

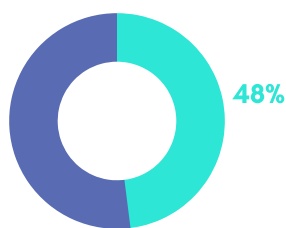
# SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Among High School Youth in Lakewood, Wheat Ridge & Edgewater

## Overview

Youth use of alcohol, marijuana, other people's prescription medication or illicit drugs can result in both short and long-term physical, cognitive, mental and legal consequences. Jefferson County CTC focus area schools have higher rates of 30-day reported use of alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs than the state or country. Youth in Jefferson County focus groups reported that young people use substances because it's a big part of their social environments, and to cope or self-medicate from stress and trauma experienced at home and at school.

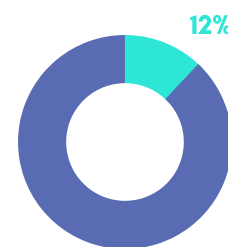
## By the Numbers



**48%** of high school students didn't think it was very wrong for them to use marijuana.



**1 in 5** high school students reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.



**12%** of high school students have used prescription pain medicine not prescribed to them.

## What Youth Had to Say

*Part of the reason people do drugs is because it's easier to get high off something than it is to accept what you're feeling.*

*Some people drink every day. Most people that are drinking are drinking to get drunk.*

*Parents don't understand the stress we experience. Stress is a big cause of doing bad things that might alleviate stress, like marijuana.*

## What's Next

The Communities That Care coalition is conducting a resource assessment to better understand what is already working, and to identify gaps in the services that we can address, so we can prevent this problem from becoming worse. If you are willing to support this process, please contact [pgould@jeffco.us](mailto:pgould@jeffco.us).

Sources: Healthy Kids Colorado Survey 2017; Jefferson County High School Report prepared for Jefferson County CTC by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; Focus group results from a Youth Researchers Project conducted in Spring 2018 by Jefferson County Public Health.