



South Southwest (HHS Region 6)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Emerging Drug Trends in the South Southwest

Josh Esrick, PTTC Associate

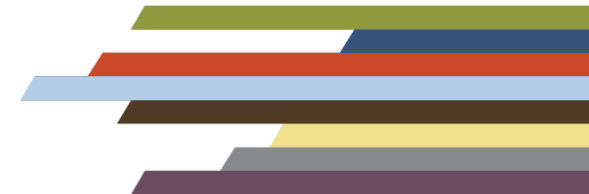
Emily Patton, PTTC Associate

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South Southwest Prevention Technology Transfer Center

SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
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Disclaimer

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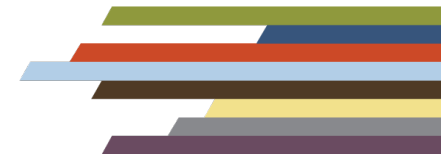


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Presenters



Josh Esrick



Emily Patton

Our Learning Objectives

- Explore data sources that can be used to identify emerging trends
- Determine regional emerging drug trends using multiple state and national data sets
- Explain how the extent and impact of these trends can vary by state due to geographic, demographic, and cultural factors
- Describe strategies for addressing emerging drug trends in the South Southwest region.



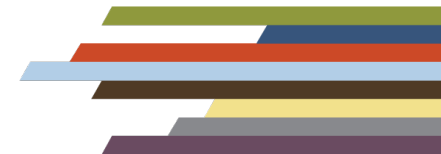
Data Sources to Identify Emerging Drug Trends



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Obtaining Emerging Trend Data

- Epidemiological Surveillance Systems
- Many data sources exist, but challenges include:
 - Data not available at the local level
 - Data lags can prevent timely analysis
 - Data siloed or not provided
- Seek **multiple, different** sources

National Data Sources



Handout: National, State, and Local Data Sources
Quick Reference Sheet

State and Local Data

- Obtain state and local data sources to supplement national datasets
- Recognize the barriers that can exist, and be prepared to overcome them
- Conduct primary data collection yourself:
 - Surveys
 - Focus Groups
 - Key Informant Interviews



Impact of COVID-19

- Little data available yet since the pandemic began
- CDC national survey data (June 2020) found:
 - 40.9% of respondents reported at least one adverse behavioral health condition
 - 10.7% contemplated suicide in the last 30 days
- Specific populations are disproportionately affected
 - Young adults, Hispanic persons, Black persons, essential workers, unpaid caregivers for adults, and those receiving treatment for preexisting psychiatric conditions

Impact of COVID-19

- Provisional national data shows a 15.9% increase in fatal overdoses from January to July 2020 (CDC)
 - Fatal overdose rate had been increasing in 2019, but not at nearly this rate
- States made numerous policy changes easing access to alcohol

Impact of COVID-19

- Likely to see significant use increases in future data releases
- The nature of pandemics increase the risk factors associated with substance abuse (Moutier, 2020; Ornell et al, 2020)
 - Isolation
 - Anxiety, Stress, Depression
 - Physical Health
 - At-Risk Populations
- Some risk factors may be weakened however (Gaiha et al, 2020)



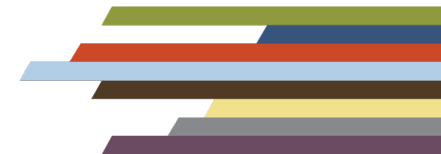
Emerging Drug Trends



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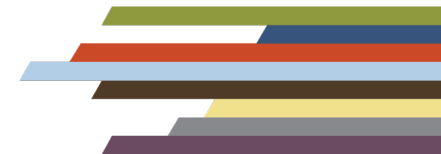


Setting A Baseline

- Increasing marijuana use
- Opioid epidemic continuing to shift
- Methamphetamine overdoses increasing
- Youth vaping finally stabilized in 2020
- Underage alcohol use increasing
- Adult problem alcohol use declined through 2019

Emerging Trends in the South Southwest Region

- Alcohol
- Drug-Involved Overdoses
- Methamphetamines
- Opioids
- Cocaine
- Marijuana
- Tobacco Products
- Suicide
- Other Trends



Alcohol Trends

- **Alcohol trends** across the SSW show that **use is relatively stable**
- **Alcohol induced deaths** have been **increasing** across the region
- **Underage youth drinking** (ages 12-17) has **generally decreased**
- **Alcohol death use rates are highest among American Indians/Indigenous peoples** in the region.

Alcohol Policy Changes

- COVID-19 has led to multiple policy and operating status changes in the past year across the US
 - Store, bar, restaurant and other alcohol retail locations
 - Changes in the types of alcohol people can purchase
 - Data is rapidly changing



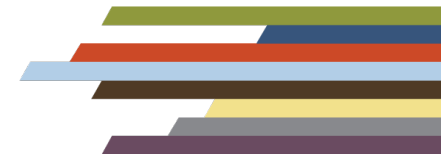


State Level Trends



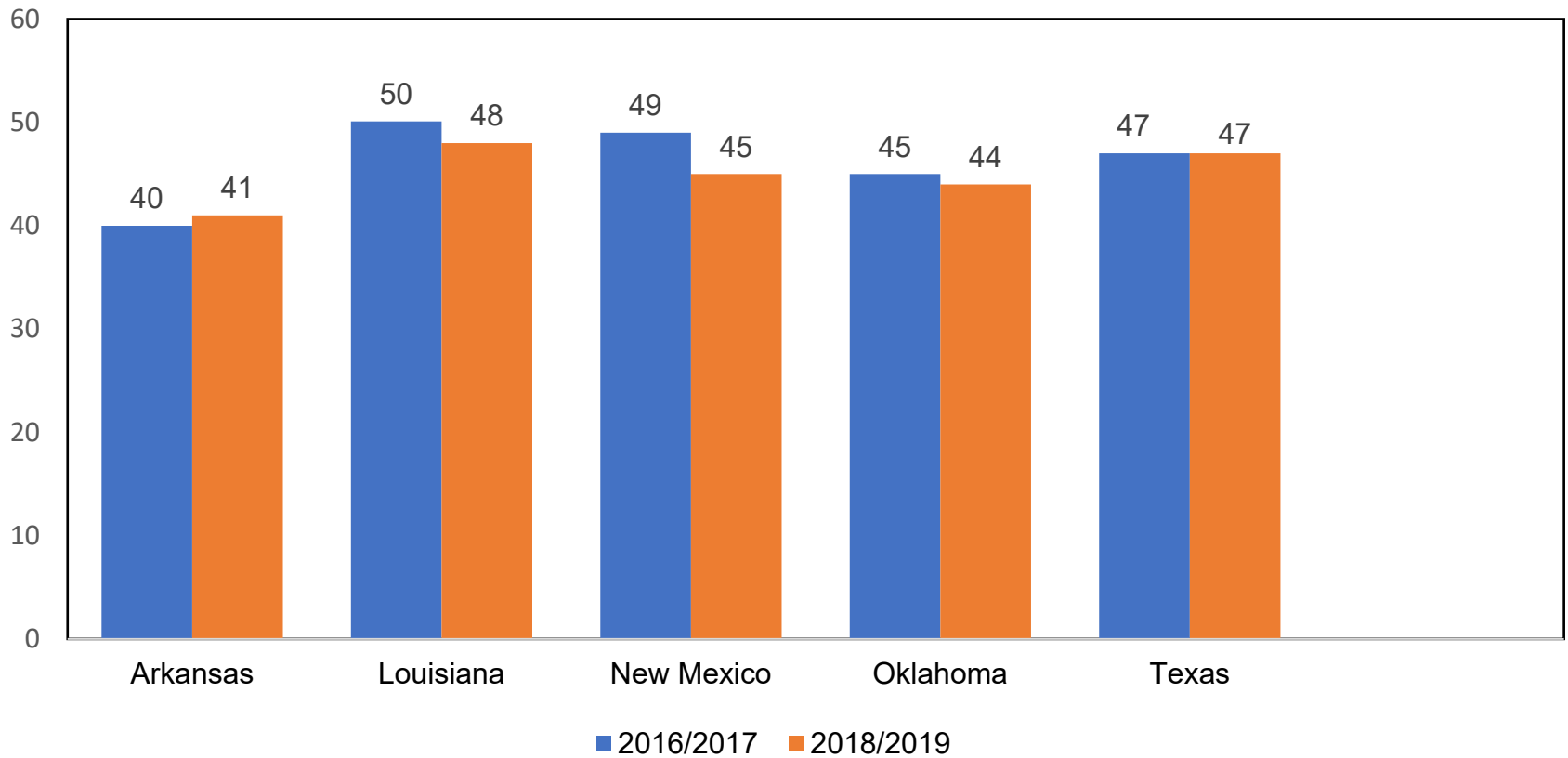
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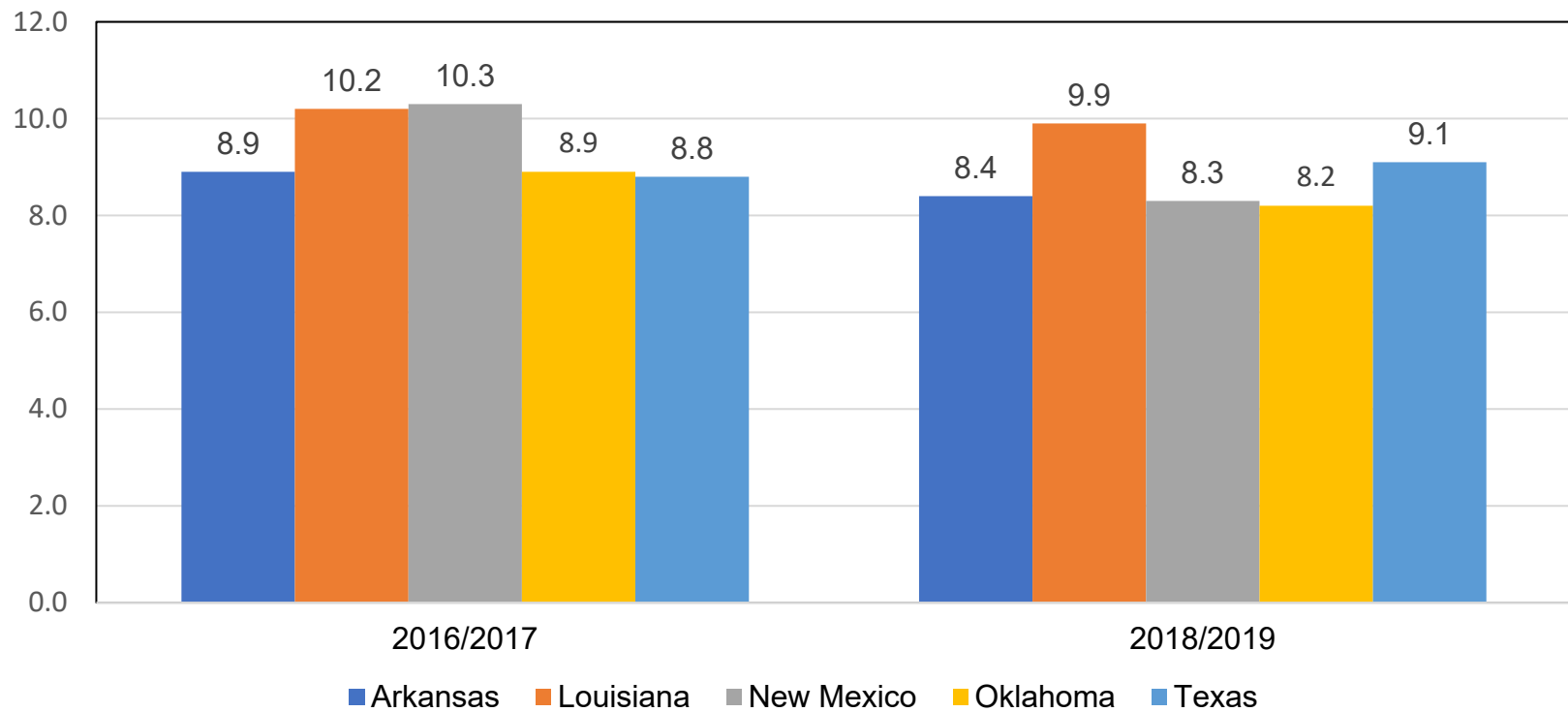
Alcohol Use

Past Month Alcohol Use Ages 12+ (%)



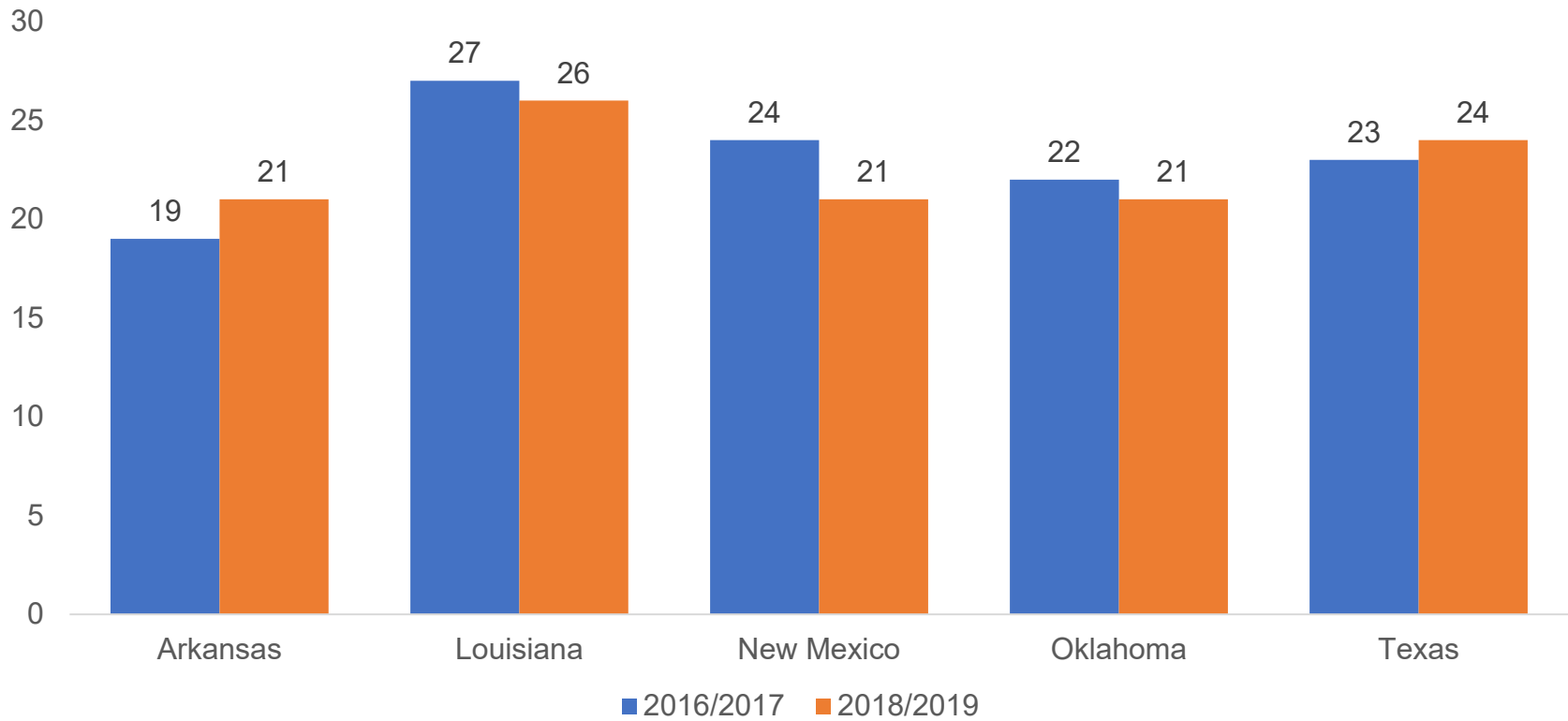
Underage Drinking

**Past Month Alcohol Use
Ages 12-17 (%)**



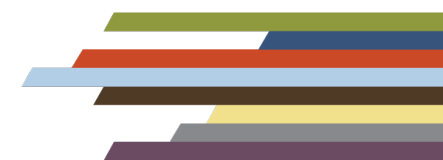
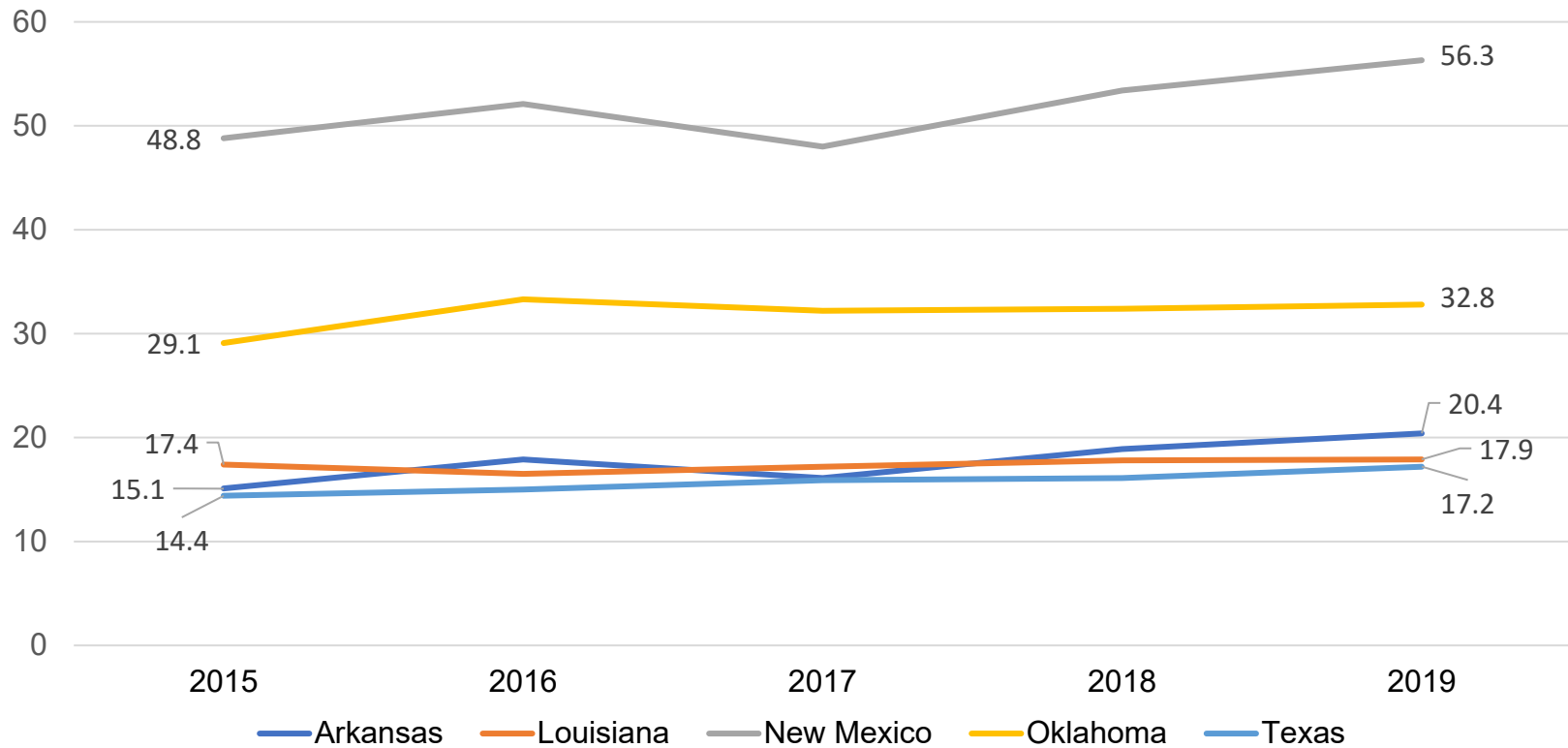
Binge-Drinking

Past Month Binge Alcohol Use
Ages 12+ (%)



Alcohol-Induced Deaths

Alcohol-induced Causes of Death (per 100,000)



Driving Under the Influence

New Mexico

- Individuals who binge drink in this state are more likely to drink and drive
- Drinking and driving is most prevalent among middle aged adults

Arkansas

- The rate of DUIs among youth is 1 per 10,000, adults is 26 per 10,000
- The state has had a decrease in alcohol traffic related crashes and injuries in recent years

Oklahoma

- The number of alcohol-related arrests per 10,000 Oklahoma adults decreased by 49% from 2008 to 2017 (this includes DUIs)

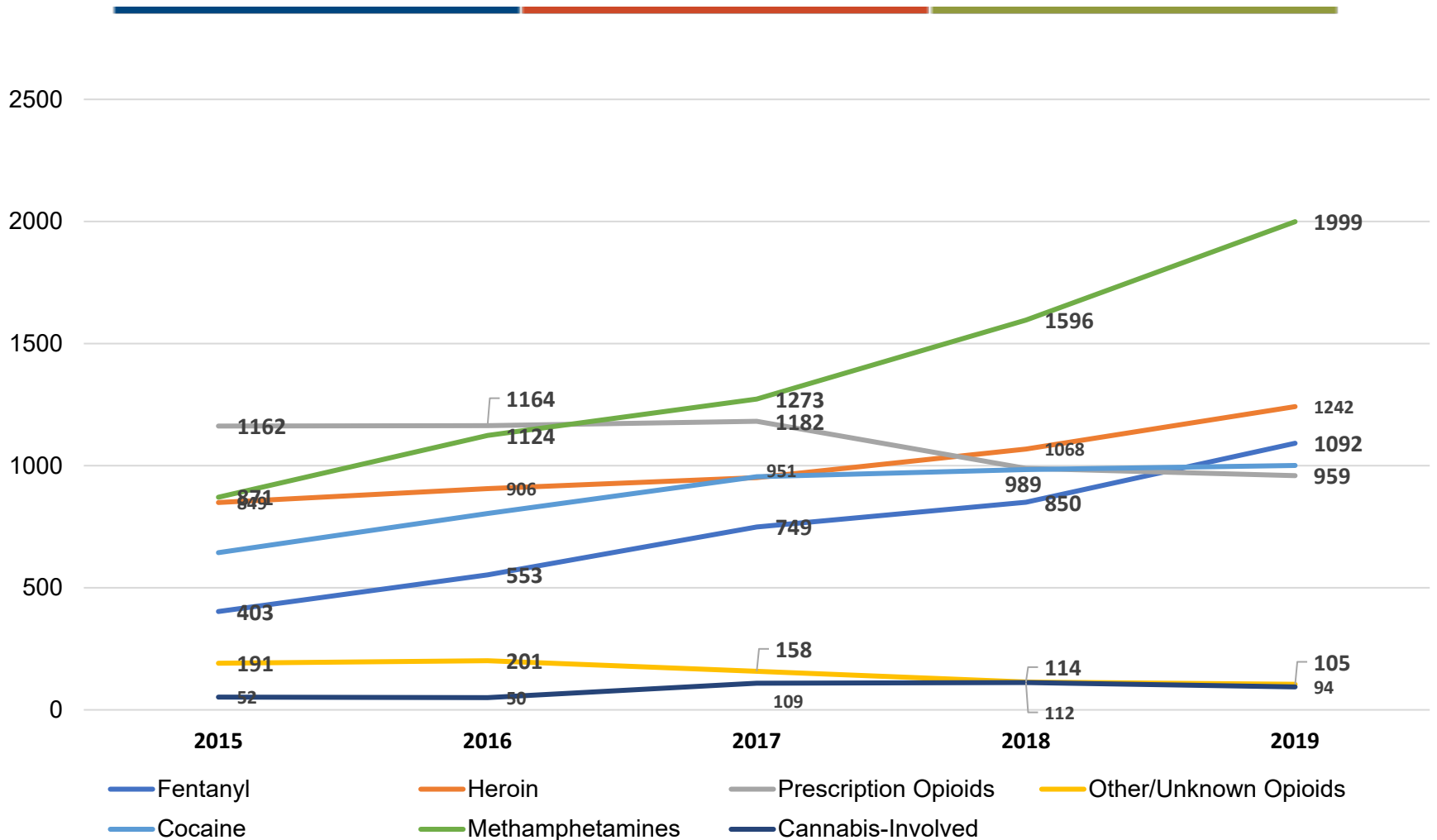
Louisiana

- Adults reporting drinking and driving have decreased over the last few years

Texas

- Adults reporting drinking and driving has been increasing since 2012

Drug Involved Fatal Overdoses

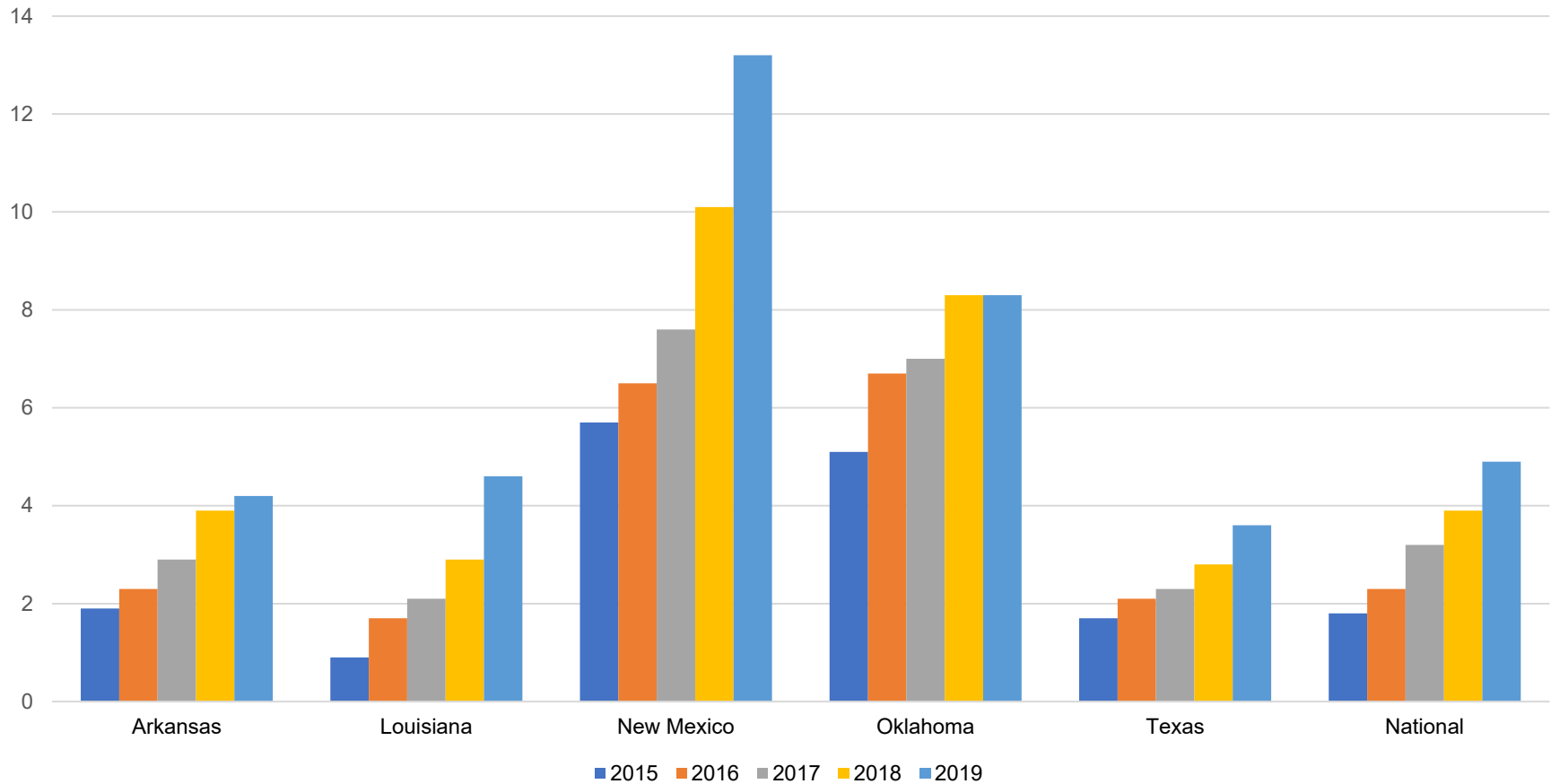


Drug Involved Overdoses

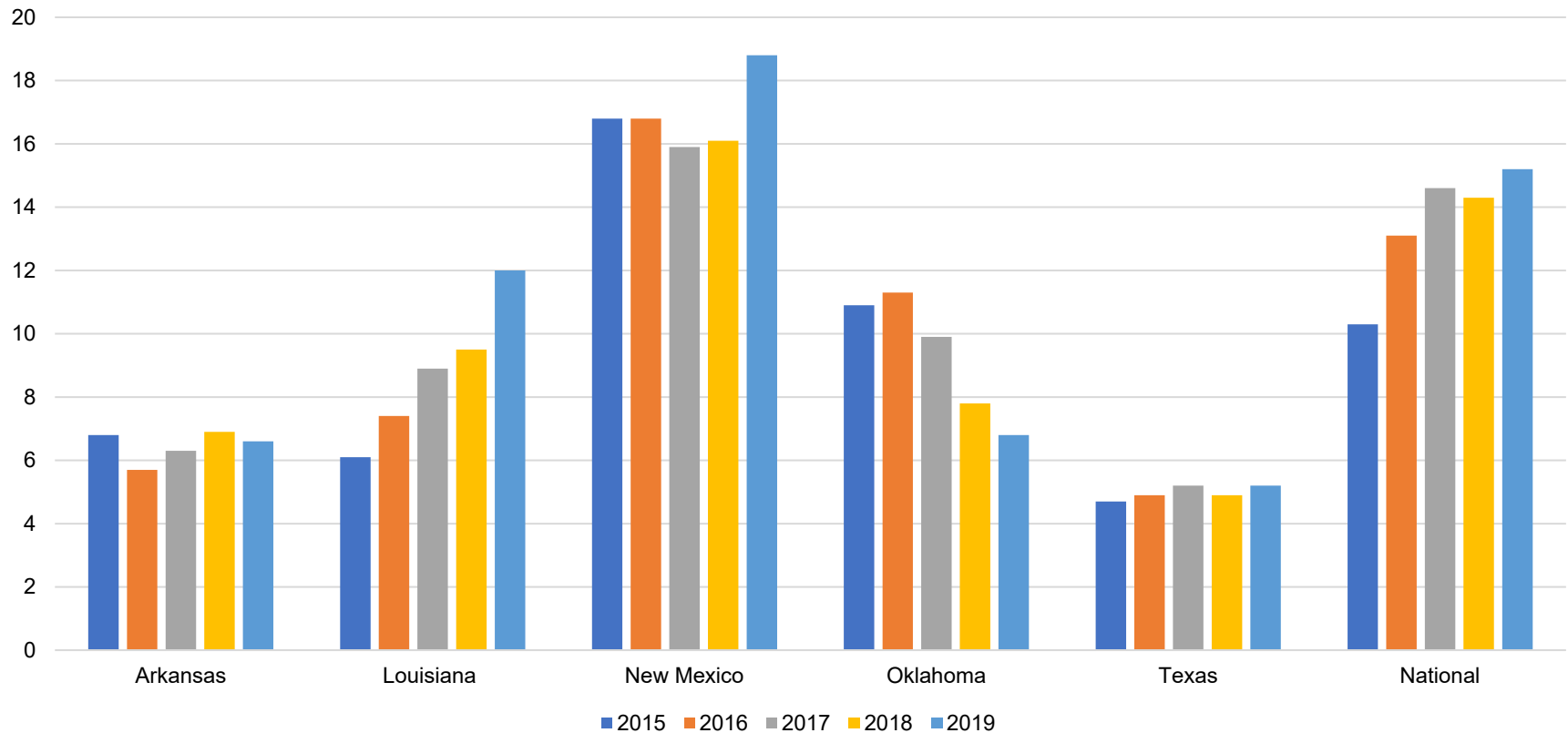
Variations by Demographics

- Fatal overdose rate **nearly double** among non-Hispanic compared to Hispanic populations
- African American overdose rate had been lower than White or American Indian rates; it has caught up
- Male overdose rate **double** female rate
- Overdoses now spread almost **evenly** across ages 25-64; had been more concentrated 10 years ago

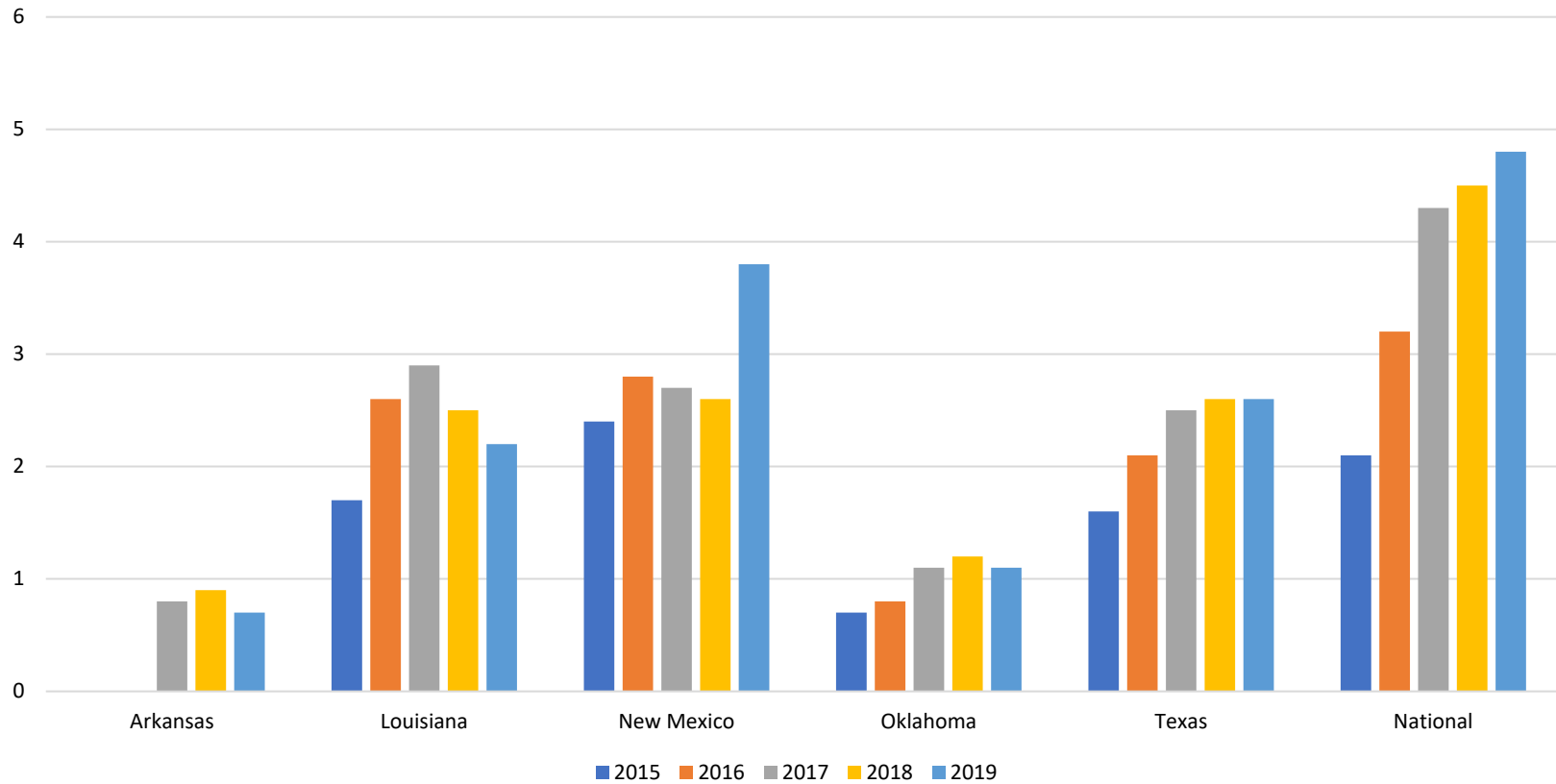
Methamphetamine Overdoses (per 100,000 people)



Opioid Overdoses (per 100,000 people)



Cocaine Overdoses (per 100,000 people)



Methamphetamine Trends

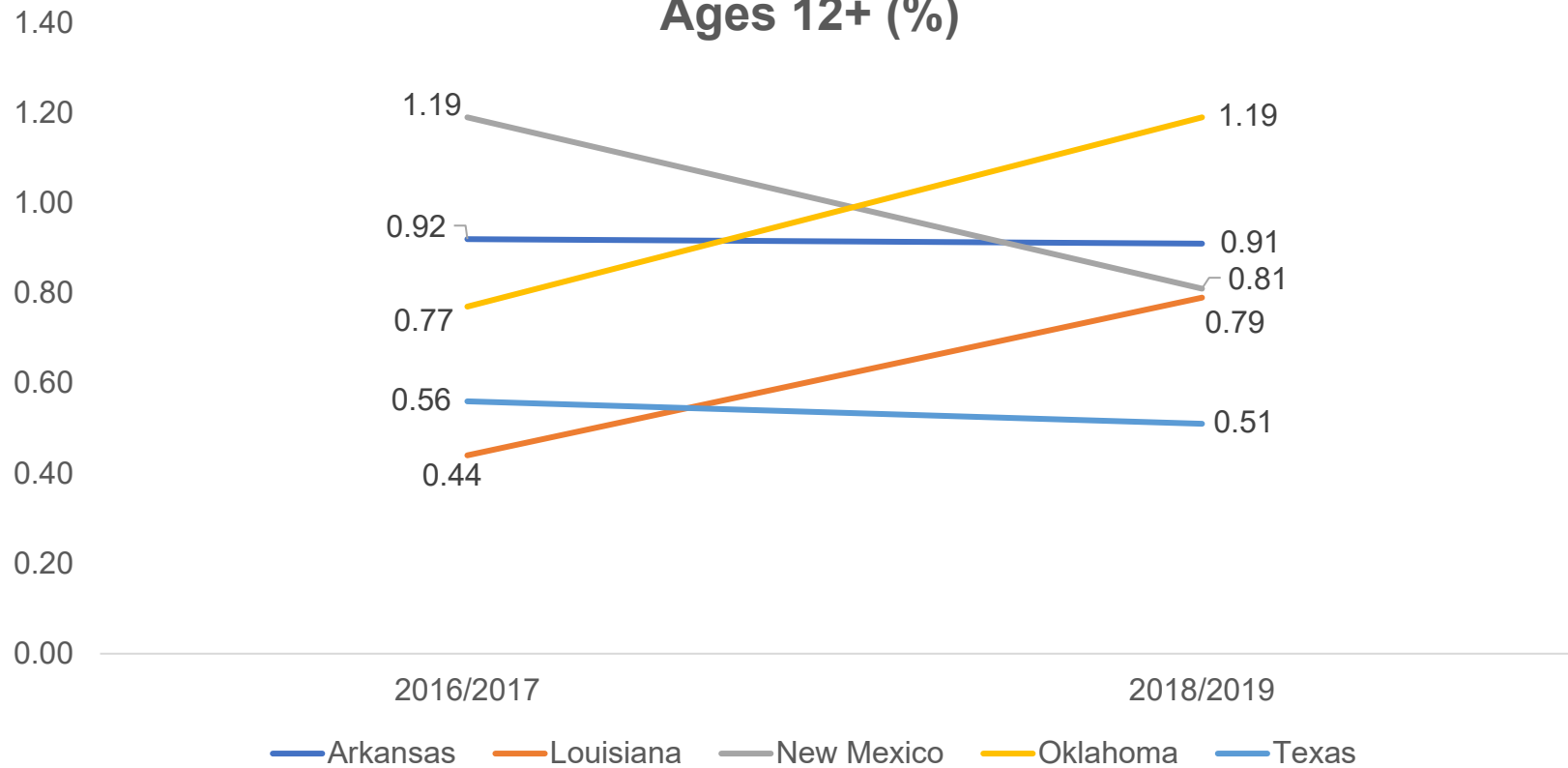
- Methamphetamine **use** has been **increasing** nationally each year
- In the SSW region, prevalence of past year methamphetamine use was **higher** in almost all of the states compared to the **national prevalence rate**
- In 2019 in **New Mexico**, methamphetamine was the number one substance involved in drug overdose deaths

Methamphetamine Threat Assessment

- Seizures along with drug poisoning deaths involving methamphetamine continue to rise
- Most of the methamphetamine available in the U.S. is produced in Mexico and smuggled across the southwest border
- Overall methamphetamine reports have increased by 75% since 2014
- In 2018, there was a nearly 23 percent increase from 2017 in psychostimulant drug-poisoning deaths.

Methamphetamine

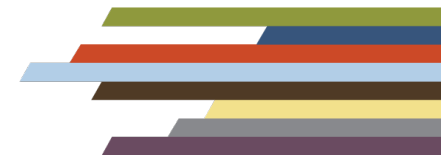
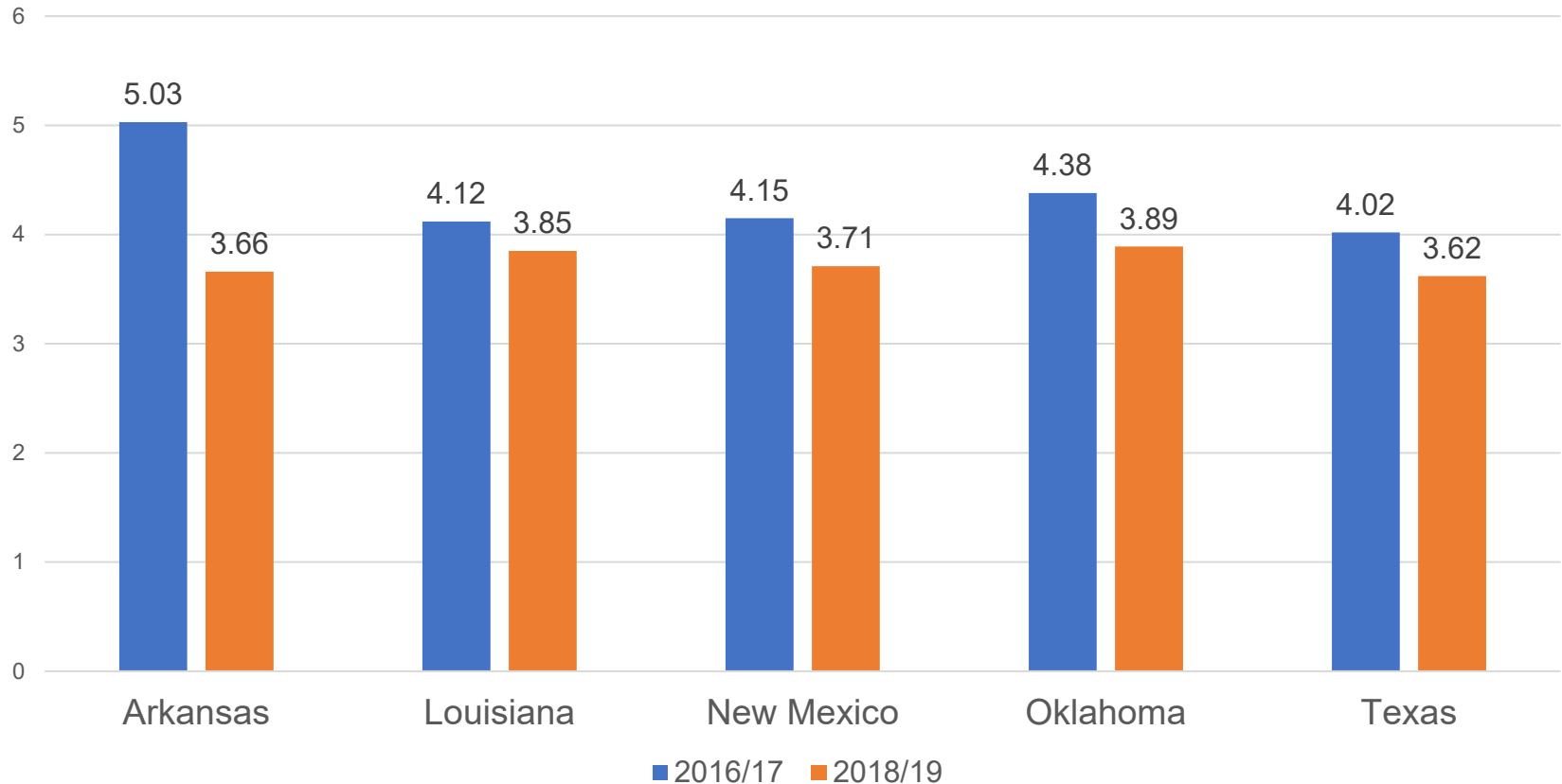
Methamphetamine Use in the Last Year Ages 12+ (%)



Opioid Trends

- **Prescription opioid misuse declined** in all SSW states from 2016/17 to 2018/19
- **Heroin use was stable or declined**; issue is fentanyl, which lacks usage data
- **Regional use rates similar to national trends**; national overdose rates higher due to fentanyl
- Most frequent use is among ages 18-25
- July 2020: DEA reports that **supplies of heroin and fentanyl may be under strain due to COVID-19**

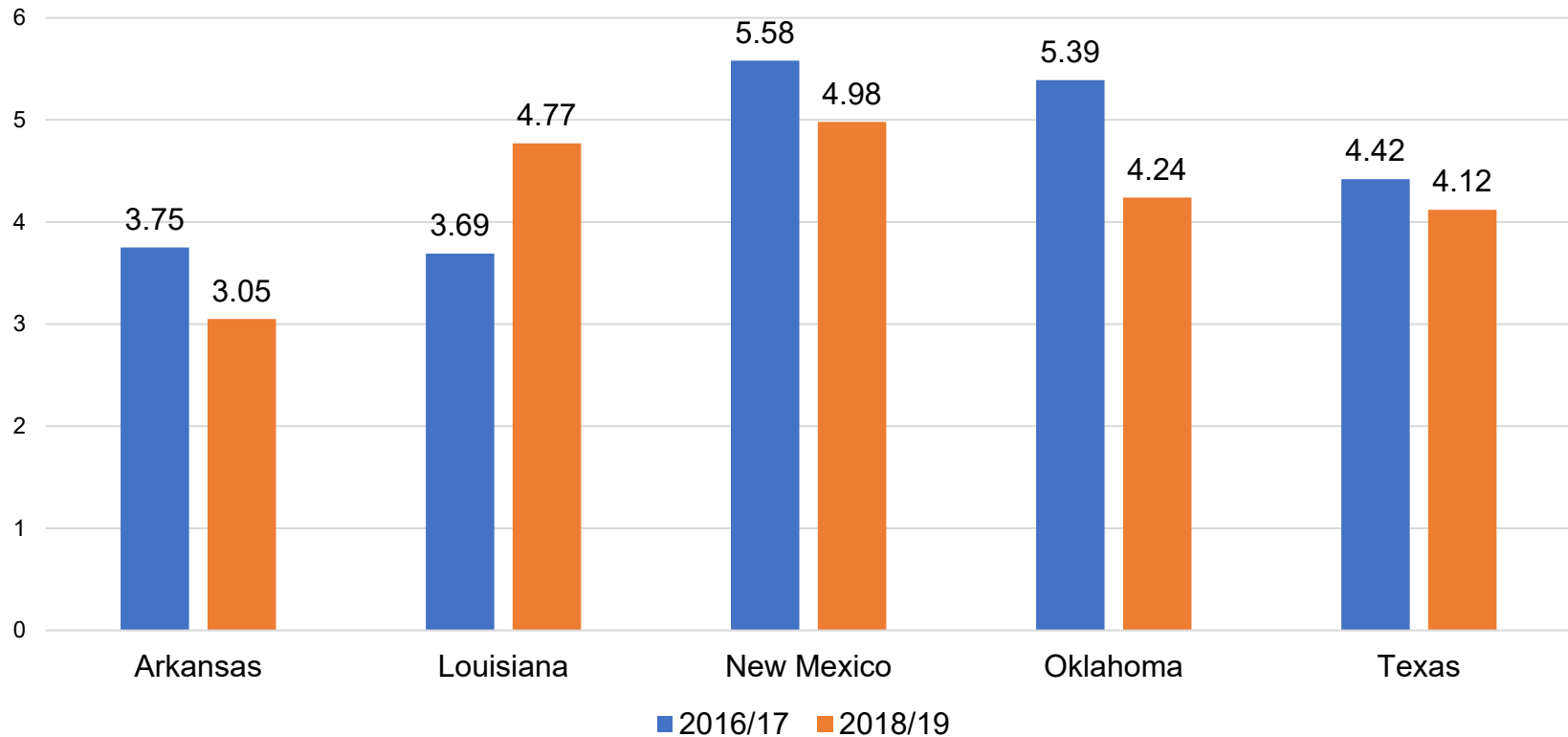
Past-Year Prescription Opioid Use (Ages 12+; %)



Cocaine Trends

- **Cocaine use overall declined**, except in Louisiana, from 2016/17 to 2018/19
 - The increases in cocaine overdose deaths are likely due to increasing mixed use of cocaine with fentanyl or heroin
- Nationally, **cocaine use** has remained **stable**
- **Use** mostly concentrated among **ages 18-25**
- October 2020: DEA reports that the cocaine **supply chain has not been affected by COVID-19**

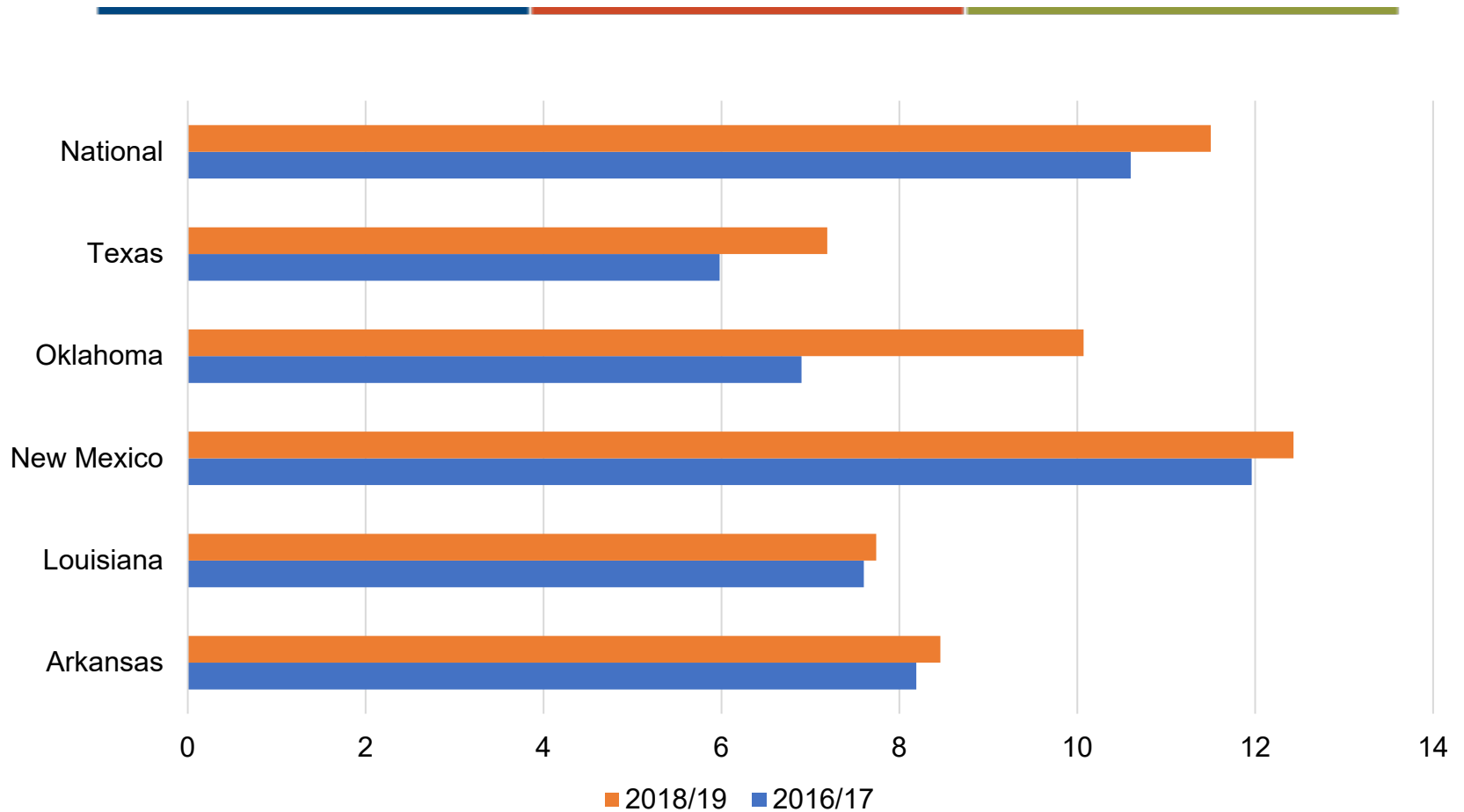
Past-Year Cocaine Use (Ages 18-25; %)



Marijuana Trends

- Regional **increases** in use are almost entirely due to **adults ages 26+**
- By contrast, **national use** rates have **increased for ages 12-17 and 18-25** as well
- One important difference: 33.9% of U.S. residents live in a state that legalized recreational marijuana use, but **no states in SSW have done so**
- **Legalization only for adults age 21+**, but may further weaken norms against use and **could increase underage access** to marijuana

Past-Month Marijuana Use (%)

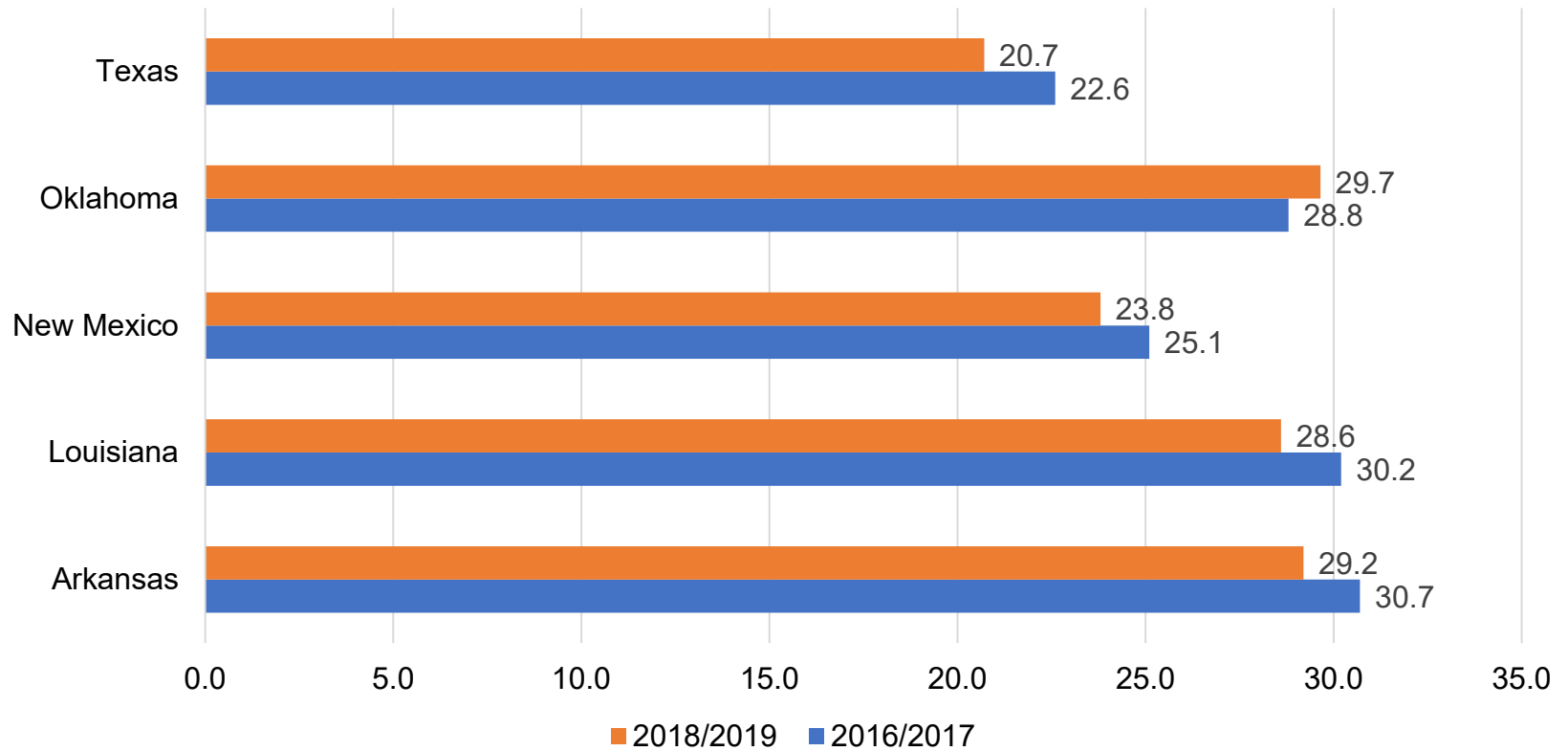


Tobacco and Vaping Trends

- In the SSW region, **tobacco and cigarette use** has generally been on the **decline** in most of the states (**Oklahoma is the exception**)
- **Youth vaping** has **increased** in each state for both current and lifetime use rates
- COVID-19 may have impacted youth vaping/e-cigarette rates with data from one study suggesting a reduction in use

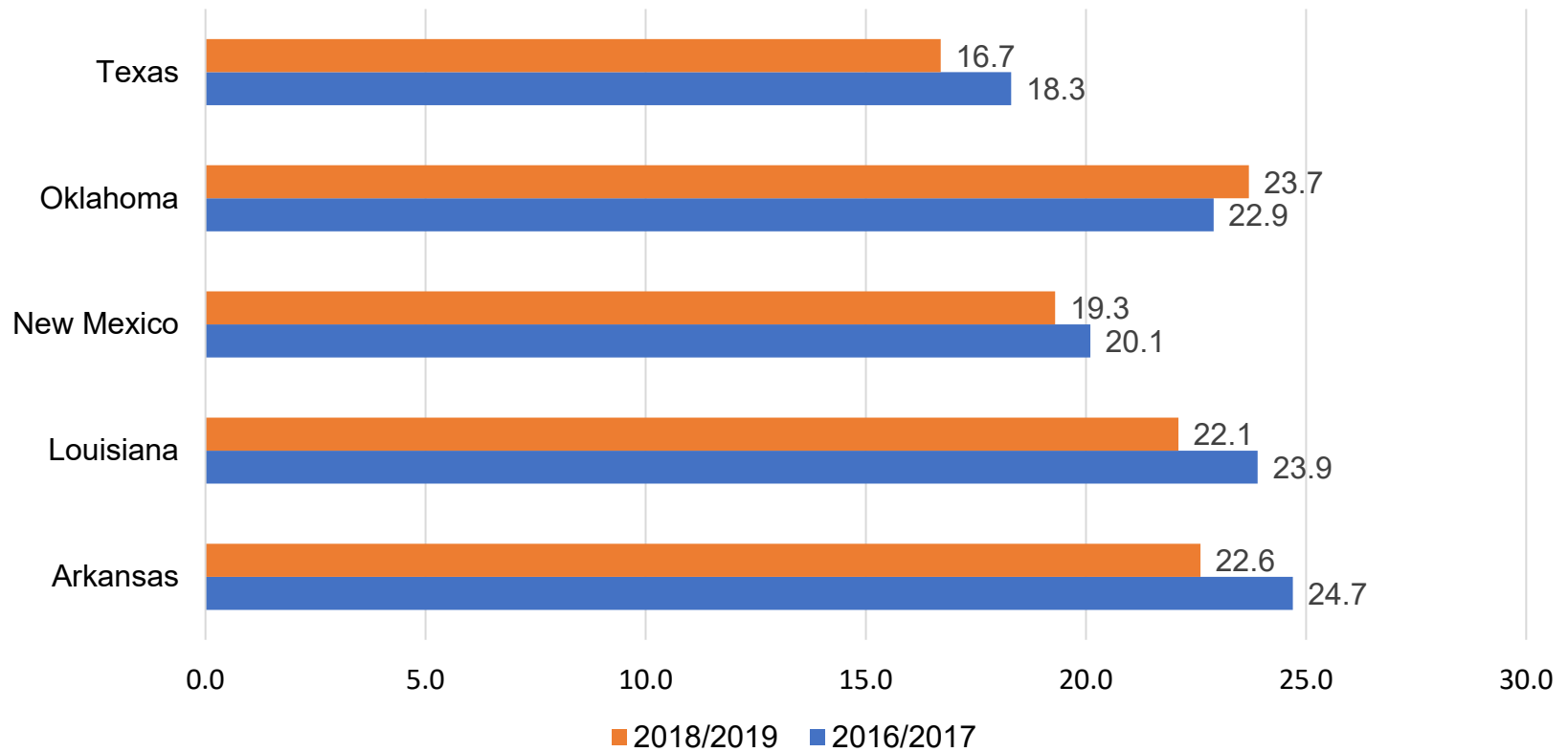
Tobacco Products

Past Month Tobacco Product Use, Ages 12+ (%)



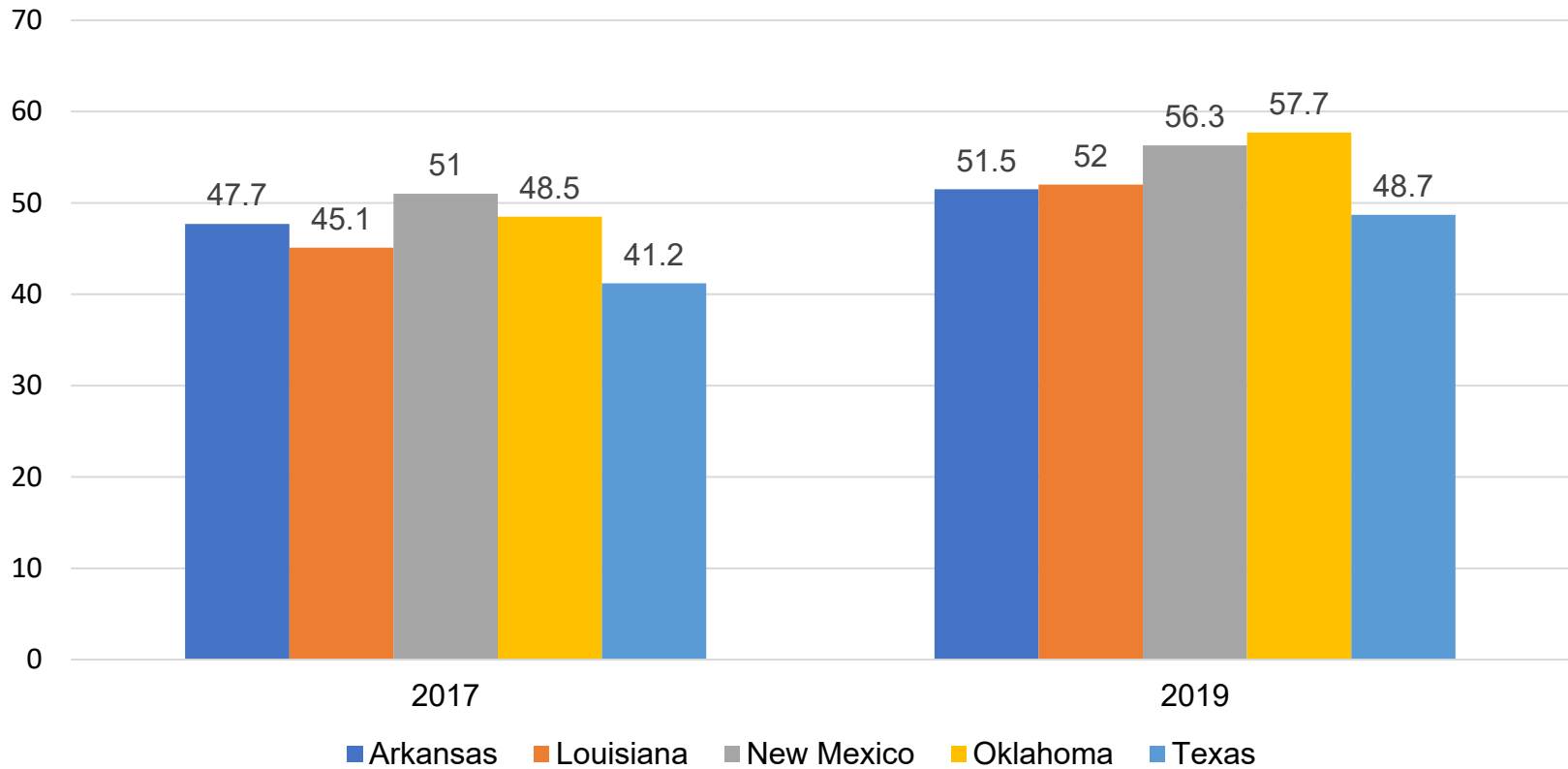
Cigarette Use

Past Month Cigarette Use, Ages 12+ (%)



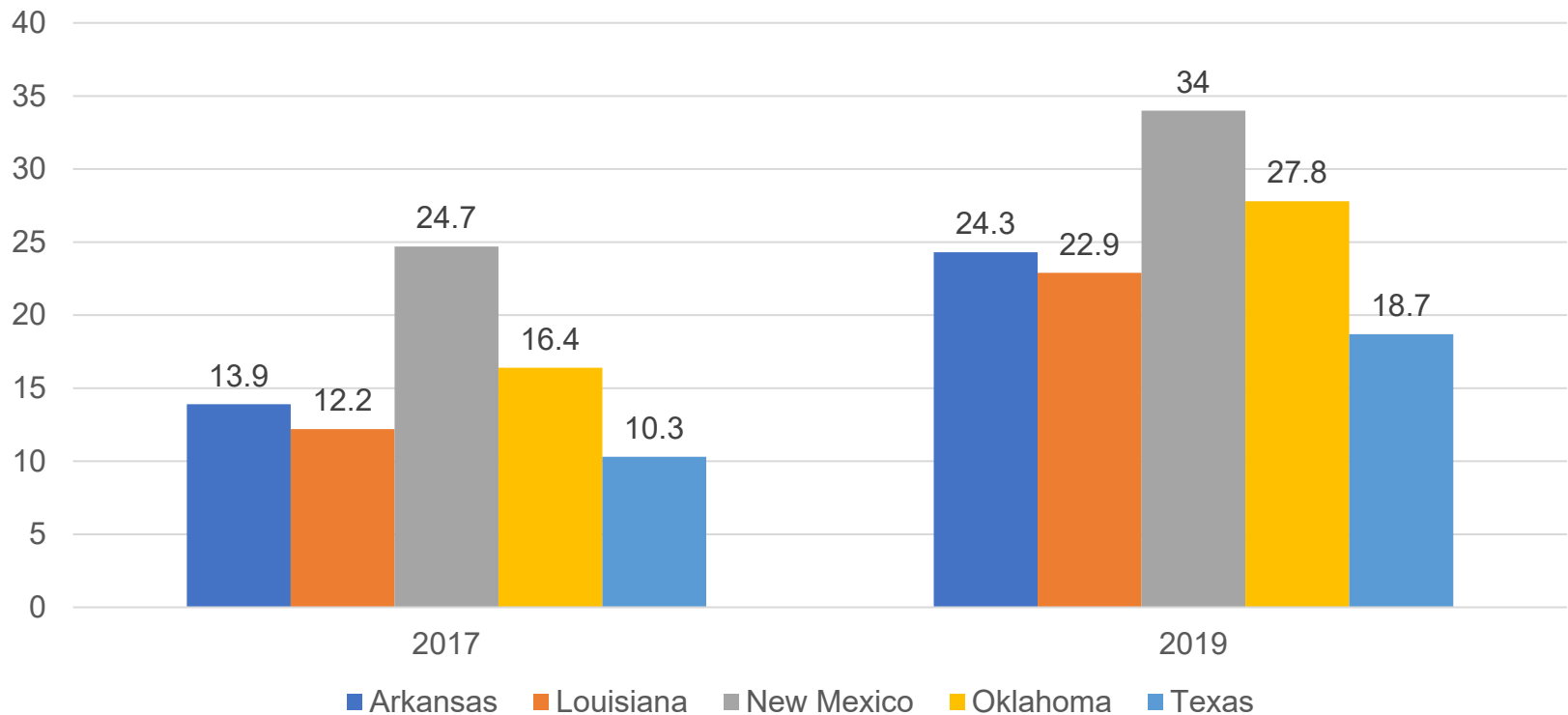
Youth Vaping

Ever Used Electronic Vapor Products, Grades 8-12 (%)



Youth Vaping, Continued

Currently Using Electronic Vapor Products
Grades 8-12 (%)

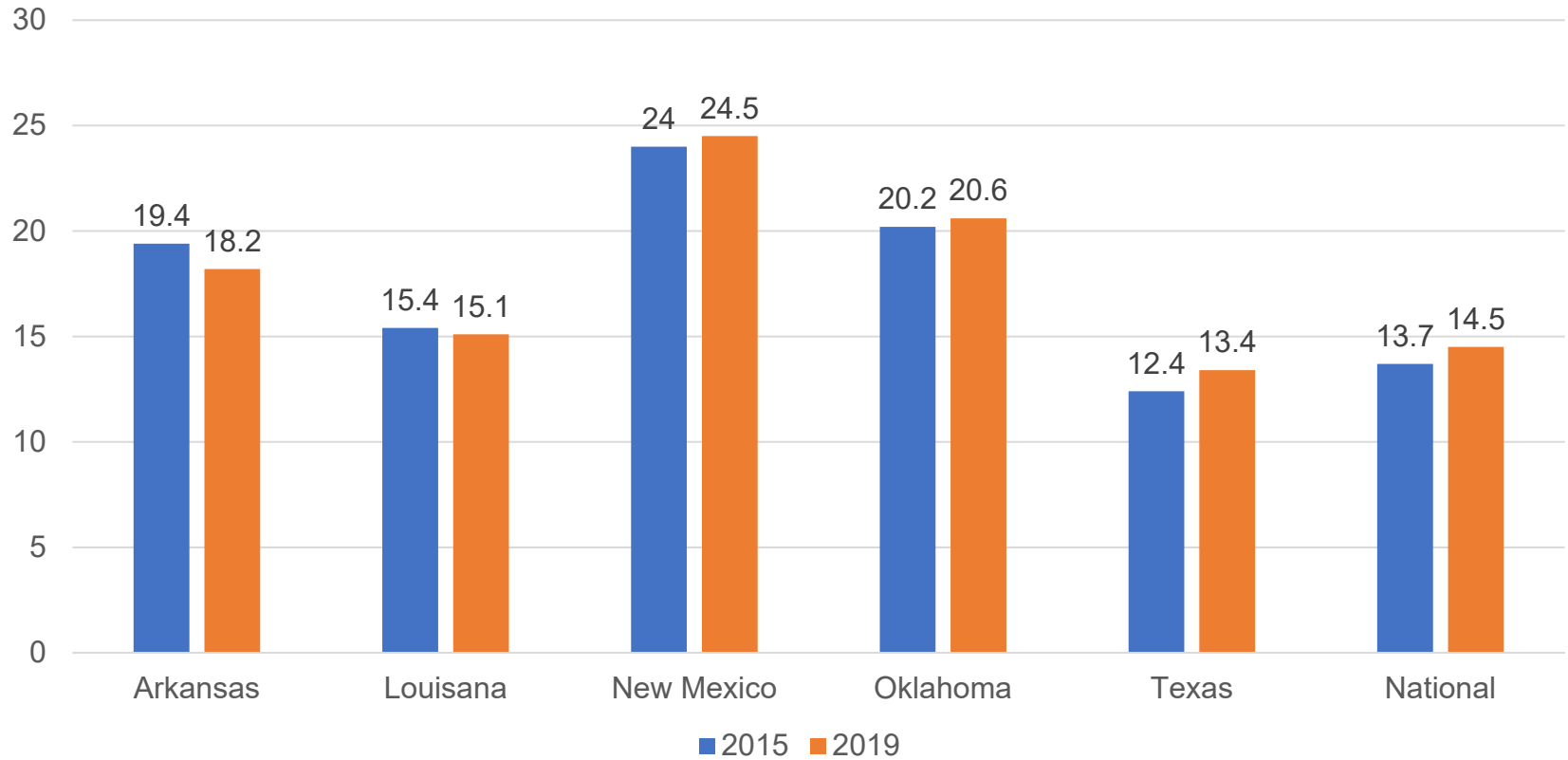


Fatal Suicide

Suicide and suicide attempts can be an important topic for substance use prevention stakeholders

- Suicide is the **leading cause of death** among people with substance use disorders
- Over **20% of suicides are drug-involved** (not all of which are overdoses)
- Suicide is strongly associated with mental health conditions (e.g. depression, anxiety, stress) that often co-occur with substance use

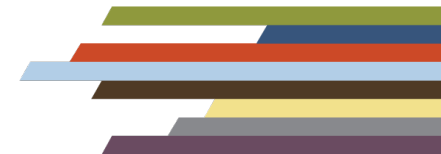
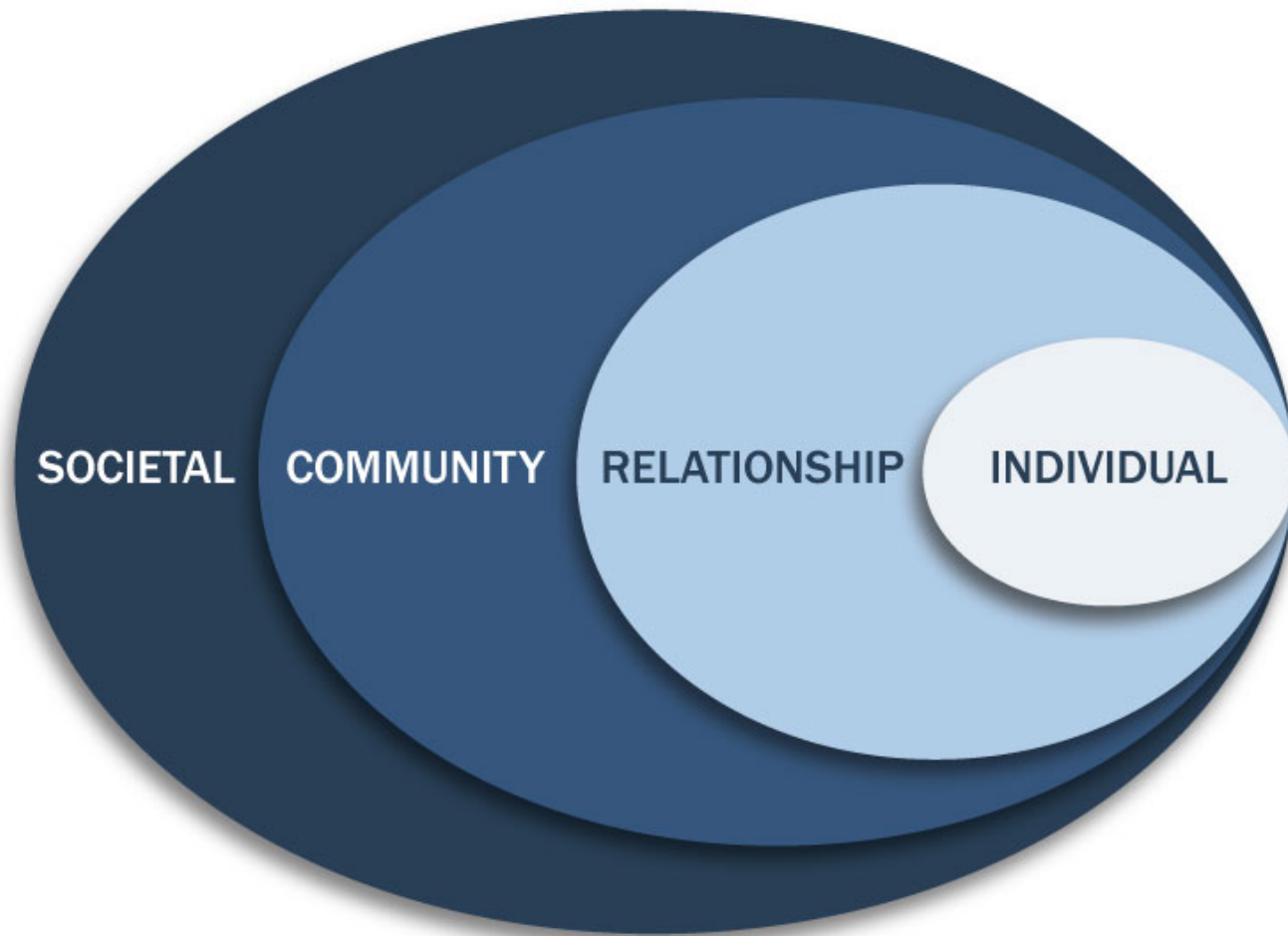
Fatal Suicides (per 100,000 People)



What Can Cause Trends to Vary?

- Risk and Protective Factors
 - The Socio-Ecological Model - Individuals, Relationships, Community, and Society
- Social Determinants of Health
 - Economic Stability
 - Education Access and Quality
 - Health Care Access and Quality
 - Neighborhood and Built Environment
 - Social and Community Context

The Socio-Ecological Model



The Social Determinants of Health

“Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks” (Health and Human Services)



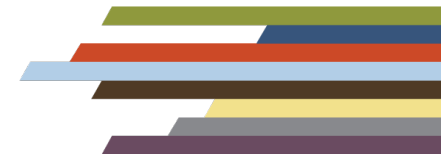
Strategies for Addressing Emerging Drug Trends in the South Southwest Region



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Understanding the SDOH

- The really “big picture” aspects of life
 - Sometimes too big for prevention professionals to address alone; or even at all
- However, prevention can play an important role in an overall public health approach focused on SDOH
- And being involved with other stakeholders we can better support a whole health approach
- And we learn more about the landscape we are working in with our other interventions

Economic Stability

- In 2019, 1 in 10 US residents lived in poverty (HHS); which is often tied to lack of economic stability and opportunity
- Most research shows that residents of more economically disadvantaged neighborhoods are at greater risk of substance use
 - And this impact is larger among people with lower incomes
- Strategies exist to support people finding employment; and help people address costs

Education Access and Quality

- Access to high quality education and attainment of higher levels of education are associated with longer, healthier lives
- Research also shows educational attainment and academic commitment as protective factors against substance use (Collins et al; Arkes & Iguchi)
- Strategies exist to improve academic performance, improve school performance, and expand access to higher education

Health Care Access and Quality, 1

- In 2020, 12.5% of US adults 19-64 lacked any health insurance coverage, and another 30.8% had insufficient coverage (Commonwealth Fund)
 - Lack of coverage is strongly associated with lack of access or affordability of health care services (HHS)
 - Even people with coverage can face challenges due to lack of service providers in their areas

Health Care Access and Quality, 2

- Health care services are strongly associated with improved health care outcomes, including reduced risk of substance use disorders
 - Health insurance coverage itself is considered a protective factor against substance use (Arkes & Iguchi), as it can increase the likelihood of receiving screening and preventative services
- Strategies exist to improve access to coverage, and access to providers

Neighborhood and Built Environment

- Issues such high rates of violence, unsafe air or water, and other health and safety risks can all dramatically impact health outcomes
 - Racial/ethnic minorities and people with lower incomes are more likely to live in neighborhoods with such issues (HHS)
- Not all of these issues have been directly linked to substance use risk; though many have been
- Also, in a collaborative public health approach, our partners may be seeking to address some of these issues

Social and Community Context

- Relationships with community members, experiencing discrimination, and interactions with friends, family, and peers can all impact health outcomes (HHS)
- Many relationship-focused strategies exist, as do strategies focused on issues like bullying and discrimination

Prevention Strategies for the South Southwest Region

- **Environmental Strategies**

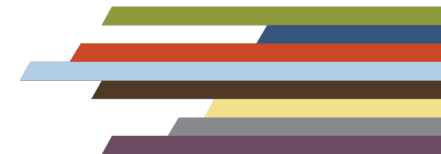
- Efforts aimed at changing or influencing community conditions, standards, institutions, structures, systems and policies
- Change the context (environment) in which substance use and abuse occur

- **Behavioral Health Strategies**

- Seek to change attitudes, perceptions, values, and beliefs to discourage and prevent substance use/misuse
- Recognize that mental health issues and alcohol and other drug problems often go hand in hand

- **Components include**

- Education
- Policy
- Training



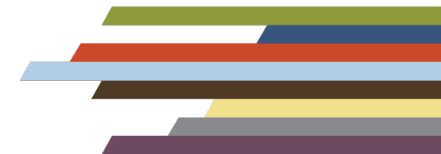
Additional Resources

- Evidenced-Based Practices Resource Center
<https://www.samhsa.gov/resource-search/ebp>
 - Contains a collection of scientifically-based resources for a broad range of audiences
- Blueprints Program Registry
<https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>
 - Comprehensive registry of scientifically proven and scalable interventions that prevent or reduce the likelihood of antisocial behavior and promote a healthy course of youth development and adult maturity
- Athena Forum
<https://www.theathenaforum.org/EBP>
 - Direct service and environmental prevention strategies resource guide

Conclusion

- COVID-19 had many profound effects on society, which we still need to learn more about
- Prior to COVID, many trends were seen, but the two largest may be:
 - Steadily high alcohol use and related death rates
 - Increasing fatal methamphetamine overdoses
- Important to understand all the different influences that can create or expand trends
- Need to develop comprehensive strategies

Final Questions



Connect with Us!

PTTCNETWORK.ORG



Join our mailing list!



Watch the website for future events!



Download the resources from the website!



Use, provide feedback, share and promote the toolkit!



Check out the PTTC Pandemic Response Resources page



Ask us! Access TA from the PTTC

Thank you

If you have questions or comments, contact:

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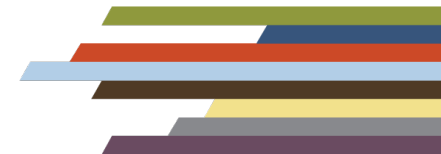
Your Feedback

Please take the time to complete the brief feedback form.

<https://ttc-gpra.org/P?s=582633>



Your input is appreciated!



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