





# Colorado State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW)

November 05, 2025

# Colorado SEOW

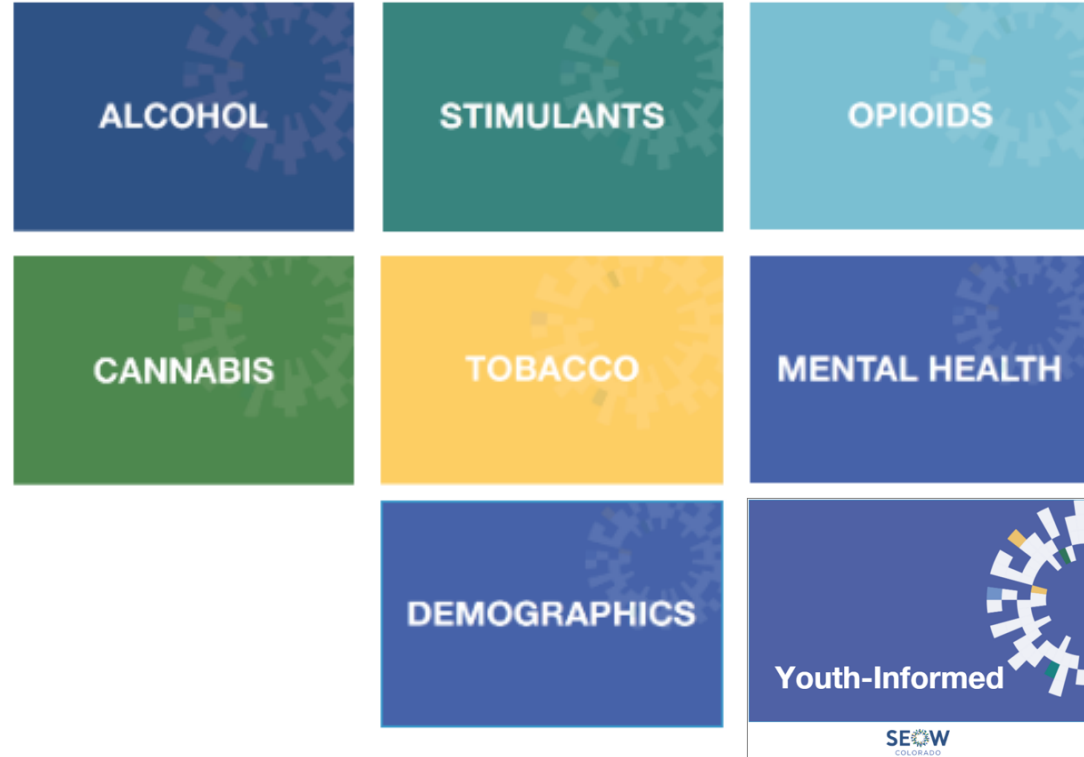
The Colorado State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) is a network of state agencies and data experts brought together to examine the patterns, context, and impact of substance use.

Primary Goals	
<b>Interpret Existing Data</b>  Characterize substance use across the state.	<b>Promote Data Sources</b>  Increase substance use data availability.
<b>Present Data for Broad Audiences</b>  Present easily digestible publications to broad audiences.	<b>Inform Efforts</b>  Continue to inform prevention and treatment efforts.

# 2025 SEOW Epidemiological Profiles

# Colorado Epi Profiles

- Evaluators conducted a needs assessment on behalf of the SEOW to understand current data use among substance use professionals, capacity to access and analyze data, and how data are used in decision-making. The following publications were made in response to that request.
- Utilizing over 40 publicly accessible data sources, the profiles aim to present the most current and actionable findings.



# Opioids Epidemiological Profile Findings

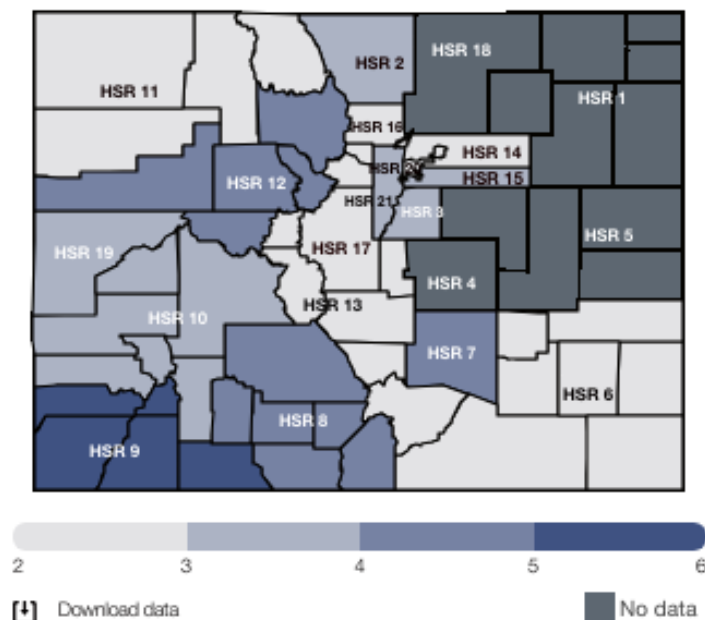
# Opioids Epi Profile - Youth

Percent of students who **misused a prescription pain reliever** in the past month.

The state average for high school students who took a prescription pain reliever without a doctor's prescription or differently than prescribed one or more times during the past month is

**3.5%**

Significant decrease from 6% in 2021



HSR 11 was the **lowest at 2.2%**  
HSR 9 was the **highest at 5.1%**

Misuse of prescription pain relievers in the past 30 days differs among Colorado students who report **the presence of protective factors in their life.**

## Among students who:

Have an adult to go to for help with a serious problem

2.4% misused prescription pain medication compared to

8.7%

who do not report this protective factor.

Feel they belong at school

2.2% misused prescription pain medication compared to

6.0%

who do not report this protective factor.

Think family has clear rules

2.8% misused prescription pain medication compared to

11.7%

who do not report this protective factor.

Feel safe at school

2.9% misused prescription pain medication compared to

9.4%

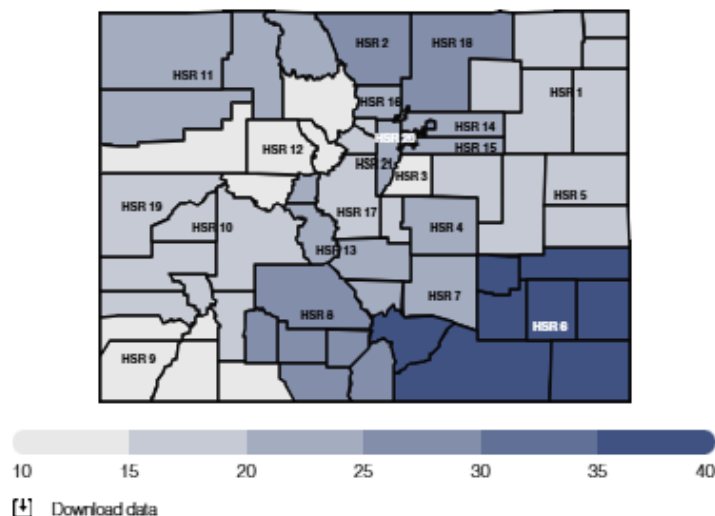
who do not report this protective factor.

# Opioids Epi Profile – Treatment

**23.8%** of treatment admissions in Colorado were for opioids\* or heroin in 2024.

The proportion of treatment admissions for opioids\* and heroin increased from 16.8% of total admissions in 2020 (72,046) to 23.8% of total admissions in 2024 (61,489).

Percent of Total Treatment Admissions for Prescription Opioids or Heroin, 2024.



Treatment admissions refer to facilities licensed by the Colorado Behavioral Health Administration and do not include clients who received service through private pay, third party insurance providers, or non-Behavioral Health Administration licensed facilities.

**27 years old**

the average age of first use of opioids\* and heroin for individuals admitted to treatment

**9 years**

the average number of years of use prior to current treatment for other opioids\*

**12 years**

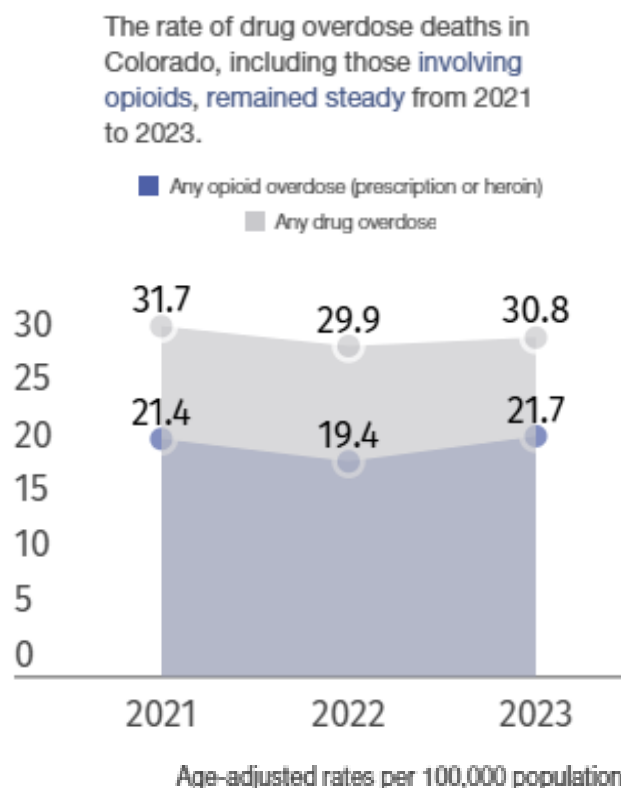
the average number of years of use prior to current treatment for heroin

Opioids\* for DACODS is defined as Non RX Methadone, synthetic opiates, and other opioids (for example, Morphine, Codeine, Demerol, Percodan, etc.)

# Opioids Epi Profile – Overdose Deaths

According to the CDC, the following steps are important for continuing to reduce overdose deaths nationwide:

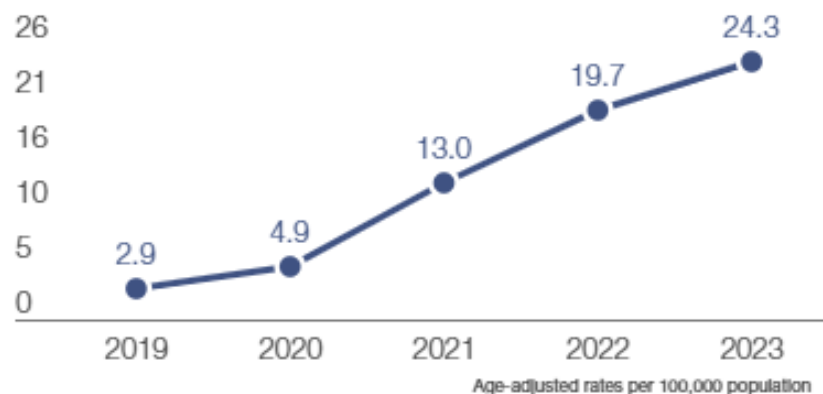
- Monitor data at the state and local levels to create a tailored response
- Review nonfatal overdoses, as measured by emergency department visits for overdoses
- Review trends to observe communities disproportionately impacted





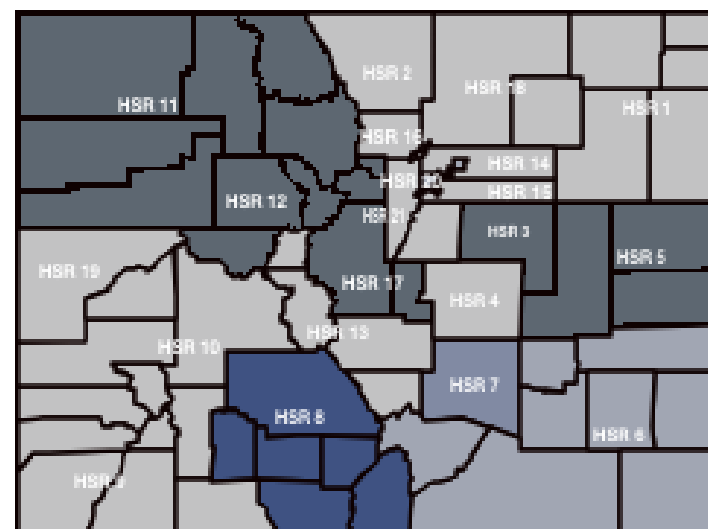
# Opioids Epi Profile – Emergency Department Visits

Rates of nonfatal drug overdose emergency department visits at acute care hospitals involving synthetic opioids (including fentanyl) have **increased** in Colorado since 2019.



- Synthetic opioids include fentanyl and tramadol.
- Methadone, which is used in the treatment of opioid use disorder, is not included in these results.
- Beginning October 1, 2020, the national coding system for health care billing, such as treatment in emergency department, began to include a code for fentanyl only.

Rates of Nonfatal Drug Overdose Emergency Department Visits Involving Synthetic Opioids (Including Fentanyl)



[Download data](#)

Fewer than 11 events in a region

Age-adjusted rates per 100,000 population

# Stimulants Epidemiological Profile Findings

# Stimulants Epi Profile – Misuse

In 2023, **4.1%** of Coloradans (12 or older) reported non-medical use of prescription stimulants which is higher than the national average.

CO AVG.  
%

**4.1%**

US AVG.  
%

**2.6%**

In 2023, **2.5%** of Coloradans (12 or older) reported using cocaine within the past year, which is higher than the national average.

CO AVG.  
%

**2.5%**

US AVG.  
%

**1.8%**

In 2023, **1.0%** of Coloradans (12 or older) reported using methamphetamine within the past year, which is the same as the national average.

CO AVG.  
%

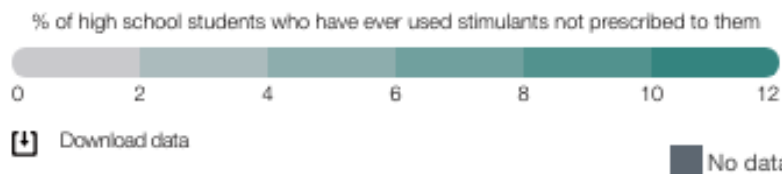
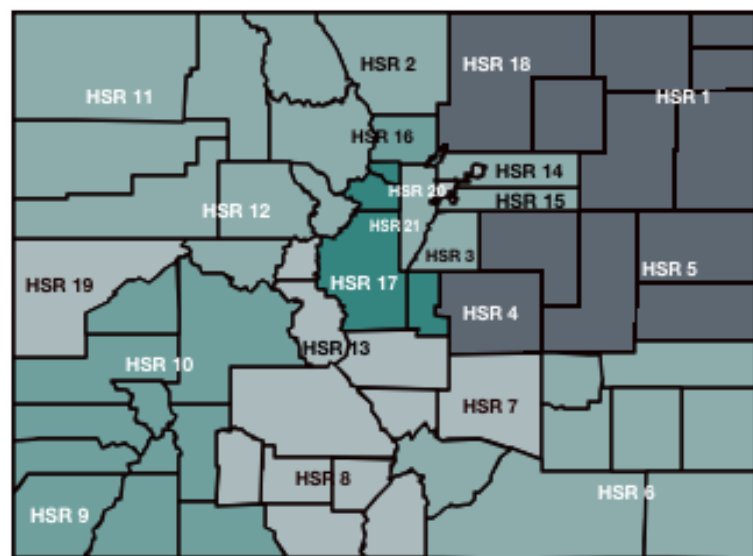
**1.0%**

US AVG.  
%

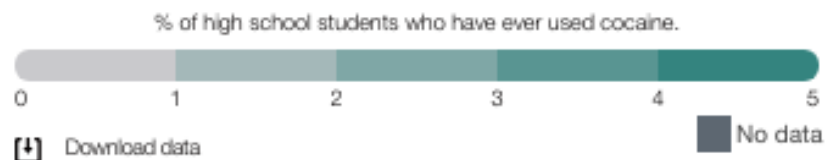
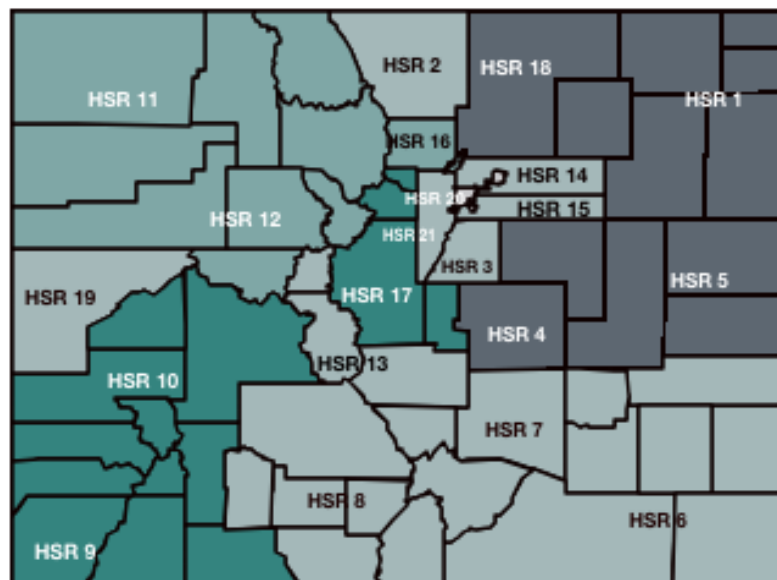
**1.0%**

# Stimulants Epi Profile - Youth

**4.4%** of Colorado students have ever used stimulants not prescribed to them or differently than prescribed.



**1.5%** of Colorado students have ever used cocaine.

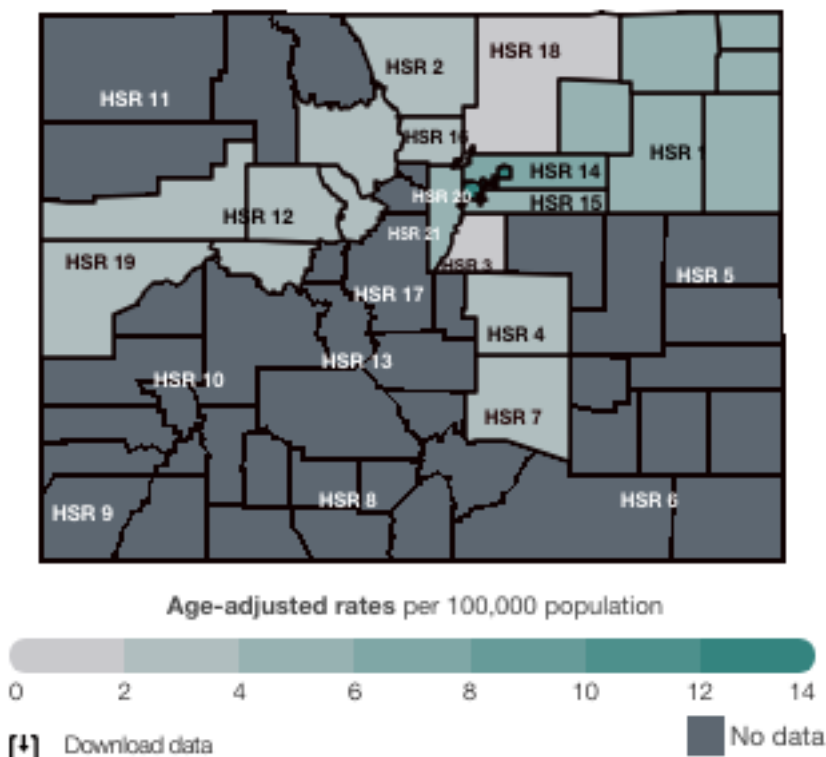


**0.7%** of Colorado students have ever used methamphetamines.  
\*Regional data was excluded due to low counts across Colorado.

# Stimulants Epi Profile – Overdose Deaths

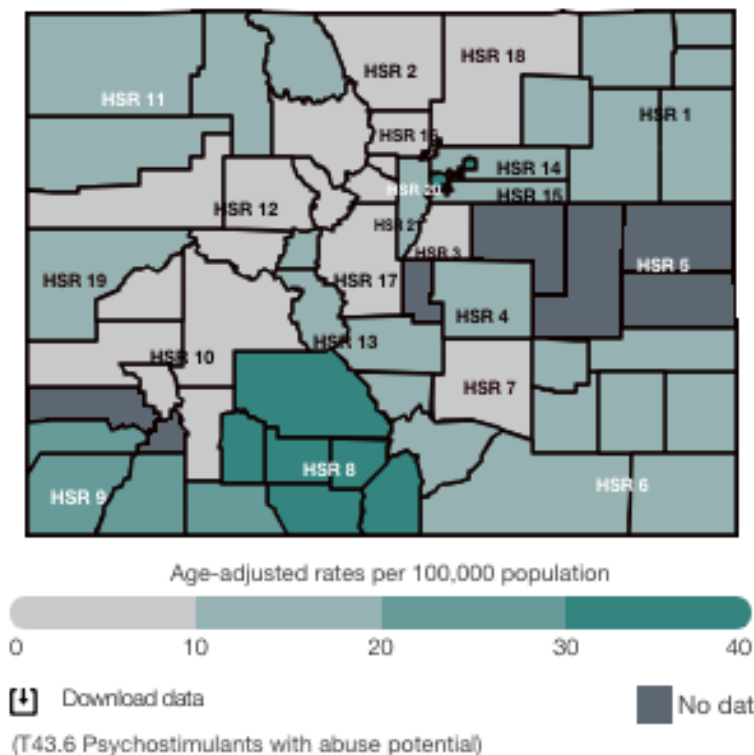
Overdose deaths involving cocaine remained fairly stable in Colorado from **4.23** deaths per 100,000 in 2022 to **4.74** deaths per 100,000 in 2023.

## Age-adjusted rates of overdose deaths involving cocaine



Overdose deaths involving methamphetamine increased in recent years in the U.S. and Colorado. They slightly increased in Colorado from **11.77** deaths per 100,000 in 2022 to **13.45** deaths per 100,000 in 2023.

## Age-adjusted rate of overdose deaths involving methamphetamine in 2023



SOURCE: VITAL STATISTICS PROGRAM, 2023 (DATA REQUESTED)

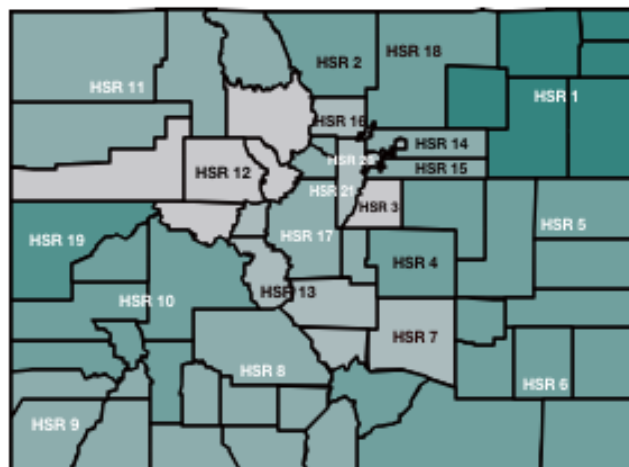


# Stimulants Epi Profile – Treatment

**21.3%** of treatment admissions\* in Colorado were for **methamphetamine** or **cocaine** in 2024.

**6.6x** In the same year, the number of treatment admissions for **methamphetamine** were 6.6 times higher than for cocaine.

Treatment admissions for stimulants were highest in HSR 1 at **33.6%**



% of treatment admissions for which stimulants were the primary substance in 2024



**22**

The average age of first use of **methamphetamine** for individuals admitted to treatment

**16**

The average number of years of use prior to current treatment for **methamphetamine**

**21**

The average age of first use of **cocaine** for individuals admitted to treatment

**17**

The average number of years of use prior to current treatment for **cocaine**

SOURCE: DRUG AND ALCOHOL COORDINATED DATA SYSTEM (DACODS), 2024  
(DATA REQUESTED)



# Profile Uses



Inform grant writing and prevention efforts	Inform substance use needs assessments
Make data easy to share with partners to raise awareness around one or more substance use-related issues	Make informed decisions for strategies, programs, and outcomes

# Colorado SEOW

For more information and to stay updated with SEOW news, please visit our website

[www.coloradoseow.org](http://www.coloradoseow.org)



Feel free to contact us to stay in touch, or if you have any additional questions

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