

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

YOUTH COMMISSION IMMERSION #1



TOP LINE FINDINGS

MAY 2, 2017

I. Participants

- 11 youth from Denver Middle Schools and High Schools
- Ages 12-17
- Diverse HHI, ethnic groups
- April 28, 2017 at 6:00 pm

II. Participants wanted to come because...

- Marijuana is a problem in their communities and they want to help
- They want to learn more about marijuana and help others learn more
- They think marijuana an issue that is ignored
- Marijuana a bad thing, but it's also a good thing
- Marijuana is talked about a lot

III. Campaign Review: Stoner Sloth

- Some have seen it before
- They think it's aimed towards younger kids
- They think it's saying don't do it for fun
- Is it an accurate portrayal?
- Shows it affects people around you
- Some don't like it
 - Feel it's over-exaggerated
- Most like it
 - Powerful
 - Humorous
 - Shows that "stoners" may not care about school



III. Campaign Review: Protect What's Next

- Most didn't recognize these spots; had trouble understanding the point
- What does it have to do with marijuana?
- Wouldn't know it was about marijuana if we hadn't told them
- Talks about making good choices



III. Campaign Review: Stay True to You

- Liked it – it's an interview, it ties the issue to a real person
- Story makes it powerful
- It was okay
- It's just one person's experience
- Marijuana affects everyone differently



III. Campaign Review: Don't Be A Lab Rat

- Good hook
- Obvious it's marijuana
- Realistic, not fluffy
- Straight to the point
- Clear

WEED MAY ACTUALLY SHRINK
PARTS OF THE TEENAGE BRAIN.



IV. City's Campaign...



Hope it's:

- Direct and clear it's about marijuana
- Intriguing, keeps youth engaged
- Voices of different ages
- Include facts and opinions
- Shouldn't bash marijuana, show support

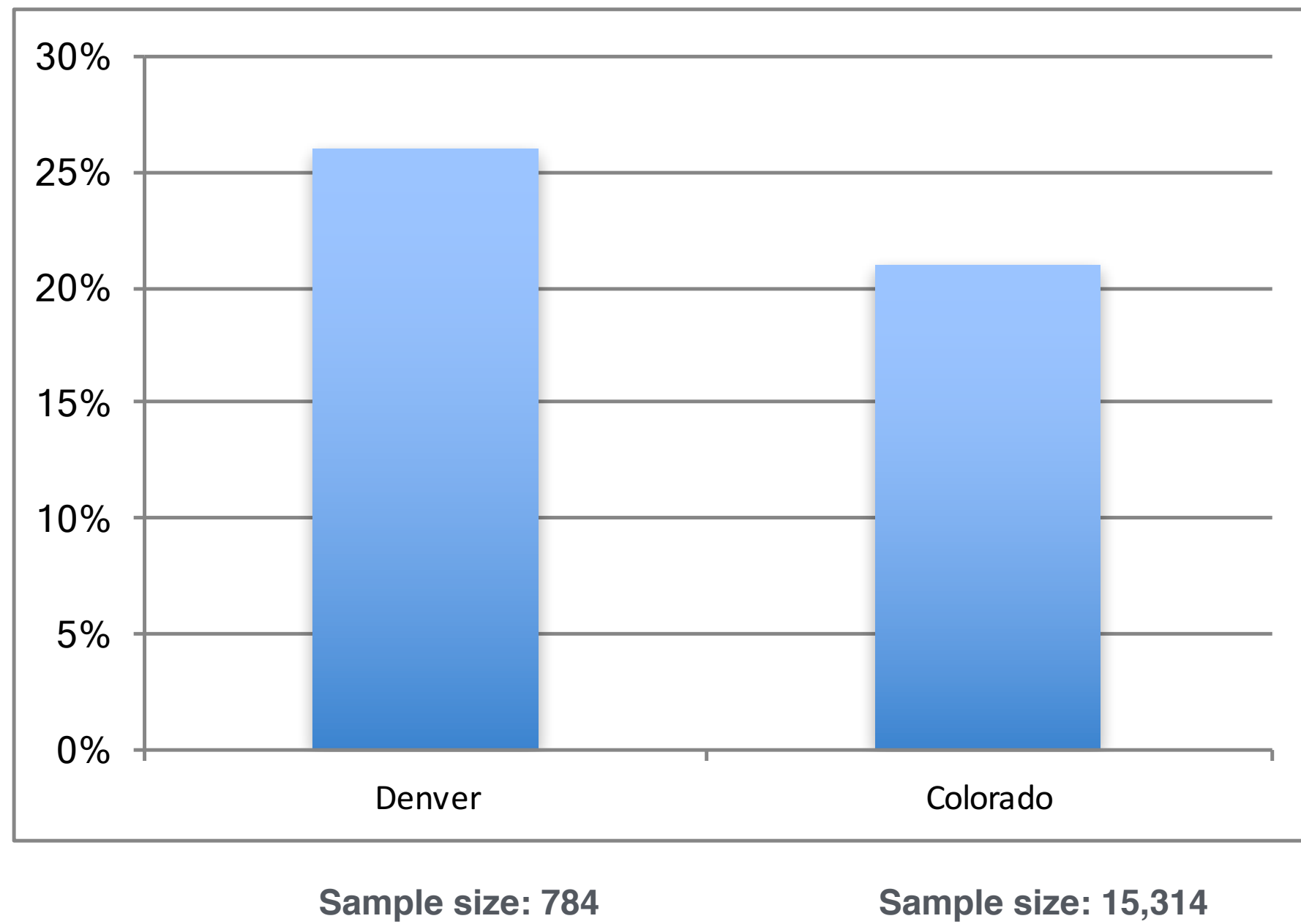
Best way to reach youth:

- Email/text
- No TV
- Streaming music
 - Pandora and Spotify
- YouTube
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- No Facebook



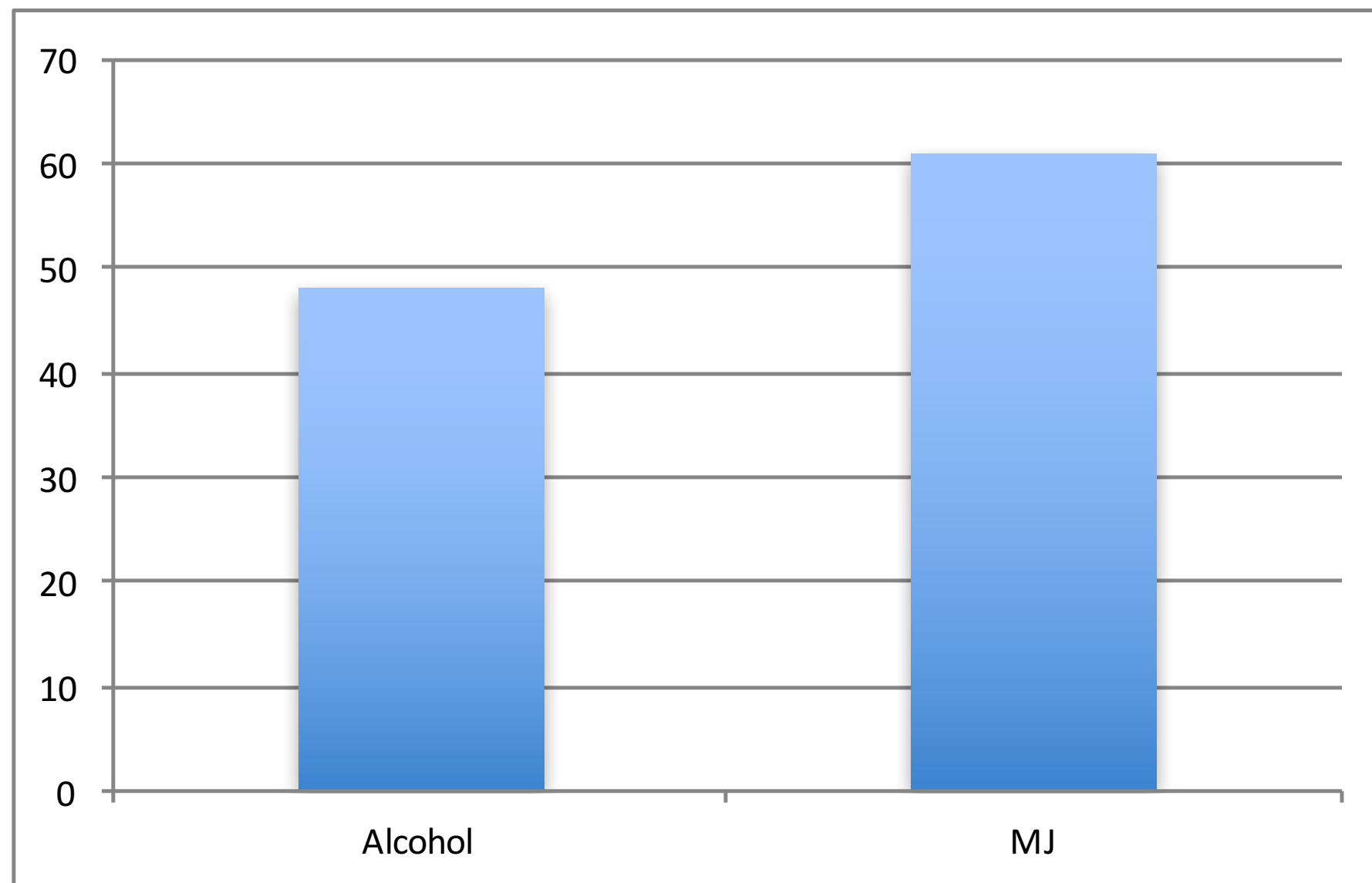
SURVEY STATS SAY

Percentage of students who used marijuana in the past 30 days...



Participants thought this sounded right to them.

Percentage of students in Denver who feel it would be sort of easy or very easy to get...

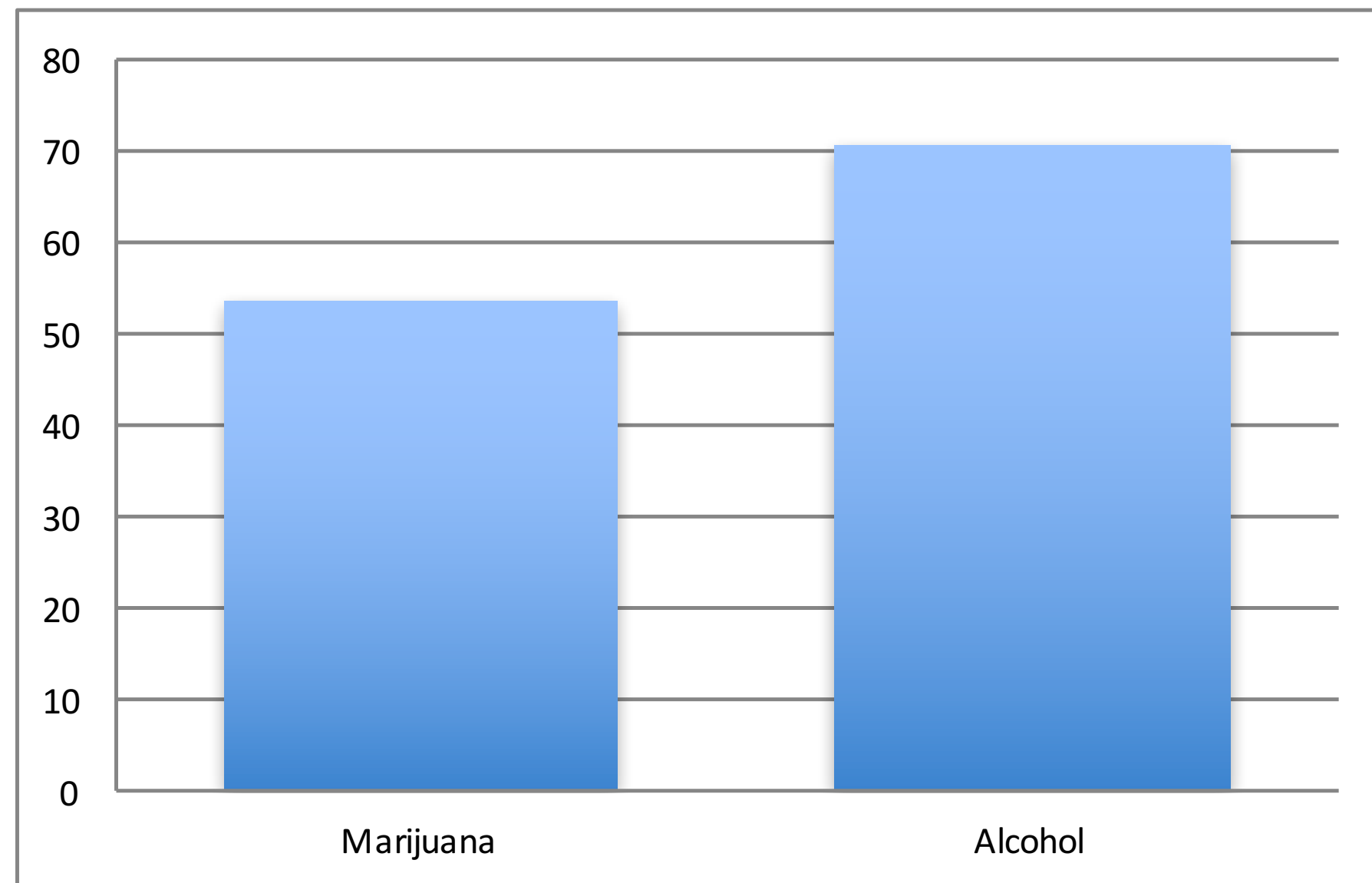


Sample size: 372

Sample size: 380

Participants thought this sounded right to them.

Percentage of students in Denver who think it is wrong or very wrong for someone the same age to use...

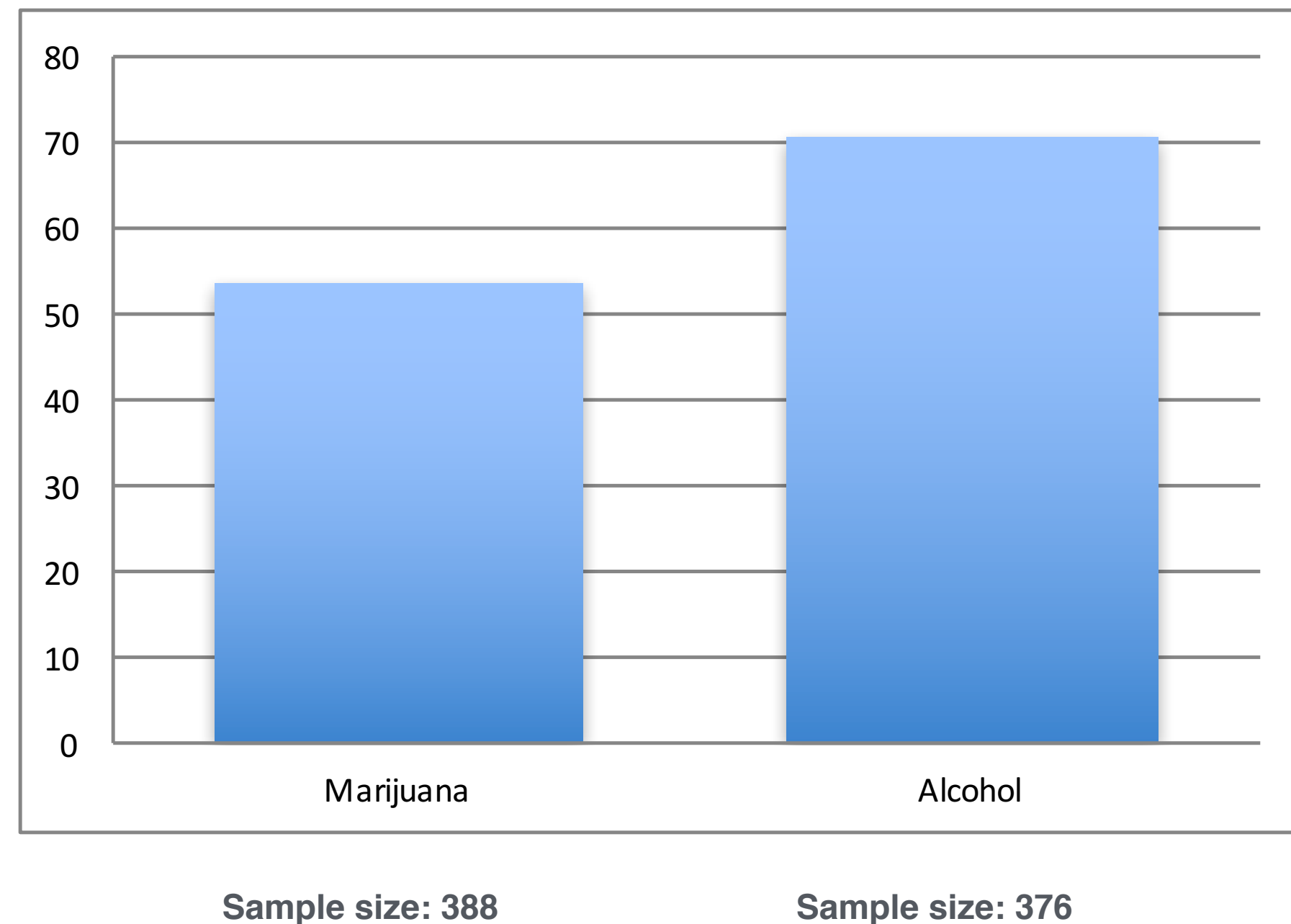


Sample size: 389

Sample size: 378

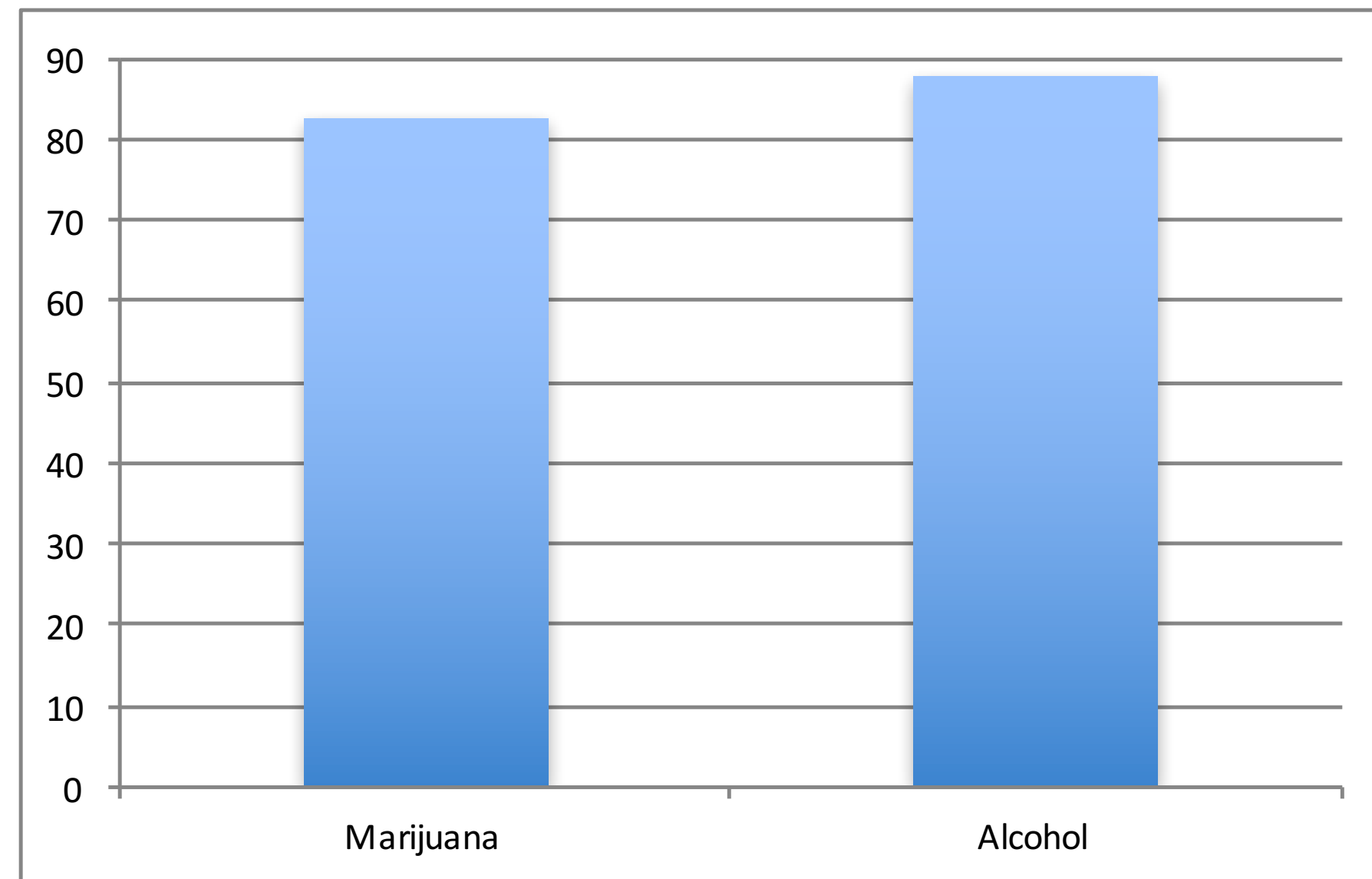
- Don't know if they agree with it
- Marijuana is more harmful to the brain
- General opinion is that alcohol is more addictive
- Surprised they're not closer together

Percentage of students in Denver who think people who have one or two drinks every day or use marijuana regularly have a moderate or great risk of harming themselves...



- Agree
- They were confused about what “harm” means – by physical actions or chemically?
- Harm brain
- Actions while drunk or high
 - School
 - Driving

Percentage of students in Denver who think their parents feel it is wrong or very wrong if they used...



Sample size: 390

Sample size: 379

- Not surprised
- Thought marijuana would be higher



LEGAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH RISKS

Marijuana Laws

It is illegal to use recreational marijuana if you are under 21.

TRUE 11

FALSE

IDK

It is illegal to use medical marijuana if you are under 18, in most cases.

TRUE	4
FALSE	4
IDK	3



It is legal to use marijuana anywhere in Colorado.

TRUE

FALSE

8

IDK

3

A “Minor in Possession” (MIP) offense could affect my chances of getting federal financial aid for college.

TRUE 11

FALSE

IDK

A “Minor in Possession” (MIP) offense could affect my chances of getting into college.

TRUE 11

FALSE

IDK

If the police charged me with a “Minor in Possession” (MIP) for marijuana, it could stay on my record into my adult life.

TRUE	7
FALSE	3
IDK	1



Marijuana Health Effects

Using marijuana could affect my brain since it's still developing until age 25.

TRUE

11

FALSE

IDK

Breathing in someone else's marijuana smoke is just as harmful as breathing in someone else's cigarette smoke.

TRUE

FALSE

4

IDK

7



Using marijuana can improve how well I do in sports.

TRUE

FALSE

7

IDK

4

Marijuana is not addictive.

TRUE	2
FALSE	8
IDK	1

Social/Other Marijuana Effects

Using marijuana can get in the way of my goals in school, getting a job, or life in general.

TRUE 8

FALSE

IDK 3

Using marijuana can hurt my grades.

TRUE	8
FALSE	1
IDK	2

Using marijuana can make my social life better.

TRUE	3
FALSE	5
IDK	3



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It is safer to drive high than to drive drunk.

TRUE	2
FALSE	3
IDK	6



Marijuana is a better choice than alcohol for teens.

TRUE	8
FALSE	2
IDK	1





FINISH THAT THOUGHT

Hey parents and teachers, when you talk about marijuana...

- I think we already know that it's not always good for us and we need to be aware
- You didn't demonize people who are addicted. They're still people! Also, it's not the end of the world if you do end up starting. Life goes on and there is recovery.
- Don't make us lose interest so we can really be educated
- Most students don't listen because they believe that they already know everything (in general)
- Don't shame us. Speak to us as young adults especially because it's a serious conversation. Don't relate the use of marijuana to death, just tell us to be responsible with our decisions.
- Don't teach us to hate it or those who use it. Be realistic and teach us to understand rather than to hate it.
- I wish you wouldn't act like it's the worst thing we could ever do to our brain – there are worse things (like alcohol)
- Don't come off with a negative tone
- You don't tell us the effects it has on us, mentally and physically.
- Use a sensitive tone.
- Make sure you include a detailed description of the damage it does to your brain, and real life examples of the effects it has.

Hey Colorado, I want you to know that legal marijuana...

- Can help destress and help people
- It's a good thing in my opinion, but it needs to be talked about more and in better ways.
- Can affect you in bad ways
- Can actually cure things and in some cases is good for you
- It's legal for a reason. Citizens of all ages use marijuana for medical reasons. It shouldn't be in the hands of the ones who don't need it, but if that's the case, then neither should alcohol.
- Is out there. People (all) can get it. So don't think that a good amount of people "aren't" doing it.
- Makes downtown smell bad!
- Can sometimes be a bad thing because minors can get a hold of it.
- May not actually be a great thing.
- Is used frequently in Colorado by teens.
- Is dangerous to kids and those who are around marijuana users.

I wish that kids who use marijuana...

- Could know to find someone who was in a similar situation before
- Know that it isn't cool but also that it doesn't make you a bad person
- Would stop or not peer pressure others to join them
- Try not to influence kids that don't want to try it
- Would use it responsibly. Kids and teens do make these types of decisions. But to stay safe, if kids/teens try weed, make responsible decisions.
- Would help those who don't understand to realize its effects and help us come to a common ground about your personal experience.
- Weren't so young. If you're in middle school using marijuana that is so bad.
- Knew what the side effects were so that they wouldn't continue to do it.
- Would realize the effects it has on them.
- Could stop because they could ruin their futures, unless it's for medical reasons.
- Knew how harmful it is to your brain and your life in general.

I wish that kids who DON'T use marijuana...

- Could help kids that do or understand why the kid may do it
- Understood more about it in general and that there wasn't so much stigma!
- Don't feel the need to use it.
- Don't give into the peer pressure because it's "cool"
- Wouldn't give in to peer pressure. If you are not using it for a reason then stay true to yourself. But don't be afraid to make your own uninfluenced choices.
- Wouldn't judge or automatically assume that kids who do use it are bad people, attention seekers, endangering themselves for fun, etc.
- Didn't act so morally superior to those that do.
- Continue to do that, but it's ok to do it one time and learn your lesson.
- Avoid it and always say no to it when it is offered to them.
- Could take more action into stopping others.
- Knew that it's the right thing to do, and that they're making good choices.

I wish that marijuana shops...

- Had multiple restrictions
- Weren't on every street and every corner! It's everywhere!
- Wouldn't advertise to kids.
- Keep doing what they are doing. Sell legally.
- No opinion. They don't affect me. They are set aside and they don't target anyone negatively.
- Weren't everywhere (including across from my doctor's office)
- Would ask for ID
- Checked your age
- Weren't open unless you needed it for medical reasons.
- Were more careful in making sure their product doesn't reach underage kids.

I wish that marijuana laws...

- Were more specific
- Protected and helped kids who started for reasons that weren't their fault
- Would be a bit more harsh.
- Were more strict, even though you have to be over 21 teens can still get it
- Would stay the same. People over 21 are allowed to use alcohol and should use weed freely also.
- No opinion.
- Were stricter in that it wasn't so easy for young people to get ahold of the drub.
- Were more lenient towards any minor who tried it.
- Would be more strict and enforced
- Were only for medical not recreational
- Made it more difficult for kids to acquire

As far as marijuana goes, I wish that...

- There were less harmful ways to use it or the ingredients inside it.
- People knew more about it and it wasn't so taboo, jokish and didn't have so much stigma
- Youth couldn't get their hands on it and bring it to friends
- It wasn't seen as bad as it really is, there are benefits and only bad things are said about it
- It was definitely more understood. It's not as harmful as people think. It came from a natural plant, I wish chemicals were implemented/implicated (spelling makes it difficult to know what they're trying to say) so much.
- It wasn't so heavily stigmatized and looked down upon if it's been legalized and is constantly tested.
- It wasn't so potent in so many forms. Less frequent usage of it isn't terrible, but methods like dabbing that contain 80% of pure THC are not good for anyone.
- It wasn't so addictive to kids/adults and it wasn't very harmful
- It wouldn't be as easy to get as it is
- It wouldn't be so frequently appearing
- The state of Colorado had taken a closer look, and will take a closer look on the effects it has on kids and those in general around marijuana and its users.



FINAL THOUGHTS

Why would/did you use marijuana for the first time? Or why not?

Have tried it – 4

Haven't tried it – 7

- Peer pressure
- Curious, new experience
- Wouldn't do it
- Not interested
- To let go
- Live in a community where it's open and it's your choice
- Feel like they would try it accidentally (edibles, etc.)
- Medical reasons – anxiety, etc.
- “If someone says, ‘don't do it, it's bad,’ it makes me want to see what it's like”
- Some of the girls have a friend who smokes every day and is still really smart

Why would/did you use it again? Why not?

- Common sense
- Scared of getting in trouble, consequences
 - Parents
 - Scared of awkward lecture
 - Law (worse than parents)
- Stats on how bad it is for you
 - Medically
 - In school
- Parents have educated on effects
 - Scared to harm the brain
- Don't want to harm future
 - Don't want to affect it
- Not something to always do when you're bored
- Don't want to – not right now
 - Paranoia, effects on the body
- Wouldn't because of the laws – would wait until 21
- Don't want to be part of it



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