

University Students Smoke More and More Marijuana in Legalized States, but Binge Drink Less

It's predominantly undergraduate students who smoke the most pot.



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Place your beer down and pass the joint around. That may be a regular sentence in any of the universities based in states that have legalized the use of marijuana.

A study by [Oregon State University](#) (OSU) has discovered that undergraduate students aged **18 to 26** are smoking more and more marijuana in legalized states. In contrast, they're binge drinking less and less.

The study was published on Monday in *Addiction*.

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Legal vs. illegal

Cannabis shown to reduce risky binge drinking. A new study by researchers at Oregon State University suggests that legalizing [#marijuana](#) has opened up alternatives to young people who might otherwise engage in unsafe drinking behaviour: <http://bit.ly/36FeEDX>

The study discovered that students in the states where marijuana is legalized were **18%** more likely to have used the drug in the past month, and **17%** of them were more likely to have done so **20 out of 30 days**, than their contemporaries in non-legalized states.



Moreover, these numbers increased as time went on. After **six years** of legalization, the percentage jumped up to **46%** more likely to have smoked in the previous month.

What's interesting is that as smoking numbers increased, binge drinking numbers decreased. Binge drinking is considered **five or more drinks** in one sitting.

Furthermore, the study noted that the effect was higher in older students, between **21 and 26 years old**, than minors between **18 and 20 years old**.



Typically, around 21 years old, students pick up drinking and drop smoking. This was clearly not the case in the legalized states.

"In most states, once you reach 21, a barrier that was in the way of using alcohol is gone, while it's intact for marijuana use. But when marijuana is legal, this dynamic is changed," said Zoe Alley, an OSU doctoral candidate and author of a companion study.

<https://interestingengineering.com/university-students-smoke-more-and-more-marijuana-in-legalized-states-but-binge-drink-less>