

## PARENT EDUCATION WEBSITES

- [www.drugfree.org/Parent](http://www.drugfree.org/Parent)  
Website for the partnership for a drug free America includes [timetotalk.org](http://timetotalk.org), a great resource for starting that conversation early and often with your children.
- [www.parentfurther.com](http://www.parentfurther.com)  
Find simple, practical, and proven ways to help your kids succeed. Take a tour to find out about their exciting new features! E-Newsletter sign-up.
- [www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana-abuse](http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana-abuse)  
A detailed and easy to read report from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) on marijuana abuse.



[www.positivedirections.org](http://www.positivedirections.org) 203.227.7644

### Fairfield

**Fairfield Counseling Services**  
[www.fcsinc.org](http://www.fcsinc.org)  
203.255.5777

### Westport

**Westport Positive Youth Development**  
[www.westportPYD.org](http://www.westportPYD.org)  
203.341.1069

### Weston

**Weston Youth Services**  
203.222.2585

### Wilton

**Wilton Youth Services**  
[www.wiltonyouthservices.org](http://www.wiltonyouthservices.org)  
203.834.6241

## HELP IS AVAILABLE

- **211 Connecticut Info Line** • [www.infoline.org](http://www.infoline.org)  
2-1-1 is Connecticut's free information and referral service. Simply by dialing 2-1-1, callers can reach knowledgeable, multilingual staff and get information, referrals or seek help in a crisis. 2-1-1 operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- **SAMHSA National Drug Information Treatment and Referral Hotline** 800-662-HELP (4357) • [www.dasis3.samhsa.gov](http://www.dasis3.samhsa.gov)  
Information, support, treatment options, and referrals to local rehab centers for any drug or alcohol problem. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

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# The Power of Parents

## Did you know...

**“A child who gets through age 21 without smoking, using illegal drugs or abusing alcohol is virtually certain never to do so.”**

Source: (CASA) The Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

### Topic: Marijuana

- Use of marijuana is linked with lower grades in school, and a reduced chance of graduation.<sup>1</sup>
- Adolescent-onset use of marijuana is associated with a significant and permanent decrease in IQ.<sup>2</sup>
- Use of marijuana during adolescence is associated with mental illness.<sup>3</sup>
- Research has shown that marijuana's negative effects on attention, memory, and learning can last for days or weeks after the acute effects of the drug wear off.<sup>3</sup>
- Persistent use of marijuana before the age of 18 can lead to lasting mental deficits in attention and memory.<sup>3</sup>
- Contrary to the belief that marijuana is not addictive, marijuana use can lead to physical and social dependence.<sup>4</sup>
- Marijuana smoke has been shown to have 50% more carcinogens than tobacco smoke.<sup>4</sup>

1. Macleod J, et al. *Lancet*. 2004; 363:1579-88.
2. Meier MH, et al. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA*. 2012; 109: E2657-64.
3. Gururajan A, et al. *Aust N Z J Psychiatry*. 2012; 46: 1120-35.
4. Myths and Facts about Marijuana, North Dakota State University. [http://www.ndsu.edu/alcoholinfo/students/marijuana\\_myths\\_facts/](http://www.ndsu.edu/alcoholinfo/students/marijuana_myths_facts/)



THE TOWN RESOURCE FOR HEALTHY CHOICES

This publication is courtesy of the **Fairfield Cares Community Coalition** and **Communities4Action**.

## Marijuana and the Brain

### Smoking Marijuana Can Make Driving Dangerous

THC, the main chemical in marijuana, affects the cerebellum's function and thereby impairs our abilities to do simple tasks that are involved in driving a car. THC affects the cerebellum, which is the part of our brain that controls balance and coordination. THC also affects the basal ganglia, another part of the brain that's involved in movement control. These effects lead to impaired judgment and coordination, slowed reaction times (e.g., hitting the brake in time), and problems reacting to signals or sounds, each of which is important while driving.

Source: NIDA-National Institute on Drug Abuse

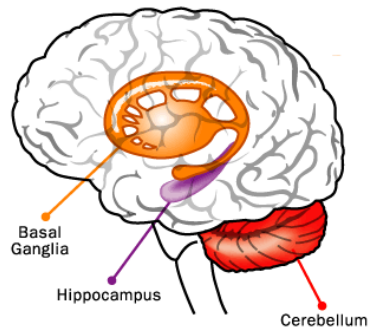
**Brain Changes With Drug Use:** Prolonged drug use changes the brain in fundamental and long-lasting ways. These long-lasting changes are a major component of the addiction itself. It is as though there is a figurative "switch" in the brain that "flips" at some point during an individual's drug use. The point at which this "flip" occurs varies from individual to individual, but the effect of this change is the transformation of a drug abuser to a drug addict.

Source: NIDA: NIDA for Teens- National Institute on Drug Abuse

**Effects on Learning and Memory:** The hippocampus is an area of the brain that serves a large role in learning and memory. It also has a high concentration of cannabinoid receptors. This means, that smoking marijuana can make you lose short term memories, and for those who use marijuana while their brain is still in development (before the mid-20's), it can lead to a drop in IQ and significant problems with both long and short term memory.

Source: NIDA: NIDA for Teens- National Institute on Drug Abuse

Cannabinoid Receptor Sites



## Parents: Take Action



- **Talk early and often with your child**
- **Have one *more* meal together per week as a family**
- **Be a role model**
- **Send your children positive text messages about healthy expectations and choices. Visit [parentfurther.com](http://parentfurther.com) for ideas.**
- **Teach kids to choose friends wisely**
- **Monitor your child's activities**
- **Sign a contract with your child about who they will contact if they end up at a party scene and need help**
- **Visit [drugfree.org/parent](http://drugfree.org/parent). Sign up for the e-Newsletter**
- **Join your local coalition (See back page for listing of local coalitions)**
- **Know the warning signs of marijuana use, and test your kids**

Sources: [www.ctclearinghouse.org/Topics](http://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Topics), LFCRAC Prevention Partnership Committee

## Warning Signs of Marijuana Use

- **If you smell smoke on clothes or in teens bedroom**
- **Unexplained use of money**
- **Drop in motivation and participation in activities**
- **Possession of eye-drops or pipes or other drug paraphernalia**
- **Sudden change of friend group**
- **Possession of drug posters, stickers, or pins**

Sources: <http://www.caron.org/signs-of-pot-use-5827.html> , [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)