

Marijuana Use, Alcohol Use, and Driving in Washington State: Emerging Issues with Poly-Drug Use on Washington Roadways

STACI HOFF, PHD

RESEARCH DIRECTOR



WASHINGTON
Traffic Safety
COMMISSION

Marijuana Use, Alcohol Use, and Driving in Washington State

Emerging Issues With Poly-Drug Use on Washington Roadways

Darrin T. Grondel, Director
Staci Hoff, PhD, Research Director
Dick Doane, Research Investigator

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Washington State Highway Safety Office

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) shares a vision with numerous others to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030. Our Commission is made up of 26 employees and ten Commissioners chaired by Washington's Governor Jay Inslee.

Washington's Traffic Safety Commission leads statewide efforts and builds partnerships to save lives and prevent injuries on our roadways for the health, safety, and benefit of our communities.



Governor Jay Inslee
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Washington State
Association of Counties

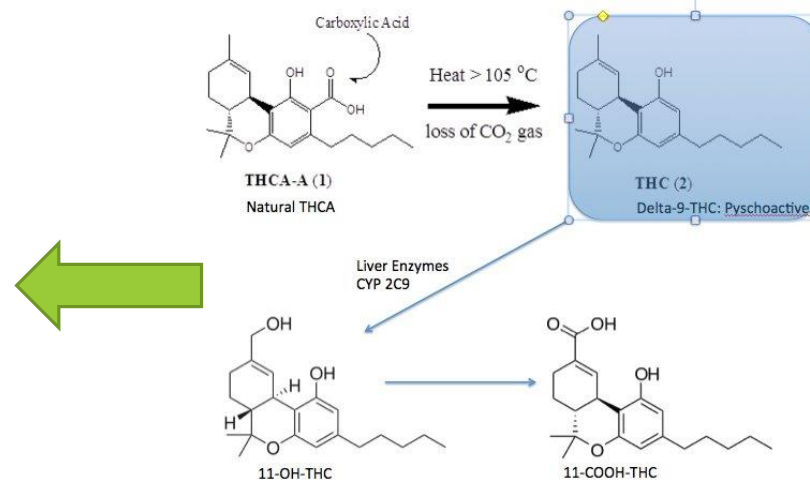
A Note About Data...



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600 – Delta 9
601 – Hashish Oil
602 – Hashish
603 – Marijuana/Marihuana
604 – Marinol
605 – Tetrahydrocannabinols (THC)
695 – Cannabinoid (Type Unk)



Drug	Level	Unit
THC	5.7	ng/ml
C-THC	55	ng/ml
Cannabinoids	888	.

Drug Differences Between NHTSA FARS and WA-FARS

NHTSA FARS

- Limited to three drug types
- Coding hierarchy – cannabinoids are fifth in the hierarchy and superseded by Narcotics, Depressants, Stimulants, and Hallucinogens
- No drug levels
- Don't know what the lab actually tested for
- Don't know what lab reporting thresholds are
- Police reported versus lab reported

WA FARS



- All potentially impairing drugs, levels, and units from single toxicology lab
- Matched to NHTSA FARS record via record number, vehicle number, and person number
- Standard lab protocol and testing panel
- Known reporting thresholds
 - THC reporting threshold ≥ 1 ng/ml

Report Summary Highlights (pages 1-2)

Driver impairment due to alcohol and/or drugs is the number one contributing factor in Washington fatal crashes and is involved in nearly half of all traffic fatalities. **Poly-drug drivers (combinations of alcohol and drugs or multiple drugs) is now the most common type of impairment among drivers in fatal crashes.** For the first time in 2012, poly-drug drivers became the most prevalent type of impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes. **Since 2012, the number of poly-drug drivers involved in fatal crashes have increased an average of 15 percent every year.**

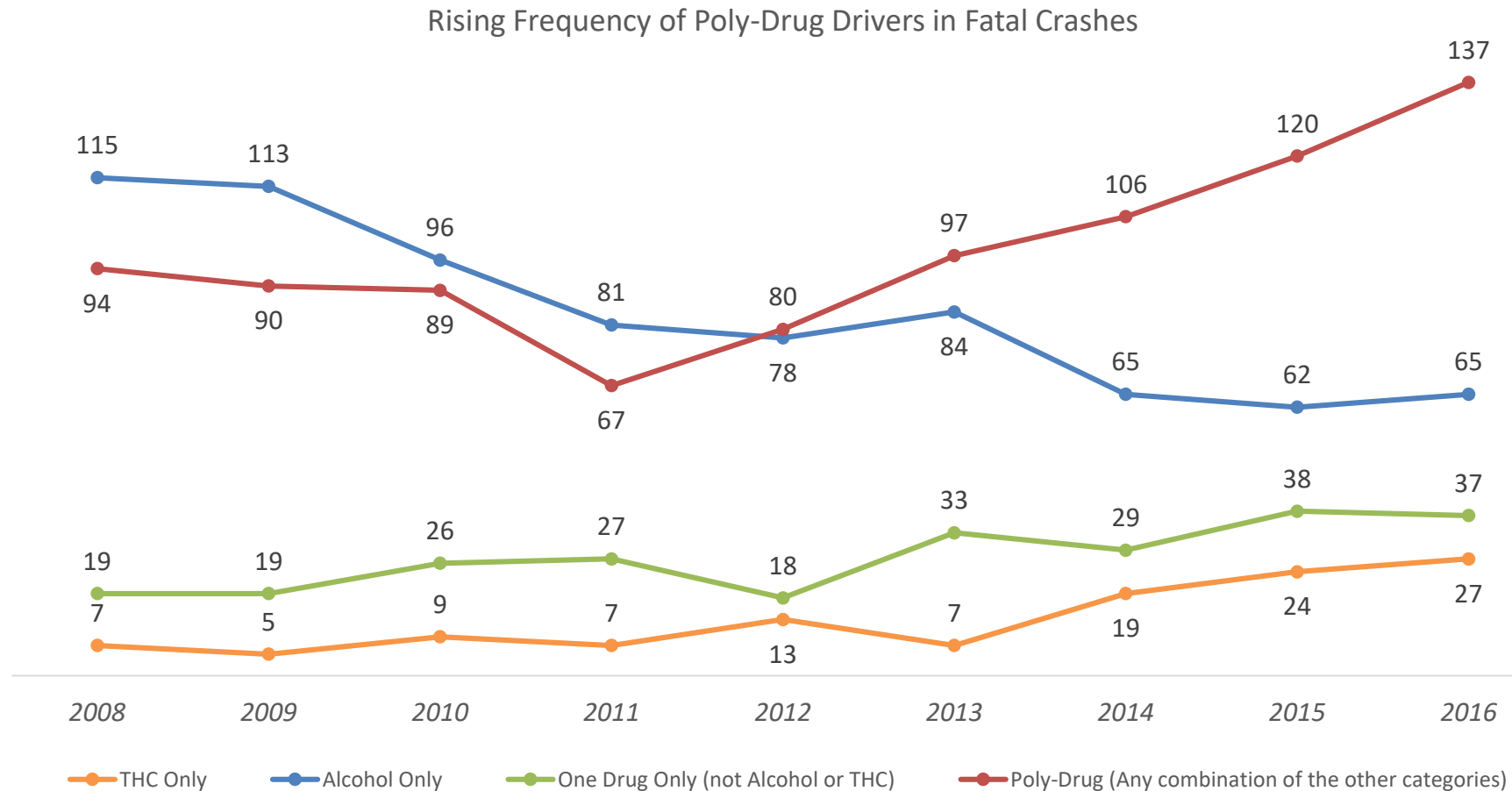
By 2016, the number of poly-drug drivers were more than double the number of alcohol-only drivers and five times higher than the number of THC-only drivers involved in fatal crashes.

More than half (53 percent) of drivers ages 15-20 believe marijuana use made their driving better. This is a significantly higher rate than drivers ages 21-25 (13.7 percent) and drivers ages 26-35 (17.4 percent).

Toxicology Testing Rates of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes (page 11)

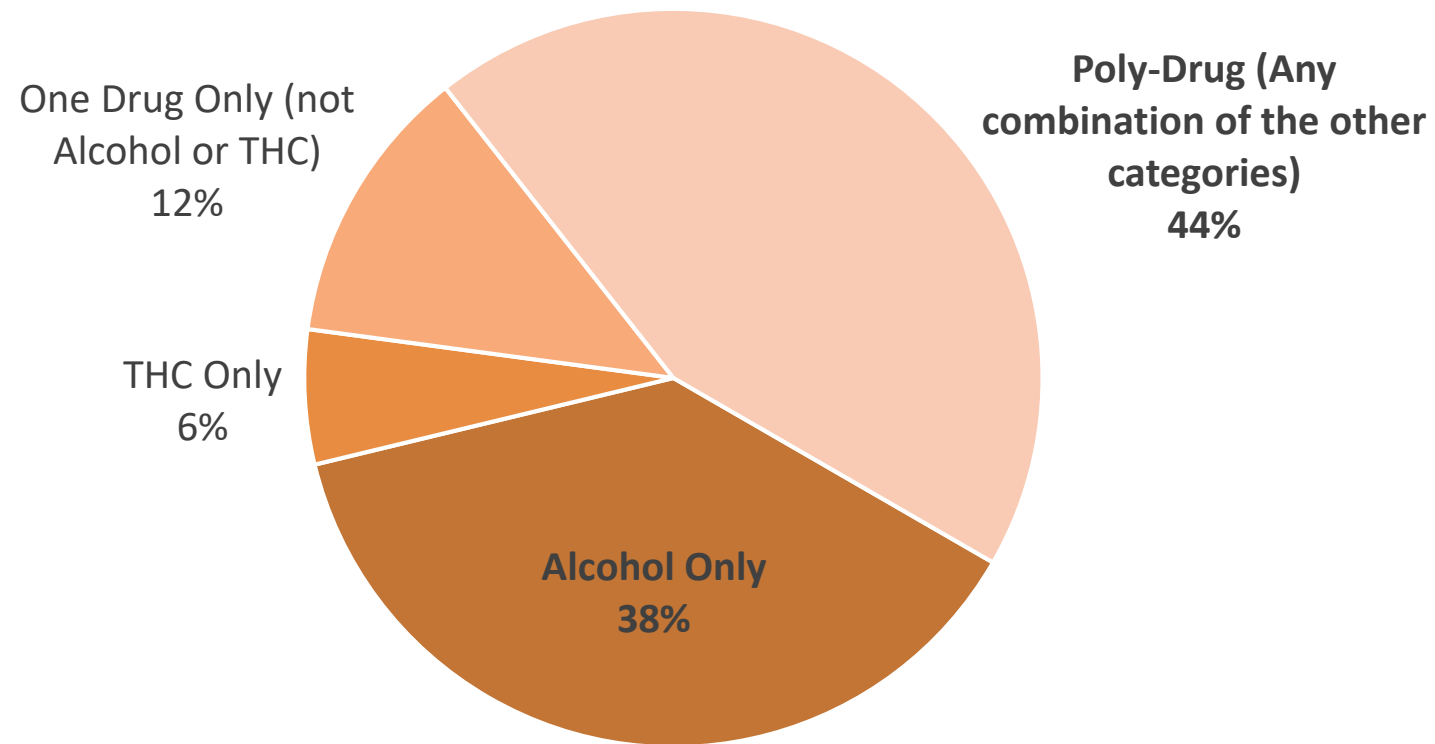
	Alcohol Test ONLY	Drug Test ONLY	Alcohol and Drug Test	Not Tested	% Tested	Total Drivers	% Tested for Alcohol and Drugs
2008	30	5	402	275	61.4%	712	56.5%
2009	37	0	369	227	64.1%	633	58.3%
2010	22	1	377	219	64.6%	619	60.9%
2011	36	0	344	226	62.7%	606	56.8%
2012	21	0	345	225	61.9%	591	58.4%
2013	7	0	373	212	64.2%	592	63.0%
2014	5	1	342	275	55.9%	623	54.9%
2015	12	0	396	359	53.2%	767	51.6%
2016	9	0	416	342	55.4%	767	54.2%
Total	179	7	3,364	2,360	60.1%	5,910	56.9%

Poly-Drug Drivers in Fatal Crashes (page 13)

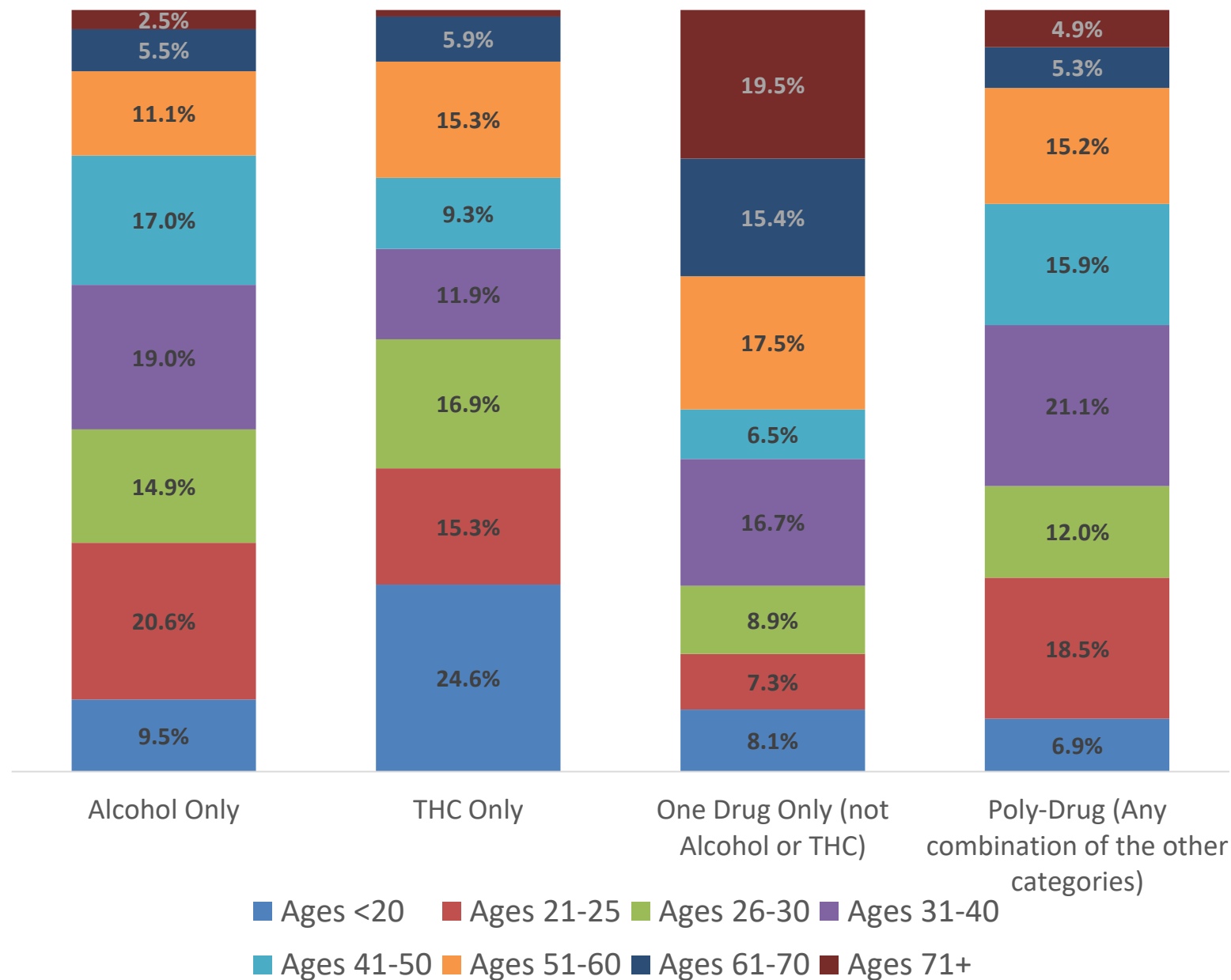


Poly-Drug Drivers are the Most Prevalent Impaired Drivers in Fatal Crashes (page 13)

Alcohol and Poly-Drug Use in Fatal Crash Involved Drivers, 2008-2016

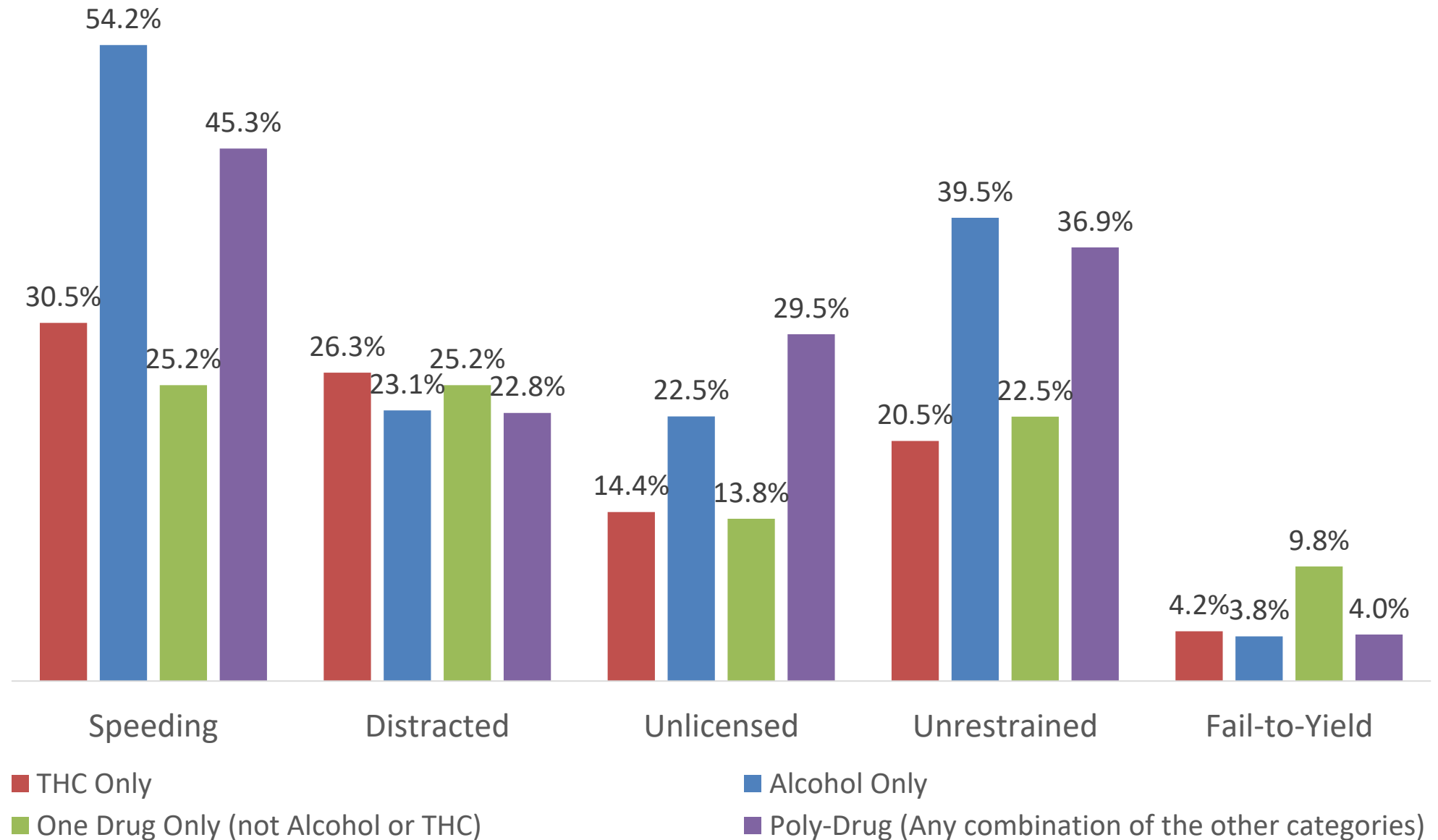


Driver Drug Results by Age (page 15)



Crash Factors

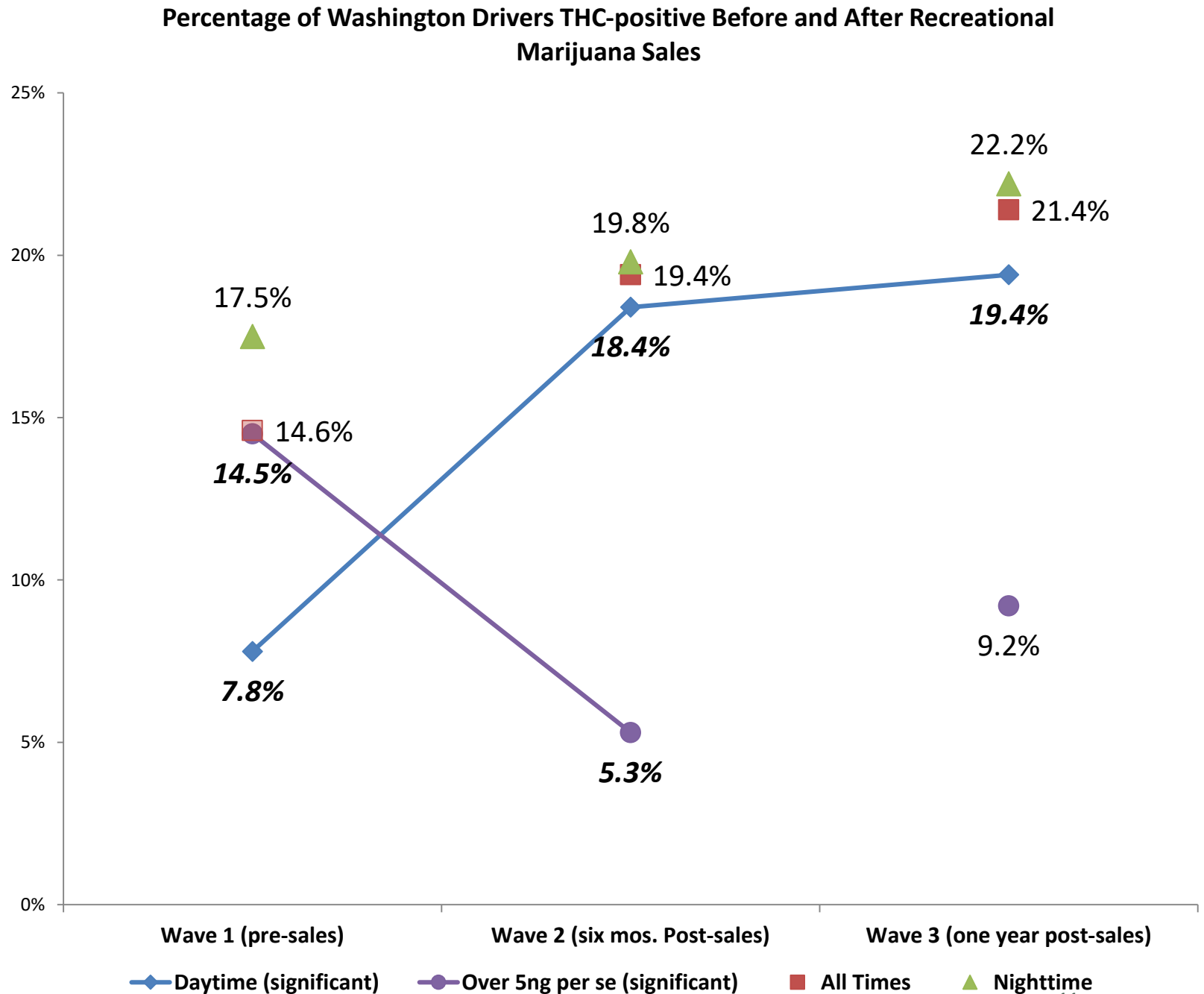
(page 16)



Marijuana and Driving

Washington's Roadside Survey 2014-2015 (page 17)

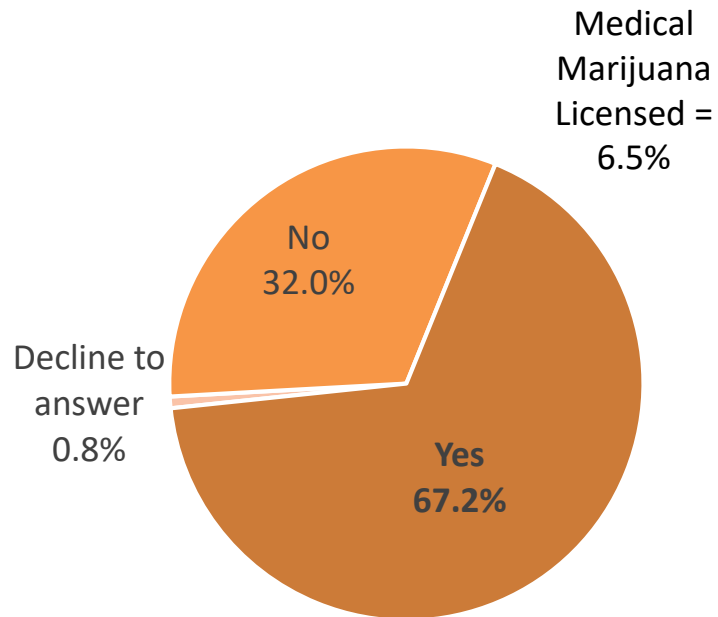
<https://www.nhtsa.gov/behavioral-research/washington-state-roadside-survey-0>



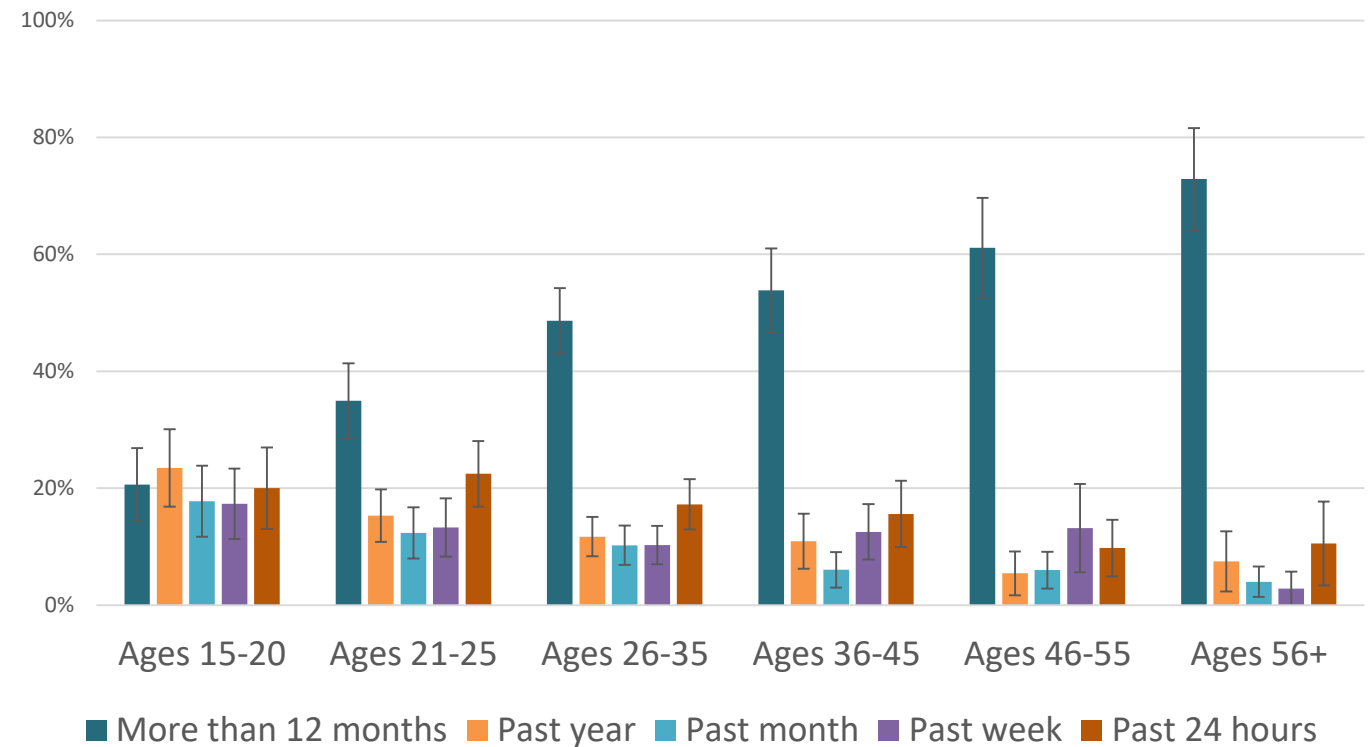
Marijuana Survey (from Roadside Survey)

(pages 18, 21)

Have you ever, even once, used marijuana?

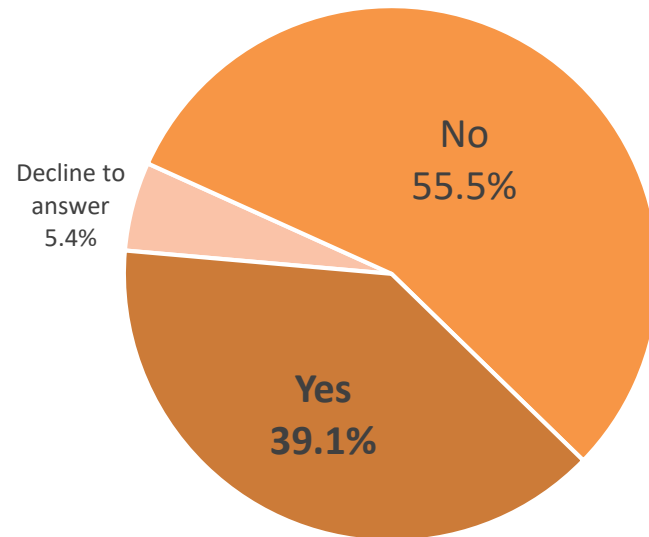


How long has it been since you last used marijuana? - By age groups

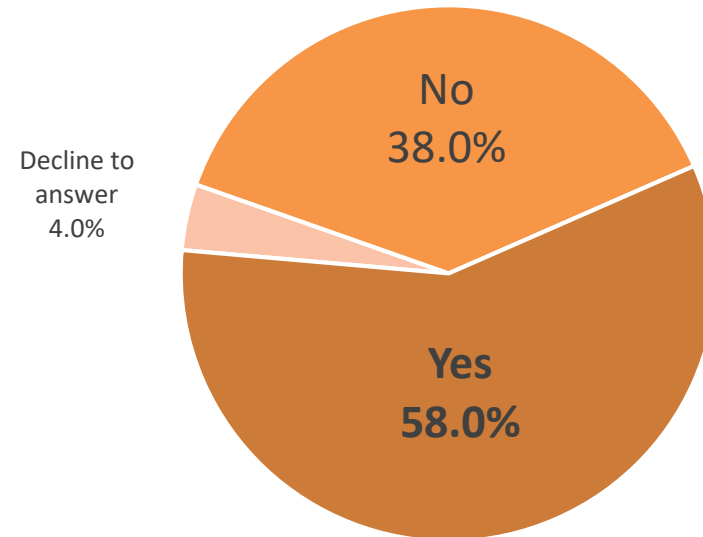


Do you Drive After Marijuana Use? (page 23)

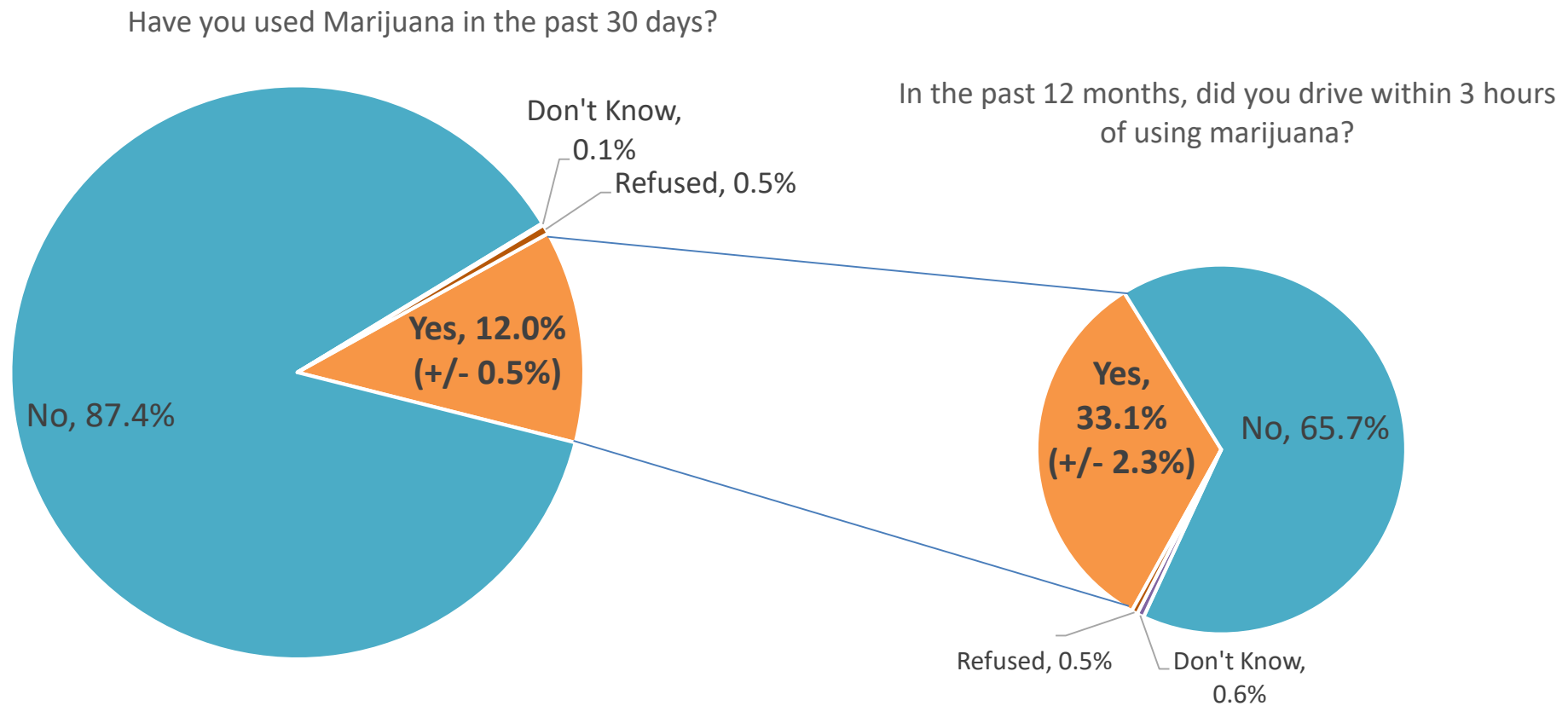
If you have used marijuana more than once in the past year, have you used any marijuana within two hours before driving?



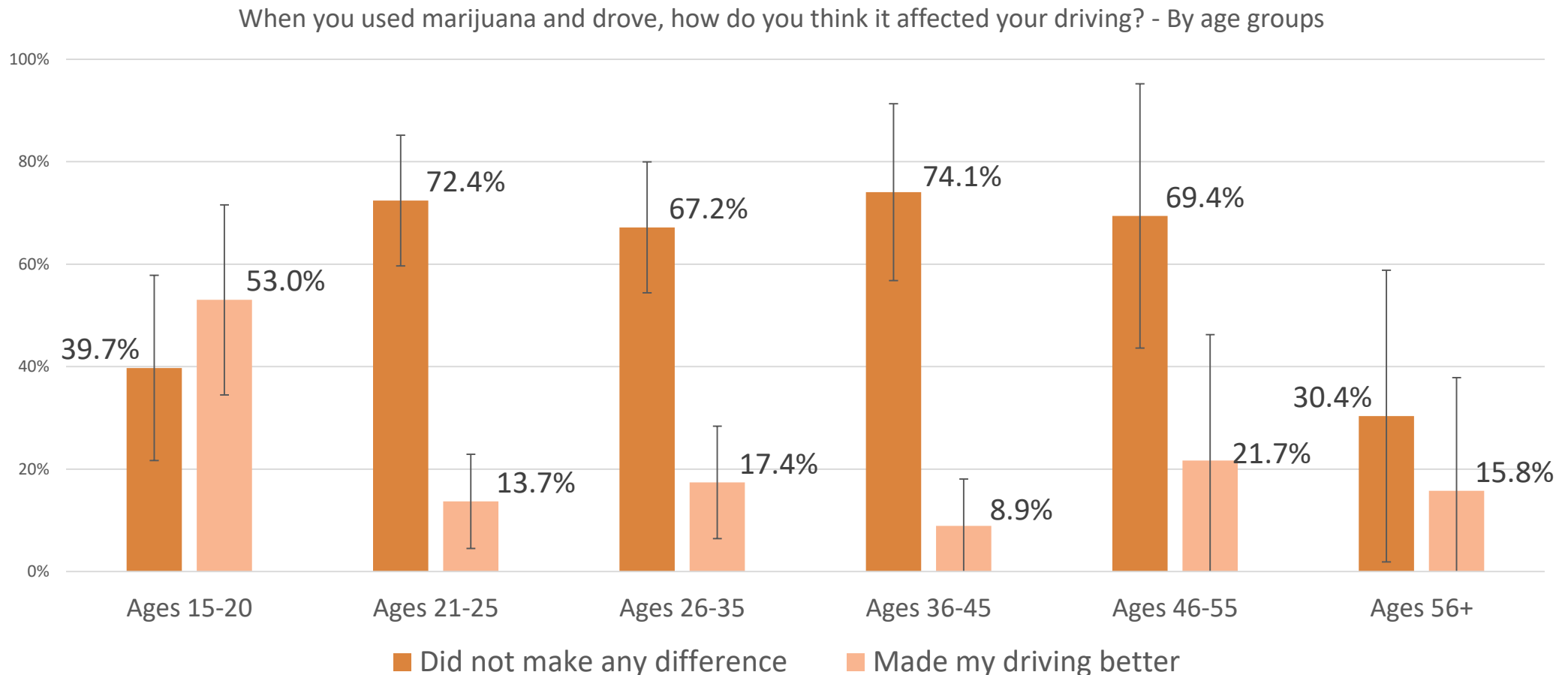
Have you ever not driven because you had recently used marijuana?



Driving After Marijuana Use – BRFSS (page 27)



Does Marijuana Affect Your Driving? By Age Groups (page 24)



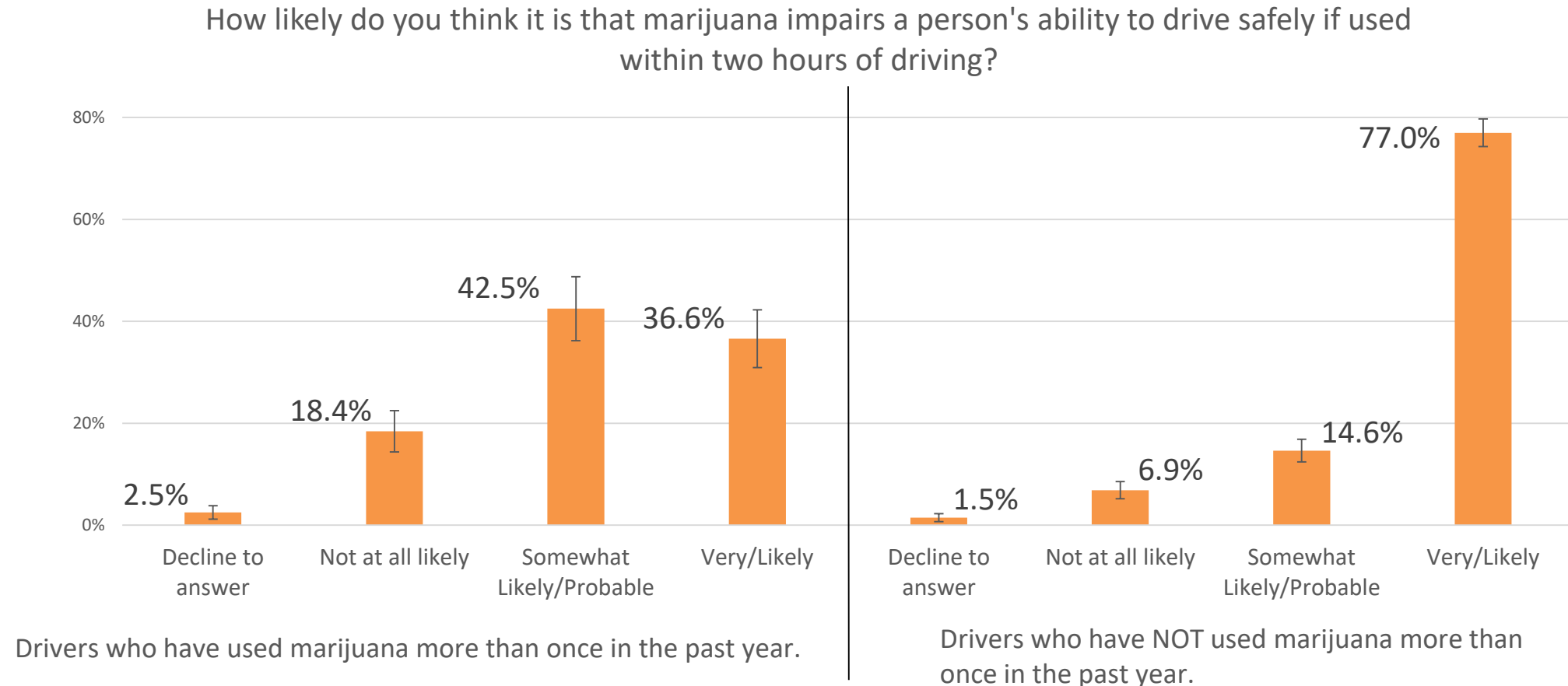
One in Four Drivers ages 16-18 in Fatal Crashes are Positive for Drugs or Alcohol

Novice drivers already have an increased crash risk and adding any drug or alcohol use significantly increases that risk. From 2008-2016, 76 drivers ages 16-18 were involved in fatal crashes after consuming drugs and/or alcohol. Fifty-four of these drivers lost their lives and 22 contributed to the death of another, in some cases their own family and close friends. (page 31)

Drug/Alcohol Status of Drivers in Fatal Crashes	Number of Drivers Ages 16-18	Driver Deceased	Driver Involved in the Death of Another Person
One Drug Only	8	5	3
Only Alcohol	32	20	12
Only THC	16	12	4
Poly-Drug	20	17	3
Total Alcohol/Drug Drivers	76	54	22

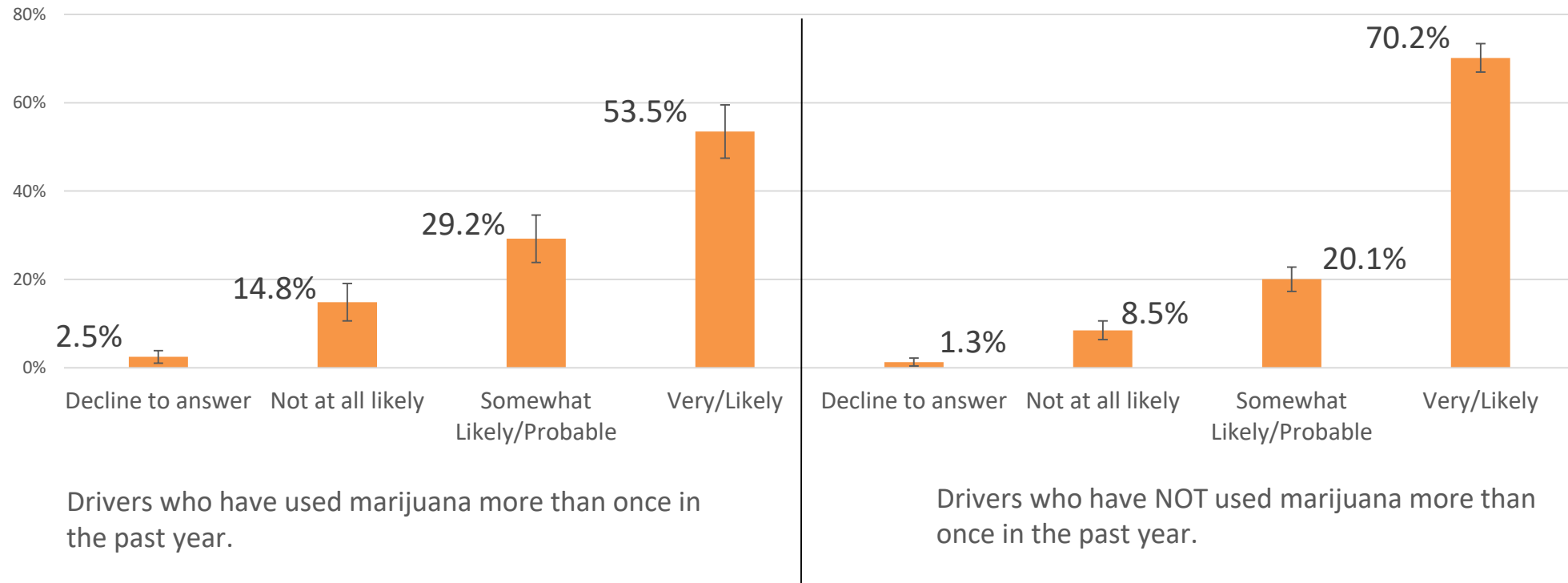
Do You Think Marijuana Impairs Driving?

(page 25)



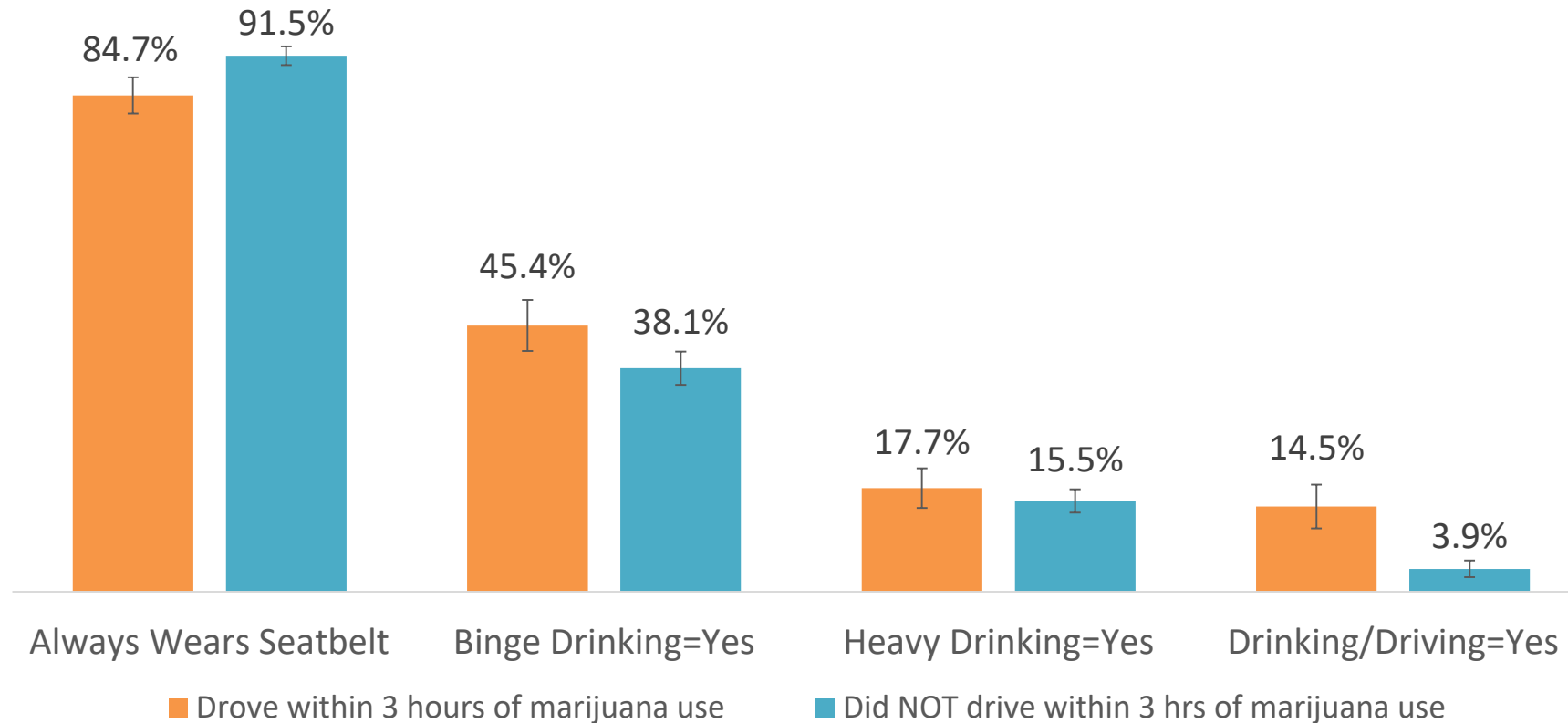
Will You Get Arrested? (page 26)

How likely do you think it is that a person could be arrested for impaired driving after using marijuana within two hours of driving?



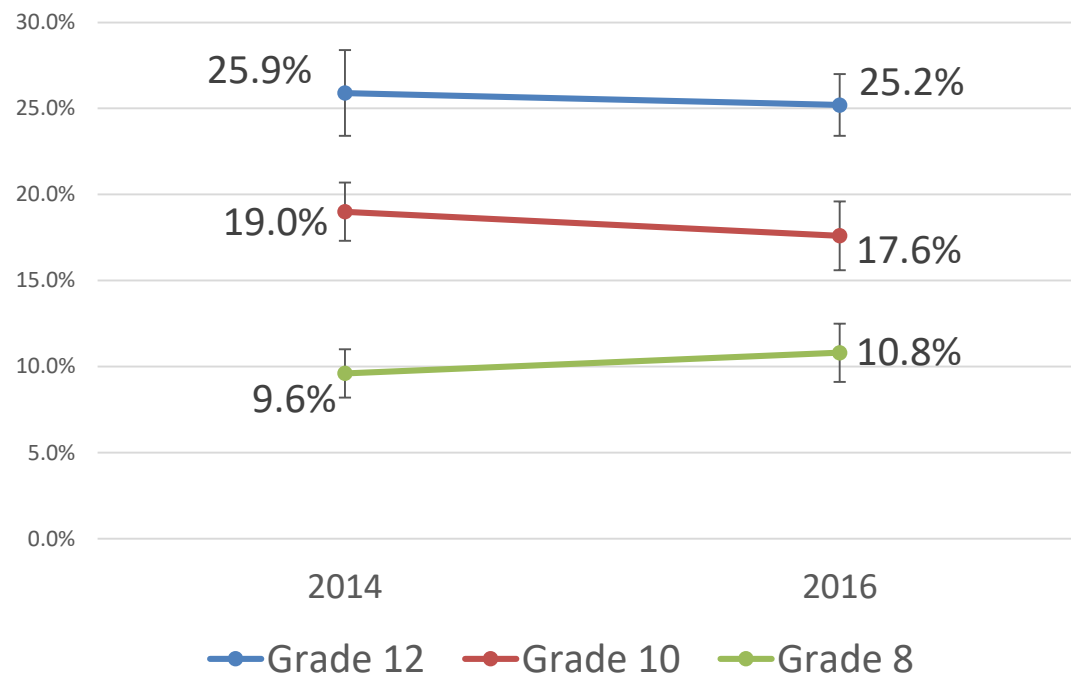
Other High Risk Behaviors – BRFSS (page 29)

Other high risk behaviors of drivers reporting yes to driving within 3 hours of marijuana use versus drivers reporting no.

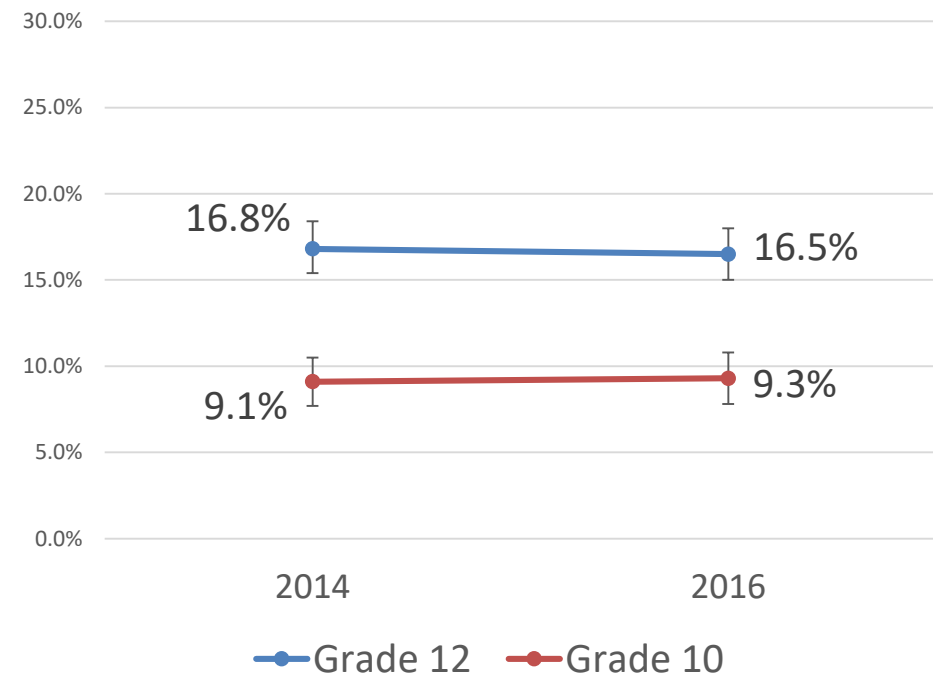


Healthy Youth Survey (pages 30-31)

HYS: Rode in a Vehicle Driven by Someone Who Had Been Using Marijuana



HYS: Drove a Vehicle Within 3 Hours of Using Marijuana



The Drugged Driving Impact in Washington

The recent rise in traffic fatalities is most certainly due in part to an increase in poly-drug use among drivers on Washington roadways.

While alcohol is still the most common substance mixed with other drugs among this high-risk group, alcohol-specific countermeasures alone will not be sufficient for impacting this emerging issue.

While it is still largely unknown what role marijuana alone plays in fatal crash risk, it is clear that marijuana mixed with other substances, most commonly alcohol, is contributing to fatal crashes in Washington State.

While alcohol driving very much remains a significant issue, the interplay of drugged driving must be equally considered if we are ever to reach our goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries on Washington roadways. This complex issue will require government, non-profit, corporate, and community response to reverse a rapidly increasing trend.

Questions?

