

Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Prevention



DRAFT

Tuckahoe Area Library, 1901 Starling Drive, Henrico VA 23229

January 24, 2023

Members Present

Hon. Stephanie Ayres
Ngan Bui
Sherri Blevins
Marilyn Brown
Jeff Charity, Vice-Chair
Julianna Herbek
James Laster
Nina Marino (Proxy for DBHDS)
Julie McConnell, Chair
Melissa Morgan
Samuel Perez
Brooke Rudis
Linda McWilliams (Proxy for DJJ)
Alex White

DCJS Staff Present

Greg Hopkins
Laurel Marks
Tony Nelson
Kenneth Stables

Members Absent

Shelly Baker-Scott
Gena Boyle (Proxy for VDSS)
Erik Coyners
Morgan Faulkner
Joseph Gong
Maria Matricardi
Sen. Joseph Morrissey
Toni Randall
Olivia Saunders
Rick White
Del. Rodney Willett
Morgan Faulkner

Guests Present

Daniel Saggese, (VFHY)

- I. **Call to Order** – Julie McConnell, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:12 am. A verbal roll call was taken.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** – The committee received and reviewed the draft minutes of the September 24, 2022, meeting. Nina Marino made a motion to approve the September 24, 2022, meeting minutes, seconded by Samuel Perez. The motion was approved unanimously by a voice vote.

III. **DCJS Updates**

Ken Stables updated the committee on JJDP Act compliance visits, data collection, and technical assistance provided. Mr. Stables also introduced Mr. Tony Nelson, DCJS new Compliance Monitor.

Greg Hopkins provided additional agency updates to include upcoming trainings and agency conferences, as well as current and previous trainings hosted by Juvenile Services staff. Additionally, the Committee was briefed on the outcome of Title II, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, One-Time Funding Opportunity grant awards. DCJS was able to award eleven state and local agencies from this funding opportunity for juvenile justice related programs.

IV. **Presentation: Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth**

Greg Hopkins introduced the guest presenter Mr. Daniel Saggese, Marketing Director with the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY). Mr. Saggese provided an overview of VFHY to include past and current prevention efforts. Mr. Saggese also shared results from the most recent youth survey addressing adolescent perception and usage of tobacco related products. Mr. Saggese also discuss VFHY most recent prevention campaign titled UNFAZED. The new campaign is geared towards communicating healthy decisions for youth to promote and deter marijuana and cannabis products use.

V. **2023 General Assembly Legislation Review**

Greg Hopkins shared with the committee a number of bills of interest being tracked by the Juvenile Justice staff of DCJS during the 2023 General Assembly session. The committee members reviewed and commented on legislation of their interest.

VI. **Virginia Three-Year Plan Review**

Greg Hopkins provided an update to the committee on the Three-Year Plan Priority Areas including the status of each. DCJS staff informed the committee that 2023 is the final year of the three-year plan, and there is an opportunity to make recommendations or to continue to implement the remaining items on the plan.

VII. **Public Comment**

None

VIII. **Next Meeting Date**

April 18, 2023, at 10:00am

IX. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

Addressing Cannabis Use Among Virginia Youth



About VFHY

Established in 1999 by the Virginia General Assembly, the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) **empowers Virginia's youth to make healthy choices** by reducing and preventing youth tobacco and nicotine use, substance use, and childhood obesity.

VFHY is solely funded by a small share of Virginia's annual payments from the nation's major tobacco manufacturers through the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA).

Visit vfhy.org to learn more.



History

VFHY empowers Virginia's youth to make healthy choices by reducing and preventing youth tobacco use, substance use and childhood obesity.

Created in 1999 by the Virginia General Assembly as a result of the Master Settlement Agreement to prevent and reduce youth **tobacco use** in Virginia.

In 2009, the General Assembly expanded our mission to include the prevention and reduction of **childhood obesity**.

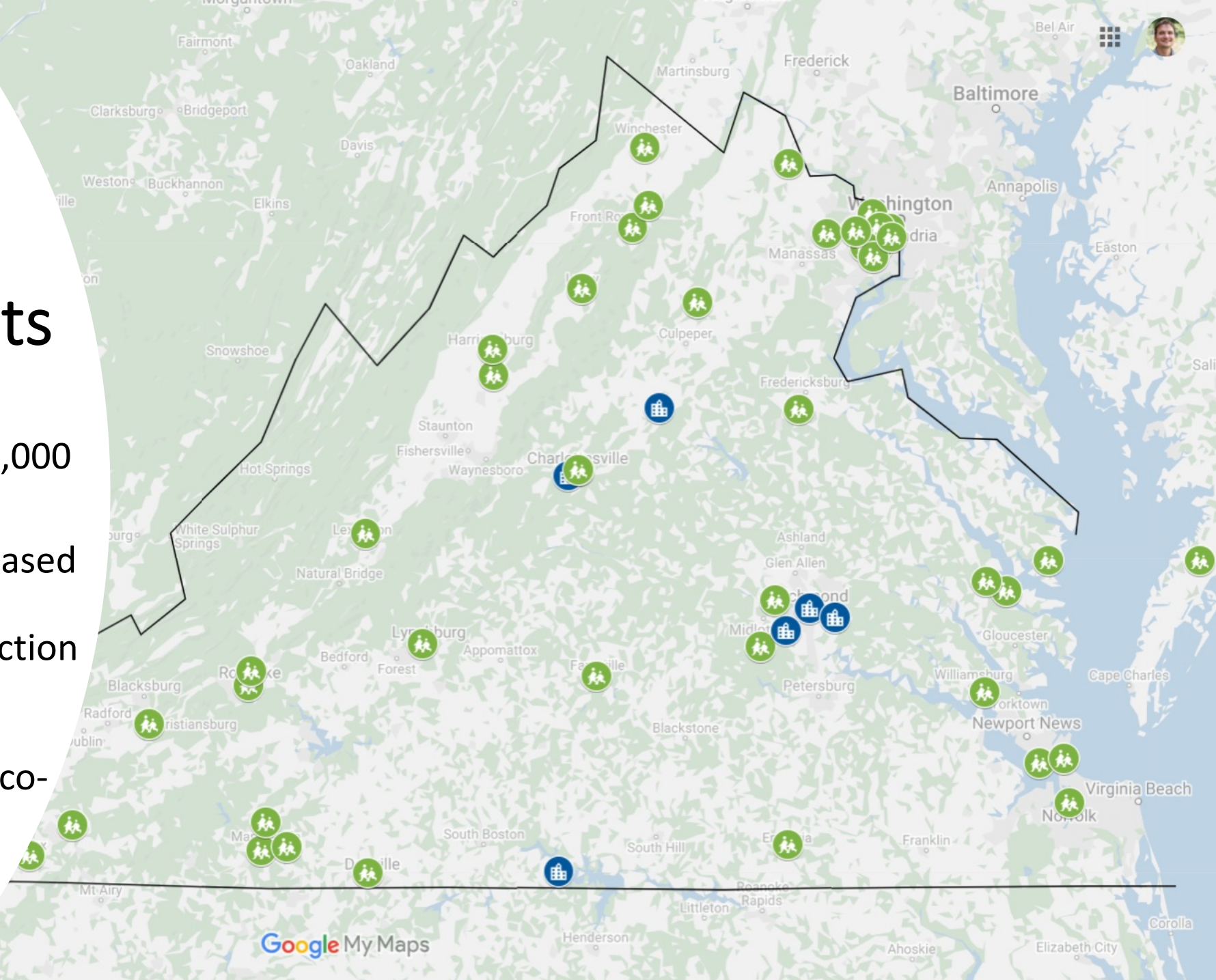
In 2017, the General Assembly further expanded the VFHY mission to include the prevention and reduction of **substance use**.



VFHY's Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Grants

VFHY typically provides \$150,000 (over 3 years).

Grantees provide evidence-based tobacco, nicotine, and vaping prevention instruction directly to Virginia youth by implementing one or more programs found in the Tobacco-Free Generation Curriculum Guide.





VFHY has been at the forefront of tackling pressing health topics to advance the health and well-being of youth for over two decades.

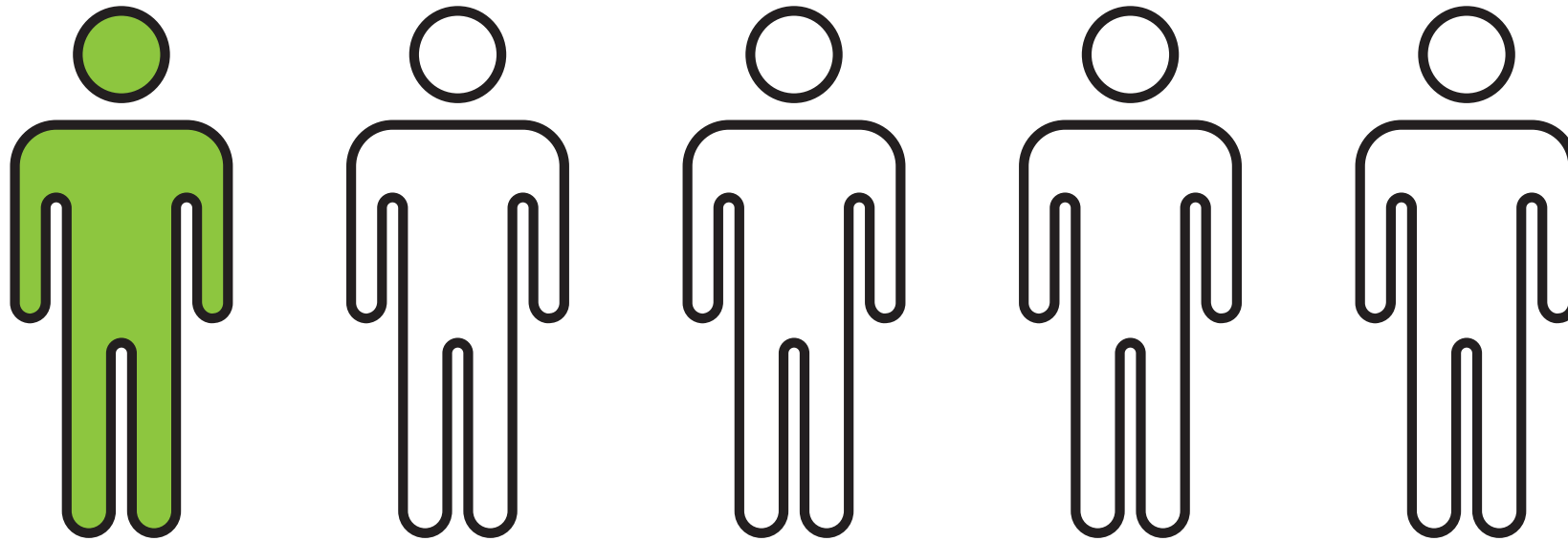


From tobacco use, to obesity prevention, to the vaping epidemic, to substance use; we deliver evidence-based, data-driven health communications campaigns that **protect the youth of Virginia.**

**Youth cannabis use
is no exception.**



2019 VIRGINIA YOUTH SURVEY:



1 in 5 Virginia high school youth currently use cannabis

Nearly 3x the number of youth who smoke cigarettes



Cannabis
affects cognitive
development, and
primes youth for long-
term addiction.

VFHY completed the largest statewide research initiative in Virginia ever (Dec '21):

- Statewide survey and focus groups with Virginia youth
- Analysis of 18 different cannabis education and prevention campaigns across North America
- Data synthesis of youth risk behaviors across the state and 5 other states that have legalized cannabis



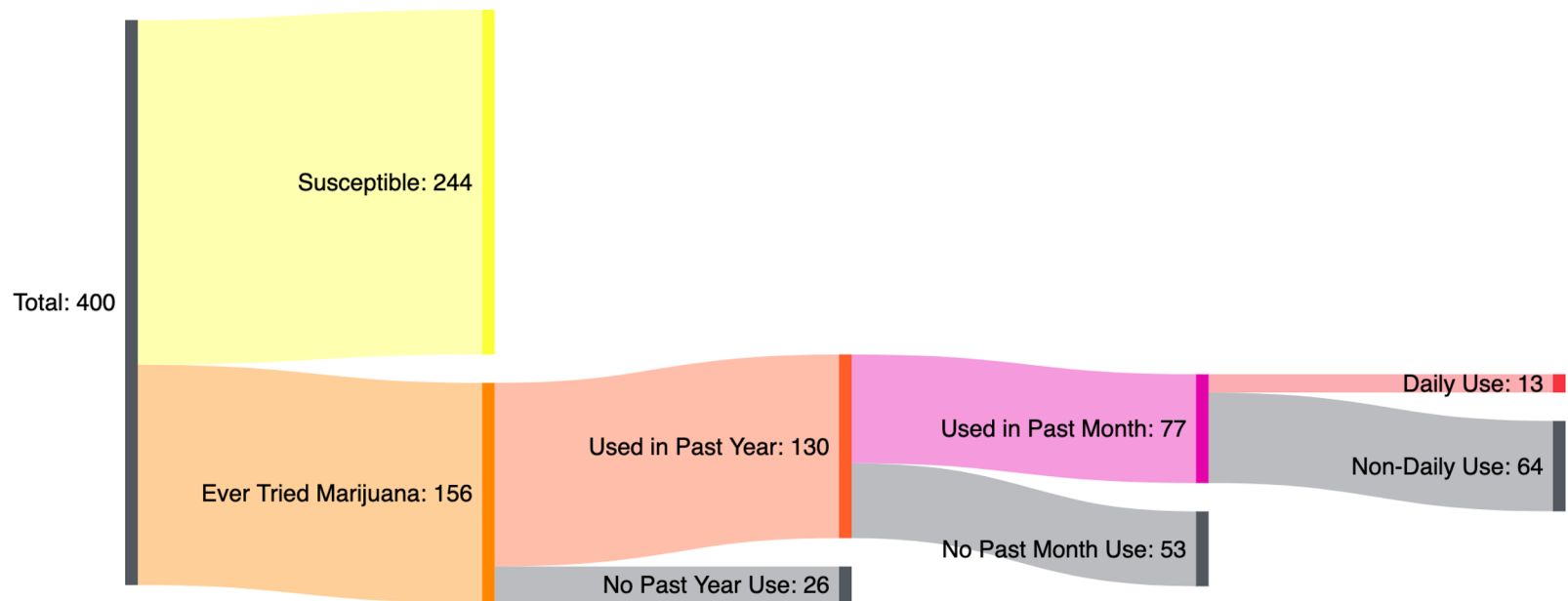


What We Know...

- Teen cannabis use is common and normalized.
- Cannabis is seen as almost no risk.
- Vaping is most common, and edibles are on the rise.
- Covid has increased youths' need to escape.
- Other states' efforts are not relevant for Virginia.

Cannabis Use Is Common and Underreported

In the Baseline Survey, 39.3% of participants had ever used cannabis, including 32.7% who had used cannabis in the past year and 18.1% who had used in the past month. In comparison, 17.3% of high school students reported past-month cannabis use on the 2019 Virginia Youth Survey.



Qualitative participants were recruited based on their use patterns. As intended, 40.5% had ever used cannabis and 59.5% were susceptible but had never used.

Includes vaping cannabis

Methods of Use

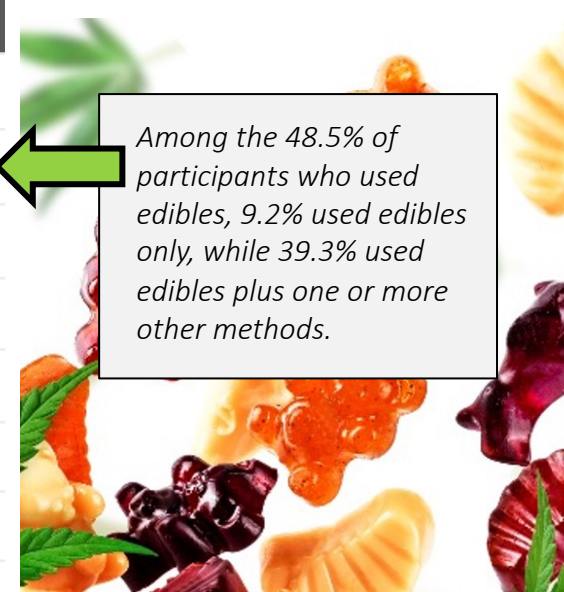
Baseline Survey participants who had used cannabis in the past year most often reported using **vapes, edibles, and joints**. Focus groups and interview participants also noted that vaping, smoking, and consuming cannabis were most common. Some noted that vape pens were used regularly at school or while driving, while edibles were often reserved for home settings.

“Gummies are probably safer than smoking or vaping. You’re not inhaling something. You’re just chewing it down.”
- 17, Male, SNT

*“It was in the house because **my aunt had bought edibles**, and they were in the kitchen. I was like, hmm, **nobody wouldn’t really notice.**”*
- 16, Female, EXP

Method	%
Vaped it	51.5%
Ate it as an edible	48.5%
Smoked it in a joint	46.2%
Smoked it in a blunt	43.8%
Smoked it in a bong or pipe	40.0%
Dabbed it	23.1%
Smoked it from a hookah or water pipe	10.8%
Smoked it in a spliff	6.9%
Used tinctures or drops	3.8%
Drank it as a beverage	3.1%
Another method	3.1%

Among the 48.5% of participants who used edibles, 9.2% used edibles only, while 39.3% used edibles plus one or more other methods.





Edibles are
on the rise

Youth See Edibles as Less Harmful and Easy to Conceal

During focus groups and interviews, Virginia teens reported edibles were highly appealing because they felt edibles:

- Were **less likely to harm** their lungs compared to smoking or vaping
- Were **less apt to spread COVID-19**, compared to passing around a joint
- Were **easy to conceal**;
- Had **no scent**, compared to smoking or vaping
- **Tasted great.**

Some experimenters explained that prior to trying cannabis for the first time, they primarily noticed teens smoking or vaping. However, after initiation they became much more aware of how edibles are commonly used by people their age.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

*"But I feel like [smoking is] a very, very common thing now. You can **smell it in the bathrooms at school**. Or you'll be in the hallway, and you can smell that someone has used it."* - 16, Non-Binary, SNT

*"I tried an edible once and, honestly, it was just because I was like, it's here, let me just see, **let me just taste**."* - 16, Female, EXP

*"Outside of DC, like in Northern Virginia, it's pretty much **just edibles** ... The school system and the police kind of **crack down on underage smoking**."* - 16, Male, EXP

*"I think edibles are more of like either you know that **somebody is going to be there that doesn't like smoking**, so you get edibles instead because you're a nice **considerate friend**. Or if it's like a lot of people there, especially now with **COVID, passing around the weed to smoke is less sanitary**. So if there's going to be a whole bunch of people and you don't necessarily know everybody, then there's more likely to be edibles there."* - 16, Female, EXP

*"I'd assume that **edibles would be safer** just because you're not inhaling something into your lungs."* - 17, Non-Binary, SNT

Cannabis Terminology

During focus groups and interviews, participants reported that the most commonly used term for cannabis was “**weed**.” Other less common terms included “marijuana,” “bud,” “ganja,” “gas,” “tree,” “dope,” “hash,” “kush,” and “devil’s lettuce.”

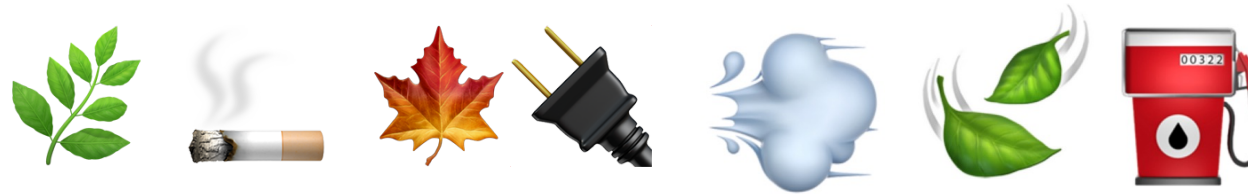
A variety of terms were used to describe being under the influence of cannabis. While the most common term was “**high**,” terms such as “blazed,” “stoned,” “faded,” and “baked” were also used. Less common terms for being under the influence included “geekin”, “blasted,” “zooted,” or “blitzed.” When someone was “too high,” some teens used the phrase “greened out.”

- Some simply referred to marijuana as “**some**” when used in the phrase, “**You trying to smoke some.**”
- Teens sometimes used the term “**pot**,” but some saw that as a term used by older adults.

*“Weed. I don’t know. **It depends on the context.** If they’re being funny, they’ll probably call it **something funny, like kush-kush.** Something funny, or they’ll just be like, ‘**You got weed,**’ or something like that, or like you, ‘Trying to smoke some?’ Or something like that.” - 16, Female, EXP*

Cannabis Emojis

Emojis were frequently used to describe cannabis with friends and when teens were looking to purchase cannabis through social media platforms. Common images included leaves, smoke/gas, or a combination of these. Sometimes smiling faces accompanied these emojis. Teens also used the outlet emoji when actively searching for a dealer.



"No, I can just think of the little leaves and I don't know if it's smoke or ... I don't know. Something like that. Those two combined together they use." - 17, Female, SNT

"I would say that the leaf emojis are the most useful, the gas emoji or like the car gas emoji ... I think those are the most used ones that I've seen." - 16, Female, EXP

"Yeah. Like the little leaf emoji? The little green leaves, yeah. People use that a lot. Different green ones, I guess. And by extension, the little plug, like the outlet plug, would be used to refer to your drug dealer." - 16, Female, EXP

Marijuana Use VS Marijuana Vaping

During screening, participants were asked to indicate in how many instances in their lifetimes they had used marijuana, and in how many instances they had vaped marijuana. The table below shows a crossing of the 2 questions, which reveals that answers often differed. Of note, 24.4% of participants reported vaping marijuana in more instances than they reported using marijuana, including **13.6% who reported lifetime marijuana vaping but no lifetime marijuana use**. Findings indicate that asking simply about marijuana use may miss out on a substantial proportion of teens who vape marijuana products.

		Used Marijuana						
		Never	1 time	2-5 times	6-15 times	16-25 times	26-99 times	100+ times
Vaped Marijuana	Never	51.3%	2.0%	2.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%	0.8%
	1 time	5.5%	3.0%	0.3%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
	2-5 times	6.0%	1.8%	3.0%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%
	6-15 times	0.3%	0.8%	0.5%	1.0%	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%
	16-25 times	0.5%	0.5%	1.0%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%
	26-99 times	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%
	100+ times	0.8%	0.5%	1.3%	1.0%	0.3%	0.8%	5.5%

Blue cells: participant reported a higher number of lifetime uses of marijuana vapes than marijuana generally

Sources of Cannabis Information

Baseline Survey respondents were asked to report what sources they used to find information about cannabis in the past week. Most participants had not looked for information on cannabis in the past week (60.6%). By far, the most common source of information was social media (29.6%).

Sources of Information	%
Social media	29.6%
Websites/apps of online-only sources	6.8%
Websites/apps of magazines	5.0%
Podcasts	4.8%
Blogs	4.0%
Local TV news	3.5%
24-hour news	3.5%
Websites/apps of newspapers	3.5%

Sources of Information	%
Websites/apps of marijuana delivery services	3.5%
Storefronts/marijuana dispensaries	3.3%
National network news	3.3%
Other TV programs	2.8%
Printed newspapers	2.0%
Printed magazines	1.8%
Radio news programs	1.3%

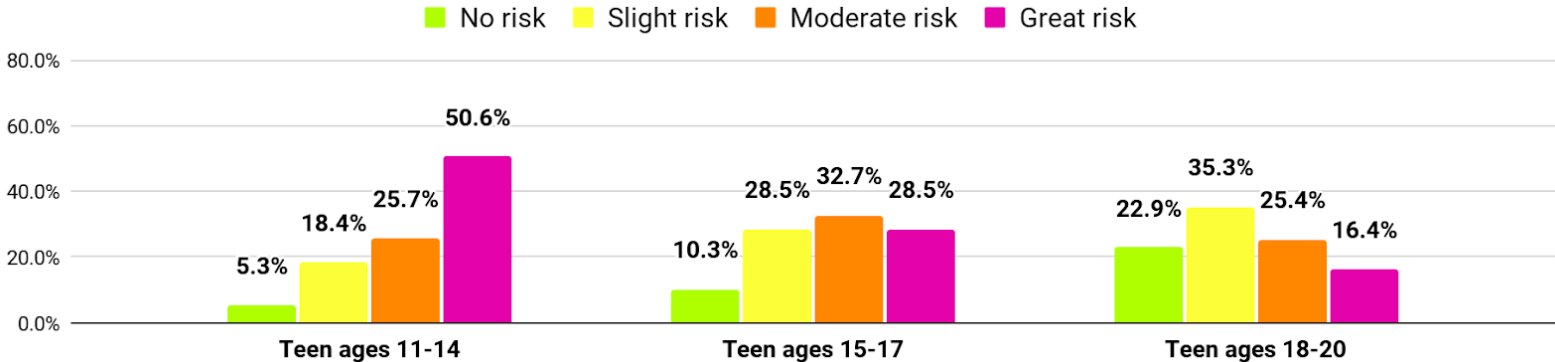
**Cannabis is
seen as
almost no
risk.**



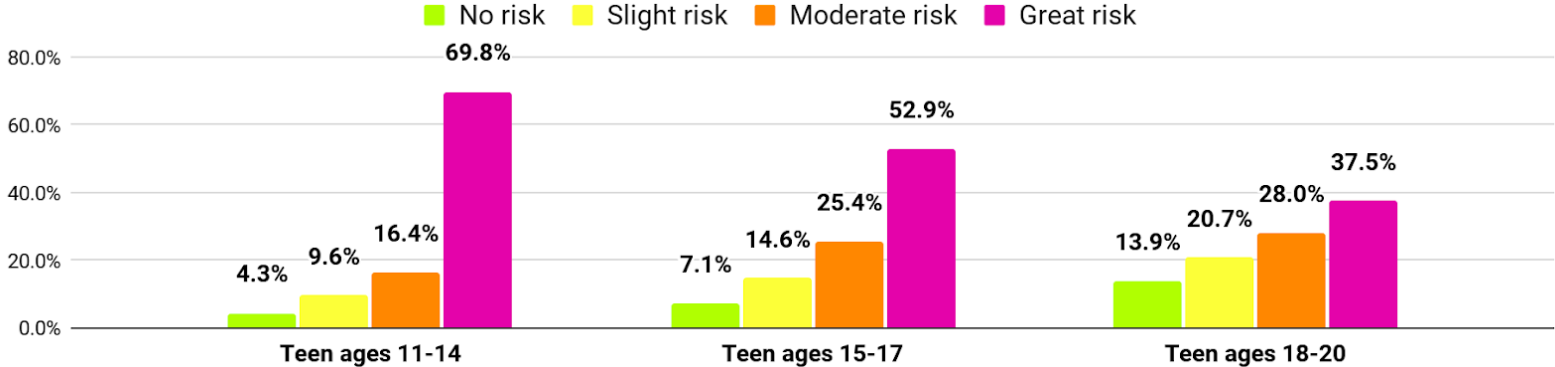
Baseline Survey: Perceived Risk for Others

To assess participants' perceptions of the risks of using cannabis, they were asked to indicate how risky they thought weekly and daily use would be for youth ages 11–14, 15–17, and 18–20. Use by younger teens was perceived as riskier than use by older teens, and daily use more risky than weekly use.

Uses cannabis once or twice a week



Uses cannabis daily or almost daily



Factors Contributing to Perception of Risk

Qualitative discussions revealed that most teens perceived very minimal risk to occasional use of cannabis. Cannabis was seen as becoming a problem when:

- People are dependent on it (e.g., unable to go a long period of time without it, unable to engage in activities with friends without cannabis, changes in personality when not using)
- Use interrupts daily life
- People make unsafe decisions because of it

*“[Marijuana use is a problem] when they're **using it all the time before they do anything or go anywhere...** Basically, if you ask them to come hang out and they're like, **‘Well, I got to smoke first. I got to do this first.’**”*
- 16, Trans Male, EXP

Negative consequences of cannabis use were typically believed to occur:

- With frequent use (2+ times/week up to daily)
- After continued duration of use (minimum of 6 months)
- Only after individuals have reached a point of dependency
- Only in select individuals who happen to be unlucky

*“I think it's only a problem **when you become dependent on it** and when you can't survive without it. If you don't know who you are without weed, then I think it's an issue. But if it's something you do **once a week or something, every once in a while, I don't think it's a problem.**”* - 17, Female, SNT



Other states' youth prevention efforts are **missing the mark.**

Reactions to Current Sources of Cannabis Information

While Baseline Survey respondents reported using social media as a common source of cannabis information, many Qualitative participants referenced learning about cannabis in their freshman year health classes and through media campaigns. However, Virginia teens felt this information:

Used scare tactics. Teens frequently noted that their high school health class tried to scare them out of using. One Virginia female described her cannabis education as, *“I’ve just seen the scary stuff they show us in health classes.”*

Felt like a lecture and was authority-based. Teens also noted that much of the school-based education they had received, along with select campaign messages, lectured instead of presented information. One Virginia female noted, *“It feels like we’re being lectured ... At this age, we don’t want to listen to authorities.”*

Was not seen as the whole story. Teens felt the information they typically receive about cannabis was not genuine or not providing complete information. As one Virginia female stated, *“Like health class or something ... Forced or ingenuine ... Your teacher telling you, guys, don’t do drugs, whatever.”*

Combined cannabis with tobacco or harder drugs. One male described, *“Red Ribbon Week, don’t smoke. If you see someone smoking or doing drugs, report it. And weed is, like, in my experience, the one that went under the radar ... Most of the time, it was anti-tobacco... And then, weed is the thing people find out about later, and they’re like, well, I don’t see anything wrong with it.”* Another male Virginia teen noted that education he received about marijuana was lumped in with harder drugs, and from his perspective, *“I’m positive that it’s not going to affect you in the same way hard drugs would. Weed is one of the safer drugs.”*

Was not science-based. Teens also had the perspective that research about cannabis was still very mixed, and health education they received overstated the health effects. As one male Virginia teen stated, *“A lot of research at this point, from what I understand, is very early on in comparison to other research things when it comes to that, because the war on drugs and everything, it had been much harder to continuously research the long-term effects on stuff like that.”*

Messaging Considerations for Virginia

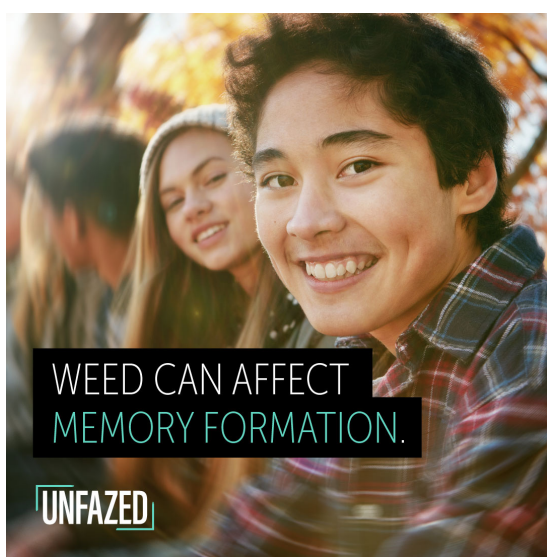
- S** **Science-based.** Virginia teens want to be in the know and understand how things work. They also hate being told what to do, and more commonly told what not to do. Messages should introduce information in a neutral, factual way. To avoid being perceived as judgmental, messages should be pro-brain, not anti-cannabis.
- C** **Credible and culturally-relevant.** Virginia teens hate being lectured. They also feel that people who would never use (e.g., experts or authority figures) are not credible. They feel experts do not get it, are biased, and push misinformation. Messages should come from sources who are people like them, those who seem like someone who might be open to using, but are choosing not to.
- O** **Open.** Teens hate when they think you are not telling them the whole honest story. Messages should say the parts we know (e.g., brain mechanisms) but never overreach. When science cannot fully support something yet, tell the whole story.
- P** **Pertinent.** Not all consequences matter to Virginia teens. It is also hard for them to picture how abstract consequences play out in the short-term, in their everyday lives. Messages must show consequences that matter to teens and how they link to their short-term everyday life. When possible, show—do not tell.
- E** **Empathetic.** Youth have a lot going on and do not need another authority figure or media campaign making them feel bad about their circumstances and choices. Prevention campaigns must acknowledge challenges that youth face and their use of cannabis as a tool for coping to make sure they feel seen, heard, and valued.

YOUR BRAIN IS POWERFUL.
PROTECT IT.



WEED CAN AFFECT
MEMORY FORMATION.

UNFAZED



REMEMBER: WEED CAN KEEP
YOUR BRAIN FROM MATURING.



UNFAZED

WEED AND THE TEEN BRAIN

SOURCES



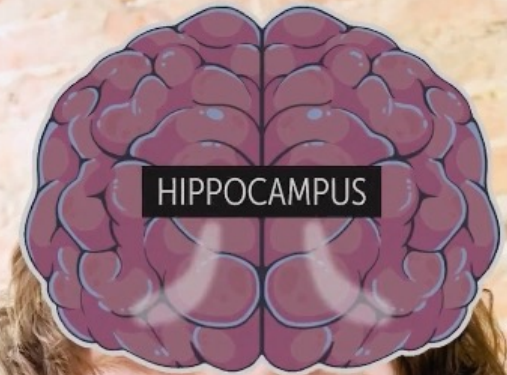
WE ARE UNFAZED

Unfazed is your source for accurate information
about the risk of using marijuana as a teen.



Following | For You

WHAT DOES WEED DO TO YOUR BRAIN?



71.1k



1281



232

@Unfazed

Check out how using weed can
impact your bra... Ad

🎵 Promotional Music



Home



Discover



Notifications



Me



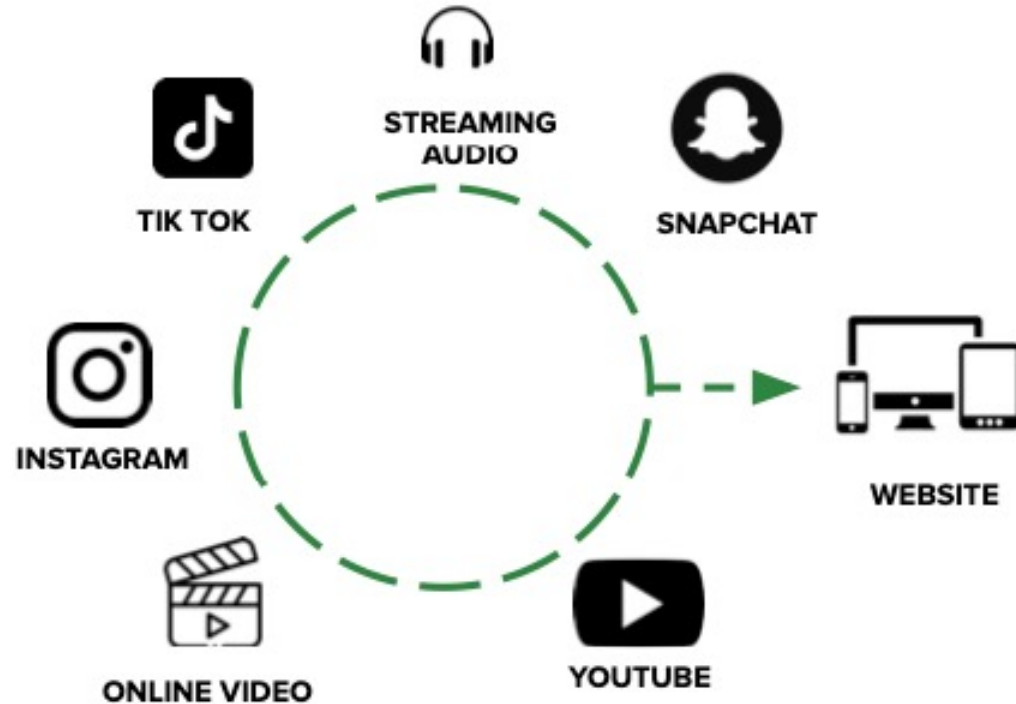
UNFAZED

COMMUNICATIONS ECOSYSTEM

Goal: Build message awareness & visibility by delivering cannabis risk messaging on channels where cannabis use is normalized.



1. EXPOSURE TO MESSAGING (i.e. awareness)



2. INDICATORS OF MESSAGE CONSUMPTION (i.e. Video views, GIF completions, etc)

SNAPCHAT engages teens through video and interactive story ads.

TIKTOK drives engagement through video and conversion ads in a relevant setting.

YOUTUBE gathers engagement through video views.

INSTAGRAM delivers engaging content on a relevant platform to maintain a trustworthy brand digital presence.

STREAMING AUDIO reaches engaged audio listeners as they stream what they love. Audio ads are served between songs while there are no competing messages, and the listener is better able to focus on the messaging.

ONLINE VIDEO Deliver video content that ensures message delivery and amplification.

WEBSITE provides an interactive and mobile-first resource for teens to learn more about living substance-free.

FLAGSHIP VIDEO ENGAGEMENT

Flagship video ads proved to be successful as completions of videos accounted for 73% of total exploratory engagements. When compared to Rescue's benchmarks, Youtube, TikTok, and Snapchat met or exceeded expectations in terms of video completions.

3.8MM* Actual Video Completions
2.8M Expected Video Completions



YOUTUBE

2MM Video Completions

Expected Video Completions: 999K

\$0.01 Cost per Video View (Benchmark: \$0.03)

SNAPCHAT

404K Video Completions

Expected Video Completions: 275K

\$0.07 Cost per Video Completion (Benchmark: \$0.11)

FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM

235K Video Completions

Expected Video Completions: 583K

\$0.08 Cost per Completion (Benchmark: \$0.06)

TIKTOK

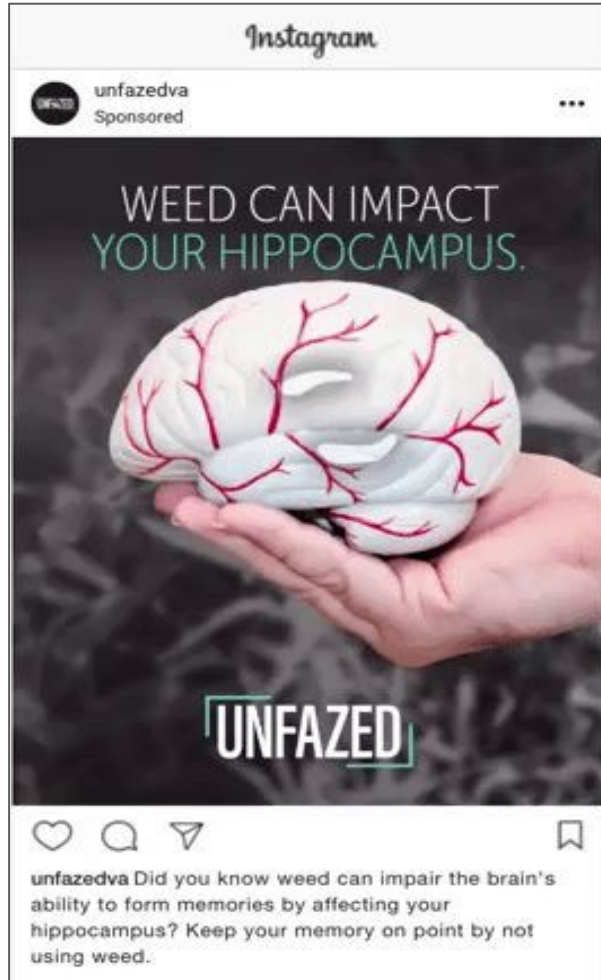
63K Video Completions

Expected Video Completions: 21K

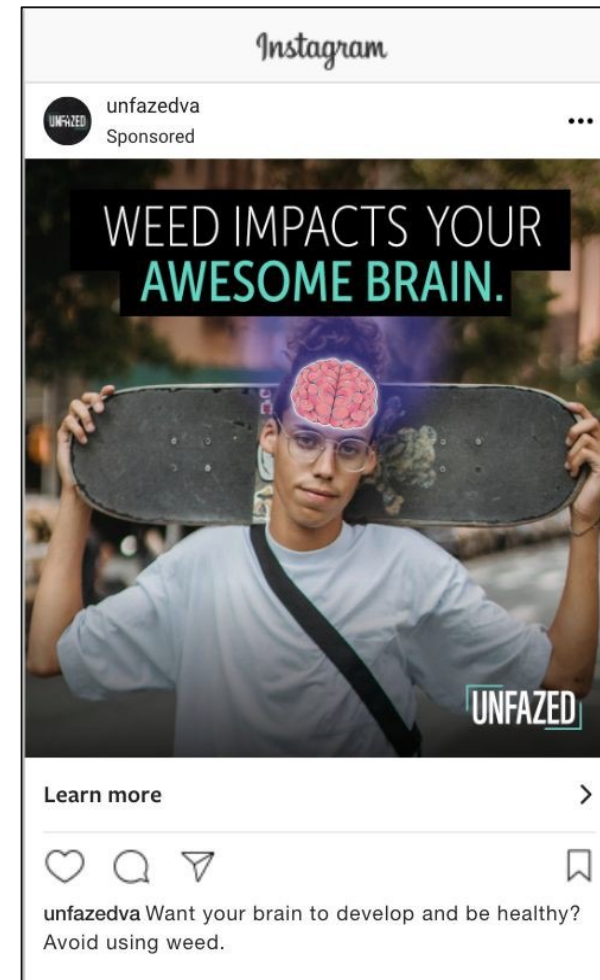
\$0.23 Cost per Video Completion (Benchmark: \$0.68)

STANDOUT PERFORMERS (FB/IG)

The ads shown here were the top performers on Facebook/Instagram – the effect on the brain and hippocampus specifically



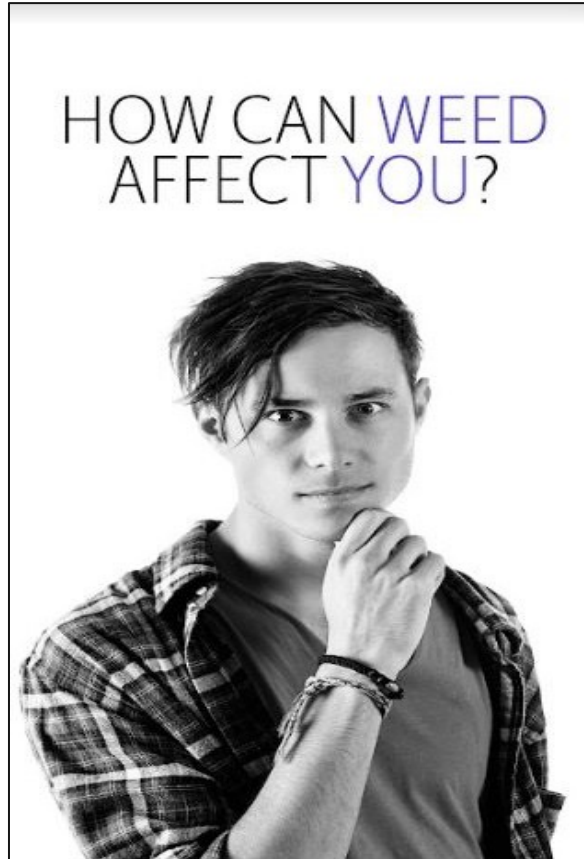
Total Engagements: 47,785
Expected Engagements: 47,000



Total Link Clicks: 1,589
Expected Engagements: 493

STANDOUT PERFORMERS (SNAPCHAT)

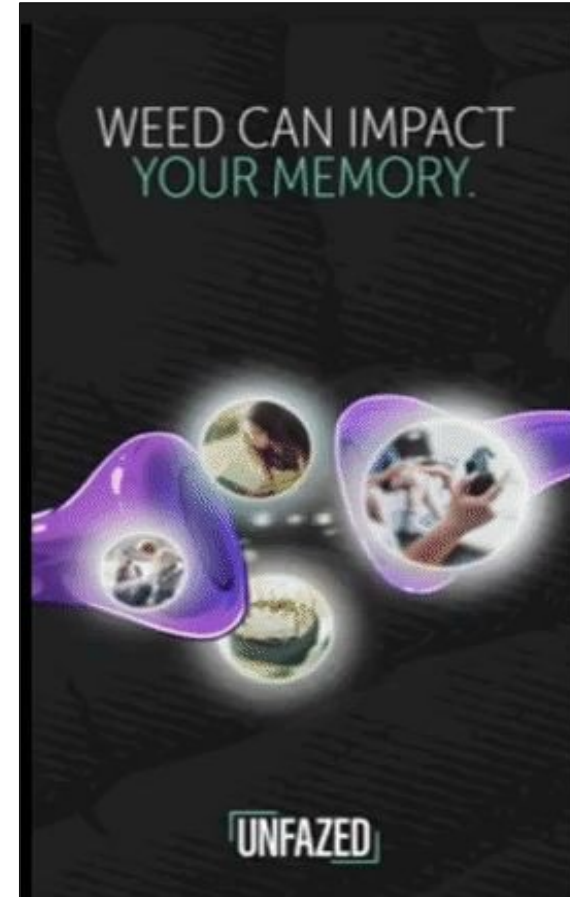
Top performers for Snapchat included themes regarding the Hippocampus and how the substances can directly affect users.



29,241 Swipe Ups

\$0.10 Cost per Swipe

Expected Swipe Ups: 1,809
(swipe up takes them to a link)



9,741 Swipe Ups

\$0.21 Cost per Swipe

Expected Swipe Ups: 1,184

TOP ENGAGEMENT TOPICS (TIKTOK)

Similar to Facebook/Instagram, top themes of ads were inquiring on the effects the substance has on the Hippocampus.

Hippocampus



Total Video Views: 58,263

Prefrontal Cortex

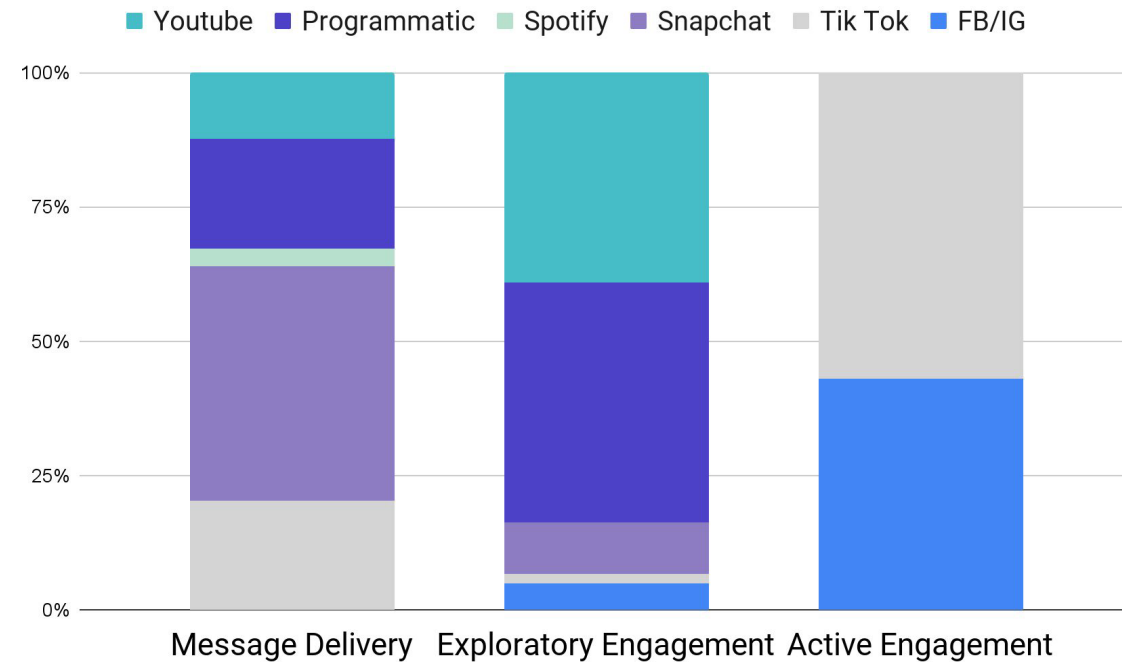


Total Video Views: 54,463

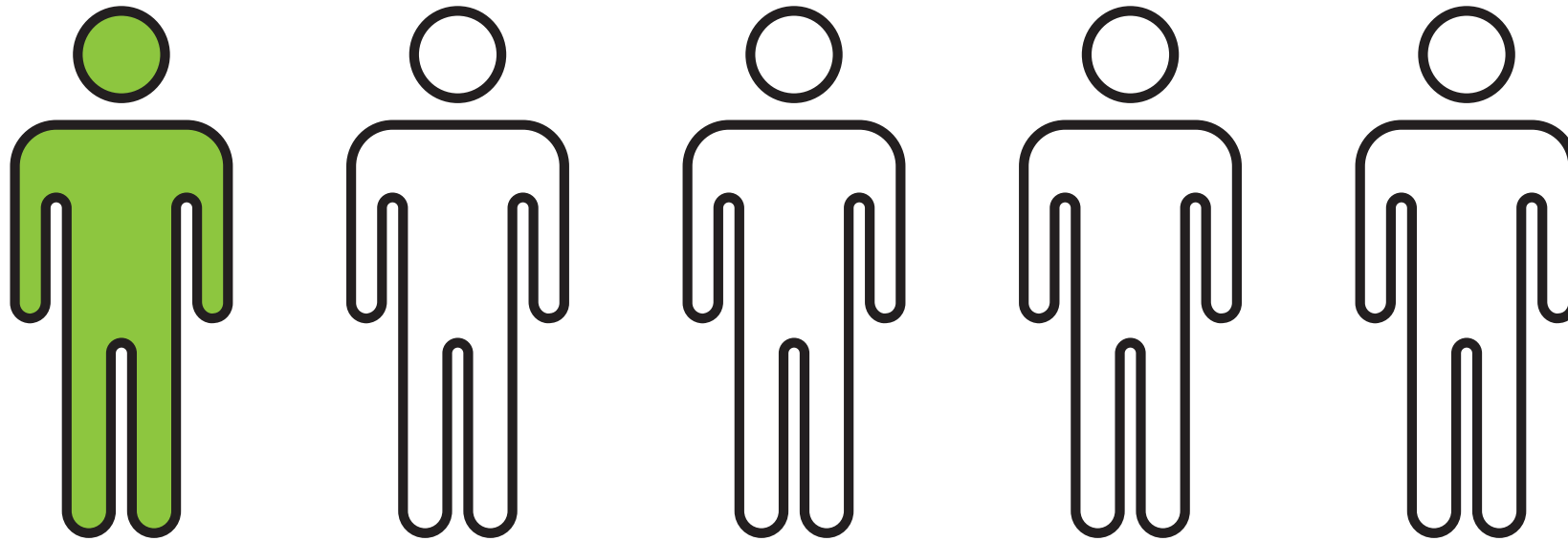
KPI WRAP UP - ALL CHANNELS

Each of the three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are the total of various metrics that measure the success of each message package against the campaign goals of achieving Message Awareness, Exploratory Engagement, and Active Engagement. **Overall, Brain Damage MP Campaign's video completions generated the most engagements, with Digital Video and Youtube being the top channels.**

	Brain Damage MP1
Flighting	April 14 – May 27, 2022
Message Delivery impressions	16,629,386
Exploratory Engagement clicks/swipe ups, likes/reactions, video/gif completions, photo views, saves, web sessions	5,193,942 (73% from video & GIF completions)
Active Engagement shares, comments, new page likes/followers	3,175 (70% from shares/replies)



2019 VIRGINIA YOUTH SURVEY:

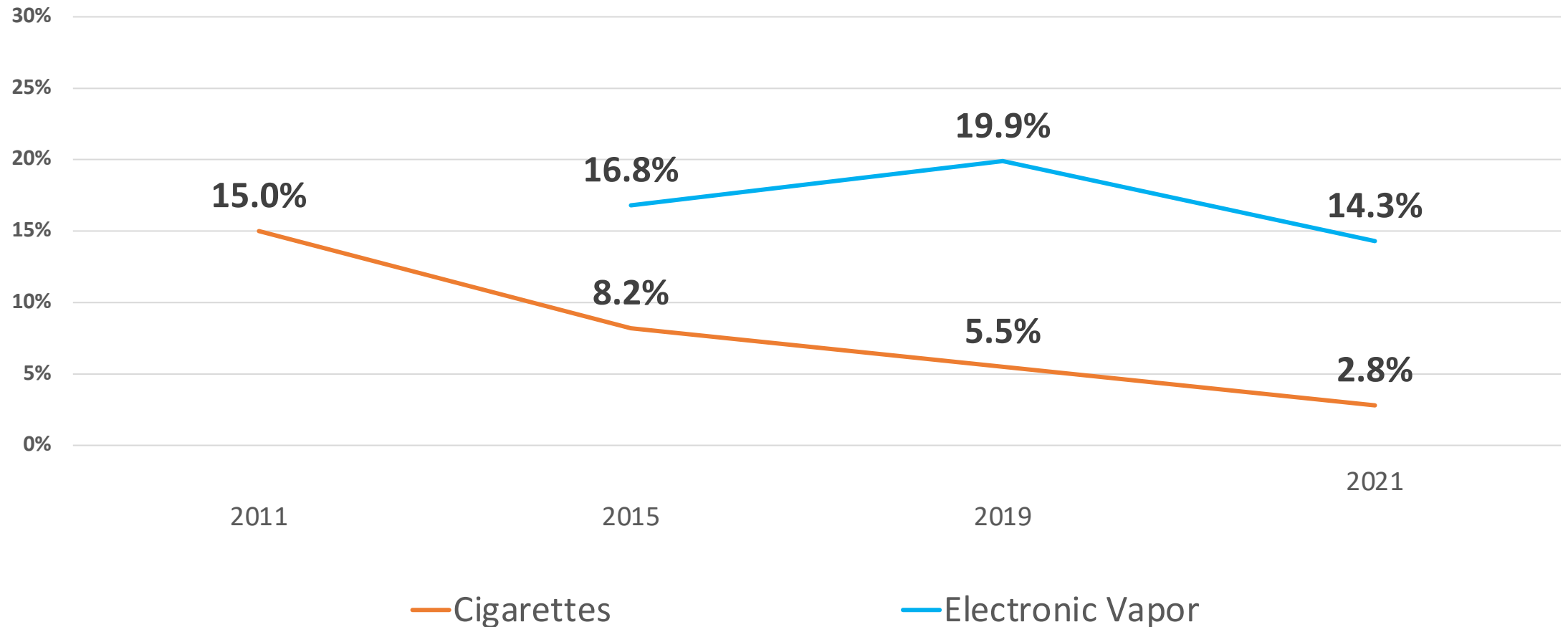


1 in 5 Virginia high school youth currently use cannabis

Nearly 3x the number of youth who smoke cigarettes

Impact

HS Use of Cigarettes vs. Vape (Statewide)



Addressing Cannabis Use Among Virginia Youth

