

Medical Marijuana Program

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Who Are You? US Government Statistics on Adult Marijuana Users

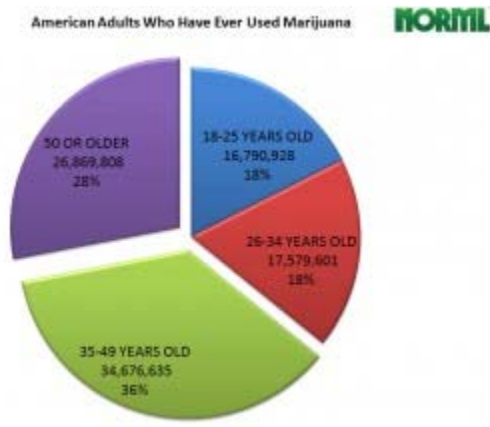
Posted by Russ Belville NORML Outreach Coordinator on Apr 10, 2009 in [Cannabis and Culture](#), [Cannabis and Drug Testing](#), [Cannabis and Health](#), [DEA](#), [Drug Treatment](#), [Feds](#), [Government](#), [Marijuana](#), [NORML Feed](#), [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#), [News](#), [Obama](#), [Smoking](#), [Statistics](#), [Substance Abuse Mental Health Data Archive](#), [US Government](#), [Updates](#), [demographics](#), [economy](#), [marijuana use](#)

The [US Government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive \(SAMHDA\)](#) is a treasure trove of information from the National Surveys on Drug Use & Health 2001-2007. I've always been uncomfortable discussing most marijuana statistics from this and other reports because the data so often cover marijuana use from age 12 and older. NORML stands for the responsible *adult* use of marijuana, so I wanted to know the facts on age 18 and older (some may wish for numbers age 21 and older; I only picked 18+ because the first data column is age 18-25).

The essential caveat: these are the people who will tell these things to a stranger for a government survey.

First of all, how many adults in the United States have ever smoked weed? The Survey breaks down the data by age categories and gives the percentage of the sample (Unweighted N) that answered yes or no to the question. Then they extrapolate, based on US adult population demographics, how many people in the United States (Weighted N) would answer yes or no.

AGE GROUP	WEIGHTED N	PERCENT OF POP.
18-25 YEARS OLD	16,790,928	51.3%
26-34 YEARS OLD	17,579,601	49.8%
35-49 YEARS OLD	34,676,635	53.1%
50 OR OLDER	26,869,808	30.1%
TOTAL	95,916,972	40.4%

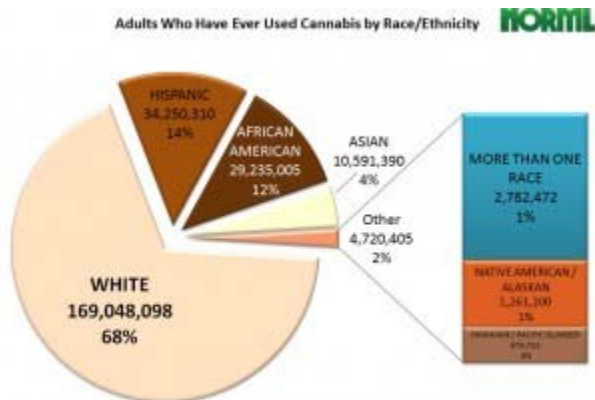


US Adults Who Have Ever Used Marijuana by Age

That's 95 million folks who've smoked herb. The percentage is how many within that age group have used – a majority of 18-25s and 35-49s and real close on the 26-34s. Or look at it this way: If you see someone under age fifty, flip a coin. Heads, they've smoked pot, tails, they haven't.

When you look at the population of adults who have ever used marijuana, we find that young people (18-34) and middle-aged people (35-50) are equally represented at 36% of the population.

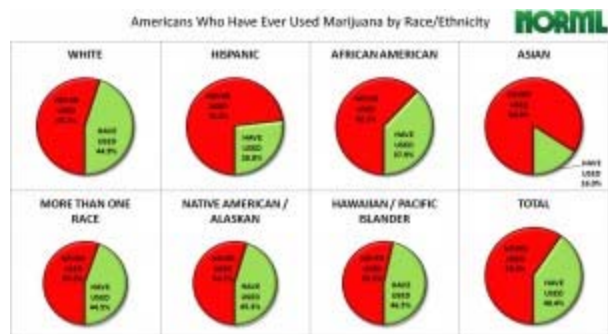
More fun with government numbers and Excel 2007 after the break...



US Adults Who Have Used Cannabis, by Race/Ethnicity

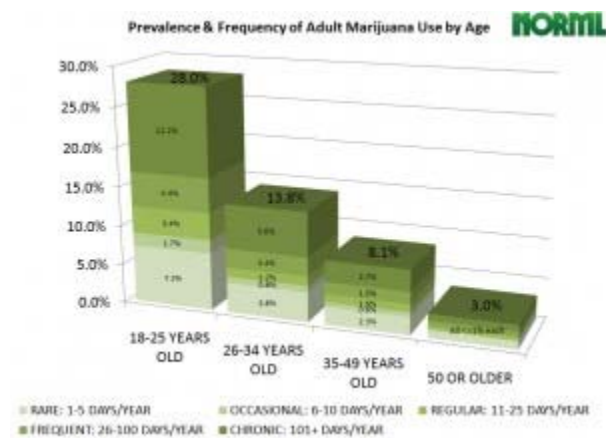
Well over two-thirds of people who have ever smoked pot are white, and only one-fourth are black or Latino. This is an interesting fact to note when compared to the [proportions of white, black, and Latino people arrested, convicted, and incarcerated for marijuana](#). (Hint: those brown pie slices get a whole lot bigger.)

While Latinos make up the second largest share of adults who've used cannabis, that is primarily due to their numbers in the overall population.



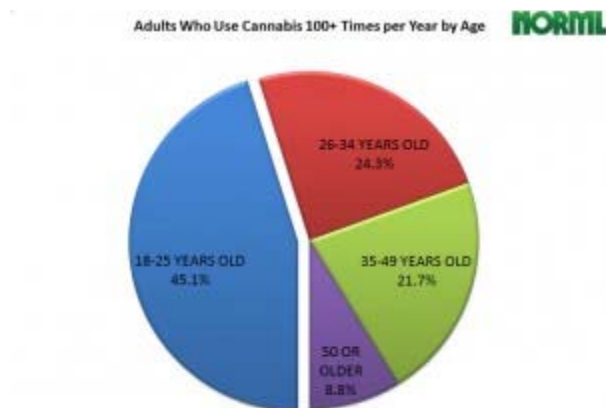
Adults Who Have Ever Used Cannabis by Race/Ethnicity

When broken down by racial/ethnic groups, we find that Hispanics are actually less likely to have used cannabis than any other group but Asians (about 1 out of 4 Latinos have used marijuana and only 1 out of 6 Asians... no matter what Cheech & Chong and Harold & Kumar may have led you to believe.)



US Adults Who Use Marijuana Annually by Age

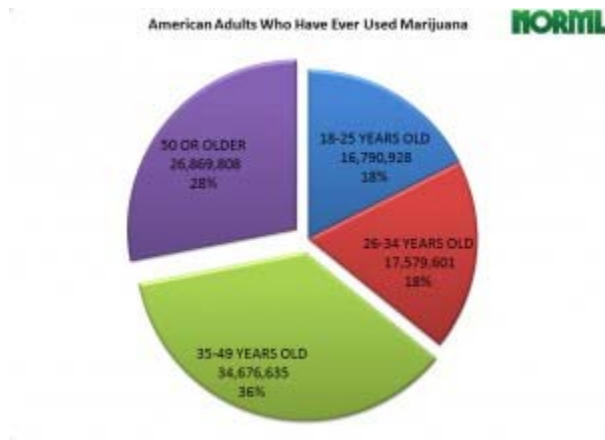
Concentrating only on the 22,003,805 estimated American adults who have used cannabis at least once in the past year yields some interesting figures as well. As expected, younger people are the most likely cannabis consumers. A full 28% of people aged 18-25 use cannabis annually, and over 11% are using cannabis more than 100 days per year, more than the 9% who use less than monthly. But by ages 26-34, all those figures drop by half or more (so much for the new Pot 2.0's addictive powers.) By ages 35-49, even though chronic and occasional/rare use drops by half again, there are still one out of twelve middle-aged Americans using marijuana at least once per year.



US Adult Chronic Marijuana Use by Age

36.9% of all annual adult marijuana smokers use marijuana more than 100 times per year, meaning there are an estimated 8,120,045 chronic tokers out there. Almost half of these users are aged 18-25.

So remember, dear marijuana smoker, you are not alone. 95,916,972 American adults have used marijuana. 22,003,805 American adults have used marijuana this year. 8,120,045 American adults have likely used marijuana today. If only 1% of people who smoked pot today [donated a dollar to NORML](#), we'd beat our advertising fundraising goal four times over.



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Last referers

- - [http://ju\(...\)emap.html](http://ju(...)emap.html)

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