

NIDA offers tools for talking to teens about marijuana

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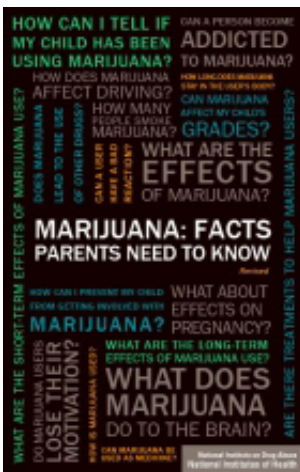
This is the booklet cover. Credit: NIDA

Two updated booklets about marijuana for teens and their parents will help families sort out marijuana myths from science-based facts. The revamped tools come from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), part of the National Institutes of Health. These booklets are being released during the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Prevention Week 2014 on the day dedicated to the Prevention of Prescription Drug Abuse and Marijuana Use. Marijuana Facts for Teens discusses the often confusing themes of health consequences of marijuana use in this age group, its effect on the developing brain, its addiction risk, and what we know about its potential as a medicine.

Marijuana: Facts Parents Need to Know has updated tips for parents on how to tell if their child is using marijuana and how to talk about the issue with their teen in a climate of heated public debates over legalization. Both revised publications are now available online. Marijuana Facts for Teens is also available in print, and Marijuana: Facts Parents Need to Know will be available in print soon.

Along with updated data and research-based information, new sections in both guides cover the dangers of K2/Spice (often referred to as [synthetic marijuana](#)) and new research that shows [smoking marijuana](#) regularly as a teen can lower IQ. Both guides also include new information on the state of the science related to potential therapeutic uses for chemical compounds found in the marijuana plant.

NIDA's 2013 Monitoring the Future survey results indicate that by the time they graduate high school, 45.5 percent of U.S. teens will have tried [marijuana](#) at least once. Also, 36.4 percent of 12th graders, 29.8 percent of 10th graders, and 12.7 percent of eighth graders say they smoked it during the past year. More than 6 percent of seniors say they smoke it daily, putting them at higher risk for addiction.



This is the booklet cover. Credit: NIDA

"Our goal for teens is to give them the straight, science-based facts so that they can make smart choices and be their best selves—without drugs," said NIDA director Dr. Nora D. Volkow. "We hope that they will continue the conversation and share this information with their peers, parents, teachers, and others."

Provided by National Institutes of Health

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