How often do Washington young adults use alcohol?
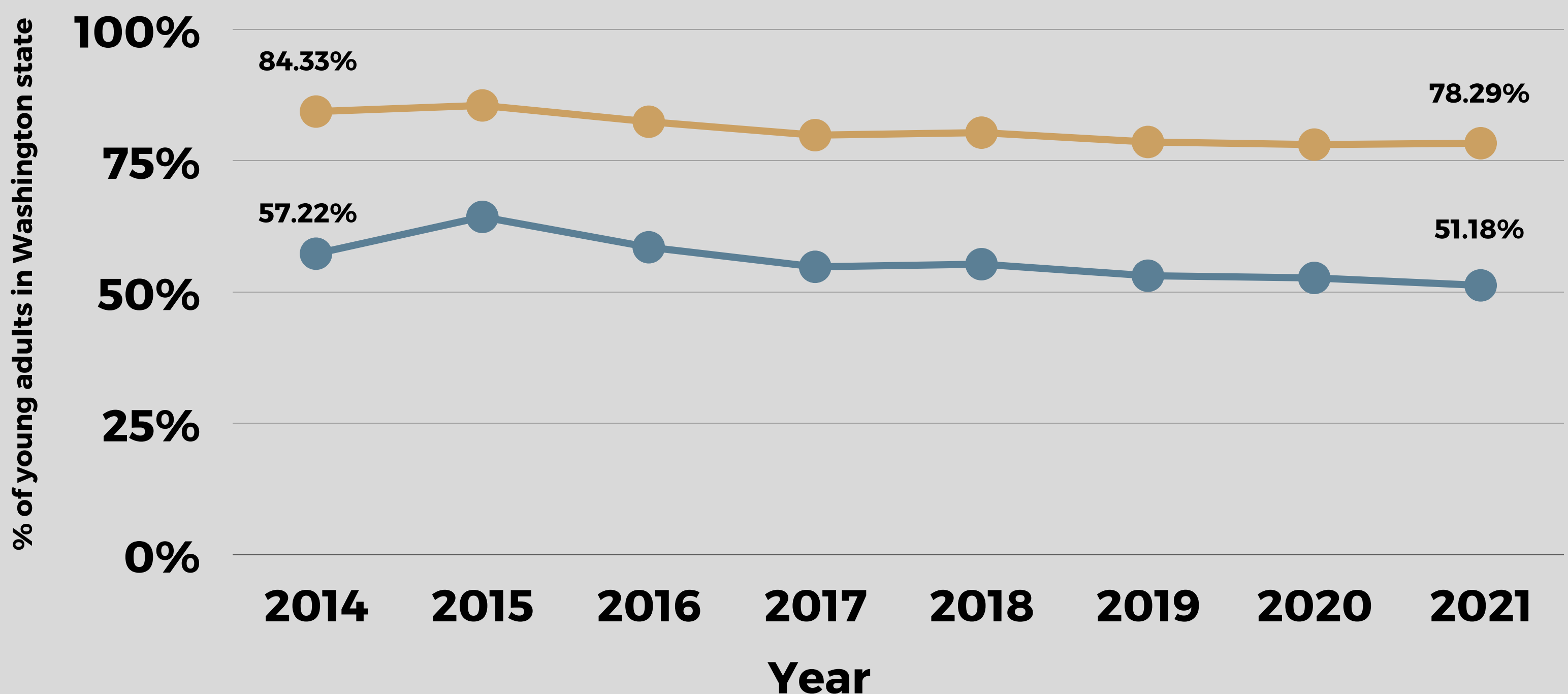
BACKGROUND

In Spring 2014, the **Washington Young Adult Health Survey** (WYAHS) began collecting data from thousands of Washington young adults (ages 18-25), and have every year since then (more info **here**). In 2022, researchers from the University of Washington analyzed 8 years of data from 2014-2021 to see how alcohol use has changed over time. **Alcohol is one of the most commonly used substances amongst young adults.**

RESULTS

Washington State | 18-25 years old

● At least monthly alcohol use   ● At least yearly alcohol use

% of young adults in Washington state

- 84.33% → 78.29% (At least yearly alcohol use)
- 57.22% → 51.18% (At least monthly alcohol use)

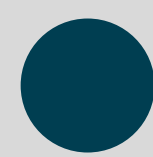Year: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

To ensure data were as representative as possible, post-stratification weights were applied to data, and unweighted findings were similar to weighted findings. The **Washington Young Adult Health Survey** is funded by the **Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery** in **Washington's Health Care Authority.**

White, H. R., Kilmer, J. R., Fossos-Wong, N., Hayes, K., Sokolovsky, A. W., & Jackson, K. M. (2019). Simultaneous Alcohol and Marijuana Use Among College Students: Patterns, Correlates, Norms, and Consequences. Alcoholism. **https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.14072**
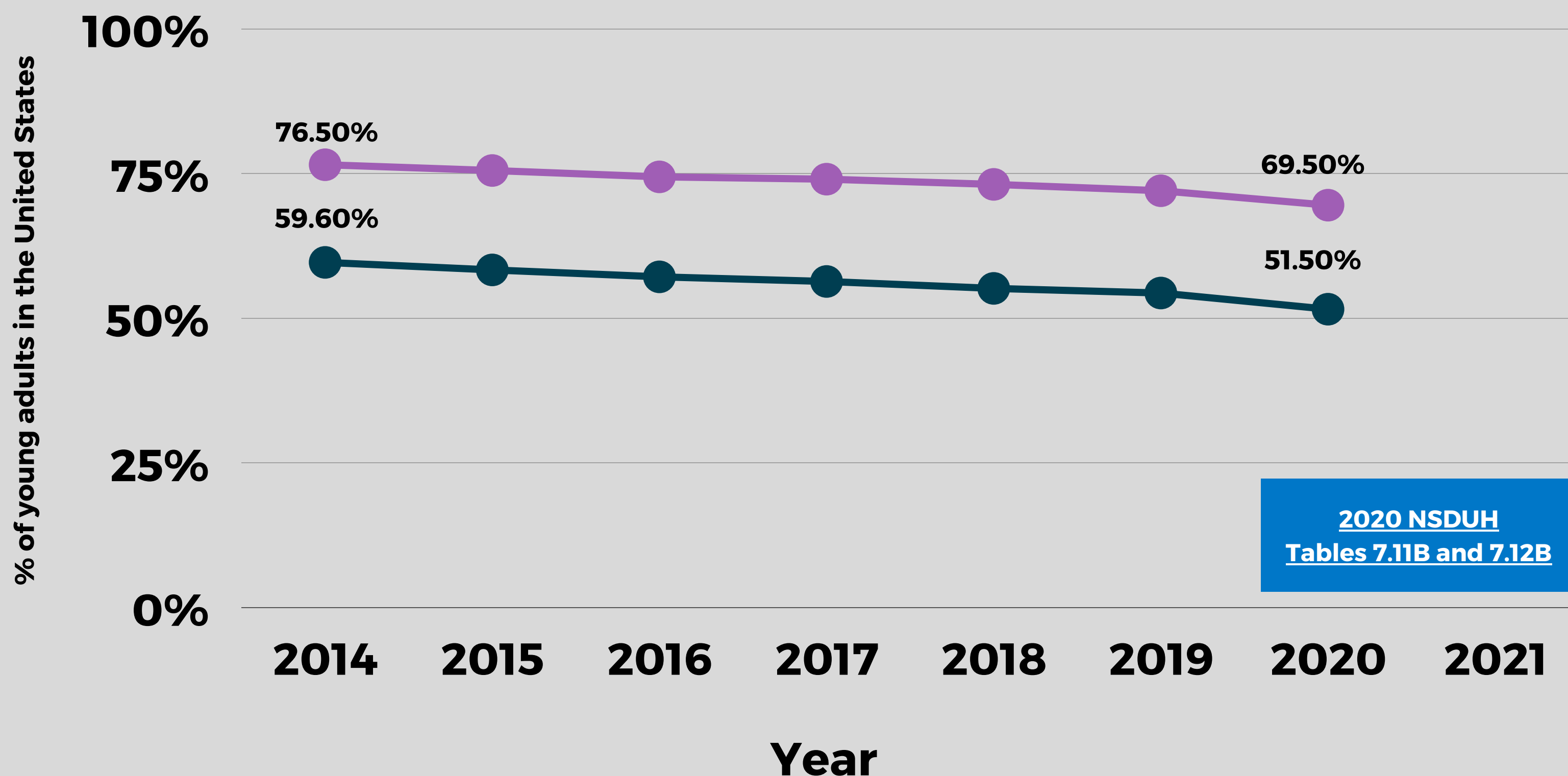
United States | 18-25 years old

● At least monthly alcohol use   ● At least yearly alcohol use

% of young adults in the United States

- 100%
- 76.50%
- 75%
- 59.60%
- 69.50%
- 51.50%
- 50%
- 25%
- 0%

2020 NSDUH Tables 7.11B and 7.12B

2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

Year

MAIN POINTS

Washington is seeing decreasing trends in both yearly and monthly alcohol use. Compared to the United States, Washington has higher rates of at least yearly alcohol use, but has similar rates of at least monthly use.

Even though alcohol use has gone down, other data from WYAHS shows that the number of those who use both alcohol and cannabis ("co-occuring use") has increased by about 5% in Washington since 2014. That means those who use one of these substances may also use the other. Young adult cannabis use is increasing in states with legalized non-medical/retail cannabis **(White et al., 2019).**

HOW CAN I USE THIS INFORMATION?

YOUNG ADULTS

Alcohol and cannabis affects every person differently, and young adults should consult with their doctor to better understand their health and substance use. Young adults should educate themselves on the **effects** of alcohol and cannabis use to make informed decisions about their health.