

Newport Academy

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Teen Marijuana Addiction Facts and Myths

Addiction is a Reality

Many parents and teens believe that marijuana is not addictive. Few develop severe physical withdrawal symptoms that are similar to those experienced by heroin addicts or prescription drug addicts, but most who abuse marijuana regularly will become emotionally and psychologically dependent upon the drug. Addiction of any kind requires psychotherapeutic treatment to ensure that the patient does not relapse when he or she returns to the same situations that initially triggered the perceived need for the drug.

Marijuana is Harmful

Not only is marijuana highly addictive, it is extremely harmful to users, especially when those users are in the middle of important developmental stages as teenagers are. Teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 are experiencing great changes physiologically and mentally. Interruption due to drug use can mean chemical changes and developmental disruptions that last a lifetime.

It Leads to Other Addictions in Adulthood

Few teens become addicted to marijuana during early adulthood and then never try another drug or illicit substance. In fact, most adults in recovery are seeking treatment for a substance other than marijuana and report that their initial experiences with drugs included marijuana and/or alcohol. Often called a "gateway" drug, marijuana is harmful enough on its own but is also often the first step to drugs of addiction that come with the risk of seizure, cardiac arrest and overdose.

It Steals Your Child's Opportunities for the Future

If your teen is spending time smoking marijuana, then he or she is not taking advantage of all of the wonderful opportunities that should define the teen years. Getting good grades, extracurricular activities, first jobs, sports, hobbies, friendships and church groups—all of these things should be what define your teen's life. If he or she is getting high, there will be no time for any of that. Many kids end up falling behind in school or dropping out. They get kicked off sports teams and out of extracurricular activities and community groups if they are caught with drugs or getting high. These opportunities lead to more opportunities for the future but if your teen is smoking marijuana, all the future holds is more of the same unless you opt for a teen marijuana rehab program.

It is Treatable

Though there is no cure for marijuana addiction and therefore no guarantee that your teen will not relapse due to this chronic illness, marijuana addiction treatment that is designed for teens will help them to learn everything they need to know for a positive recovery. Educational classes about how marijuana affects the body, family therapy, personal therapy, group therapy and experiential therapy — all of these things provided during inpatient or outpatient marijuana rehab can help your teen get a better perspective on marijuana abuse and addiction, and help them make the changes necessary to create a new life.

Marijuana Addiction Myths

Addiction is a Myth

Perhaps the biggest myth of all is that marijuana addiction does not exist. Many believe that it is impossible to become addicted to marijuana no matter how often it is abused. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Many teens in recovery attest to the addictive nature of marijuana and the need for marijuana rehab.

Tobacco is More Harmful to Teens than Marijuana

While it's true that tobacco is harmful to teens, marijuana is just as harmful. In fact, some studies suggest that marijuana smoke is far more damaging to the lungs, throat and mouth than tobacco smoke, making its use by far more harmful than smoking cigarettes.

Marijuana Calms Rambunctious Teens

Marijuana is not calming for teens. Studies show that kids who abuse the drug multiple times in a week are more likely than non-users to engage in incidents of aggression. According to the study, those who used the drug two or fewer times were more likely to break rules and destroy their own possessions. Those who used marijuana four times or more were more likely to hurt others, steal and damage public property or the property of others.

It is a Medicine

Not for teens. Almost no teenagers have a prescription for medical marijuana, and illegal use of an adult's prescription can get the adult in more trouble than the child.

Addiction is Not a Big Deal

Teen marijuana addiction is, in fact, a huge deal. Between 1992 and the year 2000, teens seeking medical care primarily for marijuana addiction increased from six percent to 15 percent. Almost half of all patients admitted into drug rehab for marijuana addiction are under the age of 20.

It is Harmless

The different ways that marijuana harms teenagers who abuse the drug are almost limitless. Their school performance, their friendships, their relationships with parents, positive interactions and balanced mental state – all these things are harmed when marijuana is a part of a teen's life.

It Doesn't Hurt Anyone

Teen marijuana addiction hurts not only the addicted teen but their parents, siblings, other close family members and friends – everyone close to the teen.

Teens Are Rarely Exposed to Marijuana

Marijuana is the second most commonly abused drug among teens aged 12 to 17. They are exposed to it at school, at work, at church and occasionally at home. Friends may offer them the drug or older siblings may introduce them to getting high. About 60 percent of high school teens say they know where to go to get drugs.

Parents Are Powerless Against Teen Marijuana Addiction

Research shows that many teens report that they listen when their parents warn them about drugs and alcohol, including marijuana. In many cases, they avoid marijuana abuse during their younger years and some skip it altogether based on the warnings of their parents. Many teens in recovery report that it was the care and intervention of their parents that allowed them to get the treatment they needed.

It is Untreatable

False. Newport Academy offers a comprehensive teen marijuana rehab program that can help your child heal. Contact us today for more information.

Abuse is Normal

Teen marijuana abuse is not the behavior of a “normal” teenager. Though a single experimentation is not uncommon, many teens never abuse drugs or alcohol during their high school years. Those who do and continue to abuse the drug often have other issues they are struggling with and attempting to escape from by smoking marijuana. Help your teen deal with these issues through psychological treatment and you'll help them get rid of the impulse to smoke marijuana and/or try other dangerous drugs.

It is Okay as Long as He or She Does It at Home

Some parents believe that if they are able to supervise their teen while he or she smokes marijuana or drinks alcohol that it will somehow protect them from making bad choices while under the influence – like driving or having unprotected sex. Unfortunately, this is not only an ill-advised decision but an illegal one. Parents who allow their teens to abuse any drug, including alcohol, at home can be held liable in court. Additionally, the privilege of abusing illegal drugs at

home does nothing but reinforce the idea that it's okay to break rules that aren't liked and opens the door to the idea that other drugs may be safe as well.