



## 2026 THC/Cannabis Survey

***Key Finding: 90% of schools and communities view cannabis use among youth as common or widespread leading to decreased academic performance, attendance issues, and mental health challenges***

### Executive Summary

At [Playbl](#), we empower school districts and communities to address youth THC/Cannabis use through evidence proven insights and intervention programs. In February 2026, Playbl launched our **THC/Cannabis Survey** to gather a snapshot from educators and health & substance misuse professionals of how youth in their communities are encountering and accessing THC/cannabis. 191 total respondents across 36 states, approximately 46% community based organizations, 22% local, state and national government agencies and 12% educators and school/district leaders. This survey came on the heels of Playbl's [School & Community Vaping survey](#) in the second half of 2025.

Cannabis use among youth is becoming increasingly normalized and accessible, creating new challenges for young people, educators, families, and public health leaders. As legalization expands and perceptions of risk decline, many communities are seeing rising rates of use alongside growing concerns about mental health, academic performance, and student behavior.

The survey results reveal that cannabis use is both widespread and increasing. More than half of respondents, **50.8%**, report that youth cannabis use is very common, while an additional **43.1%** describe it as somewhat common. Over the past 12–24 months, **43.6%** of respondents observed an increase in cannabis use, indicating a clear upward trend.

Youth are consuming cannabis in a variety of forms, with vaping at **39.5%** of respondents emerging as the most common method, followed by edibles at **25%** and traditional smoking at **22.9%**. These findings highlight the evolving nature of cannabis use and its overlap with vaping behaviors.

The data also show that cannabis use is driven by a complex mix of factors, including peer pressure, stress and anxiety, and a growing perception that cannabis is safe. At the same time, access remains a major concern, with nearly **87%** of respondents indicating that cannabis is easy or somewhat easy for youth to obtain.

While many schools and organizations have implemented some form of intervention programming, significant gaps remain in scalable, engaging, and evidence-based solutions that address the root causes of youth substance use.

These findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies that engage students, families, and communities. Playbl’s mission is to help school districts and community based organizations translate these insights into action through sustainable, evidence-based programs that improve youth outcomes and reduce substance use, while focusing on restorative practices that keep students present and engaged at school.

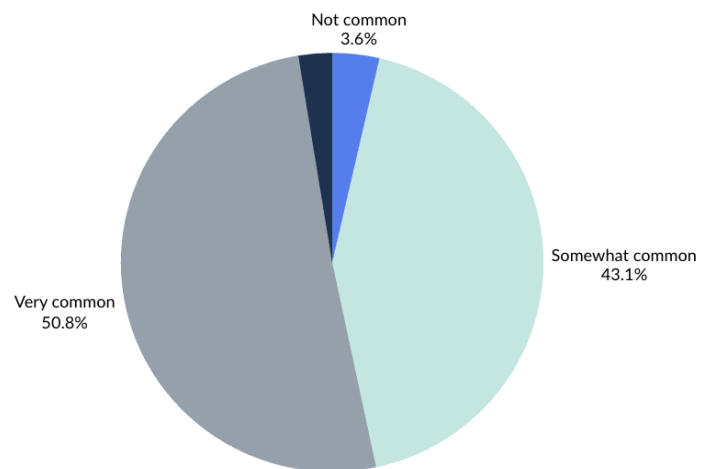
## Data Highlights

Below are representative findings from the THC/Cannabis survey:

### I. How would you describe youth THC/cannabis use in your organization/community?

When asked how they would describe youth cannabis use in their community, a clear majority of respondents identified it as highly prevalent:

- **50.8%** described cannabis use as *very common*
- **43.1%** said it is *somewhat common*
- Only **3.6%** reported it as *not common*



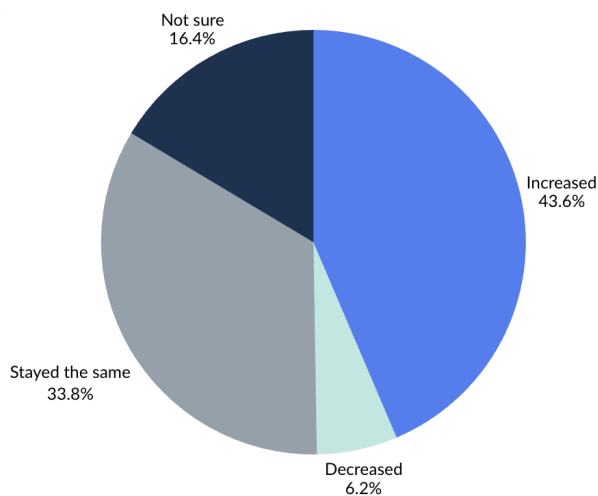
Together, these responses show that over **90% of schools and community organizations** view cannabis use as a common or widespread issue.

### II. What trends are you seeing in youth THC/cannabis use over the past 12-24 months?

Respondents reported a concerning upward trend in cannabis use:

- **43.6%** indicated use has *increased*
- **33.8%** said it has *stayed the same*
- Only **6.2%** reported a *decrease*

These findings suggest that cannabis use continues to grow across many communities.

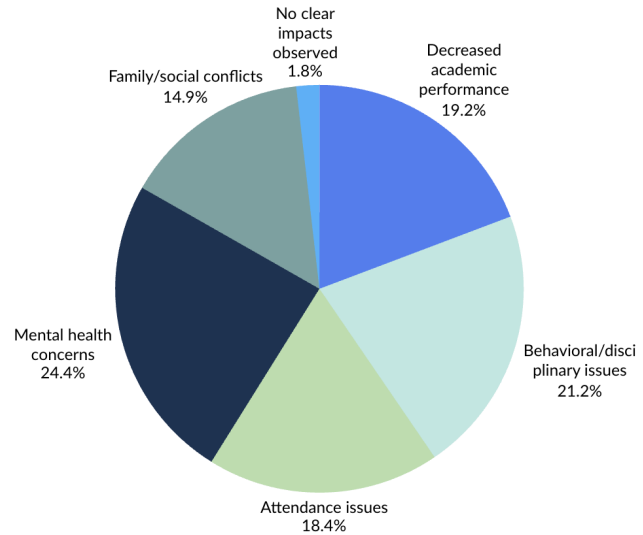


#### IV. What impacts of youth THC/cannabis use are being observed?

Respondents reported a range of negative outcomes associated with youth cannabis use:

- **Mental health concerns (24.4%)**
- **Behavioral/disciplinary issues (21.2%)**
- **Decreased academic performance (19.2%)**
- **Attendance issues (18.4%)**
- **Family/social conflicts (14.9%)**

These results demonstrate that cannabis use is closely tied to both academic and behavioral challenges.

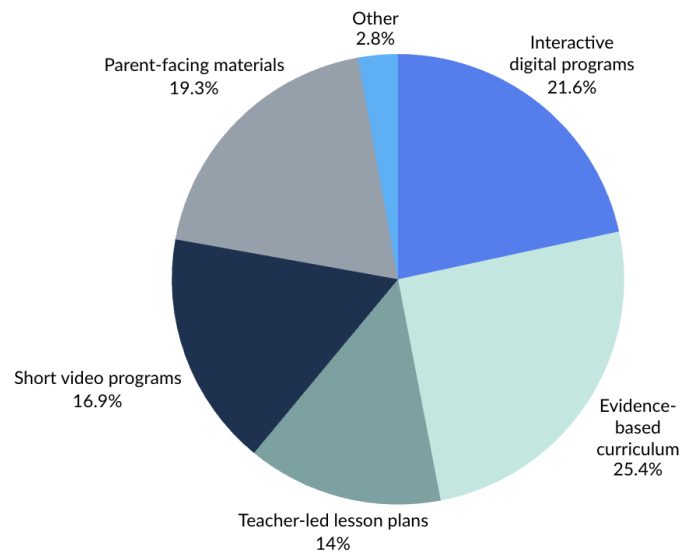


#### IX. What resources would be most helpful to address youth THC/cannabis use?

Respondents identified key resource needs (respondents selected all options that apply):

- **Evidence-based curriculum (25.4%)**
- **Interactive digital programs (21.6%)**
- **Parent-facing materials (19.3%)**
- **Short-form video programs (16.9%)**
- **Teacher-led lesson plans (14%)**

These findings point to a growing demand for engaging, scalable, and research-backed prevention solutions.



To summarize, the survey data shows that youth THC/cannabis use is widespread and increasing, with most schools and community organizations reporting it as a common issue. Cannabis is consumed in multiple forms, especially through vaping and edibles, which makes use more discreet and harder to detect. Access is a major concern, as nearly all respondents indicate that cannabis is easy for youth to obtain, often through peer networks.

Cannabis use is driven by a complex mix of social, emotional, and environmental factors, including peer pressure, stress, and a growing perception that cannabis is safe. Although schools and communities are using a range of prevention strategies, these efforts are often fragmented and limited in impact. Overall, the findings highlight an urgent need for comprehensive, evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies that address both the root causes of use and the evolving ways youth are accessing and consuming cannabis.

## Survey Data Insights & Recommendations

The data from this survey can support programs and initiatives to address youth THC/cannabis use and strengthen community health. Here are key insights and recommendations to consider:

### I. Schools and community based organizations are seeking innovative, evidence-based digital solutions with over one-quarter reporting evidence-based curriculum as being most important.

#### Key Insights

- 21.6% of respondents say interactive digital programs would be the most helpful resource for youth THC/cannabis programs.
- 25.4% of participants requested an evidence-based curriculum
- 19.3% of respondents requested parent facing materials.

#### Recommendations

- School districts and community based organizations should review digital and interactive THC/cannabis prevention and intervention programs with a focus on programs that are evidence-based, engaging, easy to implement and are restorative alternatives to suspension.
- School districts and community based organizations should review the efficacy of digital intervention as an alternative to in-person justice programs that require students and families to miss school and work.

### II. THC/cannabis use has significant impact on a student's academic performance and overall well being

- 19.2% of students who use THC/cannabis have decreased academic performance
- 18.4% of students who use THC/cannabis have attendance issues
- 24.4% of students who use THC/cannabis have mental health concerns



## Recommendations

- THC/cannabis interventions should be school-based alternatives to suspension programs for students who already have academic and attendance challenges.
- School-based and alternative to suspension programs also provide access to counseling services for students with mental health concerns.

## III. Several significant factors contribute to youth THC/cannabis use

- Social peer pressure **19%**
- Stress anxiety **18.8%**
- Perception that cannabis is safe **17.2%**
- Family influence **13.5%**
- Marketing / media / cultural influence **12.8%**

## Recommendations

- To be effective, school and community based intervention programs need to address all of the factors that contribute to youth THC/cannabis use.
- Family engagement must be a part of an effective youth THC/cannabis program.

Collectively, participation in this survey has delivered [actionable data](#) to empower school and community based teams to evaluate, select, and implement the most effective strategies to address THC/cannabis use in their communities.

## About Playbl

Playbl is a mission-driven organization focused on improving adolescent behavioral health. As a partner to the play2PREVENT Lab, we leverage the power of evidence-based programs to improve health outcomes for youth aged 10-20. Program topics include smoking & vaping, opioid misuse, mental health, and sexual health. Click [here](#) to learn more about our programs, including our new ReMind THC/cannabis intervention program, and find out how to bring them to your community.