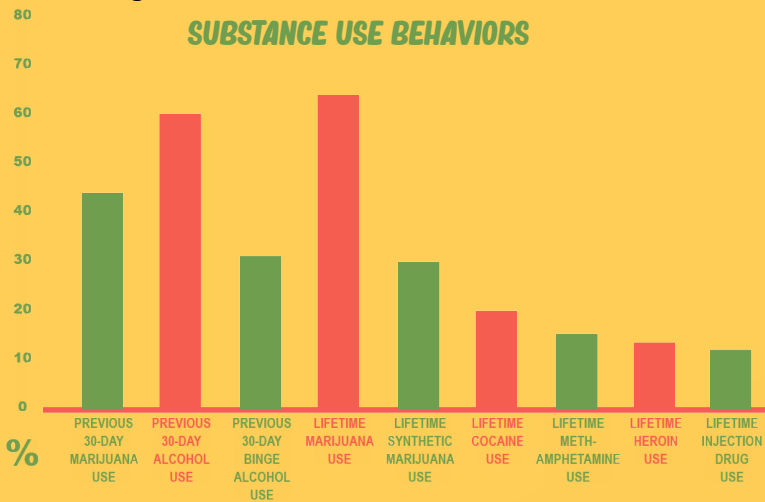


MARIJUANA IS THE #1 GATEWAY DRUG



**JOHNNY'S
AMBASSADORS**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, in their 2019 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, the #1 predictor that teens have abused opioids in the past 30 days is whether they *have ever used marijuana* in their lifetimes — it's even a better indicator than previous 30-day alcohol use. In other words, using marijuana leads to opioid abuse in teens more than any other drug.



Because of this, we see that increased marijuana use contributes to the current opioid crisis. In another study:

IN 2010, THERE WERE ABOUT 20,000 OVERDOSE DEATHS INVOLVING OPIOIDS.

IN 2021, THERE WERE OVER 80,000 OVERDOSE DEATHS INVOLVING OPIOIDS.

Now, being a gateway drug doesn't mean, if you use marijuana, you'll for sure use harder drugs. But people who are using harder drugs most likely started with marijuana—that's what a gateway means. If you went to a party and had never used any substances before, and a friend suggested you shoot up with heroin, would you? Of course not! But if you have been using marijuana and your tolerance has built up so much you can't get the same high as before, you are more likely to move on to a harder substance.



Research: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm
www.nida.nih.gov/drug-topics/trends-statistics/

LOOKING AT THESE TWO STUDIES, HOW DO YOU THINK THE LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC?