



ONE ON ONE MENTOR BRIEF: Facts and Approaches to Talking About Marijuana With Your Mentee

2012 IOWA YOUTH SURVEY DATA

- ✓ 10% of Iowa 8th grade students (22% of Mason City students) believe they would be more popular if they smoked marijuana
- ✓ 52% of Iowa 11th grade students (41% of Mason City students) say it is easy or very easy for them to get marijuana.
- ✓ Iowa student perception that marijuana use puts them at risk of harm decreases 62% between 6th grade and college age.
- ✓ Iowa youth perception of parental disapproval of marijuana use dropped 5 points from 2010-2012.

www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov

Learn facts and new research about marijuana by exploring internet sites with your mentee:

www.drugabuse.gov

www.blunfacts.org

www.learnaboutsam.org

www.themarijuanareport.org

The Issue

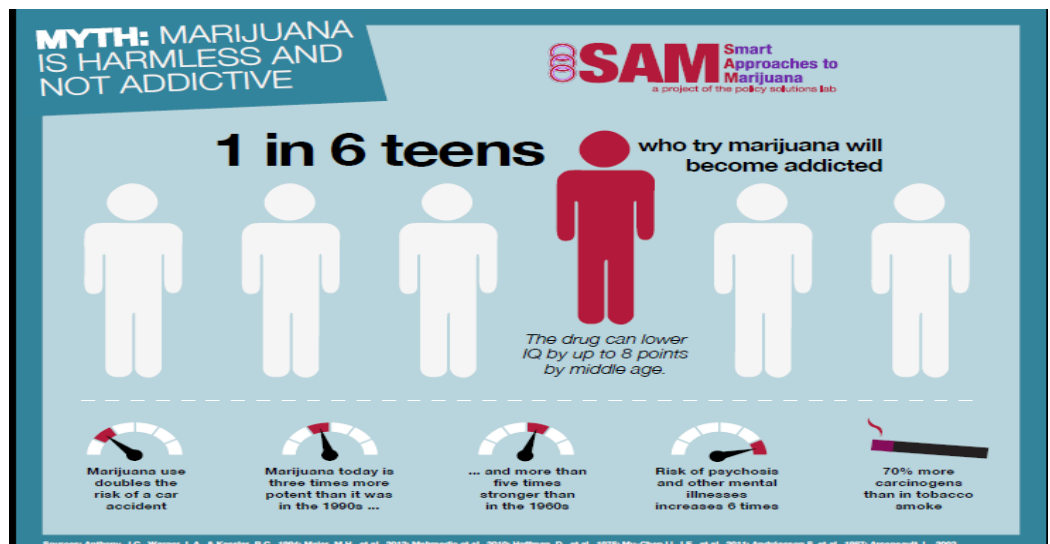
Medical or recreational marijuana laws existed in twenty states at the start of 2014. The most visible were Colorado and Washington. Mass media feeds us bytes implying the popularity of these changes, but does not give us the behind the scene impact on their youth and families, work places, law enforcement, financial institutions, government, and human services.

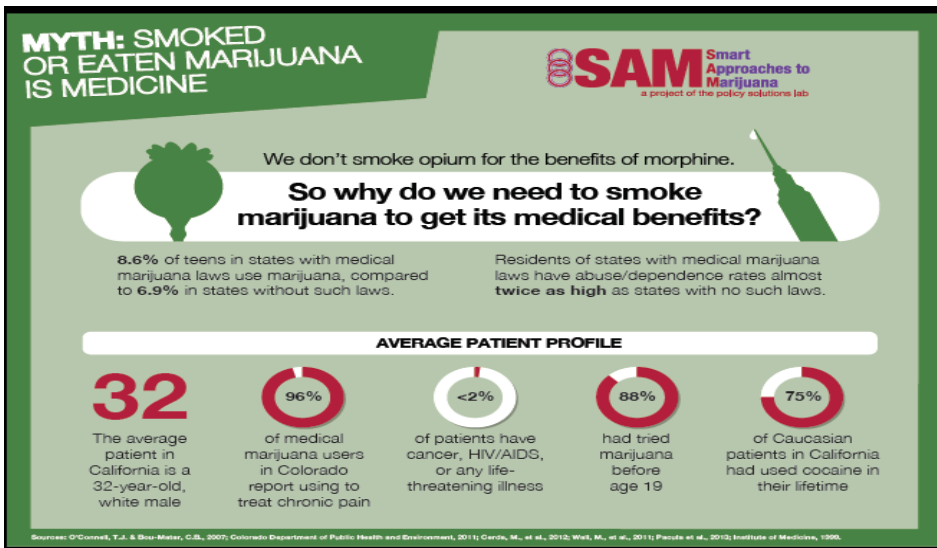


Media does not give a lot of air time to the fact that Denver now has more marijuana dispensaries than the number of McDonalds and Starbucks combined. Or that 74% of youth in a Denver drug treatment program got their marijuana from a person who had a “medical marijuana” card. Or that there is big money behind the marijuana movement and that one of the tobacco giants has already trademarked names for marijuana marketing. New research showing the harmful effects of marijuana use is given brief coverage.

Other states have taken action on marijuana this year-including Iowa. Our legislature passed a bill allowing patients with a severe type of epilepsy to obtain CBD oil from sources outside the FDA process. While the suffering of these people is undeniable, the legalization of ‘medical’ or recreational marijuana others may push for would not be good for Iowans.

Your mentee has most likely seen media coverage of this issue or heard people they know talking about it. This brief is meant to provide you with facts and tips for talking with your mentee about marijuana. Youth input tells us that most adults don’t talk about marijuana use with young people. According to the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, kids are 30% less likely to start using marijuana if a caring adult has an open, honest conversation about it first. As a mentor, you are in a good position to approach this subject with your mentee.





Marijuana's Impact on Young People

- A long-term study showed that regular marijuana use in the early teen years lowers IQ into adulthood, even if users stopped smoking marijuana as adults.
- A study of marijuana users who began using in adolescence revealed substantially reduced connectivity among brain areas responsible for learning and memory.
- A recent analysis found that marijuana use more than doubles a driver's risk of being in an accident. The combination of marijuana and alcohol is worse than either substance alone with respect to driving impairment.
- A number of studies have linked chronic marijuana use and mental illness. Studies following users across time also showed a link between marijuana use and later development of psychosis. Those who smoke pot regularly are more prone to depression, anxiety, irritability and increased sensitivity to stress.

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana>

Mason City Youth Task Force Positions on Marijuana COMPASSIONATE CARE

It is the position of the Youth Task Force that the federal government needs to continue to support research regarding the benefits of individual medicinal components of the marijuana plant; that the process of approving or disapproving use of these components currently underway be expedited; and once in final clinical trials, access to these drugs by physicians be streamlined. We believe there is potential for individual medicinal components to benefit those suffering from specific health conditions which should only be determined by FDA approved clinical research.

MARIJUANA LAWS IN IOWA

It is the position of the Youth Task Force that crude cannabis needs to remain a Schedule 1 controlled substance in Iowa. We seek to prevent the establishment of "Big Marijuana" -- a 21st Century tobacco-like industry that would market to children. Recent research has clearly demonstrated the adverse effects of this drug and the negative impact on society with changes in regulation.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

It is the position of the Youth Task Force that the State of Iowa needs to adopt a diversion process for juveniles cited for first offense possession of crude cannabis that requires the juvenile and a parent to attend a crude cannabis specific education class, similar to those currently offered for alcohol possession. We believe the majority of Iowans are not aware of the results of recent research on the impact of crude cannabis on the adolescent brain and the long term effects of early and persistent use.

Tips for Starting the Marijuana Conversation

- Be alert for media coverage about marijuana and use this as an opening to bring up the subject. Ask if your mentee has seen media coverage or heard others talking about it. Ask what they have heard and what they think about this.
- Start a conversation about peer pressure in general and include marijuana use in the conversation.
- Talk to your mentee about your job and workplace. Include information about drug testing and substance use policies at your work, including marijuana. Ask what your mentee knows about this.
- High school students have told the Youth Task Force that marijuana is easier to get than alcohol. Share this information with your mentee and ask if they think this is correct and why.

What Your Mentee Needs to Hear From You

- Your belief that using marijuana is not good for kids and why you believe this. (See box at left.)
- Not everyone is doing it. Most youth (9 out of 10 Iowa youth) do NOT use marijuana.
- Your mentee can talk to you with any questions or concerns about marijuana without fear of judgment or shaming.