



“CROSS FADING” SIMULTANEOUS USE OF ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA, 2015 & 2016

YOUNG ADULT HEALTH SURVEY

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL & HEALTH SERVICES' DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY (DBHR) AND THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON'S CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HEALTH AND RISK BEHAVIORS (CSHRB)



WHAT DID WE ASK?

We asked participants if they had used marijuana in the past 12 months. If they had, we asked how many times in the past 30 days they used alcohol and cannabis at the same time so that the effects overlapped (“crossfading”).

WHAT DID WE DO?

Thousands of 18-25 year olds in Washington participated in web-based surveys during 2014, 2015, and 2016. Participants were recruited statewide through direct mail invitation and various social media sites. Each year included a new sample/cohort as well as follow-ups with previous cohorts. While it is not a random sample (and is instead a sample of convenience), data were weighted to match Washington Census data and improve generalizability.

WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY?

For these analyses, we had 2 groups of people:
2015: 1,675 participants
2016: 2,493 participants

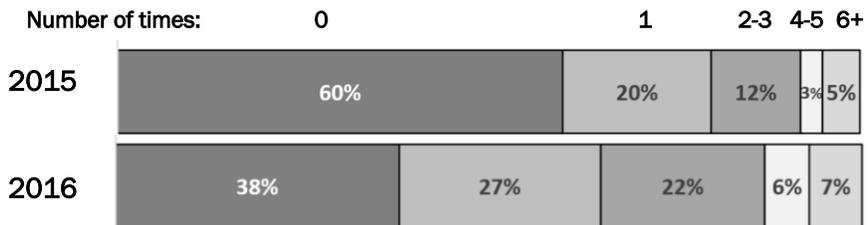
WHY DID WE ASK THAT?

When substances are used at the same time, a drug interaction takes place. What some describe as “*crossfading*” is what scientists call *potentiation* – a case in which 1 + 1 is greater than 2. In other words, there are the effects of alcohol (which slows the body down), the effects of marijuana (which also slows the body down), and then an additional impact on the body that can cause a dangerous effect with “excessive” slowing down of the central nervous system (Seamon, et al., 2007).

Seamon, M.J., Fass, J.A., Maniscalco-Fiechtl, M., & Abu-Shraie, N.A. (2007). Medical marijuana and the developing role of the pharmacist. *Am J Heaht-Syst Pharm*, 64, 1037-1044.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

In both 2015 and 2016, over 42% of the surveyed 18-25 year-olds reported marijuana use at least once in the past year. Among those with past year use, we saw a more than 56% increase from 2015 to 2016 in those reporting simultaneous use of alcohol and marijuana. This represents a significant increase in “crossfading.” See below for the percentages related to the number of times those who use marijuana also reported using alcohol and marijuana at the same time in the past 30 days.



WHY DOES THAT MATTER?

Many more young adults who use marijuana reported simultaneous use of alcohol and marijuana in 2016 compared to 2015. This simultaneous use increases safety risks for the individual (including far more impairment while driving). The state’s 911 Good Samaritan Law (www.stopoverdose.org) protects callers (and the people they’re calling about) from possession charges when people call 911 for help for a substance-related medical emergency, and “crossfading” counts.

FOR MORE DETAILS ON YOUNG ADULT HEALTH SURVEY (YAHS) METHODOLOGY AS WELL AS OTHER FACT SHEETS, SEE THE YAHS HOMEPAGE AT [HTTP://BLOGS.UW.EDU/UWWYAHS/](http://blogs.uw.edu/uwwyahs/)