Maine Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse

Building a unified statewide voice for substance abuse prevention

Marijuana Talking Points

Preventing drug use before it begins is a cost-effective, common-sense approach to promoting safe and healthy communities.

The marijuana industry targets:

- Promotion that marijuana is a safe drug/medicine
- It’s a money maker
- Regulation makes is safer
- Incarceration will decrease since legal marijuana helps fight the war on drugs

Key Points:

- Recreational marijuana is about mass commercialization and use of marijuana, not decriminalization or social justice
- Are we safer when the tobacco industry gets marijuana? The tobacco industry has misled the public once already. Are we going to repeat that mistake with Marijuana?
- The marijuana industry will profit while families, employers, taxpayers, schools, and healthcare systems will lose. Increasing access and availability will increase the cost for treatment and recovery of people who become addicted to marijuana
- Maine’s focus on marijuana use prevention, not promotion is the ultimate goal for the health, safety and success of Maine people
- Big tobacco Part 2 – creating a social norm and belief that marijuana gummy bears, cupcakes, and soda are not targeting kids

Clear language from the National Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Michael Botticelli agrees.

**Botticelli on Colorado:** “We’re beginning to see an emerging picture, particularly in Colorado around that... Clearly, there have been some challenges.”
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Maine children’s safety and success:

- **Legalizing recreational marijuana will bring in Big Marijuana market which targets youth.** This hyper-commercialized market would bring youth-friendly products and advertising to Maine. In turn, this would increase public health and public safety risks while increasing social costs.

- **Impact on our youth’s ability to succeed** in school, downward pressures on worker productivity, and increased public safety risks on the roads are results of today’s high-potency marijuana.

- **Perception of Harm** Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey shows that 37% of Maine High School students in 2009 believe regularly using marijuana is not harmful. That increased to 57% in 2013.

- **Potential for Accidental Ingestions by Children**
  - In the first half of 2014 in Colorado, the number of children between ages 3-7 years old, sent to the ER for accidentally ingesting marijuana doubled.
  - There have been two deaths related to marijuana edibles.
  - In Colorado, from 2011 through 2013, there was a 57 percent increase in marijuana-related emergency room visits.
  - Edibles often contain 3-20 times the THC concentration recommended for intoxication.
  - There is no other drug that's built into such an attractive, edible product. The concern is that marijuana isn’t being treated like any other medicine.

**Marijuana use causes IMPAIRMENT:**

- Heavy marijuana use is linked to an increased risk of motor vehicle crashes.

- The amount of tar inhaled by marijuana smokers and the level of carbon monoxide absorbed are three to five times greater than from tobacco smoke.

- Marijuana users experience attention and memory problems which last beyond the time when they are high.

This is not about IF marijuana will be a problem, it’s WHEN it becomes a problem and the cost. Cost to human lives, families, our communities and the people of Maine.