

# Supporting Parents in Your Essential Role in Youth Substance Use Prevention



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# Setting the Stage



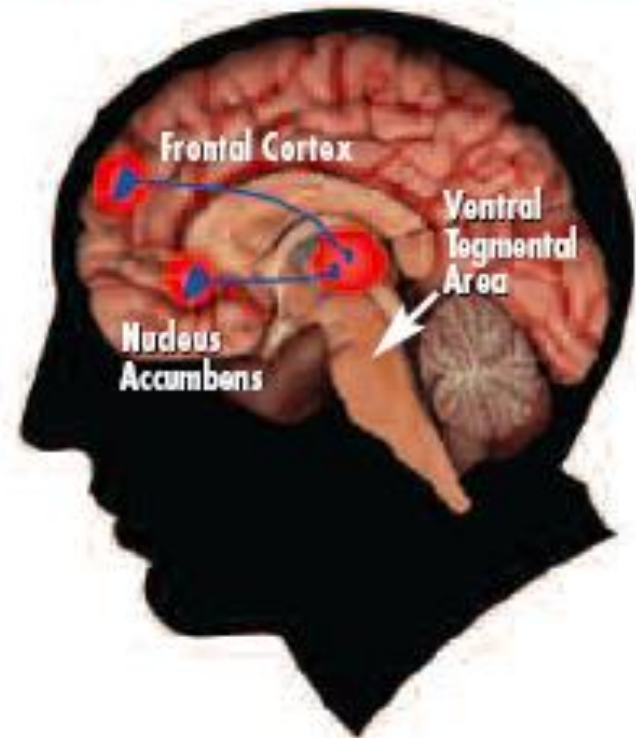
- There are no good drugs for adolescents
- The simple, clear prevention goal for youth is no use of alcohol, nicotine, marijuana or other drugs for reasons of health
- Even though it can feel otherwise, parents have tremendous influence on their children's behavior – including alcohol and drug use

# Brain Reward and Substance Use

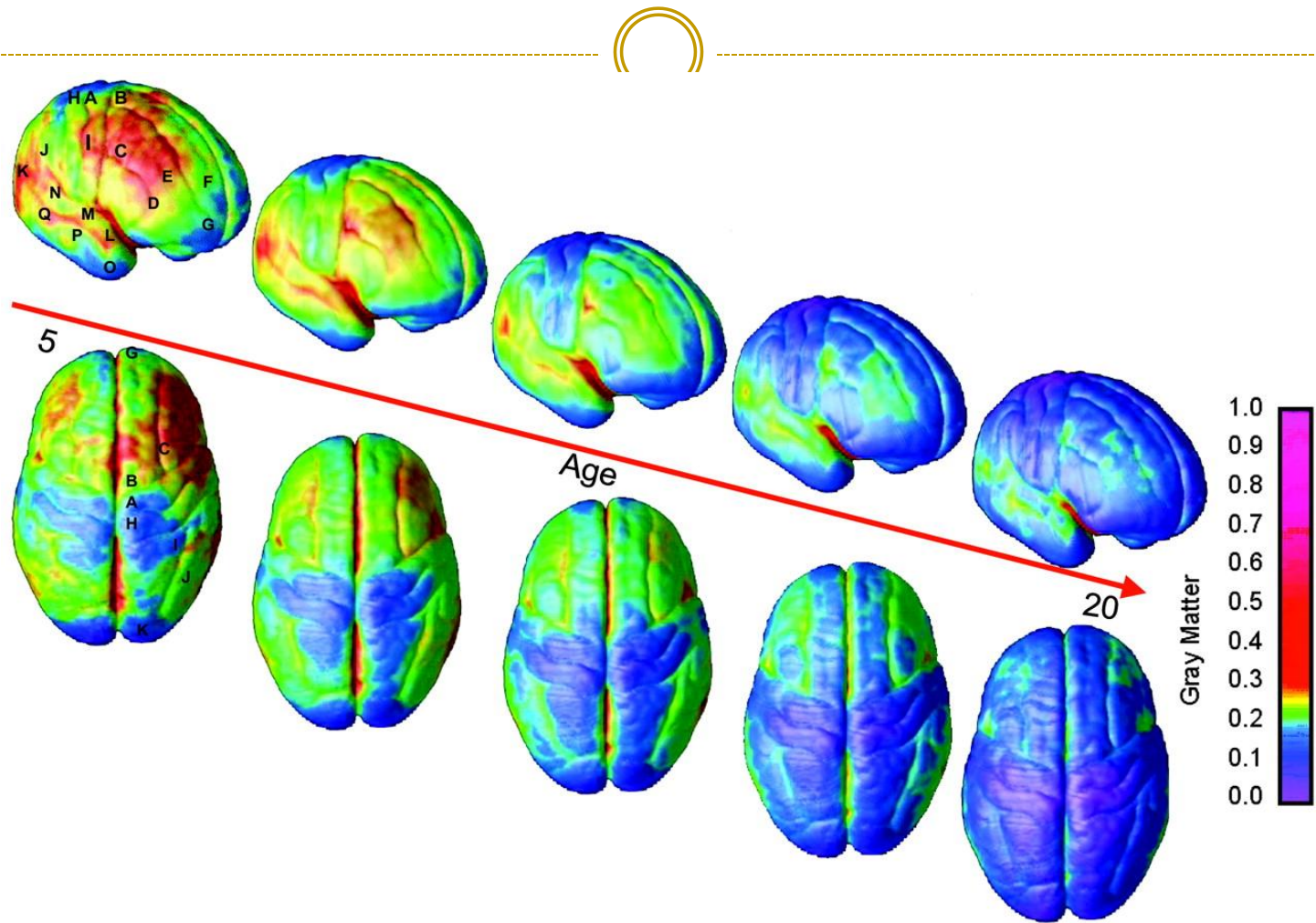


- The brain reward system shapes human behavior
- Alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, and other drugs reward the brain with intense stimulation that exceeds reward from natural stimulation (e.g., food and sex)

## Brain reward (dopamine) pathways

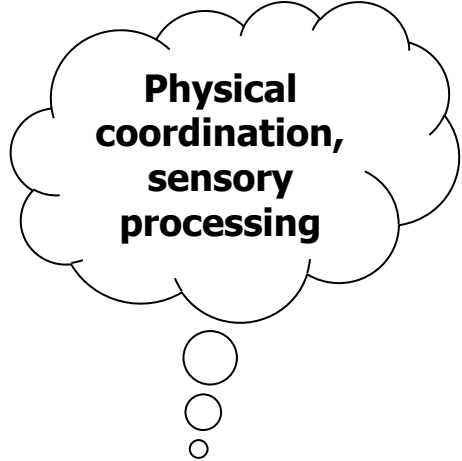


# Brain Maturation

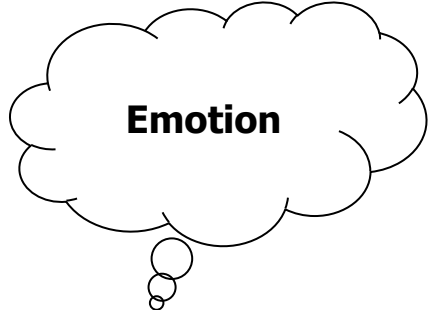




Toddler milestones:  
balance, walking,  
coordination



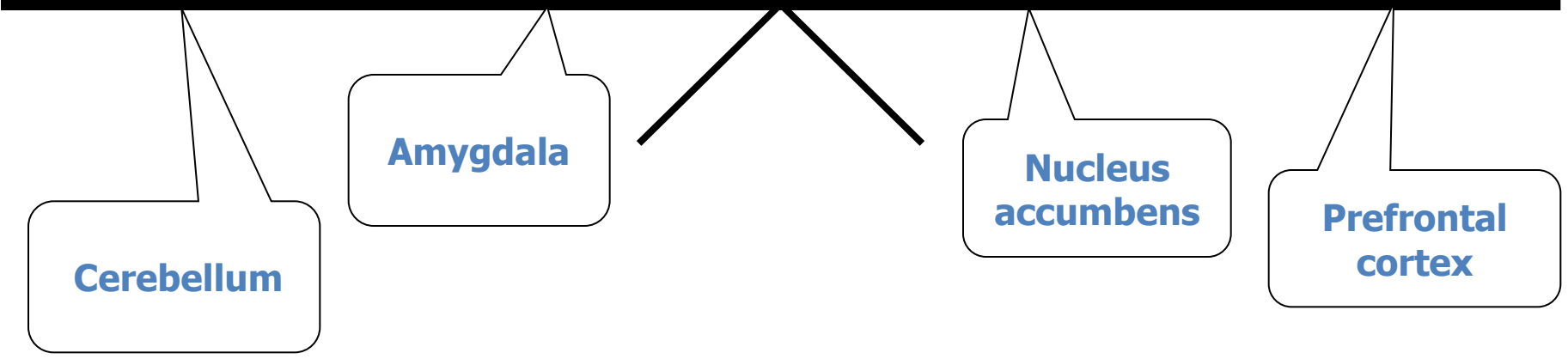
Preschool milestones:  
emotional regulation

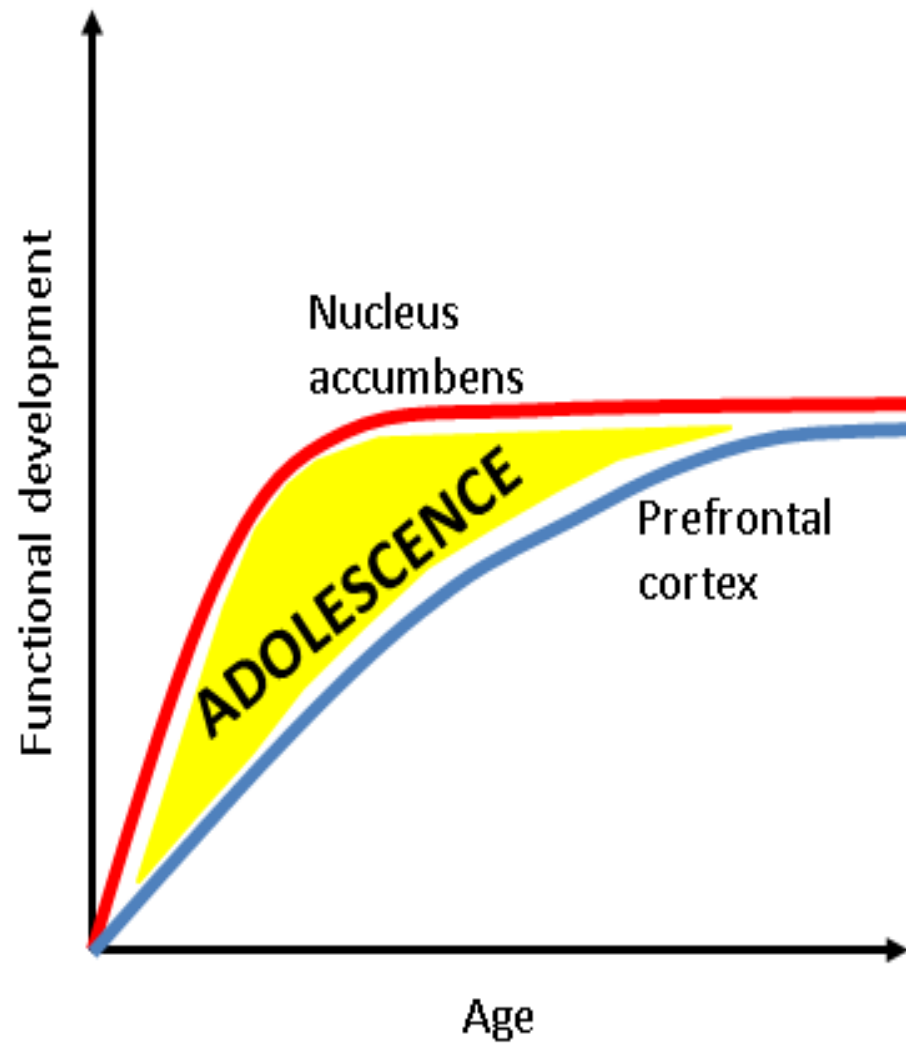


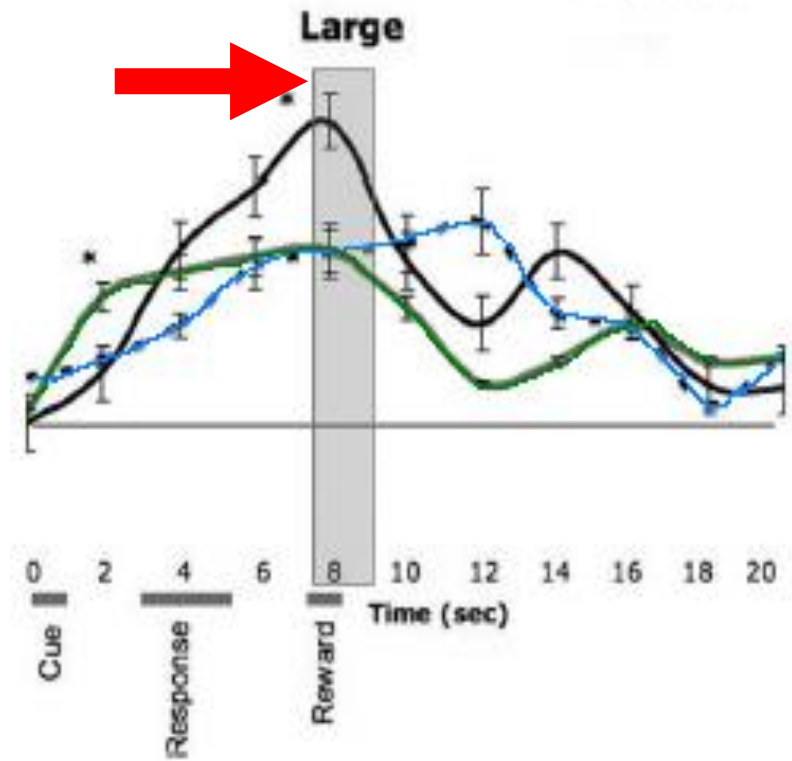
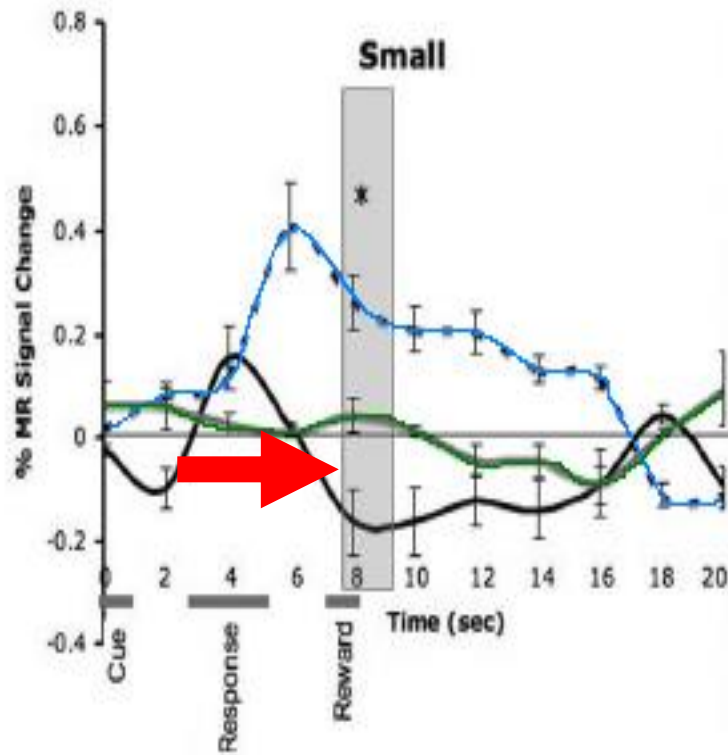
School age milestones:  
achievement



Adolescent  
milestones:  
impulse control







Children, ages 7-11

Teens, ages 13-17

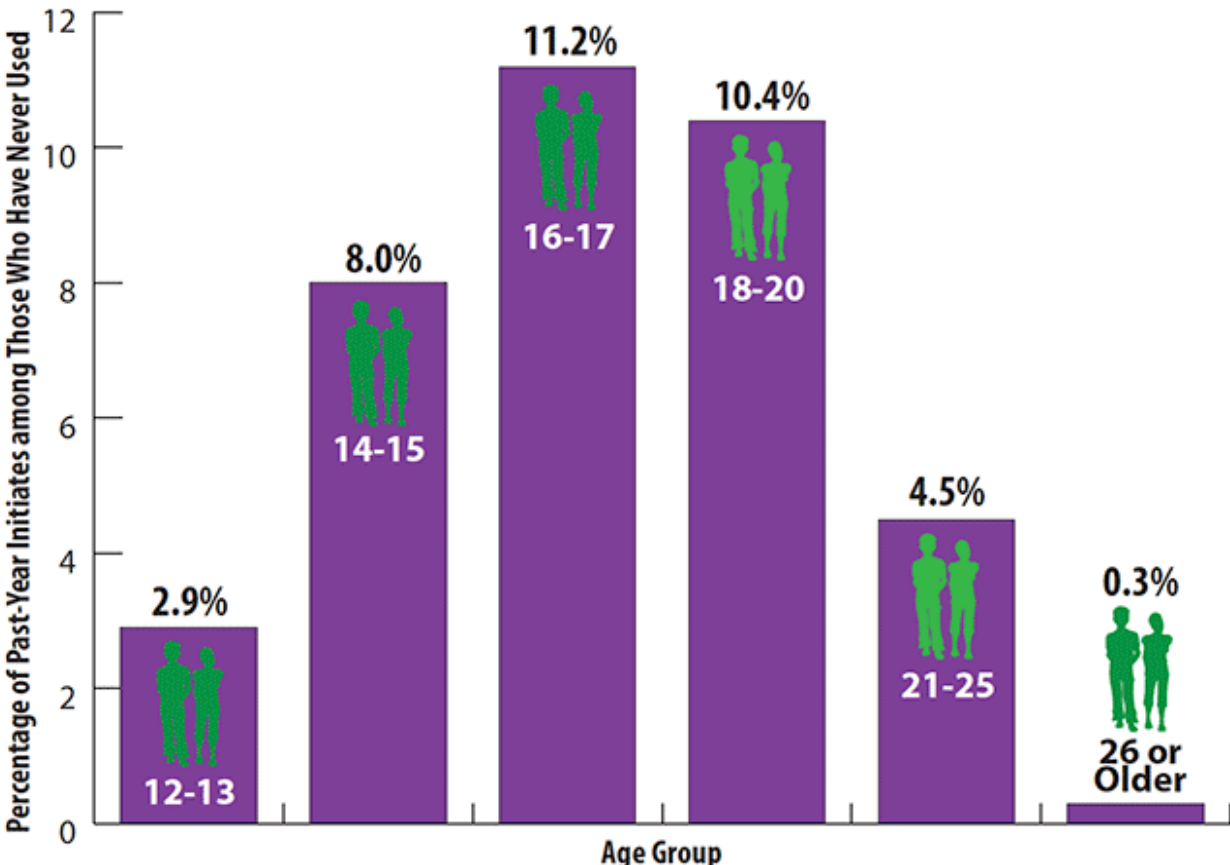
Adults, ages 23-29

# Adolescents are Developmentally Primed to Use Drugs





# Most Drug Use Starts in Adolescence



Source: SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2011 and 2012.

# All Substance Use Puts Adolescents at Risk



- **Early initiation and continued substance use significantly increases risks of problems related to:**
  - Physical health problems
  - Mental health problems
  - Serious injury or death from accidents
  - Becoming a victim of violence or sexual assault
  - Lower academic achievement
  - High school and college dropout

# ... Including Marijuana Use

## Health Effects of Short-Term Use

- Impaired short-term memory, making it difficult to learn and to retain information
- Impaired motor coordination, interfering with driving skills and increasing the risk of injuries
- Altered judgement, increasing the risk of sexual behaviors that facilitate the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases
- In high doses, paranoia and psychosis

## Health Effects of Long-Term/Heavy Use

- Addiction – in about 9% of users overall, 17% of those who begin in adolescence, and 25 to 50% of those who are daily users
- Altered brain development
- Poor educational outcome, with increased likelihood of dropping out of school
- Cognitive impairment, with lower IQ among those who were frequent users during adolescence
- Diminished life satisfaction and achievement
- Symptoms of chronic bronchitis
- Increased risk of chronic psychosis disorders – including schizophrenia – in persons with a predisposition

# Provide a Clear, Consistent Message



- The goal of no use for health is essential for your child's welfare
- Start early with this goal, before the age of 12
- Repeat the message often
- Discuss your child's experiences with alcohol, nicotine, marijuana and other drugs as they change over time and as the problems of alcohol and other drugs appear in the news and in your family's life

# A Serious Parental Challenge



- Children who are using alcohol, nicotine and other drugs
- Love your children unconditionally whether or not they use drugs
- Help them grow up healthy to be productive and grateful adults
- If your child refuses to accept the no-use health goal, get help from others including family and friends as well as professionals

# The Toughest Parental Challenge



- Children who are addicted to drugs and often failing in life
- The physician health program (PHP) care management system serves as a model, setting the standard for good outcomes for substance use disorders
- Monitor recovery work and abstinence after treatment
- Intervene quickly and strongly with any relapse to use

# Medical Providers are Resources



- Reach out to your child's pediatric or adolescent medicine provider
- Providers are useful resources for information on youth substance use and can provide:
  - Screening
  - Brief interventions
  - Referrals to treatment when needed
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) supports the no-use prevention goal

# Medical Provider and Patient Confidentiality



- Confidentiality will be maintained by your adolescent's medical provider
  - Confidentiality fosters trust between provider and patient; information is not shared with parents
  - Exceptions are made when there are clear, immediate health or safety issues that require further medical treatment
- Any information you share with the provider can be helpful in contributing to your adolescent's health



# The Big Picture



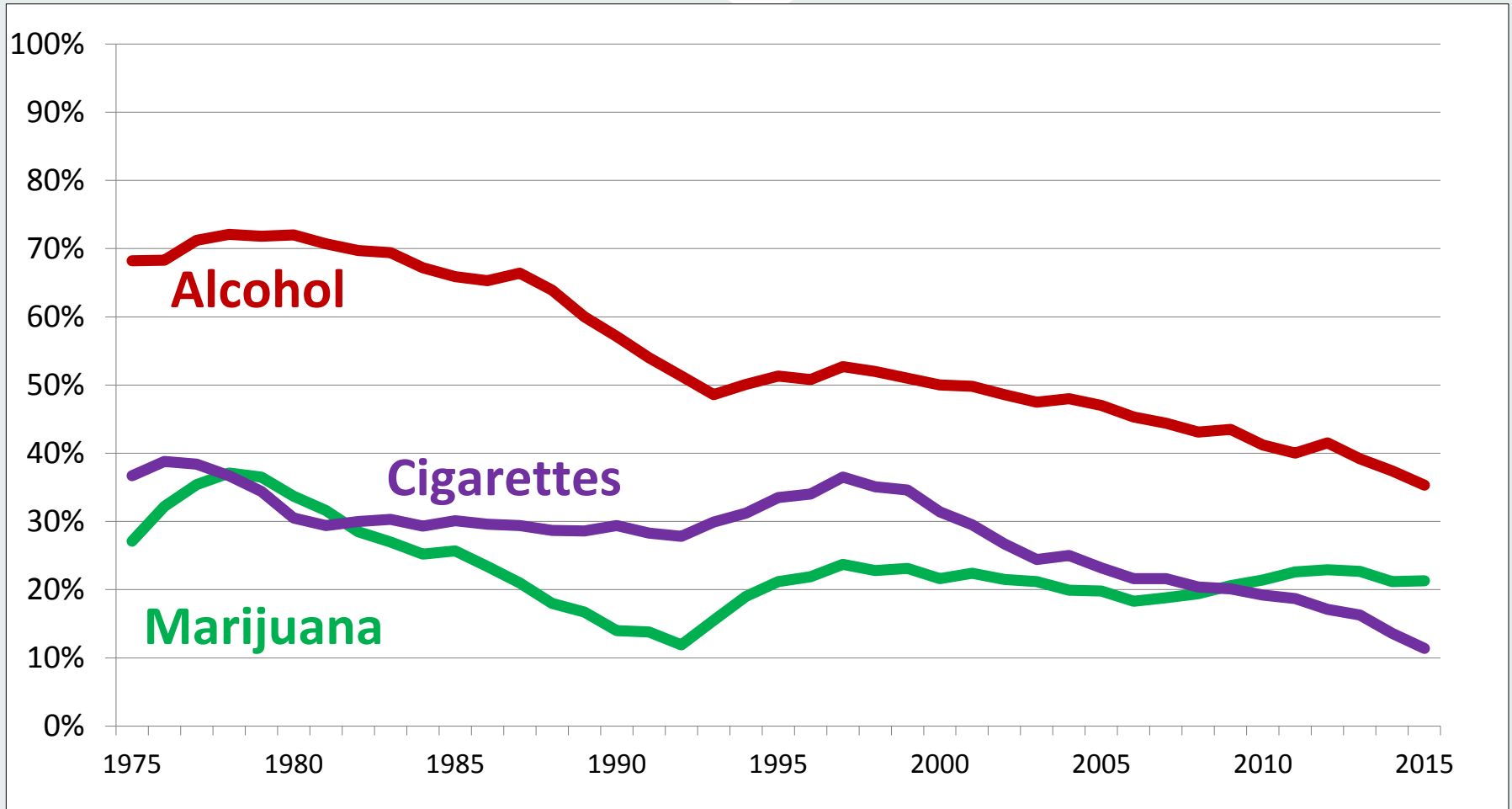
- Youth drug use is a significant personal and family threat
- It is an epidemic based in the community but affects the nation and every part of the world
- Most importantly, youth drug use is not inevitable!

# And Families Make an Impact

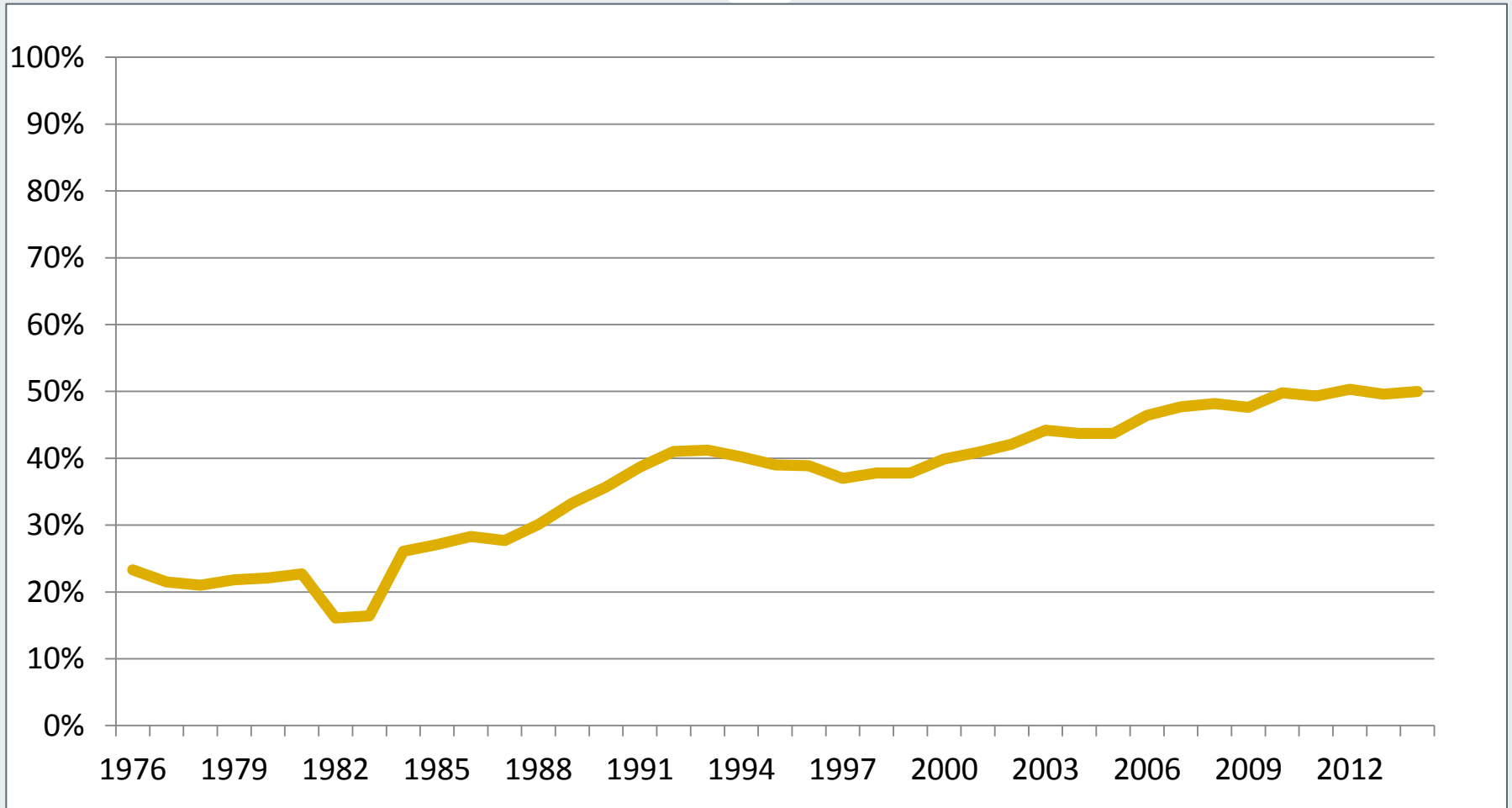


- Between 1978 and 1992, there was a 60% drop in youth drug use
- This public health triumph was the result of a national focus on youth drug use and a commitment to the no use goal
- Families led that campaign!

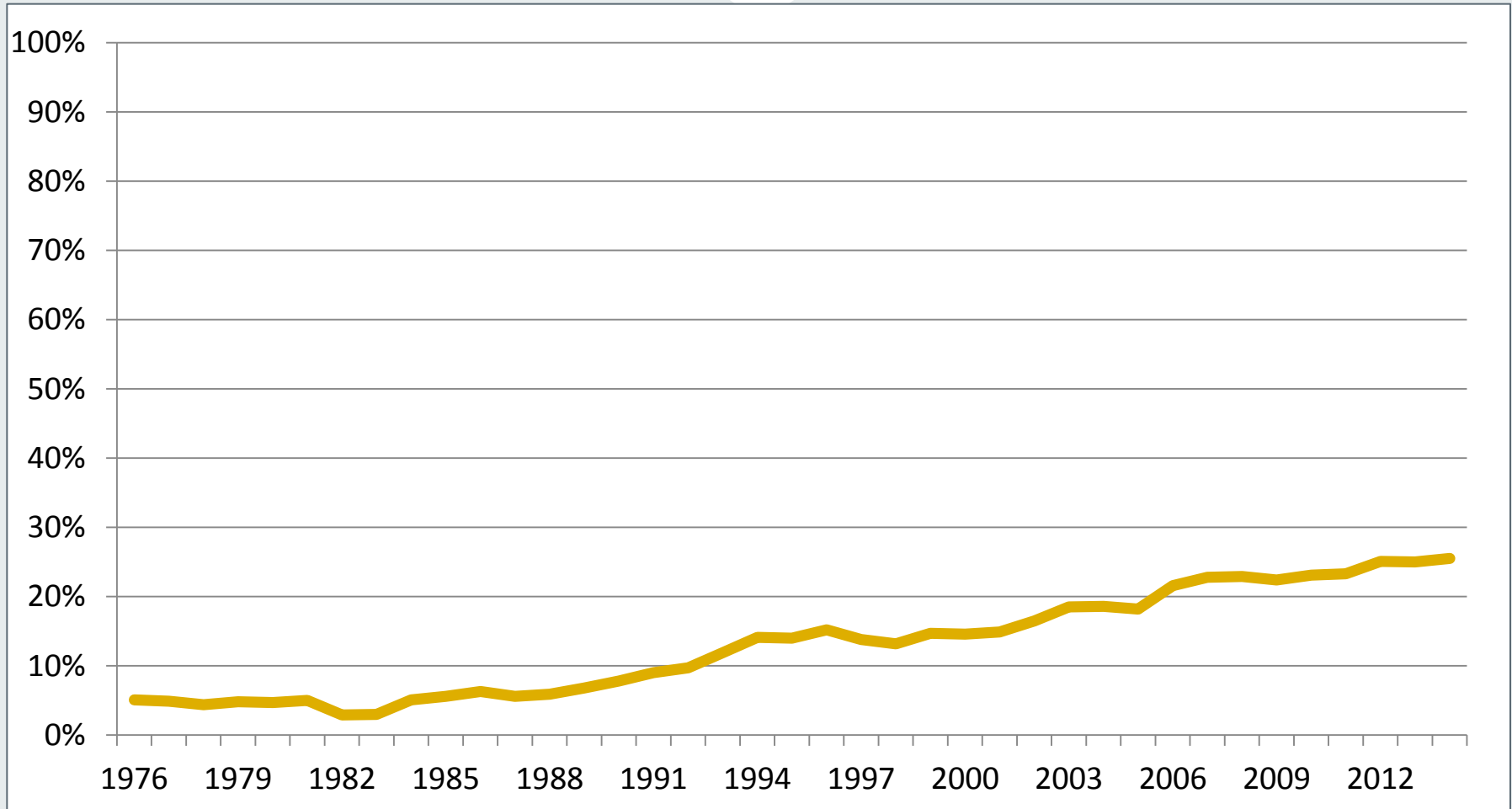
# Past Month Alcohol, Cigarette and Marijuana Use by US High School Seniors: 1975-2015



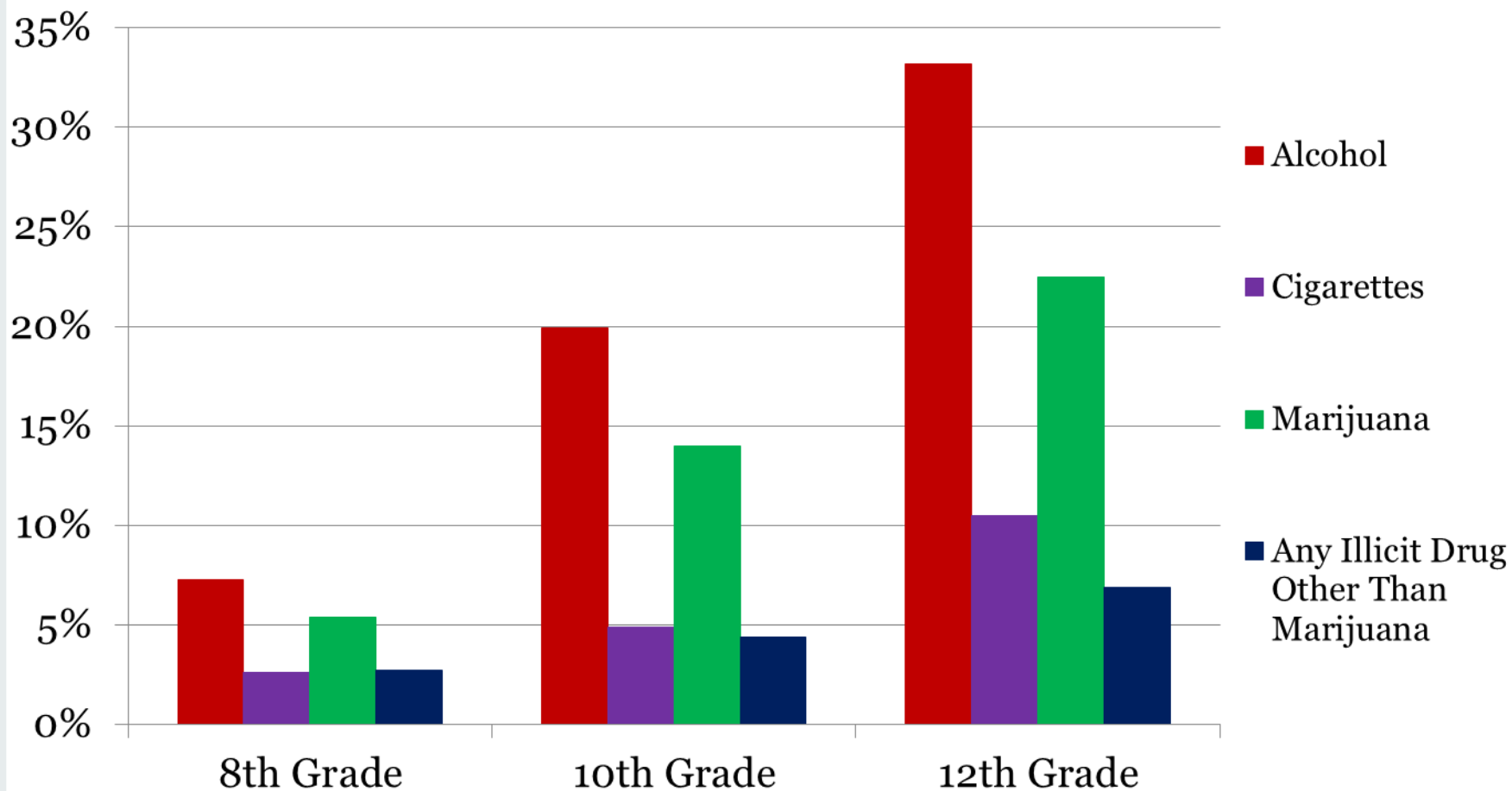
# Past Month Abstinence from Alcohol, Cigarettes, Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs by US High School Seniors: 1976-2014



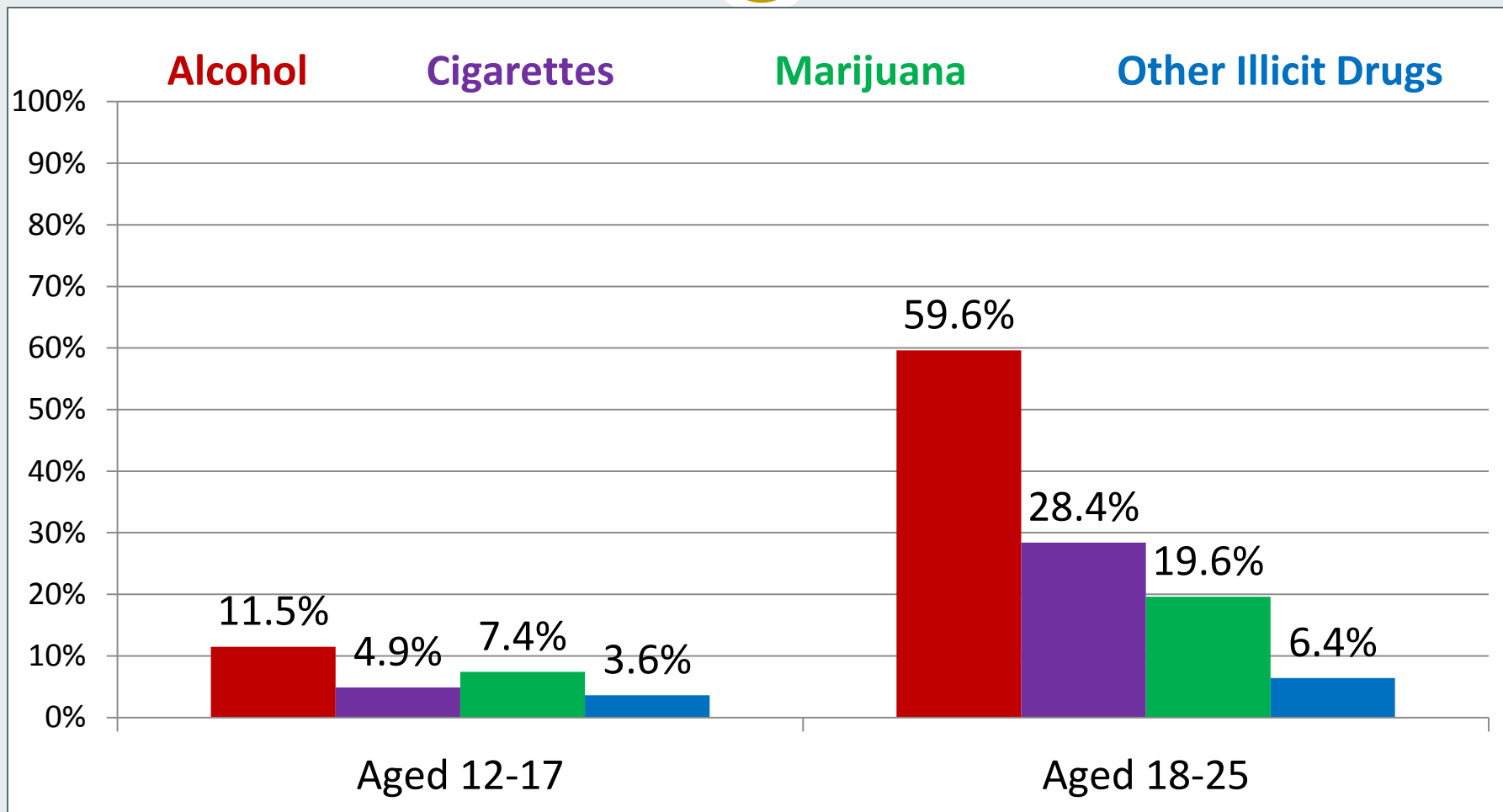
# Lifetime Abstinence from Alcohol, Cigarettes, Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs by US High School Seniors: 1976-2014



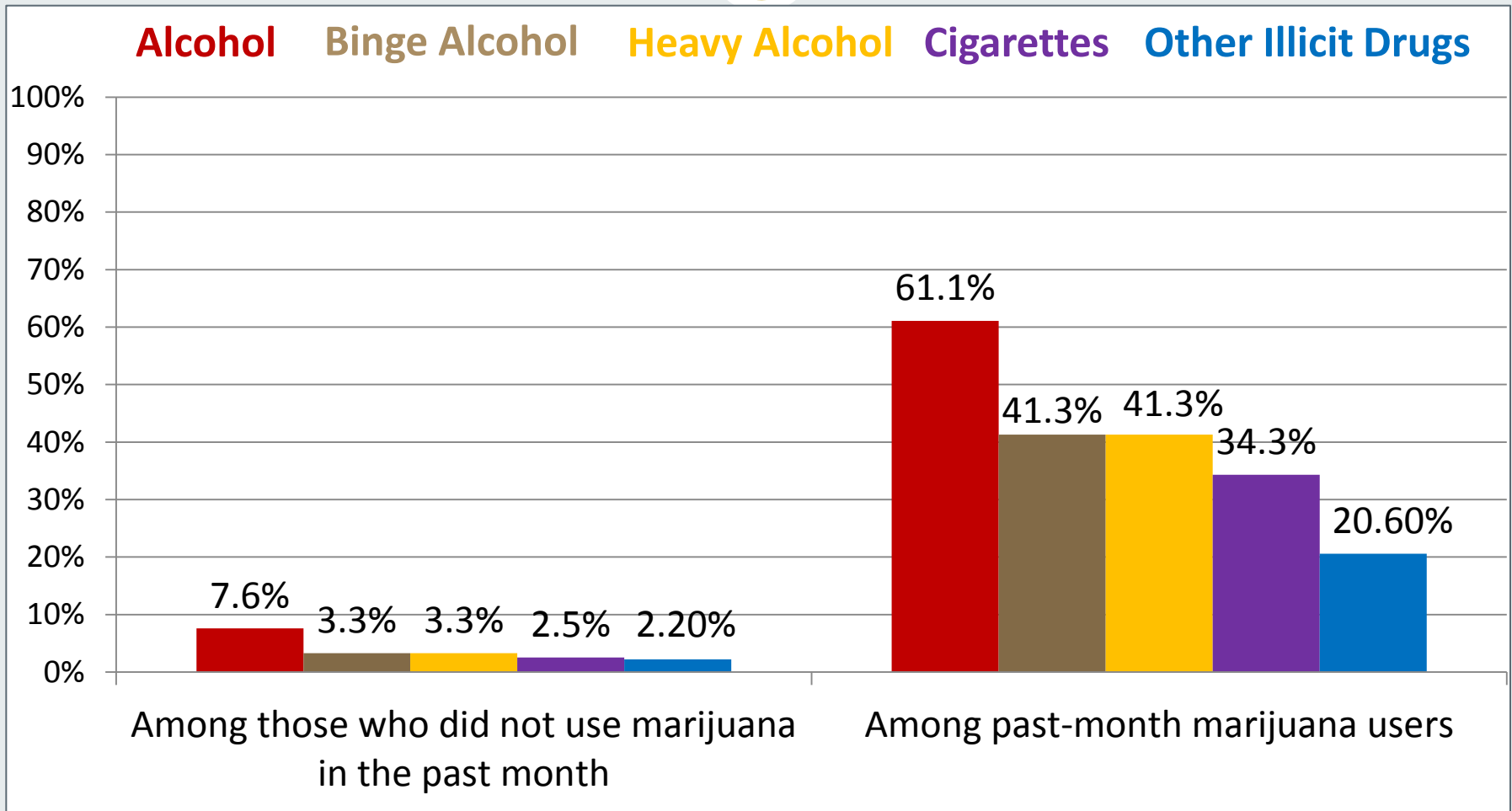
# Prevalence of Past Month Youth Drug Use Increases with Each Grade



# Prevalence of Past Month Substance Use by Young Americans Increases from Ages 12-17 to Ages 18-25



# Prevalence of Past Month Substance Use by American Youth Aged 12-17 in 2014 *by Past Month Marijuana Use*





# Lessons from Youth Drug Use Data



- Youth substance use prevention needs to support the primary goal of **no use of any alcohol, nicotine, marijuana or other drugs for reasons of health**
- The use of any alcohol, nicotine or marijuana is highly correlated with the use of other two: these are the **three gateway drugs**
- Drug prevention is not drug by drug; it is about **any and all** drug use by youth

# My Message to You



- **Prevention is possible:**
  - Alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, and other drug use by adolescents is **NOT** inevitable
  - Be actively engaged with your adolescent and encourage no use of alcohol, nicotine, marijuana or other drugs
- **Intervene if you think your adolescent is using any substance**
- **Team up with your adolescent's provider**
- **Help your adolescent get – and use – treatment if needed**

Thank You!



# Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc.



- IBH is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that develops strategies to reduce drug use



The future belongs to new ideas and the new policies they inspire.

Founded in 1978, the Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that develops new ideas to reduce illegal drug use. Non-partisan and non-political, IBH serves as a catalyst for change. IBH facilitates creative public and private sector collaboration to achieve this important public health goal.

# IBH Websites



- [www.IBHinc.org](http://www.IBHinc.org)
- [www.PreventTeenDrugUse.org](http://www.PreventTeenDrugUse.org)
- [www.StopDruggedDriving.org](http://www.StopDruggedDriving.org)
- [www.PreventionNotPunishment.org](http://www.PreventionNotPunishment.org)

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