



Forces United is a unique initiative developed by Community Alliances for Drug Free Youth (CADFY) in partnership with the International Faith Based Coalition (IFBC), bringing Drug Free Community grantees (DFCs), military personnel, faith based leaders, and their surrounding communities together with existing community based organizations and agencies to implement more effective community substance abuse prevention strategies.



www.cadfy.org

619-557-5753

Most Widely Used Illicit Drug in the U.S.:

Marijuana



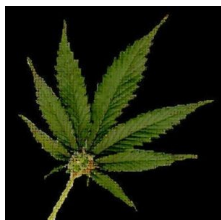
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Legalizing Marijuana is **NOT** the Answer

Marijuana is a green, brown, or gray mixture of dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds, and flowers of the hemp plant (*Cannabis sativa*). The main active ingredient in marijuana is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol).



Marijuana is usually smoked as a cigarette or in a pipe or bong. Marijuana has also appeared in blunts, which are like cigars. It can also be mixed into foods or used to brew a tea.

Short-term effects of marijuana include memory loss, distorted perception, trouble with thinking and problem-solving, and anxiety.

Long-term marijuana effects may be the same as tobacco smokers, such as daily coughs, chest illnesses, risk of lung infections, and a tendency toward obstructed airways. In addition, cancer of the respiratory tract and lungs may also be promoted by marijuana smoke.

In 2007, 14.4 million Americans aged 12 or older used marijuana at least once in the month prior to being surveyed. In addition, about 6,000 people a day used marijuana for the first time—2.1 million Americans. Of these, 62.2% were under the age of 18.

Myths vs. Facts

- Myth #1: Marijuana is harmless.
 - Fact: Use of marijuana can lead to serious health, safety, social, academic, economic, and behavioral problems. Not only does use of this drug harm the user, it also affects children, families, and communities.
- Myth #2: Marijuana is not addictive.
 - Fact: Research shows that marijuana use can indeed lead to dependence.
- Myth #3: Marijuana is not as harmful to your health as tobacco.
 - Fact: This drug contains many of the same cancer-causing chemicals found in tobacco.
- Myth #4: Marijuana makes you mellow.
 - Fact: Research shows that youth who use this drug are more likely than non-users to engage in aggressive behavior.
- Myth #5: Marijuana is used to treat cancer and other diseases.
 - Fact: Marijuana as a smoked product has never proven to be medically beneficial and is more likely to harm your body.
- Myth #6: My kids won't be exposed to marijuana.
 - Fact: Rates of marijuana use among youth in cities, rural areas, and suburbs are roughly the same. If kids want marijuana, they can find it.
- Myth #7: There's not much parents can do to stop their kids from experimenting this drug.
 - Fact: By talking to your kids about the dangers of this drug, monitoring their active ties, and staying involved in their lives can increase the chances that your kids will stay drug free.

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What You Should Know

The perception of marijuana as a harmless herb seriously distracts people from a basic message that our society needs to deliver: It is not OK for anyone—especially young people—to use this or any other illicit drug. You can help by spreading this message in your community.

GET INVOLVED!

If you would like to get involved, become a member of Forces United, make a donation, or are interested in more information, please fill out the following form, tear it off and mail it in.

Please Print)

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

Thank you for your interest in Forces United.

We will contact you shortly.

Visit www.CADFY.org