

# Provincial Patterns and Trends in Cannabis Use among Youth: Quebec

## Background: Cannabis Use in Canada

This factsheet presents recent patterns and trends of cannabis use among young people in Quebec, including prevalence of use, perceptions of harm, cannabis use and driving, and dimensions of risk.

- In October 2018, the Government of Canada implemented the *Cannabis Act*, legalizing cannabis for non-medical use in Canada.
- The legislation prioritizes the health and safety of young Canadians by restricting youth access to cannabis through regulations on its production, sale and consumption.
- Canadian youth report the highest prevalence rates of non-medical cannabis use among developed countries.
- Patterns of non-medical cannabis use among Canadian youth vary by region.
- Some subgroups of youth, including Indigenous youth and youth belonging to gender-based minorities, demonstrate increased risk of experiencing cannabis-related harms.
- Increasing awareness and understanding of the risks and harms unique to Canadian youth can inform the development and implementation of cannabis public education efforts.

## Highlights

- In 2016–2017, Quebec students reported among the lowest prevalence of cannabis use in Canada, with one in ten of students having used cannabis in the past 30 days.
- Students in Secondaire IV–V reported three times greater prevalence of cannabis use in the past 12 months than students in Secondaire I–III (28.7% vs 8.8%).
- Prevalence of past-year cannabis use was higher among males than females (17.7% and 14.3%).
- Among students in Sec. I–V who reported using cannabis in the past year, just over one quarter (27%) reported using it once or more per week.
- Among students in Sec. I–V who reported using cannabis in the past year, the majority reported smoking it (91%), followed by eating it in foods (26%) and vaping it (25%).
- Among youth aged 15–24 who reported using cannabis at least once in their lifetime, the mean age of initiation was 16.0 years of age for males and 16.2 years for females.
- Over half of youth in Sec. IV–V (52%) reported cannabis to be fairly easy or very easy to obtain. The usual ways of obtaining it were sharing among friends (33%), getting or buying it from someone else (29%), or getting or buying it from a friend or family member (16%).



## Data Sources

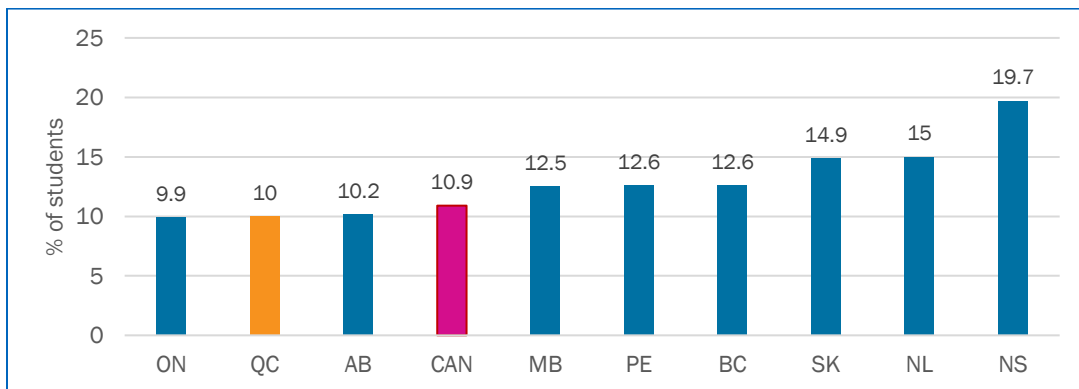
This report is based on the following sources of school and population-based survey data on cannabis use among youth.

- Canadian Student Tobacco Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS) is a biennial school-based survey of students in grades 7 to 12, conducted on behalf of Health Canada.
- Cancer Risk Assessment among Youth (CRAYS) is a school-based survey of students in grades 9 to 12 in Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.
- Canadian Tobacco Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CTADS) is a telephone-based (including cell phones) survey of the Canadian population aged 15 and older, living outside of institutions and First Nations reserve communities, conducted by Statistics Canada.

## Prevalence of Cannabis Use among Youth across Canada

- Quebec students had among the lowest prevalence of cannabis use in Canada in 2016–2017.
- About 1 in 10 students in Secondaire I to V had used cannabis in the past 30 days.

Past-30-day cannabis use among Sec I-V students

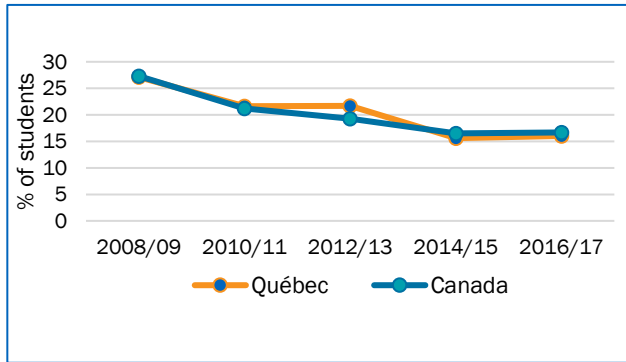


Source: CSTADS 2016–2017



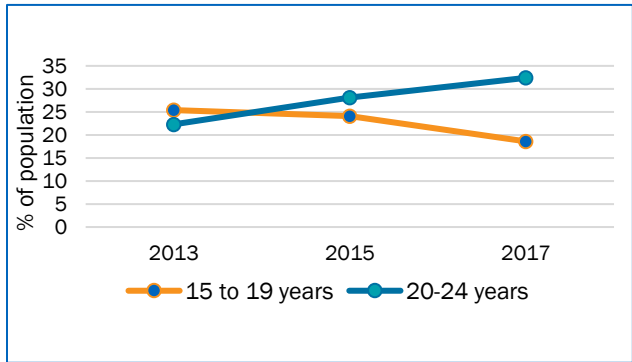
### Patterns of Cannabis Use among Youth in Quebec

Past-12-month cannabis use by Sec I-V students (2008–2009 to 2016–2017)



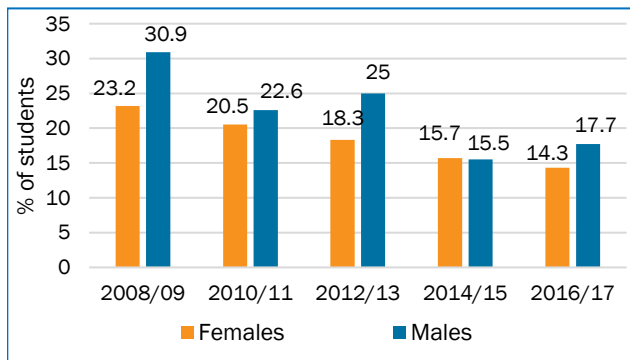
Source: CSTADS 2008–2009 to 2016–2017

Past-12-month cannabis use by youth aged 15–24 (2013 to 2017)



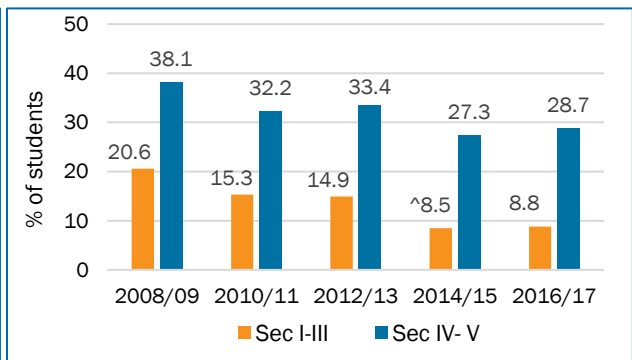
Source: CTADS 2013, 2015, 2017

Past-12-month cannabis use by sex (2008–2009 to 2016–2017)



Source: CSTADS 2008–2009 to 2016–2017

Past-12-month cannabis use by grade (2008–2009 to 2016–2017)



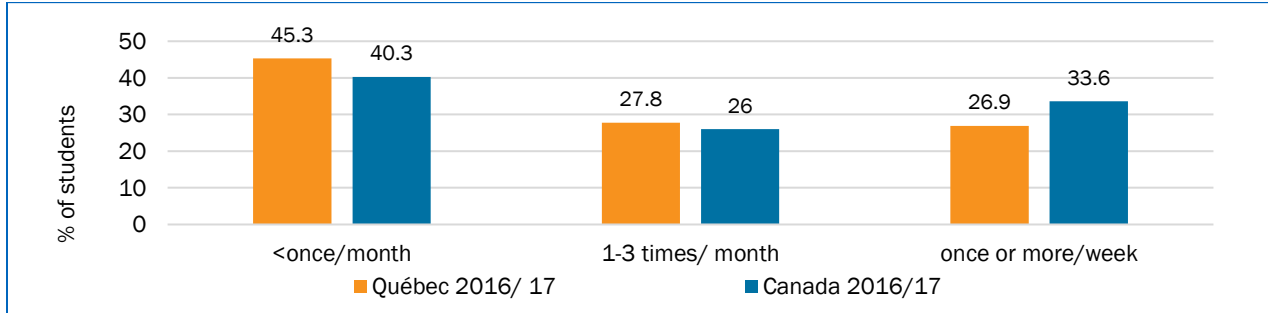
^ Moderate sampling variability, interpret with caution. Source: CSTADS 2008–2009 to 2016–2017

- Past 12-month use has decreased overall among Sec. I–V youth since 2008–2009; as well as among males and females.
- Past 12-month cannabis use among youth in Sec. IV–V has decreased in Quebec since 2008–2009; as well as among Sec. I–III students.
- Among 15 to 19 year olds, past 12-month use has decreased since 2013; and has increased among 20 to 24 year olds since 2013.



## Frequency of Cannabis Use among Students in Quebec

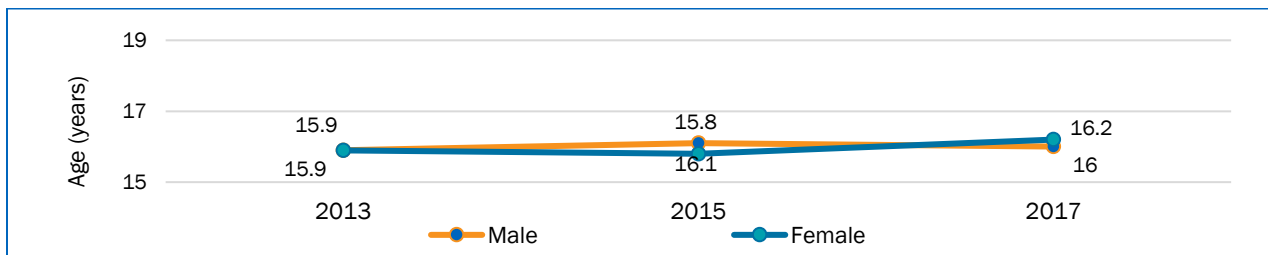
Frequency of cannabis use in past 12 months among students who have used cannabis



Source: CSTADS 2016–2017

## Age of First Cannabis Use among Youth in Quebec

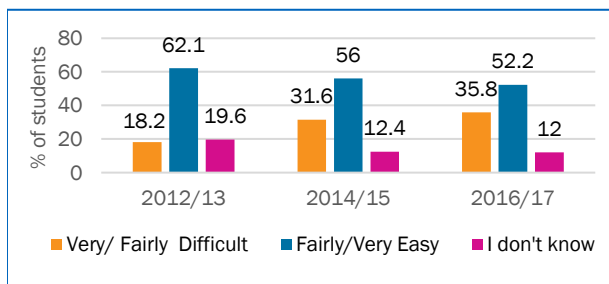
Mean age for initiating cannabis use among youth aged 15–24



Source: CTADS 2013, 2015, 2017

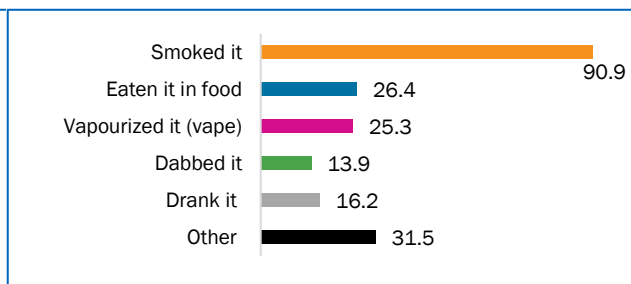
## Mode of Use and Ease of Access to Cannabis

Perceived ease of access among Sec IV-V students



Source: CSTADS 2012–2013, 2015–2016, 2016–2017

Mode of cannabis use in the past 12 months in Sec I-V students



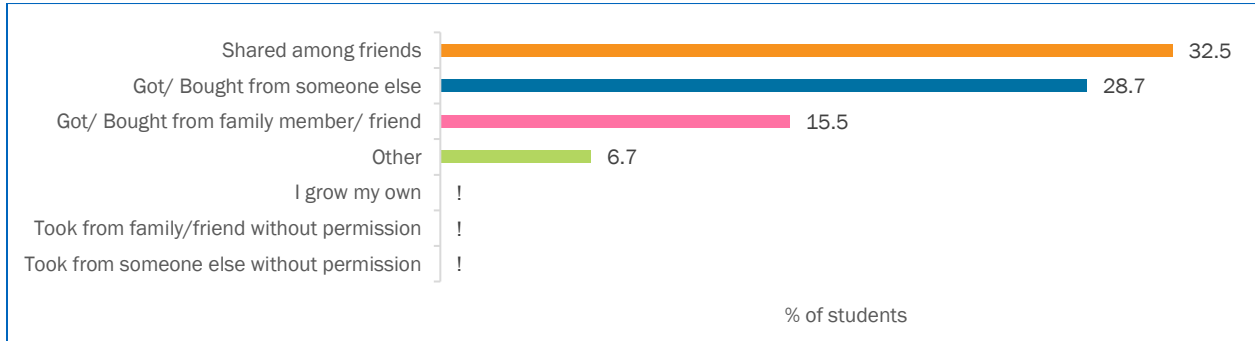
Source: CSTADS 2016–2017

- Among students who have used cannabis in the last 12 months, almost half use less than once per month.
- Age of initiating cannabis use among males and females has not changed significantly between 2013 and 2017.
- Among students who have used cannabis in the past 12 months, the large majority have smoked it.
- The perceived ease of access to cannabis among Sec IV–V students has decreased from 2012–2013 and 2016–2017, with just over half of students finding it fairly or very easy.



## Usual Source of Cannabis

Usual source of cannabis among Sec I-V students who have ever tried cannabis (2016-2017)

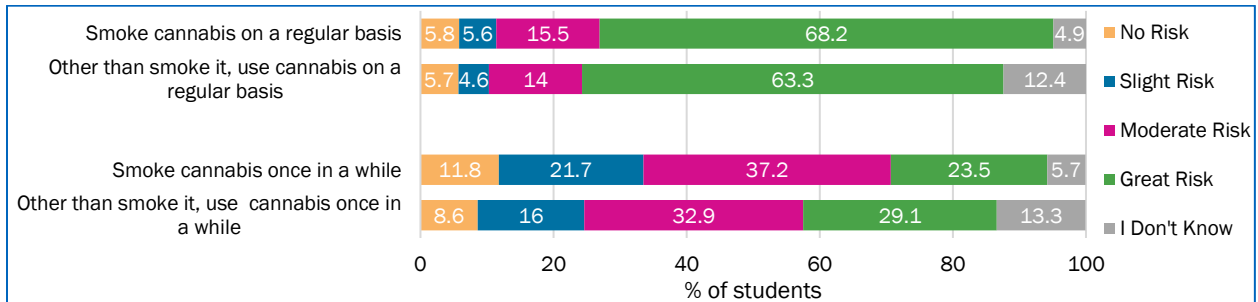


Source: CSTADS 2016-2017

! Due to low sample size and/or large coefficients of variation, the quality of these estimates is low.

## Perceived Harms of Cannabis Use

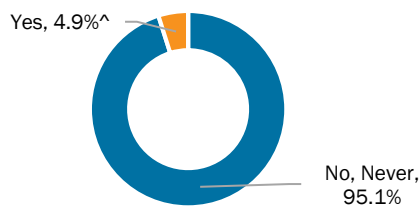
Responses to "How much do people risk harming themselves when they do each of the following activities?" among Sec I-V students (2016-2017)



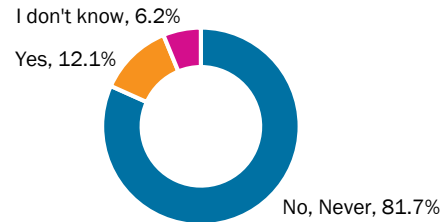
Source: CSTADS 2016-2017

## Cannabis Use and Driving

Sec IV-V students who reported having driven a motor vehicle within two hours of using cannabis (2016-2017)



Sec I-V students who reported being a passenger in a motor vehicle driven by someone who had used cannabis in previous two hours (2016-2017)



<sup>^</sup> Moderate sampling variability, interpret with caution.

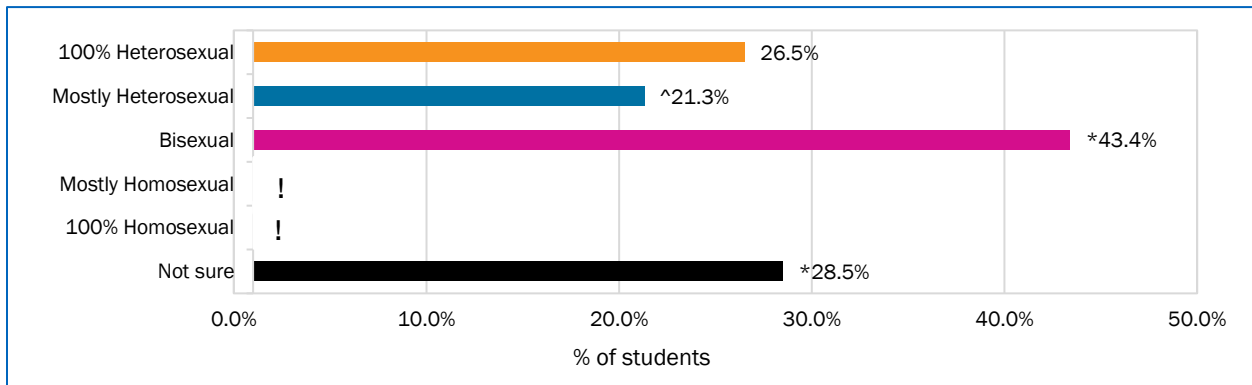
\*Motor vehicles include a broad range: cars, motorcycles, off-road vehicles (including agricultural machinery), light trucks and regular trucks.



- Before legalization, the majority of students reported that they shared cannabis among friends or that they received or purchased it from someone else.
- A large majority of students feel that using cannabis on a regular basis is a risk.
- The majority of students reported they had not driven a motor vehicle within two hours of using cannabis or had not been a passenger in a motor vehicle driven by someone who used cannabis within the last two hours.

### Dimensions of Risk for Cannabis Use among Quebec Youth

Past 12-month cannabis use among Sec III–V students, by sexual orientation† (2017)



^ Moderate sampling variability, interpret with caution.

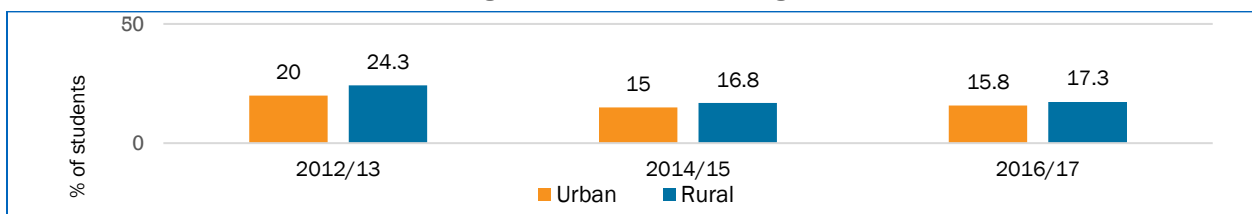
\* Due to low sample size and/or large coefficients of variation, the quality of these estimates is low. Interpret with extreme caution.

! Due to low sample size and/or large coefficients of variation, the quality of these estimates is low.

† Measuring sexual identity and orientation is difficult and changing. According to Statistics Canada, in 2016 4% to 10% of Canadian youth considered themselves either homosexual or bisexual.

Source: CRAYS 2017

Past 12-month use among Sec I–V students attending urban and rural schools



Source: CSTADS 2012–2013, 2014–2015, 2016–2017

- Bisexual youth reported a higher prevalence of cannabis use in the past 12 months than youth who were mostly or 100% heterosexual.
- The prevalence of cannabis use among students attending school in a rural setting and students attending school in an urban setting has been similar from 2012–2013 to 2016–2017.



## Appendix: Data Table and Confidence Intervals

Series	Year	Percent- age	95% Confi- dence Limits
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, QC	2016-2017	16.0	[14.8-17.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, QC	2014-2015	15.6	[12.0-19.1]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, QC	2012-2013	21.7	[18.1-25.4]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, QC	2010-2011	21.6	[19.3-23.9]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, QC	2008-2009	27.1	[24.0-30.2]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, Canada	2016-2017	16.7	[15.0-18.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, Canada	2014-2015	16.5	[15.3-17.8]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, Canada	2012-2013	19.3	[17.1-21.5]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, Canada	2010-2011	21.2	[19.7-22.6]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-V, Canada	2008-2009	27.3	[25.7-29.0]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-III	2016-2017	8.8	[7.6-10.0]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-III	2014-2015	8.5	[3.5-13.4]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-III	2012-2013	14.9	[10.6-19.1]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-III	2010-2011	15.3	[12.7-18.0]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire I-III	2008-2009	20.6	[17.0-24.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire IV-V	2016-2017	28.7	[26.0-31.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire IV-V	2014-2015	27.3	[21.2-33.4]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire IV-V	2012-2013	33.4	[30.0-36.8]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire IV-V	2010-2011	32.2	[28.5-35.9]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, secondaire IV-V	2008-2009	38.1	[33.3-43.0]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, male	2016-2017	17.7	[16.1-19.4]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, male	2014-2015	15.5	[11.5-19.4]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, male	2012-2013	25.0	[20.4-29.6]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, male	2010-2011	22.6	[19.5-25.6]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, male	2008-2009	30.9	[26.6-35.2]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, female	2016-2017	14.3	[12.6-16.0]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, female	2014-2015	15.7	[11.5-19.8]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, female	2012-2013	18.3	[15.3-21.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, female	2010-2011	20.5	[17.5-23.5]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, female	2008-2009	23.2	[20.4-26.0]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, age 15-19	2017	18.6	[14.0-23.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, age 15-19	2015	24.1	[17.9-30.2]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, age 15-19	2013	25.4	[20.4-30.5]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, age 20-24	2017	32.4	[28.0-36.9]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, age 20-24	2015	28.1	[21.9-34.3]
Cannabis use, past 12 months, age 20-24	2013	22.3	[17.4-27.2]
Past 12 month, frequency of use, <once/month, QC	2016-2017	45.3	[41.0-49.6]
Past 12 month, frequency of use, 1-3 times/month, QC	2016-2017	27.8	[23.9-31.7]
Past 12 month, frequency of use, once/week or more, QC	2016-2017	26.9	[23.3-30.5]
Past 12 month, frequency of use, <once/month, Canada	2016-2017	40.3	[37.9-42.8]
Past 12 month, frequency of use, 1-3 times/ month, Canada	2016-2017	26.0	[24.5-27.6]
Past 12 month, frequency of use, once /week or more, Canada	2016-2017	33.6	[31.6-35.7]
Age at Initiation, female	2017	16.2	[15.9-16.6]
Age at Initiation, female	2015	15.8	[15.3-16.3]
Age at Initiation, female	2013	15.9	[15.4-16.4]
Age at Initiation, male	2017	16.0	[15.7-16.4]
Age at Initiation, male	2015	16.1	[15.7-16.5]
Age at Initiation, male	2013	15.9	[15.6-16.2]
Past 12 months mode of cannabis use, smoke	2016-2017	90.9	[88.4-93.3]
Past 12 months mode of cannabis use, eaten in food	2016-2017	26.4	[22.6-30.2]
Past 12 months mode of cannabis use, drank	2016-2017	16.2	[13.0-19.3]
Past 12 months mode of cannabis use, vaped	2016-2017	25.3	[21.5-29.2]
Past 12 months mode of cannabis use, dabbed	2016-2017	13.9	[10.9-17.0]
Past 12 months mode of cannabis use, other	2016-2017	31.5	[27.5-35.5]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, very/fairly easy	2016-2017	52.2	[49.4-55.0]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, very/fairly difficult	2016-2017	35.8	[32.9-38.7]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, I do not know	2016-2017	12.0	[10.2-13.7]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, very/fairly easy	2014-2015	56.0	[50.7-61.3]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, very/fairly difficult	2014-2015	31.6	[26.3-37.0]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, I do not know	2014-2015	12.4	[10.1-14.7]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, very/fairly easy	2012-2013	62.1	[59.8-64.5]



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Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, very/fairly difficult	2012-2013	18.2	[16.8-19.6]
Perceived ease of access, secondaire IV-V, I do not know	2012-2013	19.6	[17.7-21.5]
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, shared among friends	2016-2017	32.5	[28.5-36.4]
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, got/bought from friend/family	2016-2017	15.5	[12.3-18.7]
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, got/bought from someone else	2016-2017	28.7	[24.8-32.5]
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, took it from family member/ friend without permission	2016-2017	!	!
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, took it from someone else, without permission	2016-2017	!	!
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, grow my own	2016-2017	!	!
Usual source of cannabis, last 12 months, other	2016-2017	6.7	[4.8-8.6]
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis: No risk	2016-2017	5.8	[4.9-6.6]
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis: slight risk	2016-2017	5.6	[4.7-6.6]
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis: moderate risk	2016-2017	15.5	[14.2-16.7]
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis: great risk	2016-2017	68.2	[66.4-70.1]
Smoke cannabis on a regular basis: I do not know	2016-2017	4.9	[4.1-5.7]
Smoke cannabis once in a while: No risk	2016-2017	11.8	[10.6-13.1]
Smoke cannabis once in a while: slight risk	2016-2017	21.7	[20.4-23.1]
Smoke cannabis once in a while: moderate risk	2016-2017	37.2	[35.2-39.2]
Smoke cannabis once in a while: great risk	2016-2017	23.5	[22.0-25.0]
Smoke cannabis once in a while: I do not know	2016-2017	5.7	[4.9-6.5]
Other than smoke, use on a regular basis: no risk	2016-2017	5.7	[4.9-6.5]
Other than smoke, use on a regular basis: slight risk	2016-2017	4.6	[3.8-5.4]
Other than smoke, use on a regular basis: moderate	2016-2017	14.0	[12.9-15.2]
Other than smoke, use on a regular basis: great risk	2016-2017	63.3	[61.4-65.1]
Other than smoke, use on a regular basis: I do not know	2016-2017	12.4	[11.2-13.7]
Other than smoke, use once in a while: no risk	2016-2017	8.6	[7.6-9.7]
Other than smoke, use once in a while: slight risk	2016-2017	16.0	[14.8-17.3]
Other than smoke, use once in a while: moderate	2016-2017	32.9	[31.2-34.7]
Other than smoke, use once in a while: great risk	2016-2017	29.1	[27.5-30.6]
Other than smoke, use once in a while: I do not know	2016-2017	13.3	[12.1-14.6]
Driven a vehicle within 2 hours of using cannabis, yes	2016-2017	4.9	[2.9-6.9]
Passenger within 2 hours of driver using cannabis, yes	2016-2017	12.1	[10.8-13.3]
Passenger within 2 hours of driver using cannabis, no	2016-2017	81.7	[80.2-83.2]
Passenger within 2 hours of driver using cannabis, I don't know	2016-2017	6.2	[5.4-7.0]
Used cannabis last 12 months, 100% heterosexual	2017	26.5	[17.1-35.9]
Used cannabis last 12 months, mostly heterosexual	2017	21.3	[10.4-32.3]
Used cannabis last 12 months, bisexual	2017	43.4	[19.8-66.9]
Used cannabis last 12 months, mostly homosexual	2017	!	!
Used cannabis last 12 months, 100% homosexual	2017	!	!
Used cannabis last 12 months, not sure	2017	28.5	[11.7-45.4]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Saskatchewan	2016-2017	14.9	[10.5-19.4]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Ontario	2016-2017	9.9	[7.4-12.4]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, British Columbia	2016-2017	12.6	[9.5-15.7]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Alberta	2016-2017	10.2	[8.4-12.0]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Manitoba	2016-2017	12.5	[10.1-14.8]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Prince Edward Island	2016-2017	12.6	[10.1-15.0]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Nova Scotia	2016-2017	19.7	[17.6-21.8]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Quebec	2016-2017	10.0	[9.0-10.9]
Cannabis use, past 30 days, Newfoundland and Labrador	2016-2017	15.0	[13.4-16.7]
Past 12 month cannabis use in urban youth, secondaire I-V	2016-2017	15.8	[14.4-17.2]
Past 12 month Cannabis use in rural youth, secondaire I-V	2016-2017	17.3	[13.7-20.9]
Past 12 month Cannabis use in urban youth, secondaire I-V	2014-2015	15.0	[10.1-19.8]
Past 12 month Cannabis use in rural youth, secondaire I-V	2014-2015	16.8	[12.1-21.5]
Past 12 month Cannabis use in urban youth, secondaire I-V	2012-2013	20.0	[15.9-24.0]
Past 12 month Cannabis use in rural youth, secondaire I-V	2012-2013	24.3	[16.8-31.8]





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