

SPORT MARIJUANA AWARENESS



Youth Program

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SPORT Marijuana Awareness

YOUTH PROGRAM

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SPORT

Marijuana Awareness

Section 1:

Introductory Letter

Dear Prevention and Health Professional;

Welcome to **SPORT Marijuana Awareness!**

SPORT Marijuana Awareness is an easy to use program for professionals who want to prevent or reduce marijuana use by promoting awareness of marijuana risks and the fitness, health and positive self-image of youth. **SPORT Marijuana Awareness** is an evidence-informed intervention founded on the SPORT Prevention Plus Wellness program, which is listed in the federal government's

SPORT Marijuana Awareness is an easy to use program...to prevent or reduce marijuana use by promoting awareness of marijuana risks and the fitness, health and positive self-image of youth.

National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

SPORT Marijuana Awareness is a practical, single-lesson program that illustrates how marijuana is harmful to those things important to youth, and corrects common myths, misconceptions and norms about its use. And it also aims to increase protective wellness behaviors like physical activity, sports participation, healthy eating, getting adequate sleep, and practicing stress control that enhances future self-image.

SPORT Marijuana Awareness targets naturally motivating positive behaviors and images to increase personal goal setting to improve multiple health habits

and positive self-identity. **SPORT Marijuana Awareness** is highly flexible and can be used as a stand-alone program, or as an add-on component to other prevention, health or intervention programs. It can also be repeated over time, providing a sustained intervention.

The **SPORT Marijuana Awareness Program** was designed to help youth look and feel more active, fit and healthy by having them:

1. Identify wellness enhancing behaviors, along with marijuana risks that interfere with reaching

wellness behavior goals and positive self-images;

2. Become aware of positive images of youth engaged in wellness promoting behaviors, and desired images of themselves in the future; and
3. Make a commitment to set and monitor multiple goals to increase wellness promoting behaviors, while avoiding wellness harming marijuana use.

Your **SPORT Marijuana Awareness Manual** contains the following materials:

- Step-by-step implementation directions and tips;

- Brief self-administered youth health and fitness behavior screen;
- Tailored scripts for providing an individual youth or optional group lesson;
- Set of colorful slides to present during the lesson;
- Goal plan for motivating multiple behavior change;
- Group exercise to increase classroom interaction during the group lesson;
- Feedback survey for participating youth to evaluate the quality of the lesson;
- Implementer's chart to assess the quality of the lesson presentation;
- Fidelity checklist to increase implementation reliability; and

- Lists of common marijuana myths and helpful evidence-informed resources to learn more about marijuana misconceptions and risks posed to youth and parents.

Your program also includes phone and email program support, and a digital download of reproducible materials.

Thank you for choosing **SPORT Marijuana Awareness**. We know you will find this program an easy and enjoyable way to promote knowledge of marijuana risks and myths, increase positive behaviors and self-image, and prevent and reduce marijuana use among your youth.

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Marijuana Awareness

Section 2:

Directions for Implementation

Directions for Implementing **SPORT** *Marijuana Awareness*

SPORT *Marijuana Awareness* is implemented using these easy to follow procedures:

- 1) **Pre-Implementation:** Select at least two individuals per site to serve as implementers/instructors. It is highly recommended these persons receive online or on-site training to be certified to implement **SPORT Marijuana Awareness**. Appropriate models for providing prevention and health messages to youth could include teachers, coaches, nurses, counselors, peer leaders, adult volunteers, or parents from your school, youth organization, clinic or church.
- 2) Practice implementing the screening survey, program scripts (individual and group versions), and goal plan three or more times with each other. Practice is critical to becoming familiar and comfortable with the format and content prior to implementing with youth.
- 3) **Step #1: Screening:** Implement the screening survey in a private setting. Read the directions to the screening survey aloud and ask the youth to answer the questions about their health and fitness habits honestly. Screens can be implemented in a couple of minutes to youth individually or in a group.
- 4) **Step #2: Feedback:** Select the youth's screen responses and then "read" the brief individual lesson script to the youth. During the lesson the instructor should maintain good eye contact with the youth, avoid ad libbing, and use an upbeat and varied voice while following the script.
- 5) Show the colorful slides of youth modeling positive health and fitness behaviors, and reinforcing key image terms during the lesson.
- 6) **Step #3: Goal Setting:** Read the goal plan aloud and help the youth complete it. Then you and the youth sign and date the contract. Encourage each youth to complete the goal plan for their benefit, but don't try to force them. Next, ask the youth to post their plan at home as a reminder to monitor their behavior goals. You can keep a copy of each youth's goal plan for a future follow-up session.
- 7) Use the optional group lesson script if you'd rather implement **SPORT Marijuana Awareness** to a group of youth. After completing the screening, group script and goal

setting, you may wish to use the optional group exercise to increase interaction and discussion among the youth.

- 8) **Step #4: Follow-up:** Re-administer ***SPORT Marijuana Awareness*** in individual or group format every 6-12 months as a booster program to inoculate youth against marijuana risks. In addition, the goal plan can be re-implemented weekly or monthly for more frequent contact. Use ***SPORT Prevention Plus Wellness, SPORT 2*** or ***In God's Image (IGI)*** as follow up programs to increase physical, mental and even spiritual health of youth.

- 9) **Evaluation Data Collection:** Ask youth to complete the feedback survey immediately after implementing the lesson. We provide an Excel spreadsheet to conduct an analysis of immediate pre-posttest changes on behavioral willingness measures found in the screening and feedback surveys. Each instructor should complete an implementer's chart to assess the quality of program implementation at the conclusion of the lesson. In addition, use the fidelity checklist to ensure the program is being implemented reliably.

- 10) **Marijuana Myths and Resources:** If you'd like, discuss the list of common marijuana myths with your youth, and provide youth and parents with the list of online resources to help them learn more evidence-informed facts about marijuana misconceptions and risks, especially for youth.

Tips for Implementing Prevention Plus Wellness Programs

Welcome to the quickly growing number of health, education and recovery professionals throughout the US using Prevention Plus Wellness programs, campaigns and materials. Our one-of-a-kind Prevention Plus Wellness (PPW) programs are designed for youth and adults at all levels of substance use and wellness.

Because of their flexibility, these prevention with wellness programs are being implemented in a wide variety of settings and situations, including during school, after school, clinics, churches, youth

Participants and providers love the inclusion of fitness and wellness with prevention and recovery, the focus on positive images and behaviors, learning how substance use health promoting behaviors are associated, use of multiple behavior goal setting to enhance positive development, and the sustainability of our programs over time.

organizations, behavioral and mental health agencies, sports and recreation activities, communities, family and youth services, ATOD counsels and coalitions, colleges and universities, recovery and treatment centers, and many others. Participants and providers love the inclusion of fitness and wellness with prevention and recovery, the focus on

positive images and behaviors, learning how substance use and health promoting behaviors are associated, use of multiple behavior goal setting to enhance positive development, and the sustainability of our programs over time.

Even after purchasing your program materials, we are here to help you have a successful experience implementing and evaluating your PPW programs. Here are a few tips to ensure you have a smooth and effective implementation experience:

- 1) **Train and practice:** Even though PPW programs are fully scripted, it is important to receive online or onsite training to implement our programs with fidelity. It's also critical to practice both the one-on-one and group lesson protocols before implementing them. We suggest role play practicing implementing the screening survey, one-on-one and/or group lesson protocols with slides, and goal plans at least three times each with another person, or aloud by yourself, prior to implementing them live. Don't forget to fill out an implementer's lesson chart after each practice session to see how well you did on the key implementation criteria.
- 2) **Follow the protocols:** Follow your program script and don't ad lib additional content. We realize some changes may be needed to make the language more natural or tailor the program to your setting and/or participants. Don't forget to read the directions aloud on how to complete the screening survey and

read through the entire goal plan with participants.

- 3) **Evaluate:** Use the evaluation tools included with your program to assess the quality of implementation and immediate outcomes from your PPW program. Implement the feedback sheet to participants immediately after each one-on-one or group lesson, and complete an implementer's chart to track your success in following key implementation practices after each lesson. In addition, use the fidelity checklist to ensure you are implementing your program with the highest quality.
- 4) **Follow-up:** Repeat your PPW program using the one-on-one or group lesson every 6-12 months as a booster inoculation against multiple health risks youth and adults experience. The single-session goal plan may also be re-implemented every week or month as a follow-up strategy. Some PPW programs also include optional follow-up strategies like

parent flyers, parent-youth web-resources, and information sheets.

- 5) **Keep current:** Keep abreast with the improvements and advances we make to PPW programs and learn about our latest programs, campaigns, training and materials by signing-up to receive our newsletter, and checking our website regularly to learn about special offers and new resources: preventionpluswellness.com.

Don't hesitate to contact us by email or phone if you have any questions about or problems with providing or evaluating your PPW program. We are always available to lend you a hand with implementation, evaluation, program customization, and training!

Finally, please let us know about your PPW program successes with your participants, parents and providers. We want to share your success stories with others. With your help, we can improve the "whole health" of every youth and adult in America!

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Section 3:

**Individual Youth Intervention
Materials**

SPORT© Marijuana Awareness
Young Adolescent Version
Health & Fitness Screening

Directions: The purpose of this survey is to determine what you are thinking and doing about your health. Your answers will be kept very secret. **DO NOT PLACE YOUR NAME ON THIS FORM.** The code number on the top of this page will allow us to keep your name secret. We want to know what you really think, so please answer all questions honestly. Thank you.

1. What sports or physical activities did you play in during the last year? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ a. Baseball/Softball
- ☐ b. Basketball
- ☐ c. Riding a bicycle
- ☐ d. Dance/Cheerleading/Gymnastics
- ☐ e. Football
- ☐ f. Golfing
- ☐ g. Horseback riding
- ☐ h. Running or walking
- ☐ i. Rollerblading
- ☐ j. Skateboarding
- ☐ k. Soccer
- ☐ l. Surfing
- ☐ m. Swimming
- ☐ n. Track
- ☐ o. Volleyball
- ☐ p. Tennis
- ☐ q. Others (list): _____
- ☐ r. I did not play any sports or get any physical activity last year

2. Do you participate in physical activity for at least 30 minutes four or five times a week? For example, riding a bike, running, walking, swimming, or playing a sport for 30 minutes on most days?

☐ a. Yes

☐ b. No

3. Do you usually eat a healthy breakfast every morning? For example, cereal and low fat milk, whole wheat toast, oatmeal, eggs, yogurt or fruit.

☐ a. Yes

☐ b. No

4. Do you usually sleep eight (8) or more hours each night?

☐ a. Yes

☐ b. No

5. Have you ever used any marijuana? For example, smoked marijuana, ate any food with marijuana in it, or drank a beverage with marijuana in it.

☐ a. Yes

☐ b. No

SPORT© Marijuana Awareness ***Young Adolescent Version*** **Individual Lesson**

Introduction

(Show slide).



Hi, _____. I'm going to talk to you about your health
(Youth's name)

habits and how your actions can make you healthy and keep you healthy.

Screening Survey

Now, please take out your copy of the **SPORT** Health and Fitness Screen. The purpose of this survey is to determine what you are doing about your health. Your answers are private. **DO NOT PLACE YOUR NAME ON THE SURVEY.** We want your answers to be a secret. Please answer all questions honestly. Thank you. (Wait until the survey is completed).

1. Sports/Physical Activity Last Year

Note: Read only ONE response. If youth checks any sport or physical activity in question #1 on screening, read “Yes” response. If youth answers “r” for question 1, read “No” response.

☐ (Yes) Sports/Physical Activity

1. (Show slide).



SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES:

1. Are fun.
2. Keep you fit & healthy.
3. Make you feel good about yourself.
4. Give you lots of energy.
5. Help you do better in school.

I see that you do: _____.
(Name of sports/physical activities)

Sports and physical activities are a great way to get regular exercise! Sports and physical activities are fun, help keep you healthy, help you feel good about yourself, give you lots of energy, and can help you do better in school.

2. (Show slide).



However, marijuana and an active lifestyle don't mix. Using marijuana can hurt your health and affect how well you do in sports and physical activities.

☐ (No) Sports/Physical Activity

1. (Show slide).



SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES:

1. **Are fun.**
2. **Keep you fit & healthy.**
3. **Make you feel good about yourself.**
4. **Give you lots of energy.**
5. **Help you do better in school.**

I see that you do not play sports or participate in any physical activities. You can really improve your health and how well you feel by being more active. Sports and physical activities are fun, keep you healthy, help you feel good about yourself, give you lots of energy, and help you do better in school. Pick a fun physical activity that you like to do, such as riding a bike or walking, and do it today!

2. (Show slide).



**Marijuana can hurt your health and how
you do in school and sports.**

**AN ACTIVE LIFE AND MARIJUANA
DO NOT MIX**

Marijuana use can keep you from having an active life. Using marijuana can hurt your health and affect how well you do in physical activities and in school.

3. Breakfast and Nutrition

Note: Read only ONE response. If youth answers “Yes” to question #3 on screening read “Yes” response. If youth answers “No” to question 3 on screening, read “No” response.

☐ (Yes) Breakfast and Nutrition

1. (Show slide).



It looks like you are eating a healthy breakfast most mornings. Wonderful! Eating a healthy breakfast such as nutritious cereal with low fat milk, whole wheat toast, oatmeal, eggs, or yogurt every day can have a big effect on how you feel, and help you have more energy in school and sports. Also, limiting junk food, and eating lots of healthy foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits is important.

2. (Show slide).



» MARIJUANA USE INCREASES JUNK FOOD EATING AND WEIGHT GAIN.
» IT CAN SAP YOUR ENERGY.
» AND ROB YOUR BODY OF VITAMINS AND MINERALS.

Using marijuana gives you the “munchies” which increases junk food eating. This adds empty calories and leads to weight gain, which can rob your body of vitamins and minerals. Marijuana use can also sap your energy and drive to do well in sports and physical activities.

1. (Show slide).



It looks like you haven't been eating a healthy breakfast most days. Try eating a healthy breakfast such as nutritious cereal with low fat milk, whole wheat toast, oatmeal, eggs, or yogurt every day. Also, limit junk food and eat lots of healthy foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits. By doing so, your body will feel better and you'll see that you have more energy in school and sports.

2. (Show slide).



» MARIJUANA USE INCREASES JUNK FOOD EATING AND WEIGHT GAIN.
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Using marijuana gives you the “munchies” which increases junk food eating. This adds empty calories and leads to weight gain, which can rob your body of vitamins and minerals. Marijuana use can also sap your energy and drive to do well in sports and physical activities.

SPORT© Marijuana Awareness
Young Adolescent Version
Wellness Goal Plan

To be active, healthy, and look and feel good, make sure you:

1. Get 8 or more hours of sleep each night.
2. Eat a healthy breakfast such as nutritious cereal with low fat milk, whole wheat toast, oatmeal, eggs, yogurt or fruit every day, limit junk food, and eat lots of healthy foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits.
3. Do some fun physical activity, such as riding a bike, running, walking, swimming, or playing a sport for at least 30 minutes a day on most days.
4. Most importantly, stay away from all marijuana use!

Keep in mind, being fit does not mean being perfect. Your main goal should be to have a healthy body image and not engage in unhealthy ways to control or lose weight.

I help you achieve the above goals, I want you to make the following pledge:

I _____, **promise to stay away from marijuana**
(Youth's name)
use each day during the next 30 days.

The parent/guardian who will remind me to continue to stay away from marijuana each day during the next 30 days is _____.
(Parent/Guardian's name)

In addition, one other healthy habit I'd like to improve or continue doing during the next 30 days from the list above is:

- 1. List a specific health habit (e.g., play tennis NOT get more exercise):**

_____.

- 2. Amount (e.g., 30 minutes each time): _____.**

- 3. How often (e.g., 4 times a week, Monday-Thursday):**

_____.

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Section 4:

Group Intervention Materials

SPORT© Marijuana Awareness

Young Adolescents Version

Group Lesson

Introduction

(Show slide).



Hello. For the next several minutes I will be talking with you about **SPORT**, an exciting new fitness and health program. Together we will look at how your actions can make you healthy and keep you healthy.

Screening Survey

Now, please take out your copy of the **SPORT** Health and Fitness Screen. The purpose of this survey is to determine what you are doing about your health. Your answers are private. **DO NOT PLACE YOUR NAME ON THE SURVEY.** We want your answers to be a secret. Please answer all questions honestly. Thank you. (Wait until everyone has completed the survey).

Sports/Physical Activity Last Year

1. (Ask class members to raise their hands and respond as you read each of the types of physical activities). What sports or physical activities did you play in the last year? For example...

- ☐ a. Baseball/Softball
- ☐ b. Basketball
- ☐ c. Riding a bicycle
- ☐ d. Dance/Cheerleading/Gymnastics
- ☐ e. Football
- ☐ f. Golfing
- ☐ g. Horseback riding
- ☐ h. Running or walking
- ☐ i. Rollerblading
- ☐ j. Skateboarding
- ☐ k. Soccer
- ☐ l. Surfing
- ☐ m. Swimming
- ☐ n. Track
- ☐ o. Volleyball
- ☐ p. Tennis
- ☐ q. Others (describe): _____

1. (Show slide).



SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES:

1. **Are fun.**
2. **Keep you fit & healthy.**
3. **Make you feel good about yourself.**
4. **Give you lots of energy.**
5. **Help you do better in school.**

Wonderful. Sports and physical activities are a great way to get regular exercise!

Sports and physical activities are fun, help keep you healthy, help you feel good about yourself, give you lots of energy, and can help you do better in school.

2. (Show slide).



**Marijuana can hurt your health and how
you do in school and sports.**

**AN ACTIVE LIFE AND MARIJUANA
DO NOT MIX**

However, marijuana and an active lifestyle don't mix. Using marijuana can hurt your health and affect how well you do in sports and physical activities.

Breakfast and Nutrition

3. (Ask participants to answer to themselves). **Do you usually eat a healthy breakfast every morning? For example, cereal and low fat milk, whole wheat toast, oatmeal, eggs, yogurt or fruit.**

1. (Show slide).



Eating a healthy breakfast such as nutritious cereal with low fat milk, whole wheat toast, oatmeal, eggs, or yogurt every day can have a big effect on how you feel, and help you have more energy in school and sports. Also, limiting junk food, and eating lots of healthy foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits is important.

2. (Show slide).



» MARIJUANA USE INCREASES JUNK FOOD EATING AND WEIGHT GAIN.
» IT CAN SAP YOUR ENERGY.
» AND ROB YOUR BODY OF VITAMINS AND MINERALS.

Using marijuana gives you the “munchies” which increases junk food eating. This adds empty calories and leads to weight gain, which can rob your body of vitamins and minerals. Marijuana use can also sap your energy needed to do well in sports and physical activities.

SPORT Marijuana Awareness

Group Interactive Exercise

When: You may decide to implement this optional exercise after the goal setting strategy.

Length: 45 minutes.

Materials: paper, pencils, white board, marker.

Goals:

- 1) To cue positive peer images and future self-images associated with being physically active and exercising regularly.
- 2) To link concrete health enhancing behaviors and behavior goal setting with achieving positive health images and behaviors, and health damaging/risk behaviors with interfering with positive image and behavior achievement.

Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, youth will be able to:

- 1) List 5 positive characteristics of peers and 5 of themselves in the future, associated with exercising regularly and being physically active.
- 2) Identify 3 specific behaviors that help to achieve an active lifestyle and image.
- 3) Describe 3 specific behaviors that hinder or interfere with achieving an active lifestyle and image.

Activities:

- 1) Ask each youth to list on a sheet of paper 5 characteristics of youth their age who exercise regularly and are physically active.
- 2) Next, ask them to list on a sheet of paper 5 words or phrases describing how they would feel and look if 10 to 20 years from now they were physically active and exercised regularly.
- 3) Make two columns on the white board and list peer images associated with being physically active in one column, and future self-images in the other.
- 4) **State the Main Conclusion:** We all have positive images of peers and of ourselves in the future associated with being physical active and exercising regularly.
- 5) Now, ask the group what **specific** health enhancing behaviors come to mind that would help achieve an active lifestyle. **Mention:** Participating in sports, eating healthy foods like vegetables and fruit, getting plenty of sleep, practicing relaxation skills to control daily stress, and setting behavior improvement goals.
- 6) Lastly, ask the group what **specific** health damaging/risk behaviors would hinder or interfere with living an active lifestyle and engaging in regular exercise and describe how. **Mention:** Marijuana use, excessive or heavy alcohol use, drug abuse, drunk and drugged driving, and tobacco use.
- 7) **State the Main Conclusion:** Engage in habits that support positive images and behaviors, while avoiding those that interfere with obtaining your positive image and behavior goals.

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Marijuana Awareness

Section 5:

Evaluation Materials

SPORT Marijuana Awareness Feedback Sheet

CODE: _____

Directions: Please circle one answer for each question below. We really want to know what you think about this part of the **SPORT©** Program. Please answer honestly. Thank you for your help!

	Not (none) at all	A little	Some	A lot
1) Did you like the SPORT lesson?	1	2	3	4
2) Would you recommend the SPORT lesson to other students?	1	2	3	4
3) Do you think this SPORT lesson will help students make healthy choices?	1	2	3	4
4) Will the SPORT lesson help you increase your physical activity next month?	1	2	3	4
5) Will the SPORT lesson help you avoid alcohol use next month?	1	2	3	4
6) Will the SPORT lesson help you avoid marijuana use next month?	1	2	3	4
7) Will the SPORT lesson help you avoid cigarette smoking next month?	1	2	3	4
8) Will the SPORT lesson help you increase your healthy eating next month?	1	2	3	4
9) Will the SPORT lesson help you increase your sleep next month?	1	2	3	4

SPORT Marijuana Awareness

Implementer Lesson Chart

Code: _____

Directions: Circle one response for each item and provide comments.

1. Wellness instructor's comfort level while providing the lesson:

4=A lot

3=Some

2=A little

1=None

Comments on comfort level:

2. Use of active listening and presenting (i.e., eye contact, body position, changing tone of voice, listening):

4=A lot

3=Some

2=A little

1=None

Comments on active listening/presenting:

3. Smoothness or continuous flow in delivery of the lesson:

4=A lot

3=Some

2=A little

1=None

Comments on smoothness or continuous flow of lesson:

Prevention Plus Wellness Program Fidelity Checklist

1. ☐ Attend an Onsite Prevention Plus Wellness Program Implementer's Training Workshop every 3-years.
2. ☐ Implement the screen to participants in a private or semi-private setting.
3. ☐ Read the screening survey instructions to participants prior to implementation.
4. ☐ Implement the lesson using the script as provided.
5. ☐ Maintain good eye contact during each lesson.
6. ☐ Do not ad lib extra content during any lesson.
7. ☐ Use an upbeat and varied voice during each lesson.
8. ☐ Cover all messages in the script during each lesson.
9. ☐ Show the PowerPoint slides during each lesson.
10. ☐ Read the goal plan and helped participants complete it.
11. ☐ Had participants sign while you co-signed each contract.
12. ☐ Ask participants to take home their goal plan and post it.
13. ☐ Implement the feedback survey immediately after each lesson.
14. ☐ Read the feedback survey instructions to participants.
15. ☐ Collect and staple screening and feedback surveys from each participant.
16. ☐ Monitor feedback survey data for positive responses from participants.
17. ☐ Collect and monitor implementer chart data from implementers/teachers after each lesson for positive responses.
18. ☐ Download an Excel spreadsheet from PPW website and entered screening and feedback survey data.
19. ☐ Email the Excel spreadsheet to PPW for data cleaning, analysis and interpretation.
20. ☐ Make program alterations based on feedback and implementer chart data analysis and monitoring.
21. ☐ Follow up with participants. For example, by reminding them to continue to monitor their goal plans, ask them to write a revised goal plan(s), provide follow up program materials (e.g., parent flyers, website resources, more lessons), and/or re-implement the PPW program every 6-12 months.

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Marijuana Awareness

Section 6:

Marijuana Resources

9 MYTHS ABOUT MARIJUANA HARM



Efforts to expand the legalization of recreational marijuana use in the US and abroad is increasing interest in marijuana, and stoking myths about its use.

Because these myths paint marijuana in a favorable light, they could influence marijuana consumption among children, adolescents and young adults. This may be shown in the lessening of perceived risks of using marijuana among American adolescents, reported in the Monitoring the Future Study:

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/monitoring-future-survey-high-school-youth-trends>.

For this reason, it is important to correct false marijuana claims, particularly the bedrock myth that marijuana use is harmless.

Below are 9 common myths about marijuana, and the myth-busting reality.

1. **Marijuana is harmless.**

The truth is that marijuana, like all drugs, poses both short and long-term risks. This is the case whether the drug is “natural” like alcohol or tobacco, or completely artificial like synthetic marijuana – Spice/K2. Negative effects of marijuana use for youth involve physical and mental health and social problems. These include, for example, vomiting, arguments with parents and trouble with the law, anxiety and depression, paranoia and hallucinations, poorer school performance, other drug use, accidental injury and death, and physical and psychological dependence.

WHY IS MARIJUANA USE ADDICTIVE?



Marijuana use has been shrouded in myth and misconception for centuries. In our lifetime, this situation is being exacerbated by a growing marijuana industry stemming from the legalization of recreational and medical cannabis use.

The marijuana industry markets cannabis use not just to have fun and socialize, but as part of a hip lifestyle, and to self-medicate everything from anxiety to low energy. It also portrays cannabis consumption as innocuous and as normal a part of daily life as having a glass of wine with dinner.

One of the more frequently espoused marijuana myths is that its use is not addictive like other drugs. Others think that addiction from marijuana is possible, but that it is very rare. Still others think that if marijuana use does become addictive, it's easy to just stop using it.

Each of these beliefs is incorrect. Below we'll discuss why.

MARIJUANA AWARENESS TRAINING RESOURCES



Drug Facts – Marijuana. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA):
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana>

Drug Facts: Marijuana. AboveTheInfluence:
<http://abovetheinfluence.com/drugs/marijuana/>

Easy-to-Read Drug Facts: Marijuana Facts. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): <https://easyread.drugabuse.gov/content/marijuana-weed-pot-facts>

FDA and Marijuana. U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA):
<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm421163.htm>

10 Marijuana and Alcohol Harm Reduction Tips for Parents



If you are a parent or guardian with children, teens or even young adults, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to know your marijuana or alcohol use and attitudes can influence your youth's using them too.

For example, a recent study published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health* showed that parents' current use of marijuana predicted their children's use of alcohol and marijuana, as did children's perceptions that their parent's supported marijuana use.

Some parents don't believe it, but research shows they have a significant influence on their kid's substance use.

So all parents, regardless of whether or not they use marijuana or alcohol, should take care to protect their youth from substance use harm. Below are 10 tips to help parents do just that.