

Comparison of Substance Use Trends and Consequences among Virgin Islands Public High School Students and their US Mainland Counterparts:

Results of the Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

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FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

PIRE

Translating Science into Practice

Introduction

- **Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Survey (VI YRBS)**
 - Funded by US CSAP State Incentive Grant to VI
 - Administered by VI Div. of Mental Health, Alcoholism & Drug Dep. Services and Dept. of Education

Introduction

- **Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Survey (VI YRBS)**
 - Administered in May 2006 and May 2007 to > 60% of students in all 4 VI public high schools
 - 112 Likert scale items from CDCP YRBS and CSAP CTC Survey

Introduction

- ATOD use
- Violent behavior
- Sexual behavior
- Risk and protective factors
 - Community, School, Family, Individual

Methods

- Sample weights (grade, race, gender) applied at individual student level
- Dichotomized most items to yes/no
- Weighted proportions allowed generalization to population
- Applied Fleiss confidence intervals to proportions

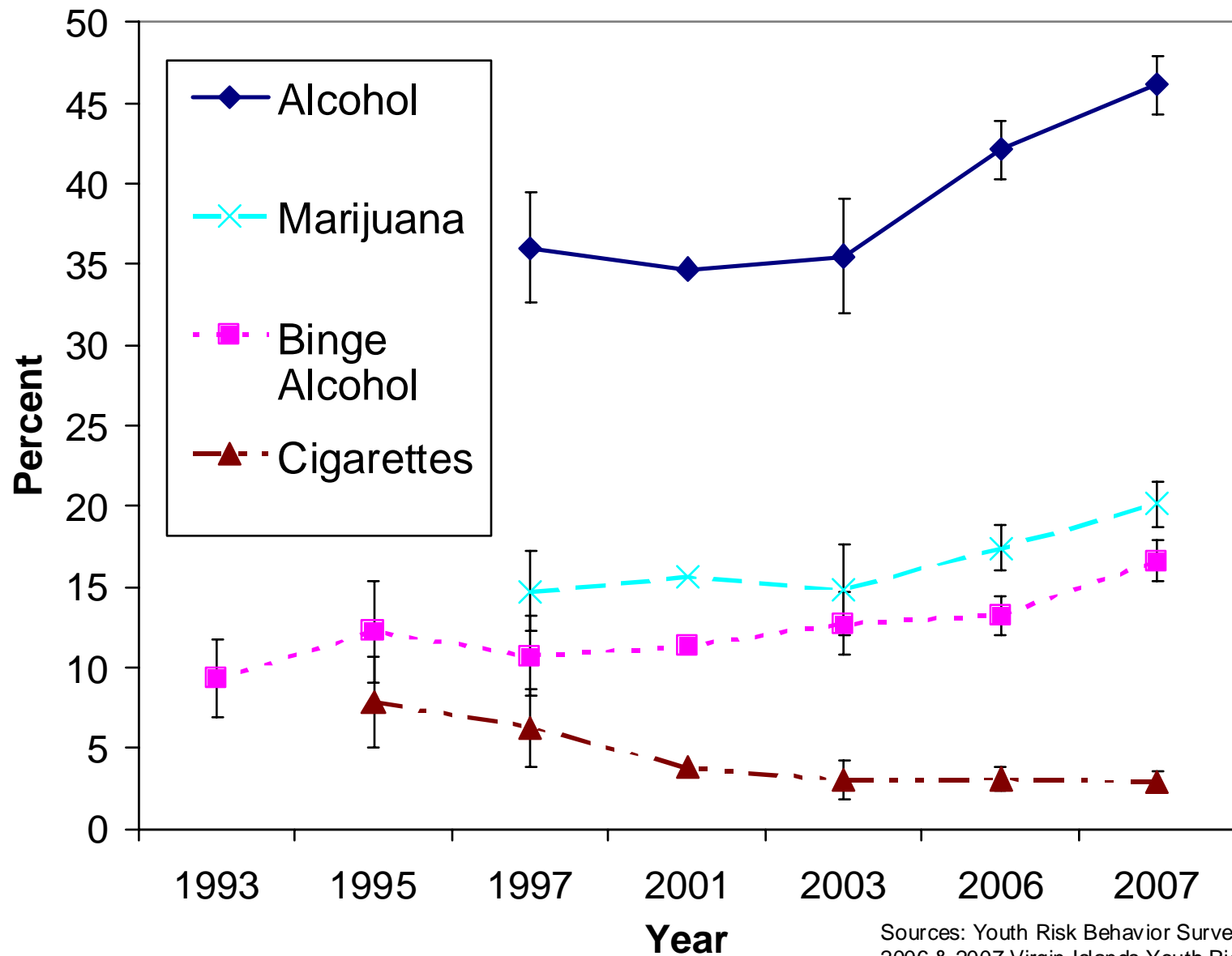
Methods

- Subgroup analyses by gender, grade, and race (although 87% of VI high school students are African-American)
- Comparison groups
 - US mainland high school students
 - US African-American high school students

Results

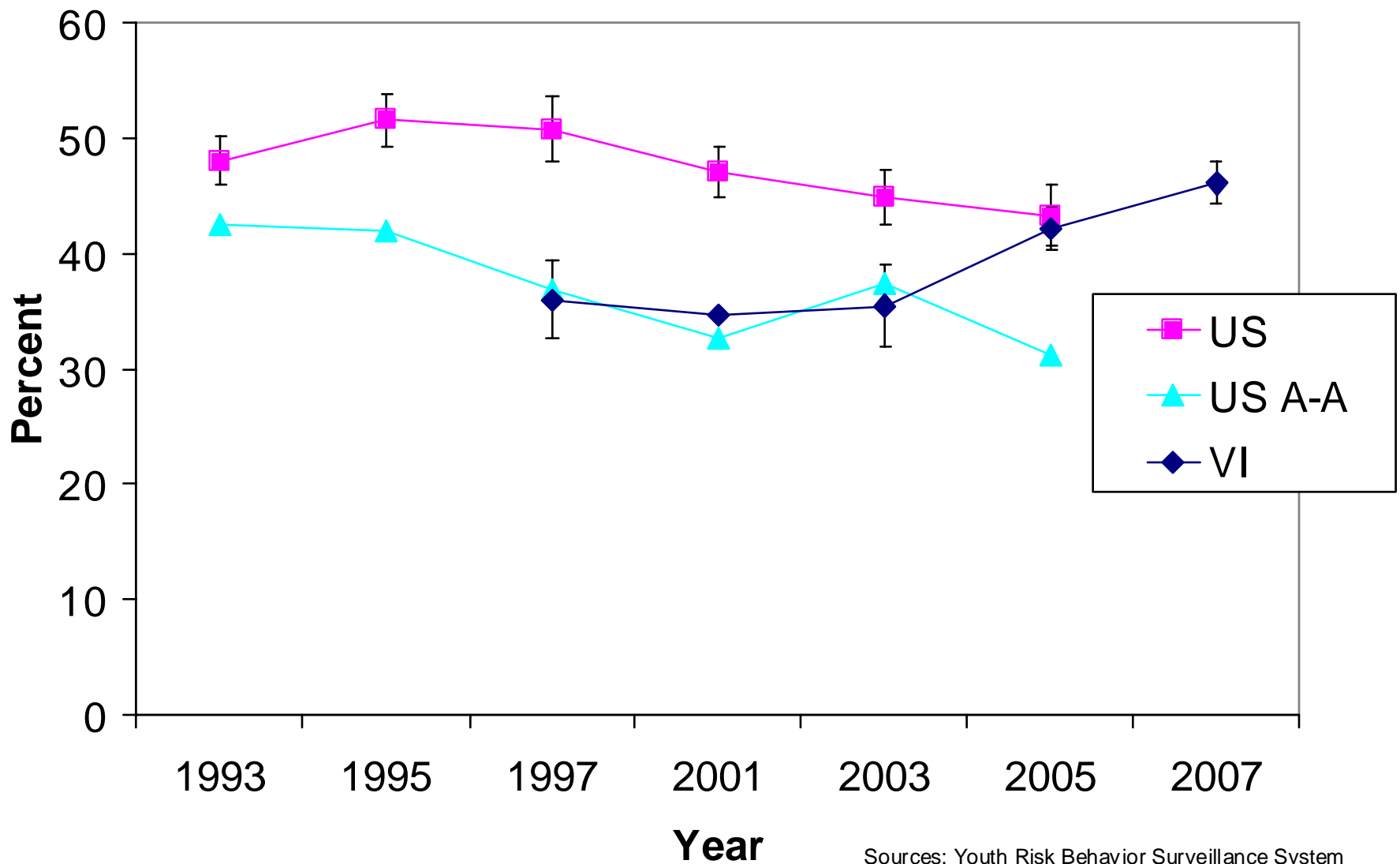
- n = 2,962 (2006) and 3,398 (2007)
- Estimated response rates 59% & 68%
- Sample demographics similar to prior CDC-sponsored surveys in VI and representative of VI public high school population

Past 30-Day Substance Use



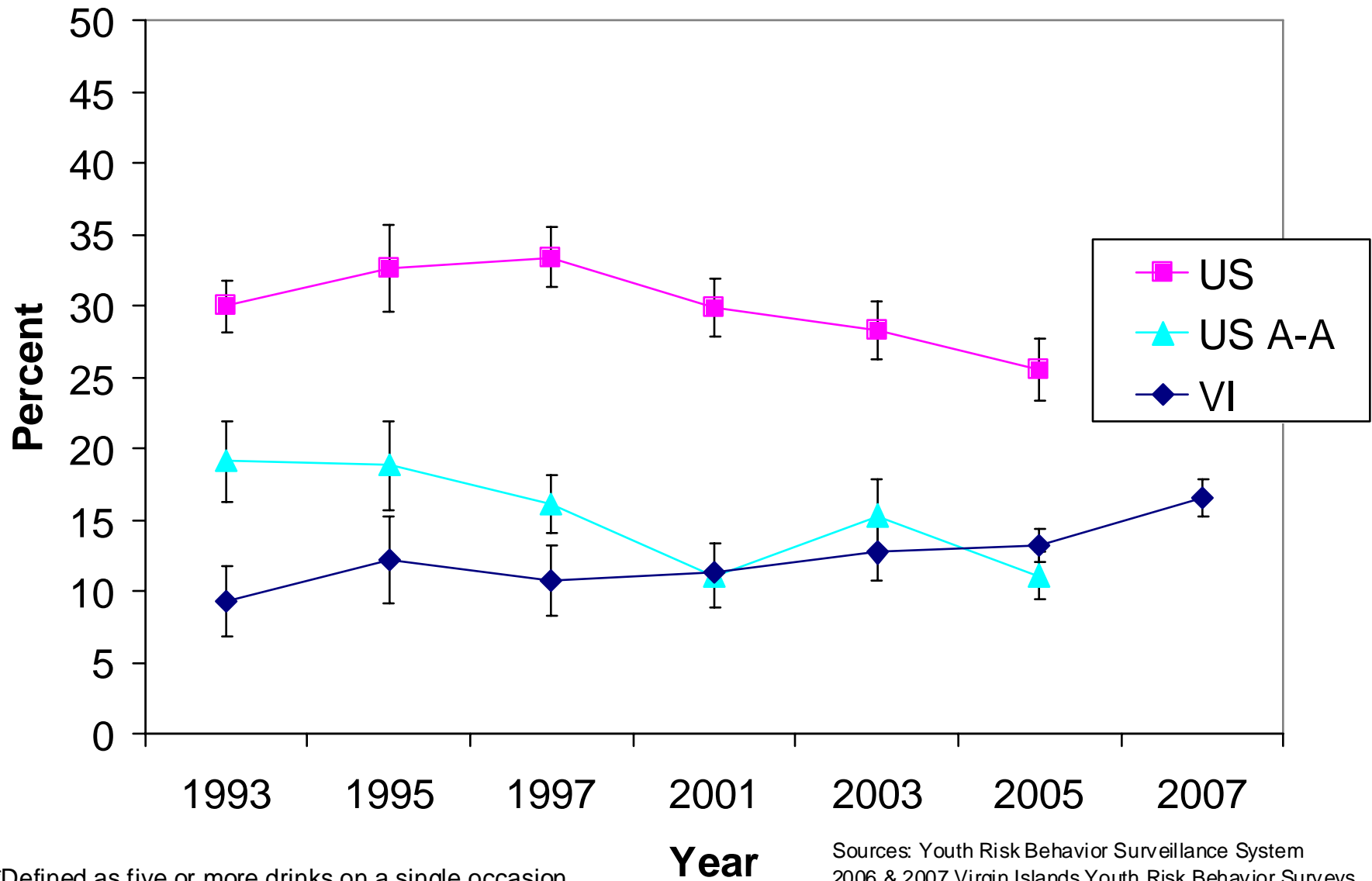
Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
2006 & 2007 Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

Past 30-Day Alcohol Use



Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
2006 & 2007 Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

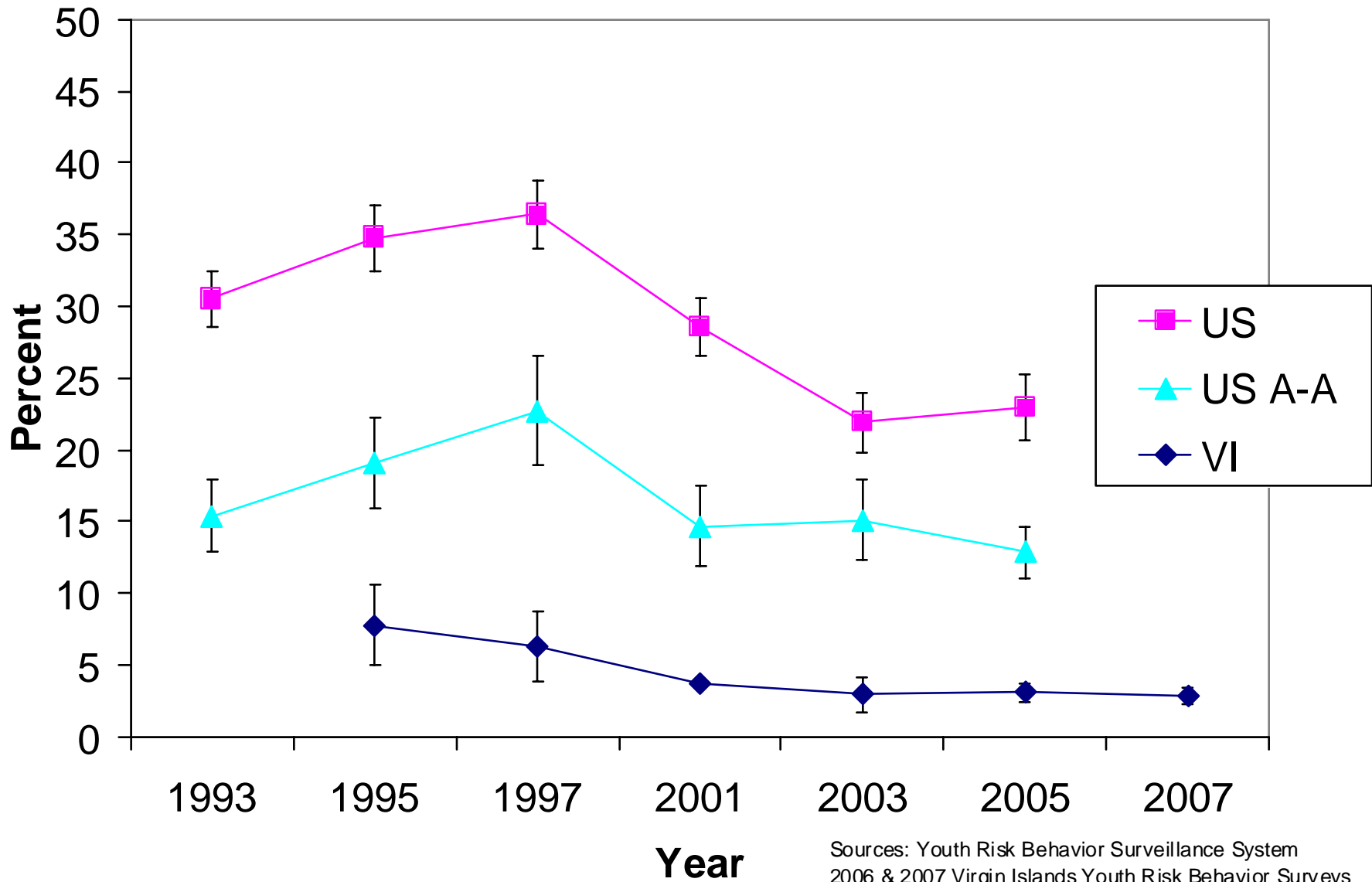
Binge* Alcohol Use



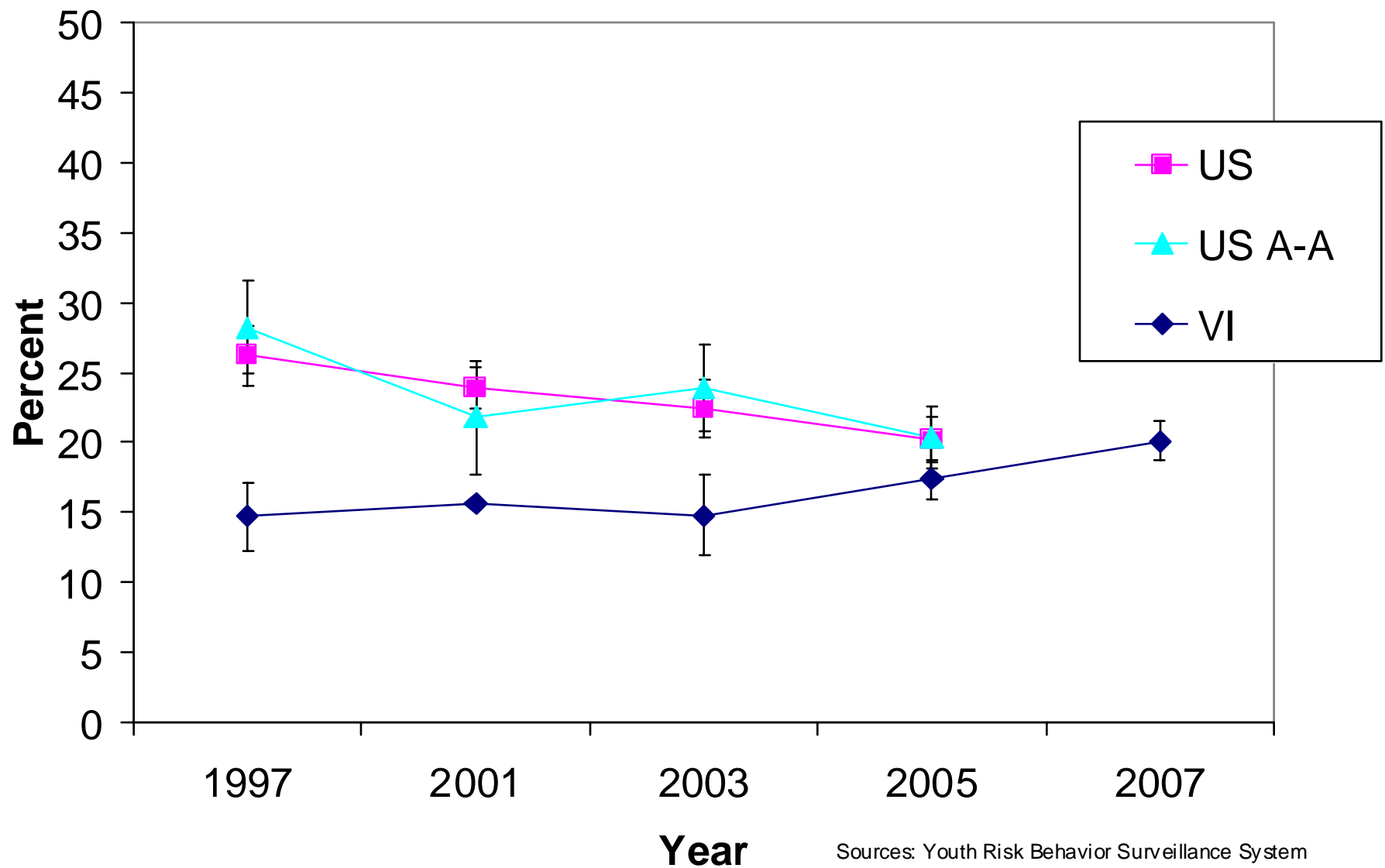
*Defined as five or more drinks on a single occasion

Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
2006 & 2007 Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

Past 30-Day Cigarette Use



Past 30-Day Marijuana Use

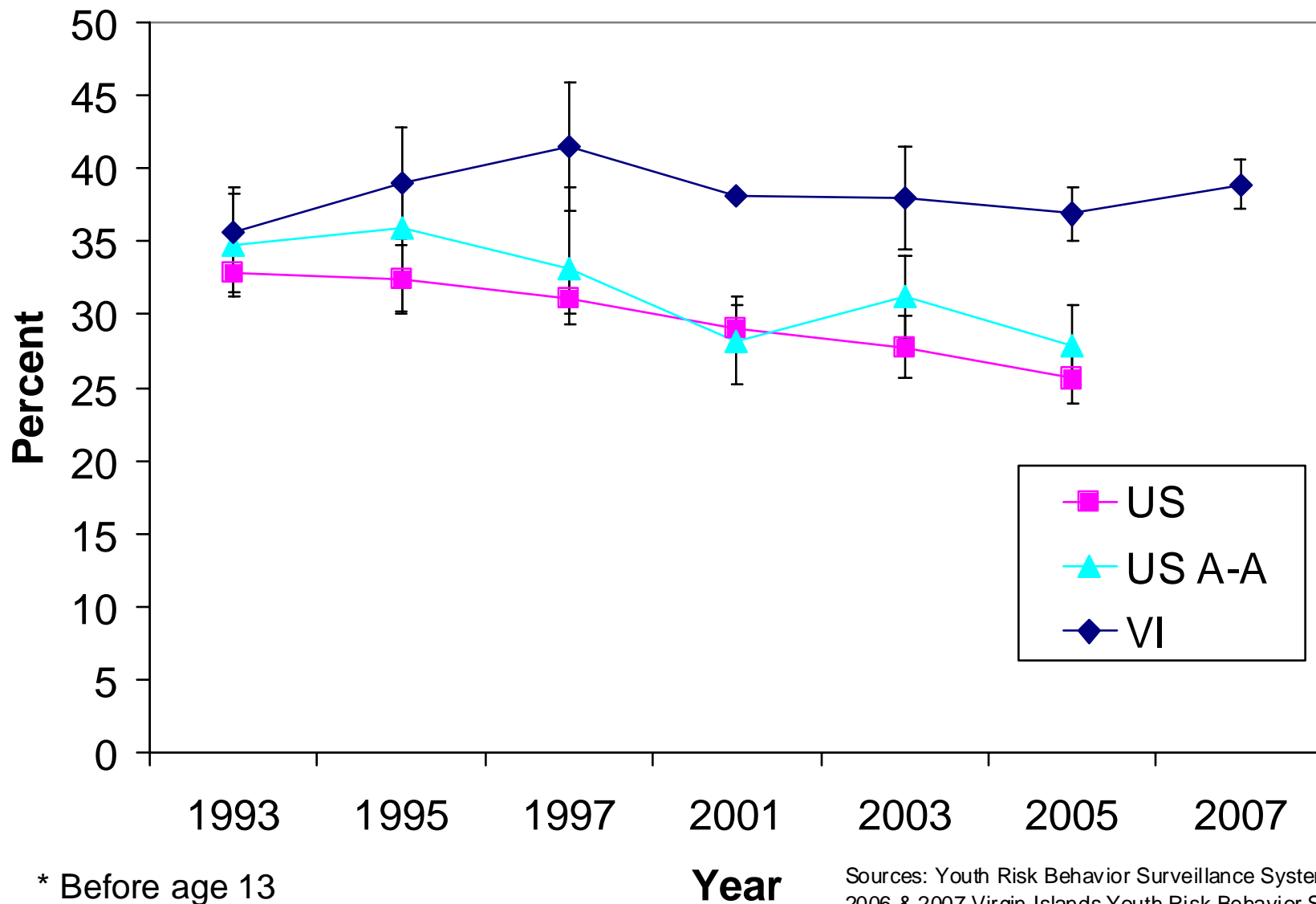


Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
2006 & 2007 Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

Results

- Past-30 day substance use trends
 - US & US A-A declining use rates
 - VI increases in alcohol, binge alcohol, and marijuana use rates
 - VI alcohol use trends similar to US A-A trends, unlike US trends
 - VI marijuana use rates rising; US & US A-A rates similar & declining

Early-Onset* Alcohol Use

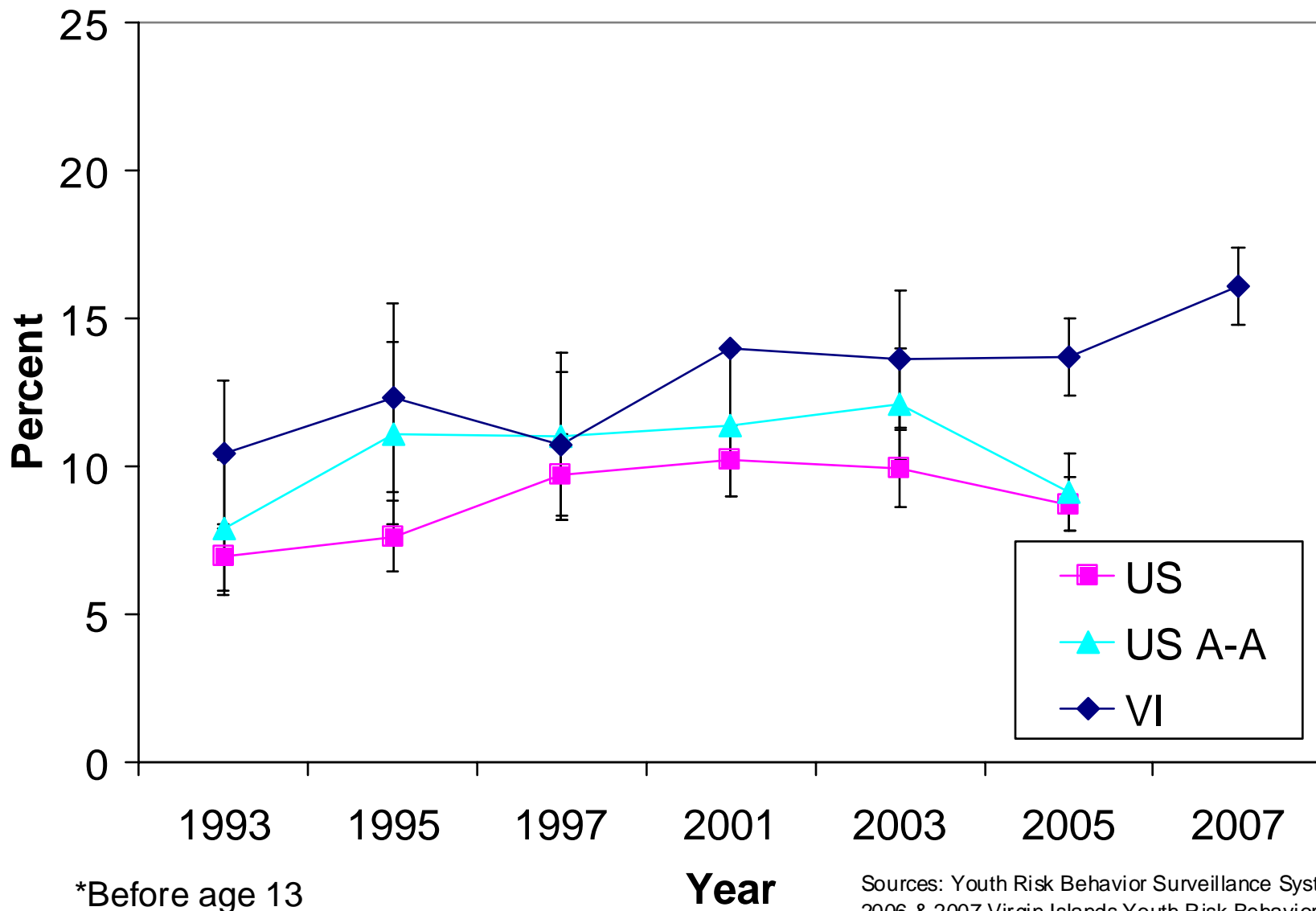


* Before age 13

Year

Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
2006 & 2007 Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

Early-Onset* Marijuana Use



*Before age 13

Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
2006 & 2007 Virgin Islands Youth Risk Behavior Surveys

Results

- VI youth initiate alcohol and marijuana use earlier compared to US youths
 - Historically, early onset use has *not* been reflected in higher rates of current or risky use, compared to US youths
 - This trend is changing, with VI & US rates now becoming equivalent

Results

- High risk subgroups
 - Alcohol
 - Males, 11th & 12th graders, Hispanics
 - Marijuana
 - Males, 10th & 11th graders

Discussion

- Consequences of youth use
 - Violence, suspension, dropout
24% annual suspension rate (2007 YRBS)
7.7% dropout rate among highest in nation (NCES 2003-2004)
 - High rates of heavy alcohol use in VI adults (BRFS 2005)

Discussion

- Consequences of youth use
 - Homicides, fire-arm deaths in young adults (18-34 years) 5 to 7 times higher in VI vs. US
 - Very high HIV/AIDS case rates
 - Higher alcohol- and drug-related mortality (all ages) in VI vs. US

Conclusions

- While the 2006 & 2007 VI surveys did not detect especially high use rates
 - Past 30-day use rates appear to be rising rapidly from 2003
 - Early-onset use confirmed
 - High suspension and dropout
 - High rates of substance use consequences in adulthood