



Interagency Coordinating  
Council for Prevention

# Youth & Marijuana Abuse

## Marijuana in Montana

- 41% of teen marijuana smokers say they began before the age of 15.<sup>1</sup> 62.5% of Montana teens have never used marijuana; of those that have used, 13.4% began when they were 15 or 16 years old.<sup>6</sup>
- Nearly 40% (35.9%) of Montana 10th grade students have ever tried marijuana in their lifetimes.<sup>6</sup>
- 90.4% of Montana teens have never used synthetic marijuana, also called K2, spice, and fake weed.<sup>5</sup>
- 41.8% of Montana 12<sup>th</sup> graders believe their parental attitudes are favorable to drug use, while 44.3% responded with an intention to use drugs.<sup>6</sup>

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## When youth use marijuana,

- Marijuana use during adolescence and early adulthood results in impaired neural connectivity in several areas of the brain including the hippocampus, a critical region associated with learning and memory.<sup>4</sup>
- Developmental problems associated with regular marijuana use during adolescence include reduced IQ scores, poorer school performance, higher school dropout rates, as well as decreased attention and impaired cognitive and verbal performance.<sup>4</sup>
- Daily users of marijuana younger than 17 are 60% less likely to complete high school or get a university degree than those who do not use marijuana. Teens who are daily users of marijuana are seven times more likely to attempt suicide.<sup>9</sup> Teens who use marijuana on a daily basis are eight times more likely to use other drugs later in life.<sup>10</sup>
- Adolescents who use marijuana have a two-to-four fold increase risk of developing psychosis and this risk is dose-dependent.<sup>2</sup>
- Youth who use marijuana heavily have up to an 8-point drop in IQ, and this risk is also dose-dependent and has not been proven reversible.<sup>4</sup>
- In past 30 days usage of marijuana by youth aged 12 to 17 years, Colorado leads all 50 states. Montana is ranked 12th out of the 50 states, preceded by the three states (CO, WA, and OR) with current legal marijuana laws.<sup>2</sup>
- Marijuana dependence was the primary drug cited in treatment admissions for the Montanans, excluding alcohol.<sup>7</sup>
- Typical THC content of marijuana today averages between 12 to 13% compared to 3% to 4% in the 70s and 80s.<sup>5</sup> States with legalization have much higher THC content averages; in Colorado, Washington and Oregon THC content averages around 24 to 26%, but is often seen as high as 36%.<sup>3</sup>
- As of 2013, an individual operating a motor vehicle with blood levels of 5ng/mL of Delta-9-THC or higher risks a DUI citation.<sup>8</sup>

## RESOURCES

[Chemical Dependency Bureau](#), [Parent Power](#), [Marijuana Talk Kit](#)

- In all 56 counties of Montana, a prevention specialist is hard at work to reduce underage marijuana usage and the harmful behaviors associated with marijuana use.
- The Chemical Dependency Bureau provides an up-to-date list of state approved addiction treatment centers across the state of Montana.



## Citations

1. [Partnership for Drug-Free Kids Marijuana Talk Kit](http://www.drugfree.org/MJTalkKit/)  
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2. [Rocky Mountain HIDTA Report, Volume 3](http://www.rmhidta.org/html/2015%20final%20legalization%20of%20marijuana%20in%20colorado%20the%20impact.pdf)  
<http://www.rmhidta.org/html/2015 final legalization of marijuana in colorado the impact.pdf>
3. [NBC News](http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/legal-pot/legal-weed-surprisingly-strong-dirty-tests-find-n327811)  
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4. [Marijuana Talking Points for Youth](http://cbhda.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Marijuana-and-Youth-Safety-CBHDA-Talking-Points_Final.pdf)  
[cbhda.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Marijuana-and-Youth-Safety-CBHDA-Talking-Points\\_Final.pdf](http://cbhda.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Marijuana-and-Youth-Safety-CBHDA-Talking-Points_Final.pdf)
5. [Youth Risk and Behavior Survey](http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/Youth-Risk-Behavior-Survey)  
<http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/Youth-Risk-Behavior-Survey>
6. [Prevention Needs Assessment Data](https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/SubstanceAbuse/CDDATA/PNADATA)  
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/SubstanceAbuse/CDDATA/PNADATA>
7. [State Snapshot Treatment Data](https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/SubstanceAbuse/CDDATA)  
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/SubstanceAbuse/CDDATA>
8. [MT DUI Laws](https://mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/)  
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9. [NCAAD](https://www.ncadd.org/blogs/in-the-news/daily-marijuana-use-in-teens-linked-to-lower-high-school-graduation-rate)  
<https://www.ncadd.org/blogs/in-the-news/daily-marijuana-use-in-teens-linked-to-lower-high-school-graduation-rate>
10. [CNN](http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/09/health/teen-marijuana-use/)  
<http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/09/health/teen-marijuana-use/>

## Resources

1. [Chemical Dependency Bureau](http://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/SubstanceAbuse.aspx)  
<http://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/SubstanceAbuse.aspx>
2. [Parent Power](http://parentpower.mt.gov/)  
<http://parentpower.mt.gov/>
3. [Marijuana Talk Kit](http://www.drugfree.org/MJTalkKit/)  
<http://www.drugfree.org/MJTalkKit/>