

# ADSGC NEWS

[adsgc.org](http://adsgc.org)



Alcohol & Drug Services of Gallatin County

August 2016



## *In this Issue...*

- *Drugged Driving A Growing Problem*
- *Everything You Need to Know Synthetic Cannabinoids*
- *“Drunkorexia” a disturbing trend on college campuses*

During this year’s Big Sky Country State Fair at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds members of the Gallatin County DUI Task Force were there as the “Face of DUI Prevention” to educate the public on the dangers of impaired driving.

While tabling for this Community Event, DUI Task Force members distributed DRIVE SOBER—ARRIVE ALIVE Cards for MEN and Women with information about BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT (BAC) and PREDICTABLE EFFECTS.

The Gallatin County DUI Task Force is a citizens group appointed by the County Commissioners to develop and/or fund public education, awareness, and enforcement projects to reduce the number of alcohol and/or drug related crashes and deaths in Gallatin County





After alcohol, marijuana is the drug most often found in the blood of drivers involved in crashes.

## **Drugged Driving A Growing Problem**

Drugged driving appears to be a growing problem, according to a 2015 study by the Governors Highways Safety Association. The study found the percentage of drivers testing positive for marijuana or other illegal drugs is increasing.

The effects of specific drugs differ depending on how they act in the brain. For example, marijuana can slow reaction time, impair judgment of time and distance, and decrease coordination.

Drivers who have used cocaine or methamphetamine can be aggressive and reckless when driving. Certain kinds of sedatives, called benzodiazepines, can cause dizziness and drowsiness. All of these impairments can lead to vehicle crashes.

Research studies have shown negative effects of marijuana on drivers, including an increase in lane weaving, poor reaction time, and altered attention to the road. Use of alcohol with marijuana made drivers more impaired, causing even more lane weaving.

It is difficult to determine how specific drugs affect driving because people tend to mix various substances, including alcohol. But we do know that even small amounts of some drugs can have a measurable effect. As a result, some states have zero-tolerance laws for drugged driving. This means a person can face charges for driving under the influence (DUI) if there is any amount of drug in the blood or urine.

As more states consider legalizing marijuana, legislators are grappling with how to deal with drugged driving.

Read More> <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/drugged-driving>



Despite dire warnings about the dangers of synthetic cannabinoids, popularly known by names such as K2, Spice, Black Mamba and Kronic, they continue to grow in popularity.

## Everything You Need to Know Synthetic Cannabinoids

Synthetic cannabinoids refer to a growing number of man-made mind-altering chemicals that are either sprayed on dried, shredded plant material so they can be smoked (herbal incense) or sold as liquids to be vaporized and inhaled in e-cigarettes and other devices (liquid incense).

These chemicals are called cannabinoids because they are related to chemicals found in the marijuana plant. Because of this similarity, synthetic cannabinoids are sometimes misleadingly called "synthetic marijuana" (or "fake weed"), and they are often marketed as "safe," legal alternatives to that drug. In fact, they may affect the brain much more powerfully than marijuana; their actual effects can be unpredictable and, in some cases, severe or even life-threatening.

Synthetic cannabinoids are included in a group of drugs called "new psychoactive substances" (NPS). NPS are unregulated psychoactive (mind-altering) substances that have become newly available on the market and are intended to copy the effects of illegal drugs. Some of these substances may have been around for years but have reentered the market in altered chemical forms or due to renewed popularity.

Manufacturers sell these herbal incense products in colorful foil packages and sell similar liquid incense products, like other e-cigarette fluids, in plastic bottles. They market these products under a wide variety of specific brand names; in past years, K2 and Spice were common. Hundreds of other brand names now exist, such as Joker, Black Mamba, Kush, and Kronic.

For several years, synthetic cannabinoid mixtures have been easy to buy in drug paraphernalia shops, novelty stores, gas stations, and through the Internet. Because the chemicals used in them have a high potential for abuse and no medical benefit, authorities have made it illegal to sell, buy, or possess some of these chemicals. However, manufacturers try to sidestep these laws by changing the chemical formulas in their mixtures.

Easy access and the belief that synthetic cannabinoid products are "natural" and therefore harmless have likely contributed to their use among young people. Another reason for their use is that standard drug tests cannot easily detect many of the chemicals used in these products.

**Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse**

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/synthetic-cannabinoids>



## **"Drunkorexia" a disturbing trend on college campuses**

College students looking to avoid alcohol-related weight gain or get a faster buzz are increasingly turning to a seriously unhealthy habit called "drunkorexia."

The practice involves skipping meals, exercising heavily before drinking alcohol, taking laxatives or diuretics, or vomiting after imbibing.

Drunkorexia -- so named because it straddles the line between an alcohol disorder and an eating disorder -- isn't a new condition, say experts.

"The effect is very well known and has been discussed and observed by many experts," Dr. Petros Levounis, chair of the department of psychiatry at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, told CBS News.

What is new, according to the latest study from University of Houston researchers, is that more students may be practicing the risky drinking behavior than previously thought.

The findings were based on a survey of 1,184 college students, mostly from Texas, who said they had drunk alcohol heavily at least once in the past 30 day. More than 80 percent had engaged in at least one drunkorexia-related behavior in the preceding three months.

Students who lived in fraternity and sorority houses were more likely to report the worrisome behaviors.

**Read More> CBS NEWS**

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/drunkorexia-drinking-alcohol-eating-disorder-college-trend>