



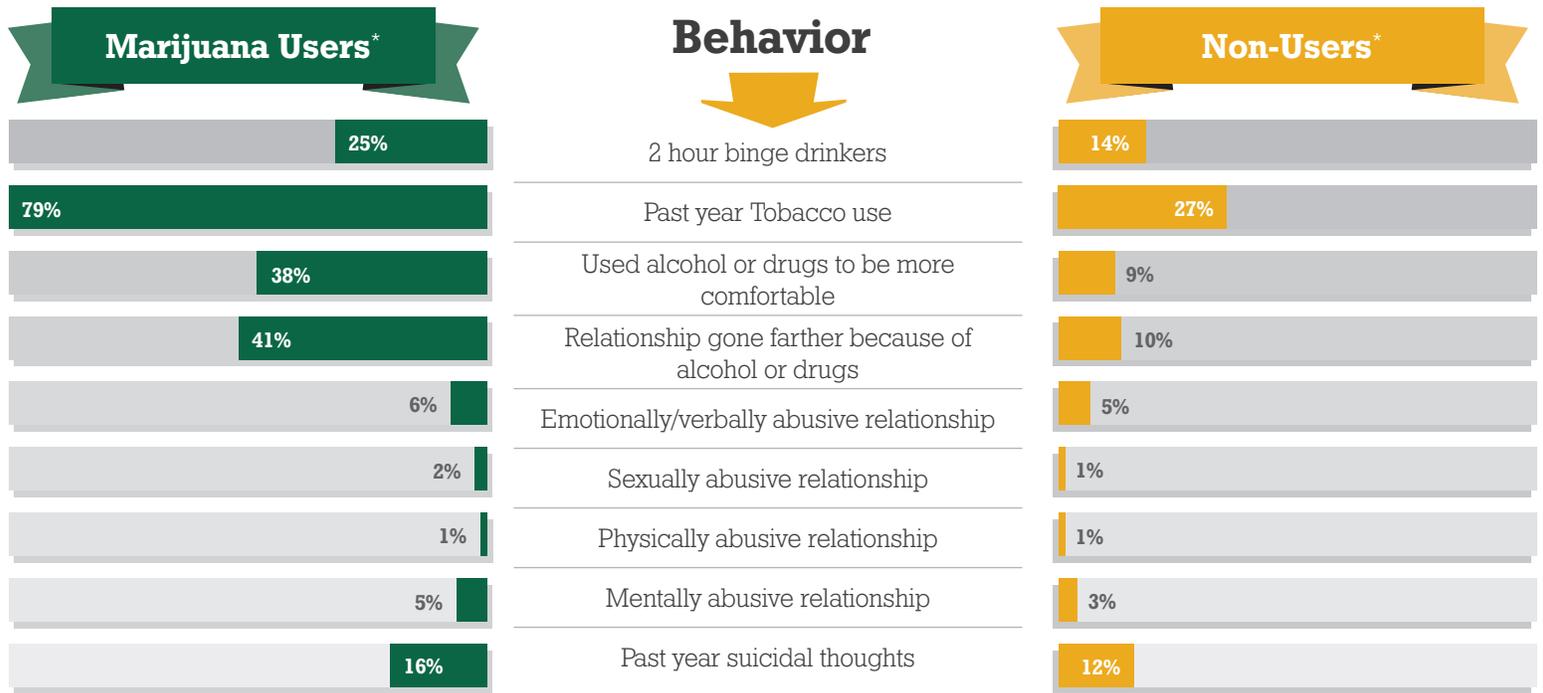
# Wellness Brief: Marijuana Use and Other High-Risk Behaviors

## Introduction

Partners in Prevention (PIP) has been Missouri's higher education substance abuse consortium since 2000. In order to gain an understanding of the current health behaviors of college students, PIP implements the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS) each year. The data in this research brief was filtered to observe behavioral trends from students at the University of Missouri.

## The Results

According to the 2014 MCHBS, 36% of University of Missouri college students reported using marijuana in the past year. This brief looks at the frequency of other high-risk behaviors, comparing the results for students who engage in marijuana use and those who do not engage in marijuana use.



*\*reported in the past year*

The data suggest that 25% of students who used marijuana in the past year reported binge drinking in the past two weeks, compared to 14% of students who did not use marijuana. Similarly, 79% of marijuana users also report using tobacco, while 27% of non-users reported using tobacco.

Additionally, marijuana users reported having an average of 2.55 sexual partners in the past year, while non-users reported having an average of 0.94 in the same time frame. There is no meaningful difference between the two groups for being involved in an abusive relationship.

## Number of sexual partners



This trend holds true for a variety of other health behaviors such as: using alcohol or drugs to be more comfortable with a sexual partner, letting a sexual encounter go further than intended due to alcohol or drugs, and a slightly higher frequency of suicidal thoughts.

## What Does This Mean?

Marijuana use remains a controversial issue in the U.S. The results extracted from this survey indicate that marijuana users are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors that negatively impact their health. While some of this data may be alarming, it provides an opportunity for selecting interventions to address the issues students face.

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