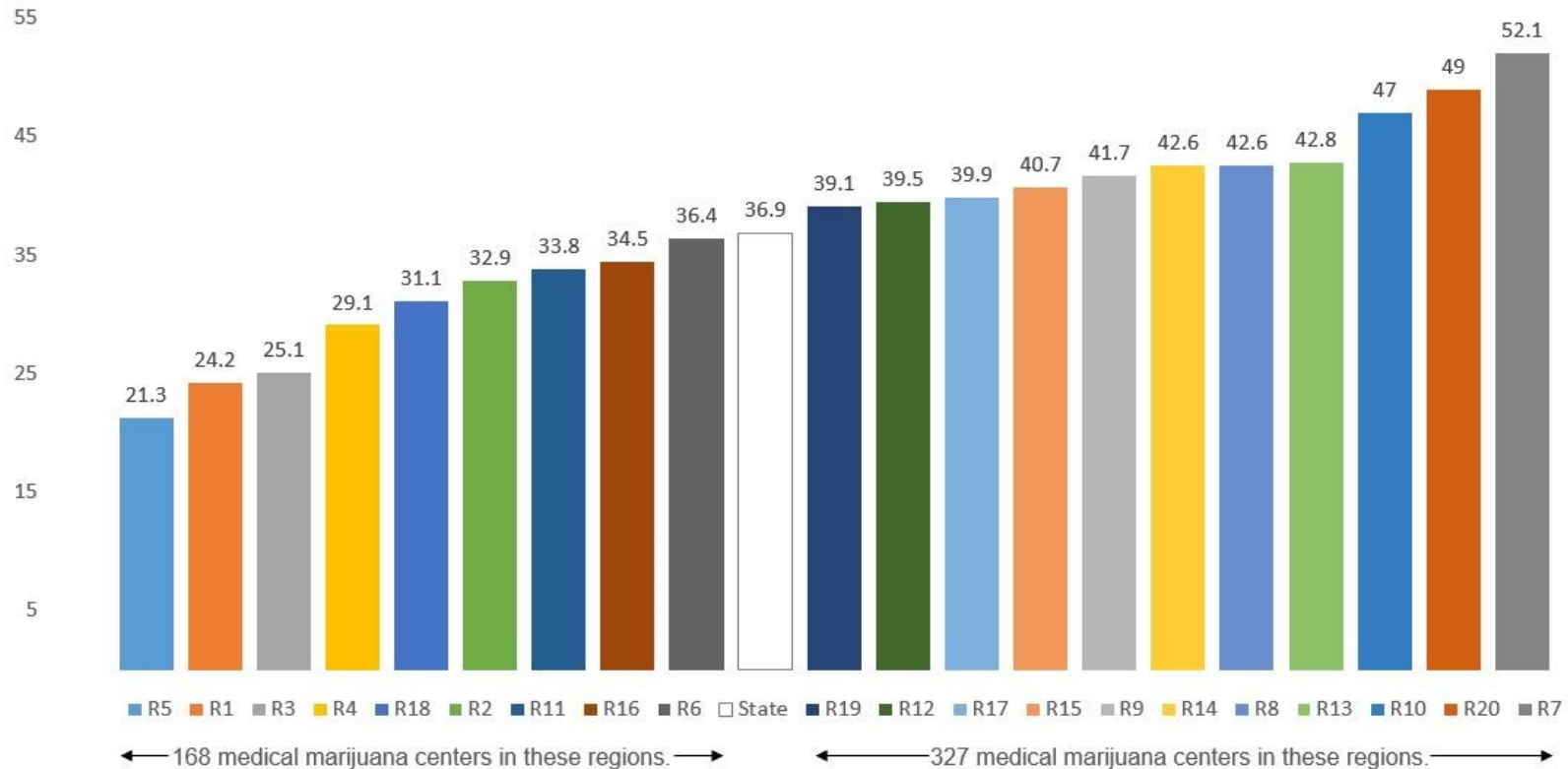


Colorado High School Students' Lifetime Marijuana Use, 2013

With few exceptions, regions with lowest rates of use have fewest medical marijuana centers (total 168).
Regions with highest rates of use have most medical marijuana centers (total 327).



Sources: 2013 Colorado Healthy Kids Survey; Colorado Department of Revenue, MED Licensed Medical Marijuana Centers.

The more medical marijuana dispensaries, the more adolescent marijuana users.

Colorado legalized medical marijuana in 2000 but only legalized cultivation and dispensaries in 2009, giving rise to an explosion of dispensaries in some areas of the state. Colorado legalized recreational marijuana in 2012, but no recreational pot shops opened until January 1, 2014. In 2013, Colorado initiated the Colorado Healthy

Kids Survey of some 40,000 middle and high school students. It divided the state into 21 regions, releasing data for the state in September 2014 and for the regions quite a bit later. Nationwide press coverage proclaimed that one year after legalization, Colorado high school students' marijuana use (36.9%) was lower than the national average (40.7%).

But that wasn't the whole story, illustrated above. Use is higher than the national average in some regions, lower in others. Why? There are nearly twice as many dispensaries in regions where use is higher, and that's *before* recreational pot shops opened for business. What will the 2014 Colorado Healthy Kids Survey show?