

DOCUMENTED REASONS TO OPPOSE THE LEGALIZATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF MARIJUANA

TODAY'S MARIJUANA IS VERY HIGH IN POTENCY AND CAUSES ADDICTION, MENTAL ILLNESS, VIOLENCE, CRIME, DUIS AND MANY HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

Marijuana products today can be up to 99% THC the psychoactive chemical in marijuana. The amount of THC in marijuana has been increasing steadily over the past few decades. For a person who's new to marijuana use, this may mean exposure to higher THC levels with a greater chance of a harmful reaction including mental illness. The popularity of edibles also increases the chance of harmful reactions. Edibles take longer to digest and produce a high. Therefore, people may consume more to feel the effects faster, leading to dangerous results.

References

<https://herb.co/2017/03/29/thc-a-crystalline/>

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LEGALIZING POT WILL CAUSE MORE MAYHEM ON OUR ROADWAYS

According to a Colorado Springs Gazette editorial about legalization in Colorado there has been a doubling of drivers involved in fatal crashes testing positive for marijuana. [1]

Marijuana significantly impairs driving including time and distance estimation and reaction times and motor coordination. [2] The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration lists marijuana as the most prevalent drug in fatally injured drivers with 28 % testing positive for marijuana. [3]

It is true that the crash risk for a driver on alcohol is higher than on marijuana. But to suggest it is safe to drive after using marijuana is irresponsible. An even greater danger is the combination of alcohol and marijuana that has severe psychomotor effects that impair driving. [4]

What about our kids? Vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among those aged 16-25. [5] **Weekend nighttime driving under the influence of marijuana among young drivers has increased by 48%.** [6] About 13 % of high school seniors said they drove after using marijuana while only 10 % drove after having five or more drinks.[7] Another study showed about 28,000 seniors each year admitted to being in at least one motor vehicle accident after using marijuana. [8]

The marijuana industry is backing legalization. Do we want more dangerous drivers on our roads and dead kids so the industry can make money from selling marijuana?

References regarding DUI

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MARIJUANA USE RESULTS IN PERMANENT BRAIN DAMAGE TO KIDS

Marijuana use is tied to concurrent and lasting changes in adolescent cognitive functions, according to a study that tracked high school students for 4 years. Marijuana use, but not alcohol consumption, was linked to lagged changes in inhibitory control and working memory and concurrent changes in delayed memory recall and perceptual reasoning. Of particular concern was the finding that marijuana use was associated with lasting effects on a measure of inhibitory control, which is a risk factor for other addictive behaviors, and might explain why early onset marijuana use is a risk factor for other addictions.

<https://www.medpagetoday.com/neurology/generalneurology/75472>

LEGALIZING POT WILL CAUSE MORE OPIATE USE

Legalizing marijuana will cause more marijuana use. Marijuana use is associated with an increased risk for substance use disorders. [1] The interaction between the opioid and the cannabinoid system in the human body might provide a neurobiological basis for a relationship between marijuana use and opiate abuse.[2] Marijuana use appears to increase rather than decrease the risk of developing nonmedical prescription opioid use and opioid use disorder. [3] In 2017, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) landmark report written by top scientists concluded after a review of over 10,000 peer-reviewed academic articles, that marijuana use is connected to progression to and dependence on other drugs, including studies showing connections to heroin use. [4]

New research suggests that marijuana users may be more likely than nonusers to misuse prescription opioids and develop prescription opioid use disorder. The investigators analyzed data from more than 43,000 American adults. The respondents who reported past-year marijuana use had 2.2 times higher odds than nonusers of meeting diagnostic criteria for prescription opioid use disorder. They also had 2.6 times greater odds of initiating prescription opioid misuse. [5]

Marijuana used as a medicine is being sold as reducing the need for other medicines.

However, a new study shows that medical marijuana users were significantly more likely to use prescription drugs in the past 12 months. Individuals who used medical marijuana were also significantly more likely to report nonmedical use in the past 12 months of any prescription drug with elevated risks for pain relievers, stimulants and tranquilizers. [6]

References regarding opiates

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MARIJUANA USE BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER PREGNANCY CAN CAUSE SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS, LEARNING PROBLEMS, AND BIRTH DEFECTS

Legalizing marijuana will cause more marijuana use among women of child bearing age. Prenatal marijuana use has been linked with:

- 1. Developmental and neurological disorders and learning deficits in children.**
- 3. Premature birth, miscarriage, stillbirth.**
- 4. An increased likelihood of a person using marijuana as a young adult.**
- 5. The American Medical Association states that marijuana use may be linked with low birth weight, premature birth, behavioral and other problems in young children.**
- 6. Birth defects and childhood cancer.**
- 7. Reproductive toxicity affecting spermatogenesis which is the process of the formation of male gamete including meiosis and formation of sperm cells.**

Moderate concentrations of THC, the main psychoactive substance in marijuana, when ingested by mothers while pregnant or nursing, could have long-lasting effects on the child, including increasing stress responsivity and abnormal patterns of social interactions. THC consumed in breast milk could affect brain development.

References regarding pregnancy

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Risk of Selected Birth Defects with Prenatal Illicit Drug Use, Hawaii, 1986-2002, *Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health*, Part A, 70: 7-18, 2007

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MARIJUANA EXPOSURES AMONG CHILDREN INCREASE BY UP TO OVER 600%

The rate of marijuana exposures among children under the age of six increased by 610% in the “medical” marijuana states according to a study published in *Clinical Pediatrics*. The data comes from the National Poison Data System. 75% percent of the children ingested edible marijuana products such as marijuana-infused candy. Clinical effects include drowsiness or lethargy, ataxia [failure of muscle coordination], agitation or irritability, confusion and coma, respiratory depression, and single or multiple seizures.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0009922815589912>

FACTS FROM COLORADO

“Big Marijuana” employs promotional activities and materials that falsely deny or trivialize the risks of marijuana while making false claims for the benefits of using marijuana. This is the same approach used by “Big Tobacco” and the opiate industry.

The marijuana industry claims that we should follow the example of Colorado the “paradise of pot.” However, it seems that things there are not going so well in Colorado for infants, toddlers and teenagers. It is also negatively effecting emergency rooms.

The people who are pushing marijuana legalization paint Colorado as a pot paradise. This is not true according to Peter Droege who is the Marijuana and Drug Addiction Policy Fellow for the Centennial Institute a policy think tank in Lakewood Colorado. In a April 20, 2018 opinion article he states that:

According to the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), Colorado is a national leader among 12-17-year-olds in (1) Last year marijuana use; (2) Last month marijuana use; and (3) The percentage of youth who tried marijuana for the first time.

A 2017 analysis by the Denver Post showed Colorado had experienced a 145% increase in the number of fatal crashes involving marijuana-impaired drivers between 2013 and 2016. While the analysis stresses that the increase cannot definitively be attributed to the legalization of marijuana, it reports that the number of marijuana-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes has more than doubled since 2013, the year before the state legalized recreational marijuana use.

A July 20, 2016 article in Westword magazine reports that increased homelessness, drugs, and crime are causing local residents and convention visitors to shun Denver's 16th Street Mall, once one of the most vibrant tourist destinations in the region.

A group of concerned scientists from Harvard University and other institutions wrote a letter to Governor Hickenlooper on March 10, 2017, seeking to correct the record after his Feb. 26, 2017, interview on Meet the Press in which he told Chuck Todd that Colorado had not seen a spike in youth drug use after the legalization of recreational marijuana, and that there was "anecdotal" evidence of a decline in drug dealers - claims he repeated in Rolling Stone.

In the letter, the scientists reference numerous studies, including the NSDUH survey, that report a dramatic increase in youth marijuana use, emergency room visits, mental health issues and crime tied to the legalization of marijuana in Colorado. They quote an official from the state's attorney general's office saying legalization "has inadvertently helped fuel the business of Mexican drug cartels ... cartels are now trading drugs like heroin for marijuana, and the trade has since opened the door to drug and human trafficking."

Today's high-potency "crack weed" is marketed to youth through vapes, candies, energy drinks, lip balms and other products easy to conceal in homes and schools. Most dispensaries in Colorado are located in low-income neighborhoods, targeting young people who do not need another obstacle in fulfilling their great potential in life. *

* <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/04/20/colorado-governor-marijuana-hickenlooper-column/533731002>

MARIJUANA RELATED SUICIDES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN COLORADO

Marijuana is the Number 1 substance now found in suicides of young people in Colorado who are 10-19 years old. Go to the below Colorado website and click on the box that lists "methods, circumstances and toxicology" and then click on the two boxes for 10-19 years olds. The marijuana data will appear.

https://cohealthviz.dphe.state.co.us/t/HSEBPublic/views/CoVDRS_12_1_17/Story1?embed=y&:showAppBanner=false&:showShareOptions=true&:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no#4

55% OF COLORADO MARIJUANA USERS THINK IT'S SAFE TO DRIVE WHILE HIGH

55% of marijuana users surveyed by the Colorado Department of Transportation last November said they believed it was safe to drive under the influence of marijuana. Within that group, the same percentage said they had driven high in the past 30 days, on average 12 times. A recent analysis of federal traffic fatality data by the Denver Post found that the number of Colorado drivers involved in fatal crashes who tested positive for marijuana has doubled since 2013.

<https://www.vaildaily.com/news/cdot-survey-more-than-half-of-colorado-marijuana-users-think-its-safe-to-drive-while-high/>

TODDLERS WITH LUNG INFLAMMATION

In Colorado one in six infants and toddlers hospitalized for lung inflammation are testing positive for marijuana exposure. This has been a 100% increase since legalization (10% to 21%). Non-white kids are more likely to be exposed than white kids.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/04/160430100247.htm>

TEEN ER VISITS

Marijuana related emergency room visits by Colorado teens is substantially on the rise. They see more kids with psychotic symptoms and other mental health problems and chronic vomiting due to marijuana use.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-marijuana-kids/marijuana-related-er-visits-by-colorado-teens-on-the-rise-idUSKBN1HO38A>

LOW BIRTH WEIGHTS

The Colorado School of Public Health reports that there is a 50% increase in low birth weights among women who use marijuana during pregnancy. Low birth weight sets the stage for future health problems including infection and time spent in neonatal intensive care.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/04/180423125052.htm>

EMERGENCY CARE

Colorado Cannabis Legalization and Its Effect on Emergency Care

"Not surprisingly, increased marijuana use after legalization has been accompanied by an

increase in the number of ED visits and hospitalizations related to acute marijuana intoxication. Retrospective data from the Colorado Hospital Association, a consortium of more than 100 hospitals in the state, has shown that the prevalence of hospitalizations for marijuana exposure in patients aged 9 years and older doubled after the legalization of medical marijuana and that ED visits nearly doubled after the legalization of recreational marijuana, although these findings may be limited because of stigma surrounding disclosure of marijuana use in the prelegalization era. However, this same trend is reflected in the number of civilian calls to the Colorado poison control center. In the years after both medical and recreational marijuana legalization, the call volume for marijuana exposure doubled compared with that during the year before legalization.

Kim HS, Monte AA. Colorado cannabis legalization and its effect on emergency care. *Ann Emerg Med.* 2016;68:71-75.

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CONTAMINATION OF MARIJUANA PRODUCTS

There is contamination in marijuana products in Colorado. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment claims that “Cannabis is a novel industry, and currently, no recognized standard methods exist for the testing of cannabis or cannabis products.”

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/marijuana-sciences-reference-library>

DO YOU CARE?

Do you care...**about our Environment?** Marijuana growing creates environmental contamination. [1]

Do you care...**about Pedestrian and Motor Vehicle Deaths caused by marijuana impaired drivers?**

Increased marijuana impaired driving due to the increased potency of THC creates more risk.[2]

Do you care...**about Freedom of Choice?** Cannabis Use Disorder destroys freedom of choice. [3]

Do you care...**about Violence, Domestic Abuse and Child abuse?** Oftentimes marijuana is reported in incidents of violence. Continued marijuana use is associated with a 7-fold greater odds for subsequent commission of violent crimes. [4]

Do you care...**about Safety in the Workplace?** Numerous professions and trades require alertness that marijuana use can impair. Employers experience challenges to requirements for drug free workplaces, finding difficulty in hiring with many failing marijuana THC drug tests.

[5]

Do you care...**about Substance Use Disorders and the growing Addiction Epidemic?** Recent data suggest that 30% of those who use marijuana may have some degree of marijuana use disorder. That sounds small? 22,000,000 US marijuana users x 30% = over 6,000,000 with a marijuana use disorder. There is a link between adolescent pot smoking and psychosis. [6]

Do you care...**about Suicide Prevention?** Marijuana use greatly increases risk of suicide especially among young people. [7]

Do you care...**about your Pets?** Vets report increases in marijuana poisoned pets since normalizing and commercializing of marijuana. [8]

Do you care...**about our Students and Schools?** Normalization of marijuana use brought increased use to schools. Edibles and vaping have made use harder to detect. Colorado has had an increase in high school drug violations of 71% since legalization and school suspensions for drugs increased 45%. [9]

Do you care...**about Racial Inequality?** Marijuana growers and sellers typically locate in poorer neighborhoods and degrade the quality of the areas. Arrests of people of color have increased since drug legalization while arrests of Caucasians have decreased. [10].

Do you care...**about Our Kids and Grandkids, the Next Generations?** Help protect them by advocating for their futures. [11] Please oppose increasing the use of marijuana

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