

CLOSING THE



GAP

ALIGNING PERCEPTION WITH REALITY





“Rise Above Colorado is a statewide prevention organization that measurably impacts teen **perceptions** and **attitudes** about the risks of substance misuse to help youth make healthy connections, decisions and change.”

The logo for Safe 2 Tell Colorado features a red speech bubble containing the number '2' in white. Below the speech bubble, the words 'safe tell' are written in a red, lowercase, serif font, and 'Colorado' is written below that in a larger, red, uppercase, serif font. The entire logo is set against a solid orange background.

safe tell
Colorado

Safe 2 Tell Colorado
Anonymously report any
concerns



I Matter.

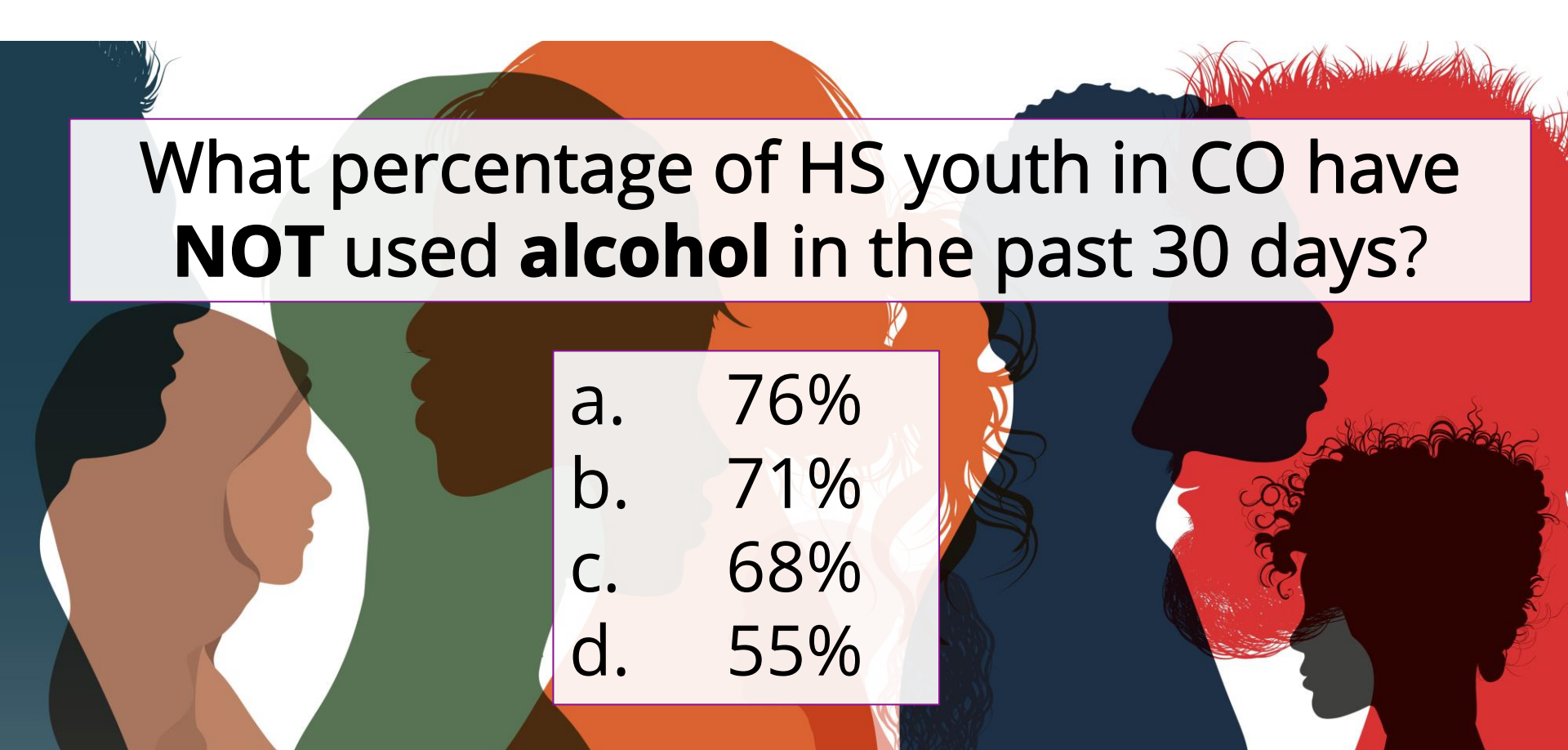


I Matter Colorado
Free, confidential counseling
services for youth

Objectives

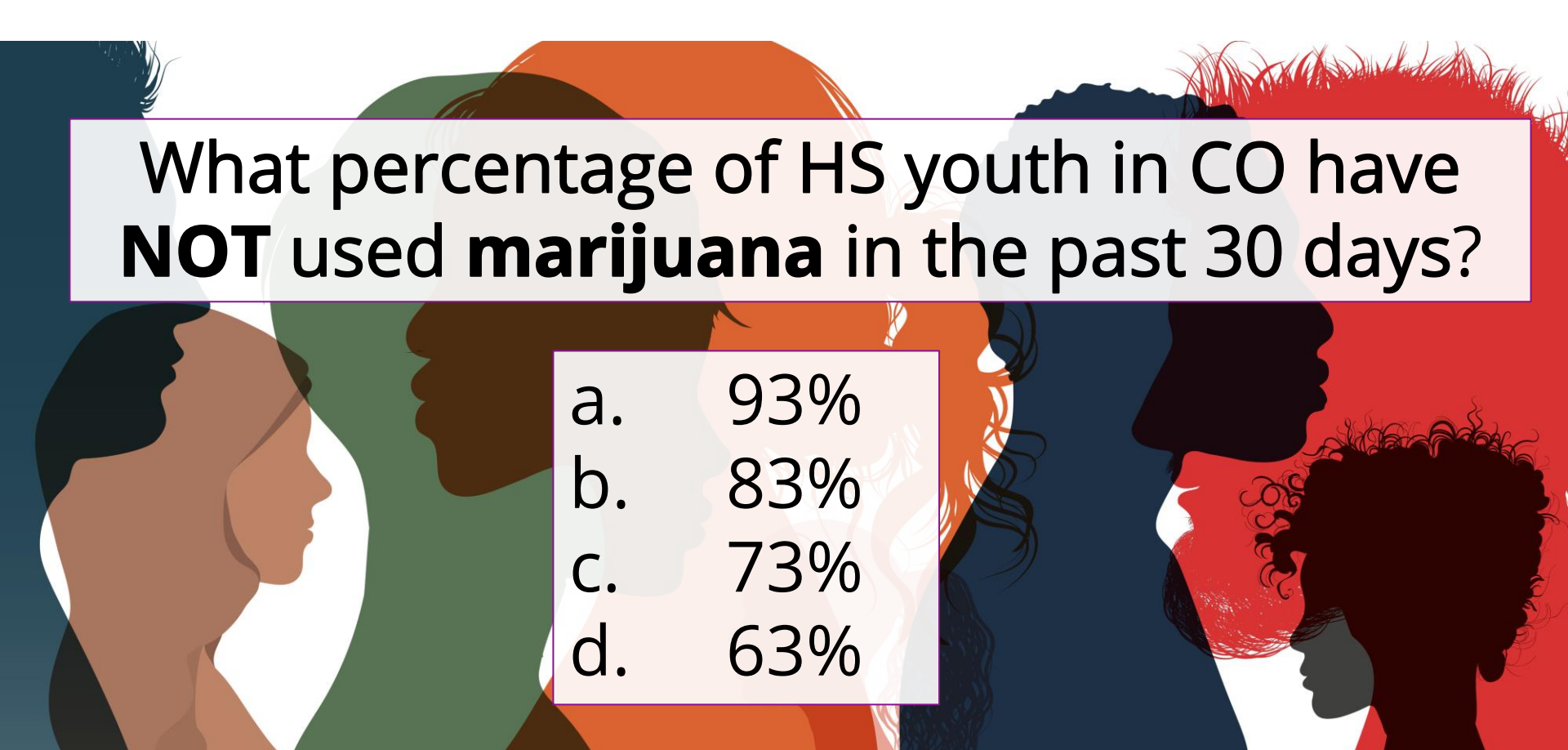
- **REVIEW** recent data on teen substance misuse
- **EXPLORE** connection between perceptions, attitudes & behaviors
- **BUILD** critical thinking skills to better interpret the world around us with an open-mind
- **DISCUSS** hopes & concerns about Colorado teen substance misuse
- **PLAN** ways to correct misperceptions and rise above substance misuse





What percentage of HS youth in CO have **NOT** used **alcohol** in the past 30 days?

- a. 76%
- b. 71%
- c. 68%
- d. 55%



What percentage of HS youth in CO have **NOT** used **marijuana** in the past 30 days?

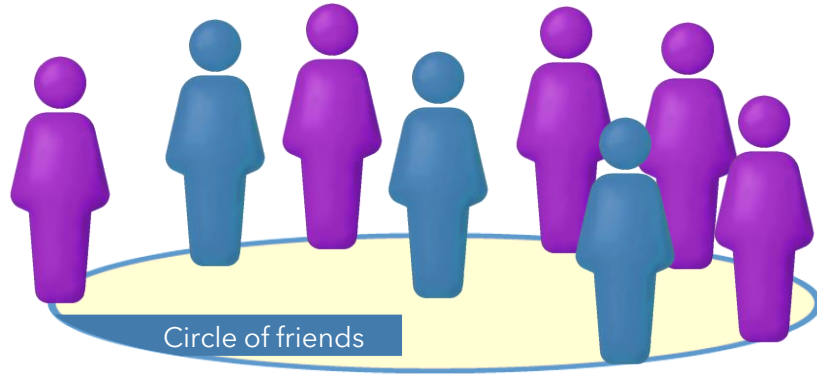
- a. 93%
- b. 83%
- c. 73%
- d. 63%

But is this information REALLY true?!?

Despite occasional pushback, this information is accurate and well documented.

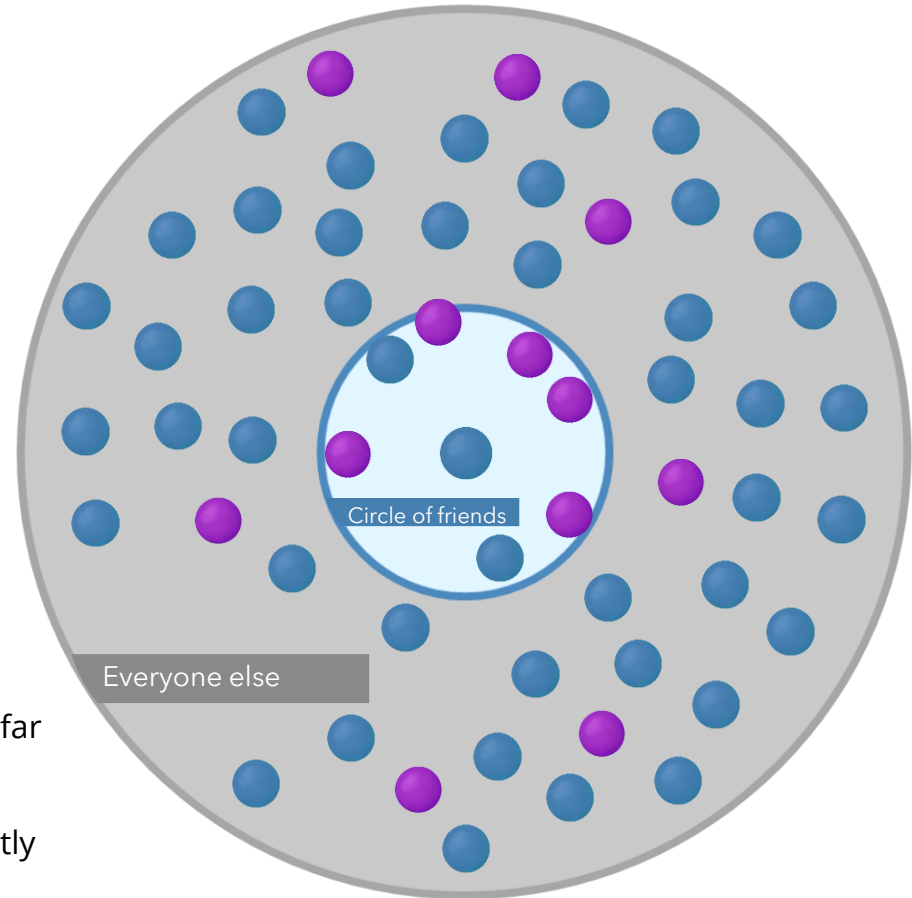
- ❖ **“Yeah but teens lie...”** Some teens do indeed mislead, but there are failsafe measures to identify and remove dishonest participation. A large sample size helps ensure results are accurate. This data is consistent with many other surveys and studies.
- ❖ **Yeah but this is just propaganda...”** Do we have an agenda? Yes! We are unapologetically working to empower teens to help them stay healthy and connected. But this requires accurate and honest conversations - not propaganda.
- ❖ **“Yeah but all my friends smoke pot...”** Two things can be true at once but it’s important to take a wider view, and confront something called *confirmation bias*, which is interpreting new evidence to confirm existing beliefs.

Confirmation Bias

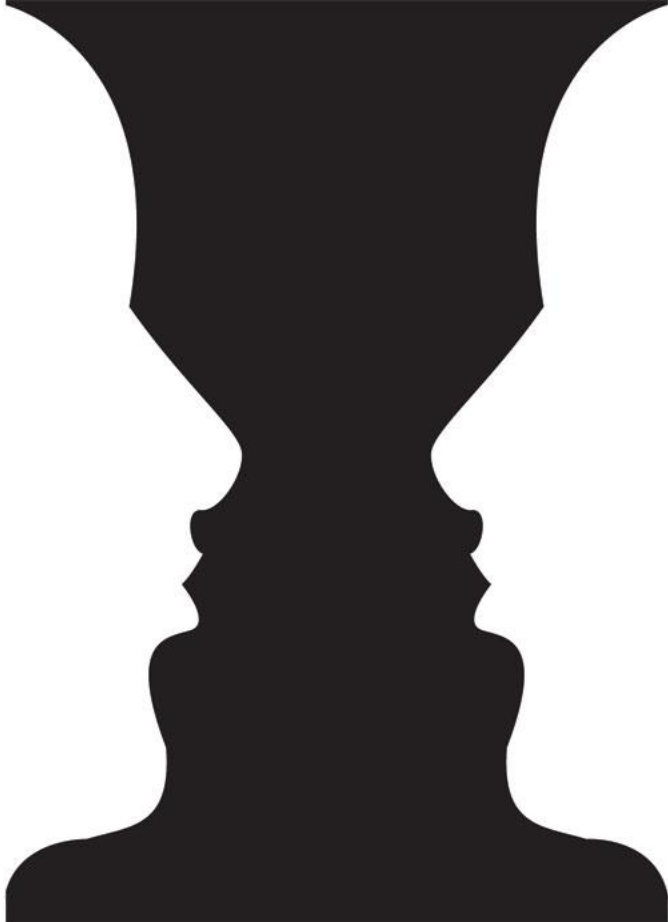


We may have friends or know peers who use, making us think that most people do. However, if we look at the bigger picture, far fewer people than we think do.

- Fewer than 1 out of 5 high school-aged students (17%) recently used marijuana
- But teens believe that more than twice that many have (37%)



● Have Used
● Have Not Used



How do you define
PERCEPTION?

Why do we need accurate perceptions?



Where do our perceptions come from?

HALF
FULL



HALF
EMPTY

How does social media impact our perceptions?



What are some tips to help us become healthier consumers of social media?



Step 1:
OBSERVE

Step 2:
QUESTION

Step 3:
INTERPRET



#IRISEABOVE

WITH ALL YOUR 

What is the **Rise Above Colorado Youth Survey**?



Most Colorado teens are **NOT** using drugs

Use in the
past 30 days

Middle school-aged youth

Alcohol



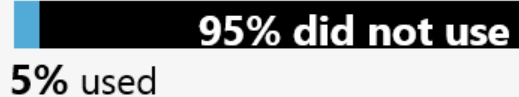
Marijuana



Vaping products



Prescription Stimulants*



High school-aged youth



*not prescribed to you

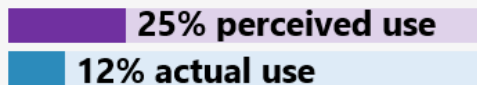
Perception & Reality: Closing the Gap

Perception doesn't always match reality

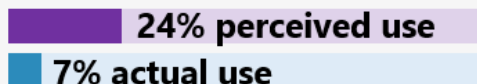
*Use in the
past 30 days*

Middle school-aged youth

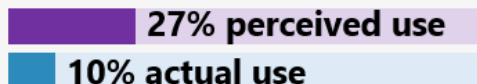
Alcohol



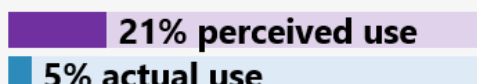
Marijuana



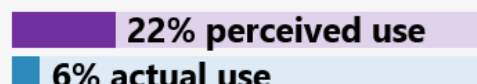
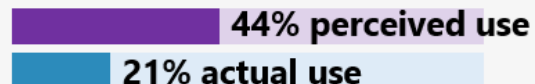
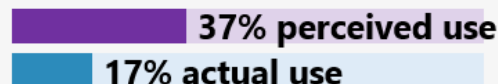
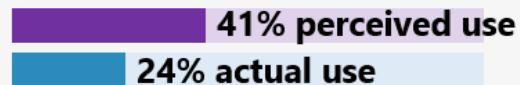
Vaping products



Prescription Stimulants*



High school-aged youth



*not prescribed to you

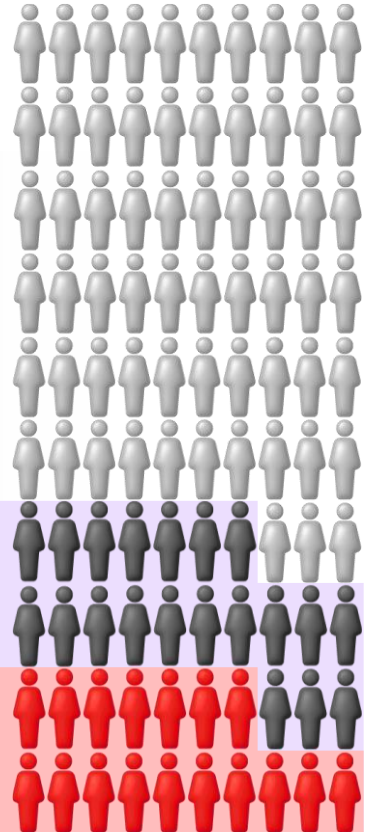
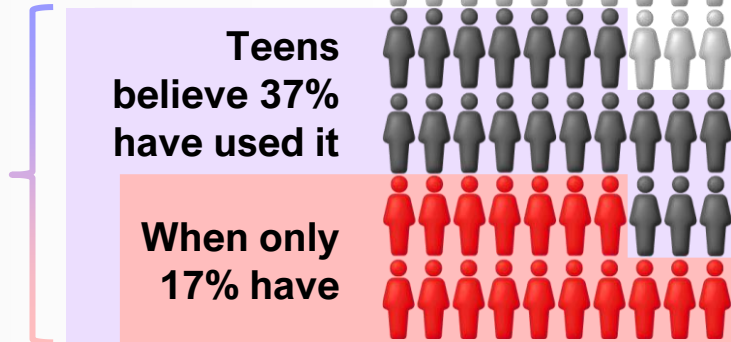
Perception does not always match reality

Marijuana Overestimation & Actual Use



83%
of teens in high school
have not used
marijuana
in the past 30 days

High School teens believe more than twice as many teens use marijuana than actually do.

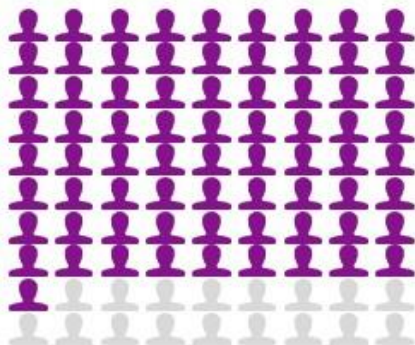


HOPE & CONCERN:

In the past 30 days, *the percentage of CO teens who...*

81%

did NOT consume
alcohol



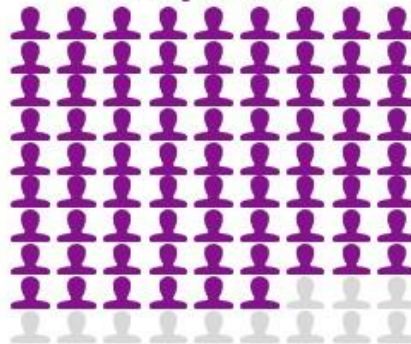
83%

did NOT use vaping
products



87%

did NOT use
marijuana

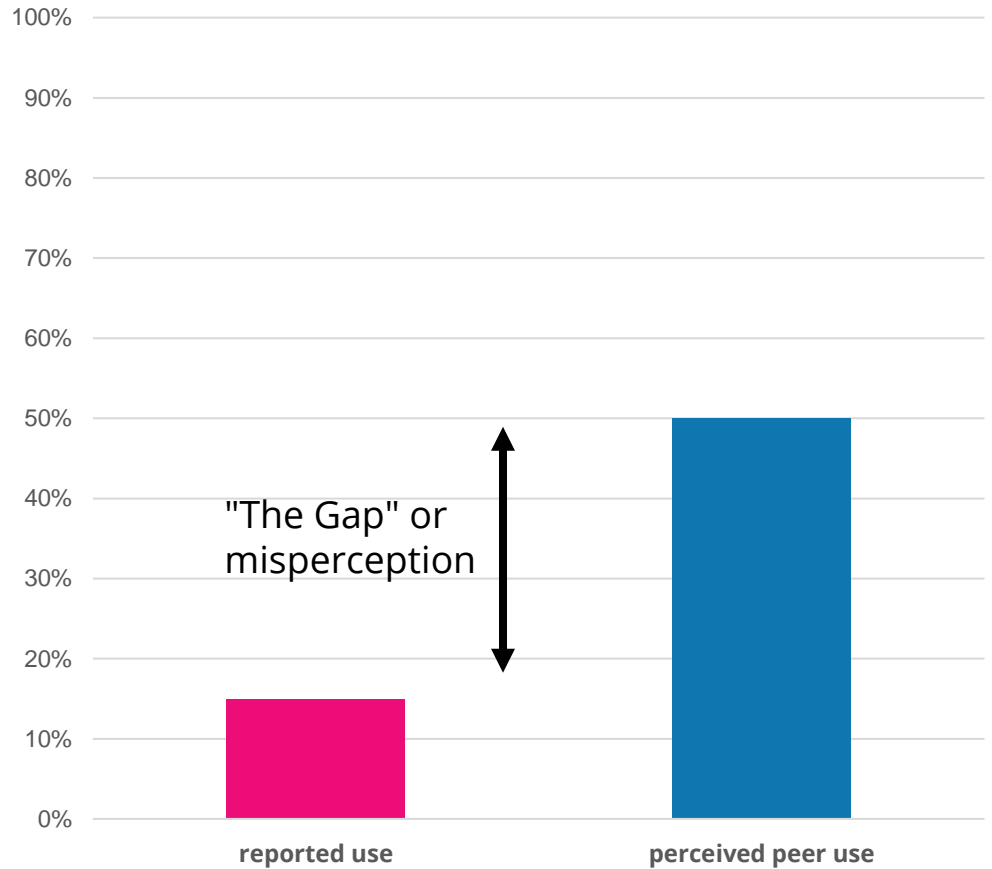


96%

did NOT use prescription
drugs



Perception, Reality, & Behavior



**What factors
contribute to teens
misusing substances?**

What HOPES & CONCERNS do we have?

- Using **Observation**, what knowledge and skills can we focus on to help prevent ourselves and others from slipping into substance misuse?
- What **Questions** can we ask of ourselves and others to ensure this knowledge and/or these skills are effective?
- How will we **Interpret** and build on our success?



Protective Factors


Positive connection with family, peers & community

Positive coping, stress, & management skills

Hobbies & interests

Trusted adults

Goals for future

The background of the slide is a vibrant, abstract pattern of graffiti-style hearts. The hearts are drawn in various colors including red, yellow, blue, green, and pink, and are scattered across a dark, textured background. The overall effect is energetic and celebratory.

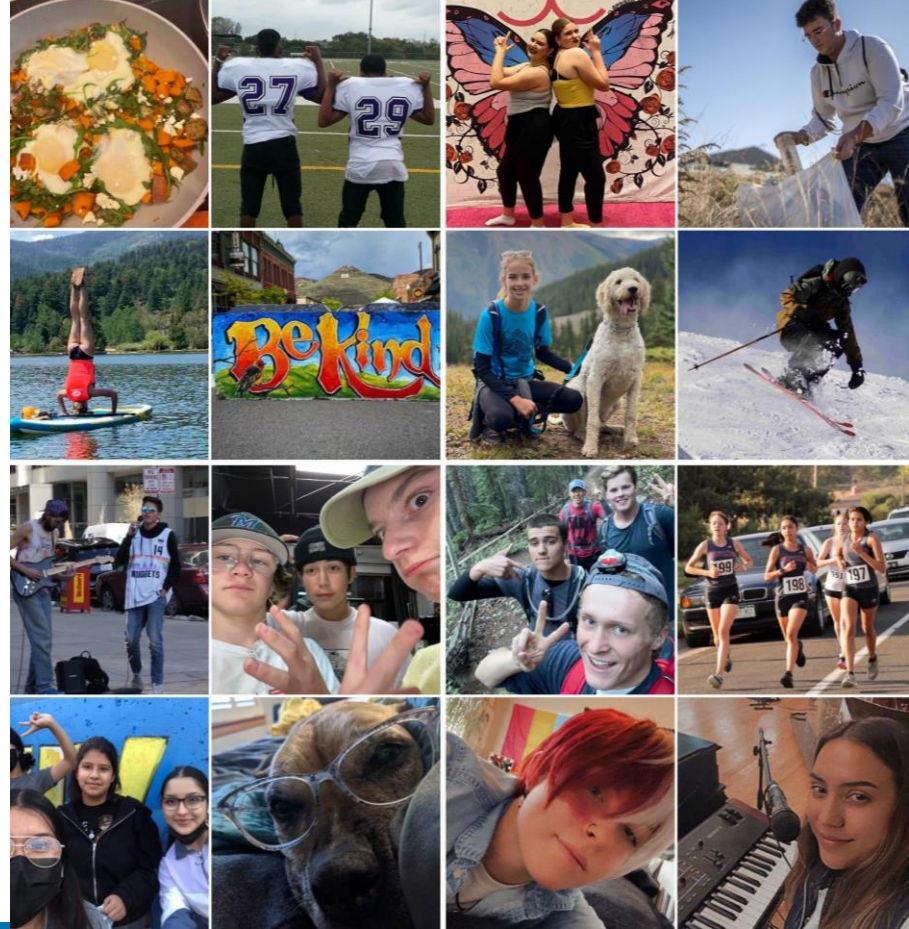
What actions can YOU take to correct misperceptions among your friends, peers, family and community?

Check out youth resources & campaign updates:

www.IRiseAboveCO.org

Connect with
Rise Above Colorado
on social media:

#IRiseAbove
@riseaboveco



Please complete
Closing The Gap
Post-Survey!

