

Ten Things Every Teen Should Know About Marijuana

1. **Marijuana is illegal.** Using, holding, buying, or selling marijuana can get you suspended or expelled from school. This will hurt your chances of getting a job in the future.
2. **Marijuana is not harmless.** Marijuana smoke increases the risk of cancer and lung damage. Marijuana can cause feelings of panic, anxiety, and paranoia.
3. **Marijuana diminishes abilities.** Marijuana reduces your ability to do things that require coordination and concentration, like sports, dancing, acting, and studying.
4. **Marijuana sells you short.** Think about what you are doing if your wear T-shirts, hats, pins, or jewelry with a pot leaf/joint/blunt on them. Do you want to promote something that can make you forget things? Or make it difficult to drive a car? Do you really want to be the victim of promotional techniques designed to put money into somebody else's pocket?
5. **Marijuana limits you.** Do the right thing. Using marijuana hurts your education, family ties, and social life.
6. **Marijuana impairs your thinking and judgment.** It's a risky business. Car crashes, violence, unplanned pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, are all possibilities when you use marijuana.
7. **Smoking marijuana does not make you cool.** Get with the program. Contrary to what you might hear in songs or see on TV or in the movies, smoking marijuana does not make you cool. It makes your clothing and body reek.
8. **Marijuana is addictive.** You can get hooked. Many users report that, over time, they require more of the drug to get the same effect.
9. **Marijuana is not an escape.** Talk about your problems. Using marijuana won't help you escape your problems; it will only create more. Don't believe people who say that marijuana is no big deal or that it will make your life better.
10. **Everyone is not "doing" marijuana.** You don't need it. If you think "everybody's doing it" you're wrong. More than 80 percent of 12-17 year-olds have never tried marijuana. Marijuana won't make you happy or popular, or help you learn skills you need as a grown up. You can do that with the help of friends, family, and other adults you trust.

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) offers free, valuable information about marijuana and other illegal drugs. Contact NCADI at (800) 729-6686 (TDD (800) 487-4889) or on the World Wide Web at www.health.org/. To find out more about the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, visit www.freevibe.com