

An aerial photograph of New York City, showing the dense urban landscape of Manhattan and the surrounding areas. The Hudson River is visible on the right, and the East River is on the left. The city's skyline, including the Empire State Building, is prominent in the background. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text "YOUTH PHOTOVOICE" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters.

# YOUTH PHOTOVOICE



# ABOUT THE PROJECT



In July 2022, the Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) and the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program at Cambridge Community Television (CCTV) collaborated on a photography project.

The goal was to reflect on the strengths and concerns related to teen substance misuse in Cambridge. These pictures show youth perspectives on this issue and will be used to inform future substance misuse prevention initiatives for youth.



# HOW IT WORKED

The Cambridge Public Health Department's Youth Wellness Coordinator spent time with the teens and gave them prompts to guide their photography choices.

The students considered:

01

messages they receive about substance use in daily life: billboards? storefronts? TV ads? coupons? social media posts?

02

places in Cambridge that came to mind when they thought about young people and substances (alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, etc.) -and why

03

Cambridge sites they like to visit - and why

04

places that they'd like to improve -and why





# THE CHALLENGE



**Show us through photography how you relate your thoughts about these questions to the presence of substances in Cambridge.**

Through their edited photos and captions, they present their ideas to the Cambridge community.





## Bennett

“School signs”

In schools, students created flyers and information to educate others on the effects of smoking.



## Bennett

*“School bathroom – a not so safe place”*

In my school, students are known to smoke or vape in secret. Although I've never seen it, I've heard from others how this place has become a sort of hangout for smokers, but for me it is now an uncomfortable place.







## Bennett

*"A New Era in Cannabis"*

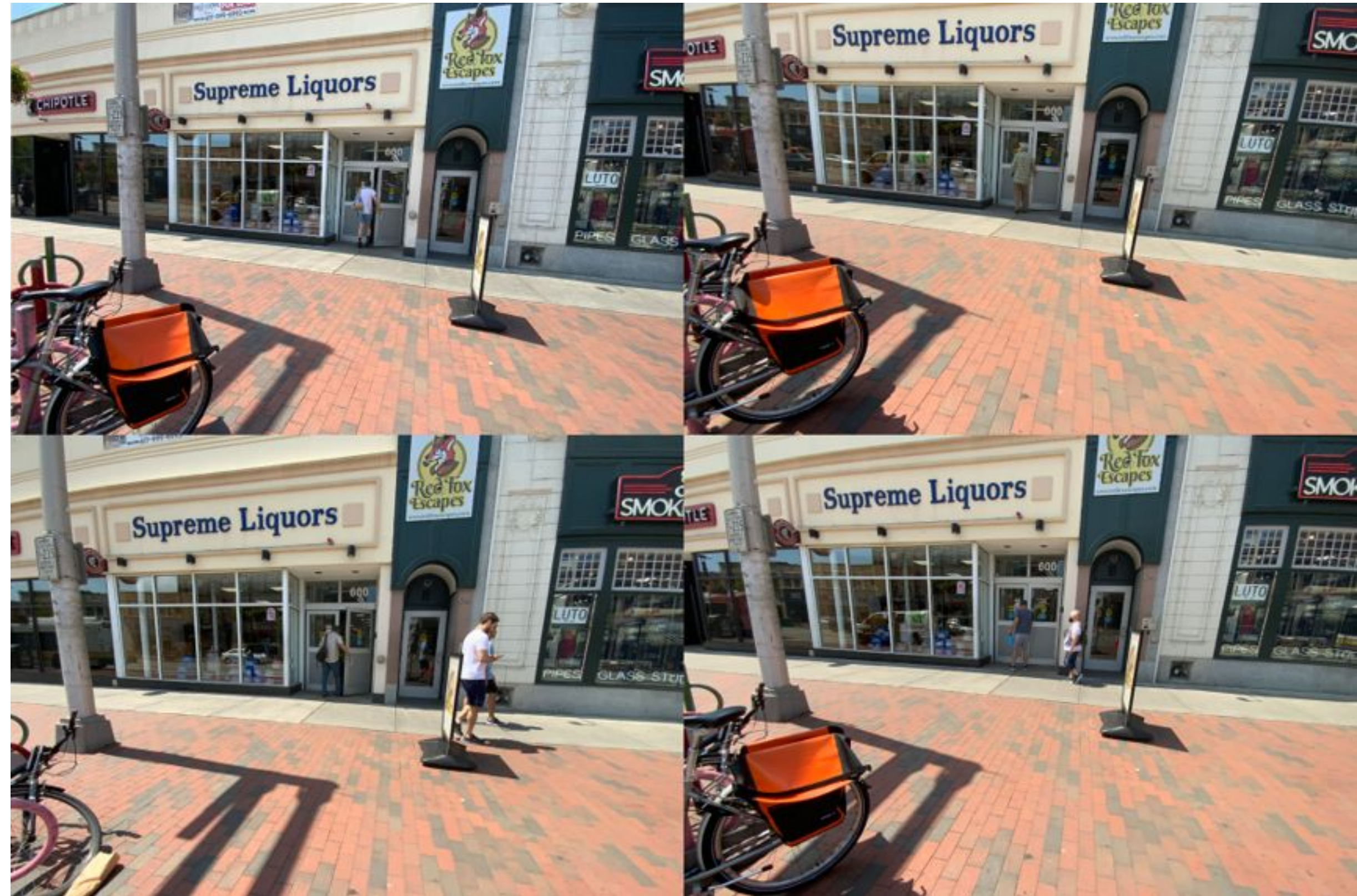
Cannabis ads are in a lot of the roads my parents take around the city and highway. In many ways they are the new normal.



## Senai

“LQ”

A compilation of the pictures I took of people entering “Supreme Liquors”. A famous and heavy foot traffic liquor store in Cambridge, MA.







## Senai

*“Mr. Giant Face”*

It’s a bit of an exaggeration, but imagine if you drank a lot of alcohol and then sat down in a chair, looked up. And saw a giant face in the sky.





## Angelina Santiago

*“The Sidewalk”*

This is a photo of a tipped over bottle of alcohol on the sidewalk. It is near my house and a park, so many children and young teens walk through here. I took a picture of this because this bottle could lead to a bad influence of encouraging drinking to youth.



## Angelina Santiago

*“The Field”*

This is a photo of a half buried vodka bottle. I found it in a field where many children and young youth like to play and hang out.







## Angelina Santiago

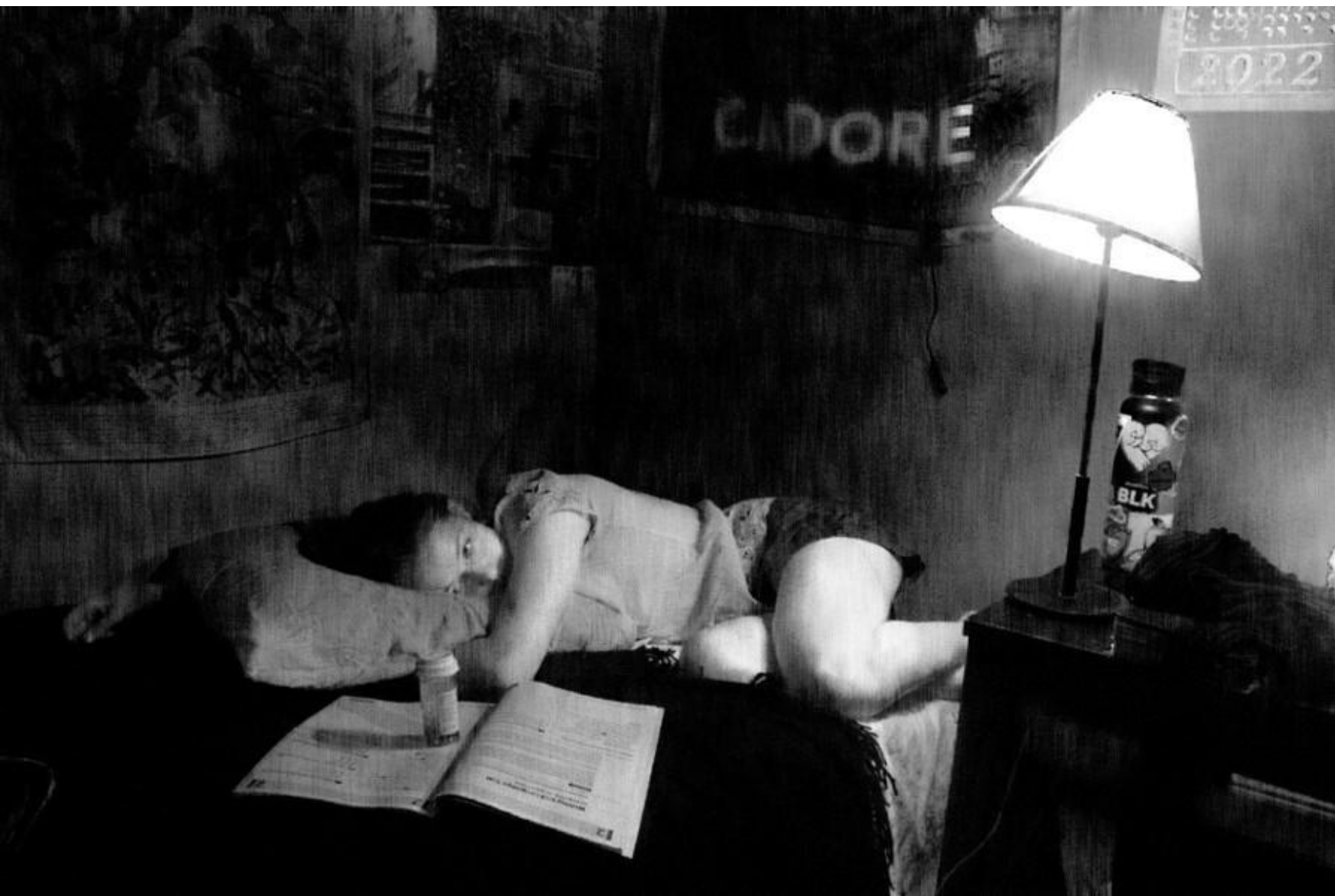
*“The Park”*

This photo is of empty alcohol bottles next to a school park. They were laying in grass and leaves. I took this photo because these bottles can not only encourage drinking, but it also encourages littering.



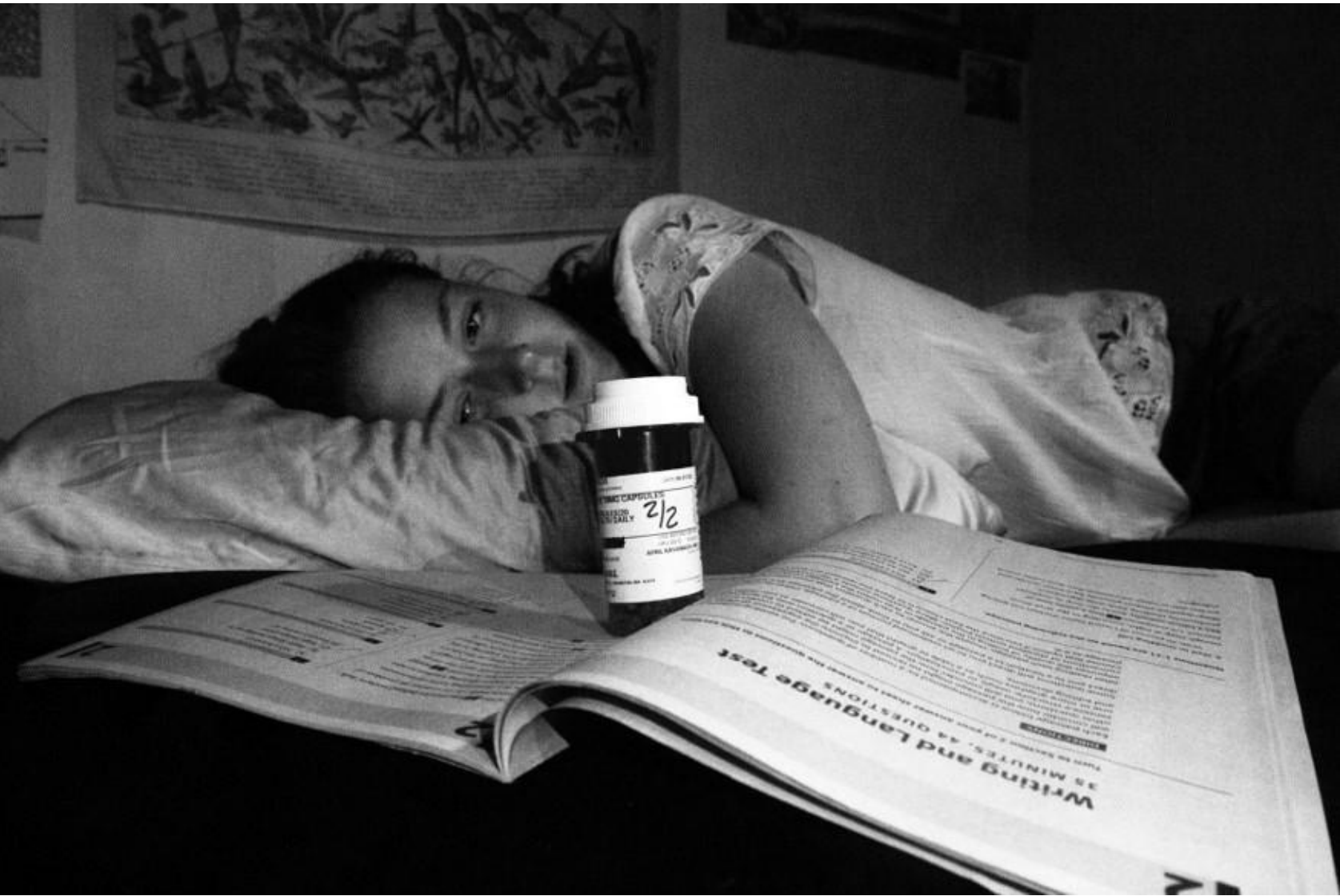
# Julietta Littin

“Prescribed pills and the SAT”



Teenage drug addiction is a problem deeply interconnected with the mental health crisis among teens. It is not a problem particularly caused by teens themselves but by the many systems surrounding them that have failed and prompted them to seek out relief and escape in drugs.

The role the uncontrolled pharmaceutical industry plays in being the main source and provider of substances, and the poor quality of our public healthcare systems are key to the magnitude of the problem that only grows bigger by the day.





## Julieta Littin

*“Fire, shadow, and joint”*

We don't really know what we're doing. We think about it every time we do it. Sometimes we have to get lost in order to feel the ground under our feet again. We need more than a simple “Say no to drugs” to learn control.







## **Julieta Littin**

*“Silhouettes and their clouds”*

They are young, young and living. They’re trying out new things. Trying to figure out what separates doing wrong from doing right, and where the line stands.



## Merron Emanuel

*“Waste Land”*

Charles river, for teen/young adults it’s common to leave nips on the ground. This is titled Waste Land, because littering has become a problem in Cambridge, and people view the ground as a waste land.







## Merron Emanuel

*"Drinks"*

I took this photo in Target where you can find a lot of beverages, including alcohol. Amongst teens it's common to mix these drinks, but to also drink them separately.





## Miel

*“Lost in Addiction”*

In this picture you can see a teenager who stopped by the sidewalk to stare at a smoke shop. But what do you think he's going to do? Just walk past it like it's nothing or go in and get a smoke even though he's underaged. In today's world there are kids who are using drugs, smoking cigarettes/vapes and drinking alcohol with and without parental control. Many reasons for this can be trauma, depression and anxiety. They can use those things to stimulate their brain and make them feel safe and calm.

## Miel

*“Sidewalking”*

In this picture you can see the teenager walking down the sidewalk of a park and holding a cigarette. He still has his hoodie on and looking down at the ground. In a way a lot of people can relate to this (well almost). Because whenever someone is depressed or lost they can lose interest in what they love the most and replace it with something addictive like vapes, alcohol, etc.







**Paul Dottin-Campbell**  
*“Air”*

**Paul Dottin-Campbell**  
*“The Park”*





## Justine Nankabirwa

*“Put it out”*

This thing is where people put their cigarettes after they're done and the black parts are where people put out their cigarettes. I took a picture of this because I've always been curious about it since I was a kid. I honestly think it's kinda cool and convenient but lung cancer isn't.







## Justine Nankabirwa

*“School environment”*

I took this photo because this place is surrounded by a lot of kids when the school year starts. It's right next to the CVS everyone goes to. I took a picture of this place because I actually wanted to go in because it was really colorful but my friend reminded me it was a smoke shop.





## Safiwah

*“Dirty Bottle Pit”*

Nature is a nice place to relax in and to explore around but walking around i see empty cans and trash. Walking around the trash was this pretty place in the wild with a big stone with a beer bottle and a Mcdonald's bottle.



## **Safiwah**

*“Beer Storage”*

Walking through the spray painted parts of Central inside those tunnels are little gates that show some light. The light shines to the beer bottles and cans that have been squished inside the gate.

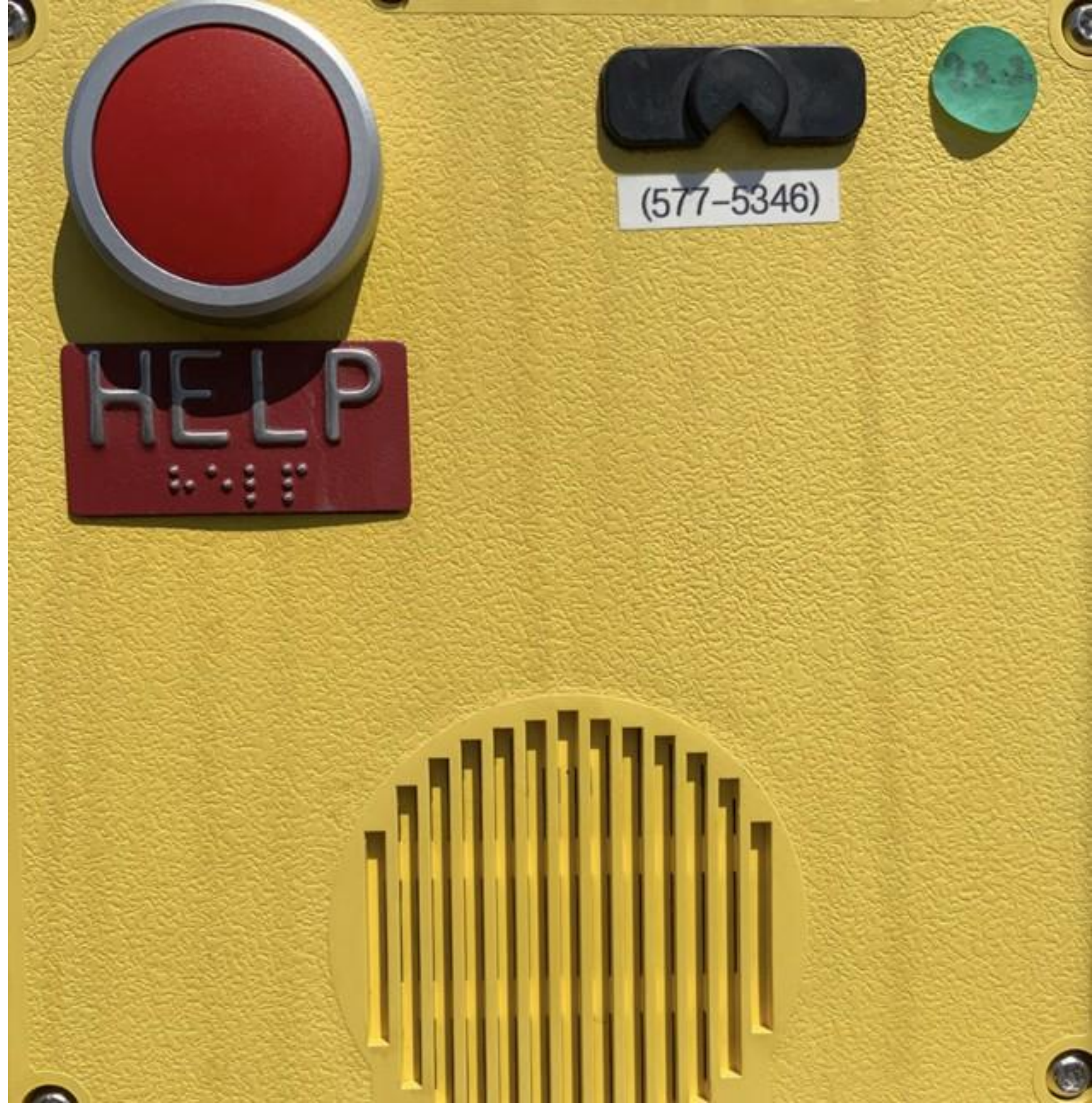




## Rehaan

“Help sign”

This is a photo of a “help” sign with a red button to press if help is needed. This shows how help for addiction is accessible in Cambridge through the available resources from schools and various health centers. But, maybe people who are struggling with addiction don’t use those resources







**Rehaan**  
*“Beer Can”*