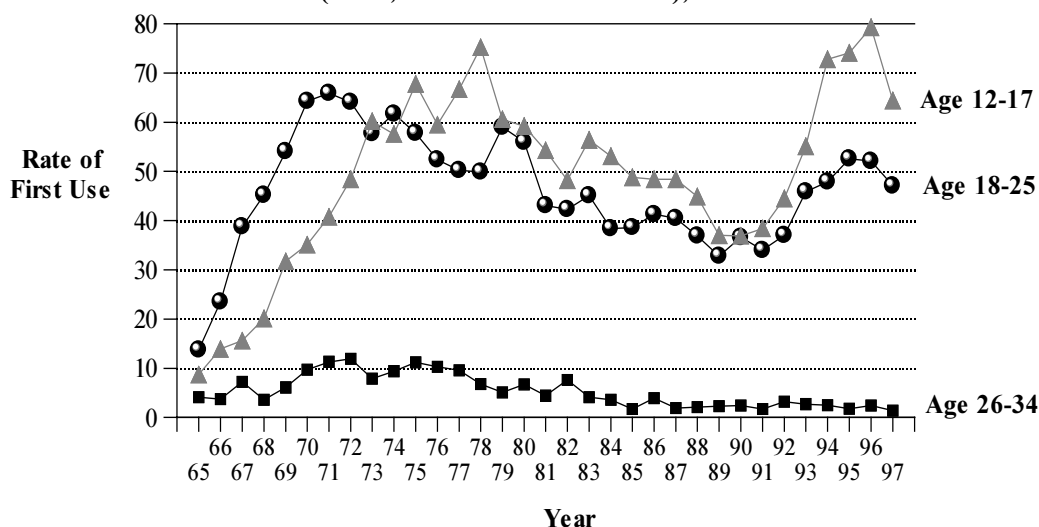
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

90s Surge in Marijuana Use by Youth May Be Subsiding: Fewer Youth Age 12-17 Initiated Marijuana Use During 1997

The rate of new marijuana use by youth ages 12-17 decreased for the first time in almost a decade, according to data from the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. In 1997, there were 64 new marijuana users ages 12-17 per 1,000 potential users, a 19% decline compared to 1996. In that year the rate was 79 new users per 1,000 potential new users. This represents the first decline in the initiation of marijuana use among this age group since 1989. A similar, yet less substantial, decline occurred among 18-25 year olds (from 52 to 47 new users per 1,000 potential users). The researchers estimate that 2.1 million U.S. household residents aged 12 and older used marijuana for the first time in 1997 and that the mean age of first use was 17.1 years.

**Age-Specific Rates of First Marijuana Use
(Per 1,000 Potential New Users), 1965-1997**



SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Office of Applied Studies (OAS), "Summary of Findings from the 1998 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse," August 1999. Available online at www.samhsa.gov.

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