

# Cannabis Prevention & Intervention in NC Public Schools

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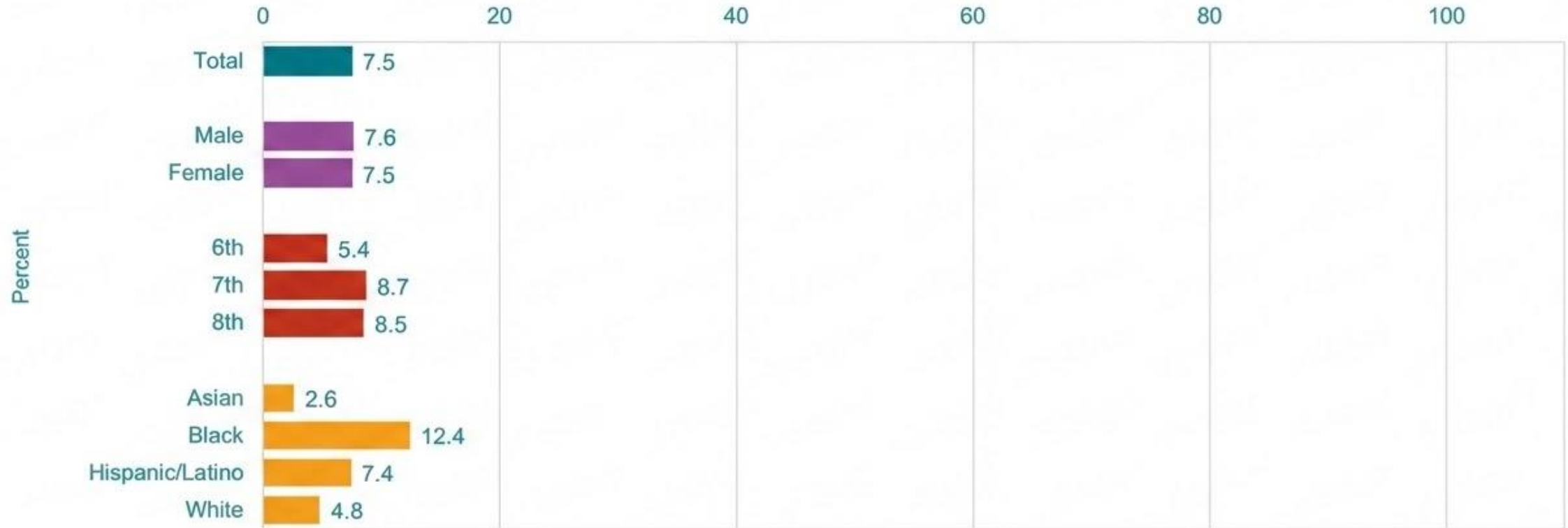
# What We Know

- Early use leads to higher risk
- Mental health and co-occurring issues
- Academic and attendance impacts
- Opportunity for prevention and early intervention
- Schools = Front door
- Scope of the problem

# The Data

## NC YRBS (2023)

# Percentage of Middle School Students Who Ever Used Marijuana, by Sex, Grade, and Race/Ethnicity,\* 2023

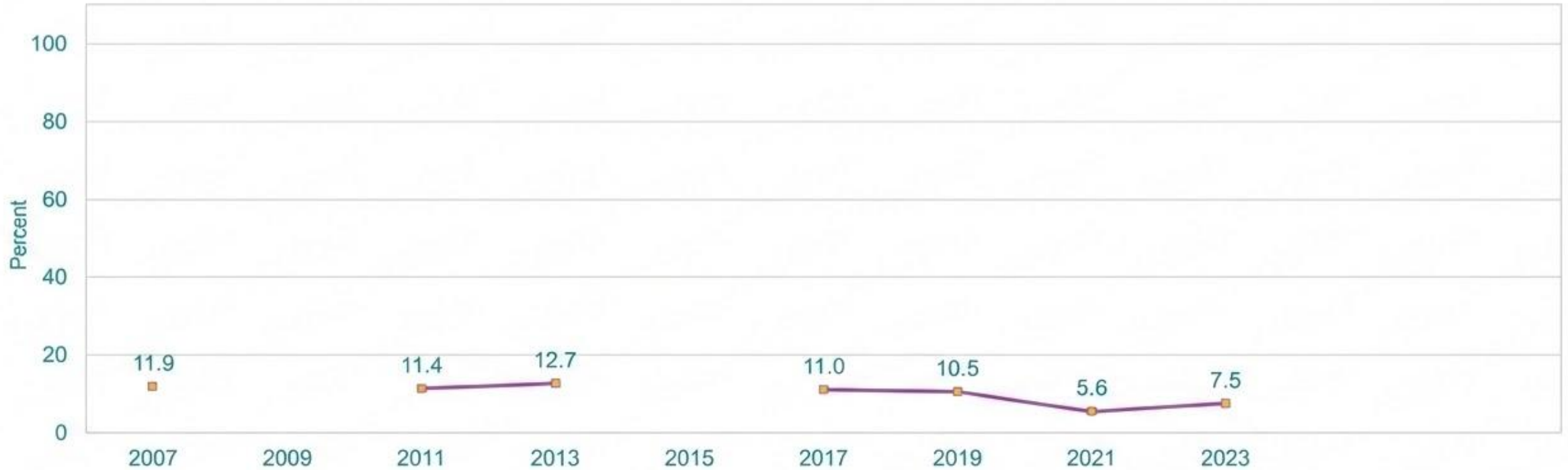


\*B > A, B > H, B > W, H > A (Based on t-test analysis,  $p < 0.05$ .)

All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.

This graph contains weighted results.

# Percentage of Middle School Students Who Ever Used Marijuana, 2007-2023\*

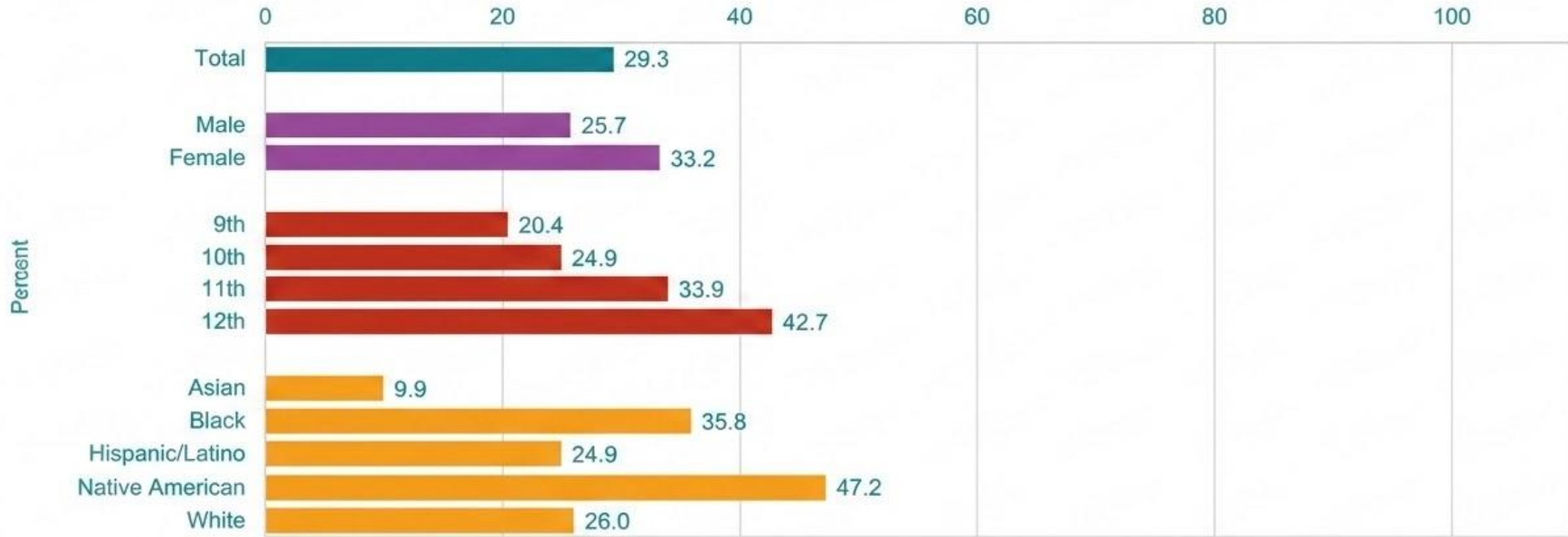


\*Not available [Based on linear and quadratic trend analyses using logistic regression models controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade ( $p < 0.05$ ). Significant linear trends (if present) across all available years are described first followed by linear changes in each segment of significant quadratic trends (if present).]

Data not available for 2009, 2015.

This graph contains weighted results.

# Percentage of High School Students Who Ever Used Marijuana,\* by Sex,† Grade,† and Race/Ethnicity,† 2023



\*One or more times during their life

†F > M; 11th > 9th, 11th > 10th, 12th > 9th, 12th > 10th; B > A, B > H, B > W, H > A, N > A, N > H, N > W, W > A (Based on t-test analysis, p < 0.05.)

All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.

This graph contains weighted results.

# Percentage of High School Students Who Ever Used Marijuana,\* 2003-2023†



\*One or more times during their life

†Decreased 2003-2023, no change 2003-2019, decreased 2019-2023 [Based on linear and quadratic trend analyses using logistic regression models controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade ( $p < 0.05$ ). Significant linear trends (if present) across all available years are described first followed by linear changes in each segment of significant quadratic trends (if present).]

This graph contains weighted results.

# Percentage of High School Students Who Currently Used an Electronic Vapor Product to Vape Marijuana,\* by Sex, Grade,† and Race/Ethnicity,† 2023



\*Also called pot or weed, including THC, THC concentrates, hash oil, or waxes, on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey

†11th > 9th, 12th > 9th, 12th > 10th; N > A, N > B, N > H, N > W (Based on t-test analysis,  $p < 0.05$ .)

All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.

This graph contains weighted results.

## Percentage of High School Students Who Currently Used an Electronic Vapor Product to Vape Marijuana,\* 2021-2023†



\*Also called pot or weed, including THC, THC concentrates, hash oil, or waxes, on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey

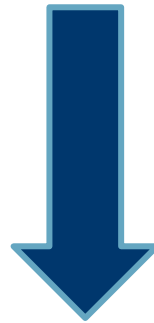
†No change 2021-2023 [Based on linear trend analyses using logistic regression models controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade ( $p < 0.05$ ).]

This graph contains weighted results.

# Agency Level Prevention

# Health Education Standards

**ATOD = Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs**



**ANCOD = Alcohol, Nicotine, Cannabis and Other Drugs**

21 directly related to cannabis





# NC School Mental Health Policy

- **SL 2020-7** requires each public school unit to adopt and to implement a school-based mental health plan that includes a mental health training program and a suicide risk referral protocol.
  - Substance use prevention is a legislated training topic.

# Honorable Mentions

- **Project AWARE/ACTIVATE**
  - Statewide initiative led by DPI + DHHS
  - Focus: mental health + substance use prevention continuum
- **Character Education**
- **Student Success Standards**

# Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Ratios

School Counselors	2025	1:367	Recommended	1:250	 68%
School Social Workers	2025	1:1,055	Recommended	1:250	 24%
School Psychologists	2025	1:1,954	Recommended	1:500	 26%
School Nurses	2025	1:876	Recommended	1 per school	 51%

# Local Level Prevention & Intervention

# Tier 1: Prevention

- Social emotional learning
- Health education curriculum(s)
- School-wide messaging
- Family engagement
- Staff training

# Tier 2: Intervention

- School-based intervention team
- SISP supports
  - Cessation/support groups
- Screening & brief interventions
- Family inclusive supports
- Re-entry planning after an incident

# Tier 3: Referral & Treatment

- Combined education/discipline
- Diversion Programs
- Wraparound family support
- Safety planning
- Referral to community treatment providers

# Innovations

- Alternative to Suspension (ATS) programs
- Restorative Justice Centers
- SBIRT in Schools
  - Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment

# Challenges

- Laws & policy language not keeping pace
- Rapidly changing products
- Limited formalized pathways to treatment
- Edible packaging
- No state zoning restrictions
- School-based mental health staff/SISP

# Questions?



NORTH CAROLINA  
**Healthy Schools**

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