

Prevention Guide



Marijuana and Developing
Teen Brain

Driving Under the Influence
of Marijuana

Identification of Effective
Programs, Policies and Practices

The Good News

The majority of
Montana
high school
students (60%)
have never used
marijuana



2019 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Bad News



In Montana, marijuana is the most
commonly used drug among ages 12-
17 who visit treatment centers for drug
misuse or abuse. Over half of youth
are being seen primarily for cannabis-
related issues.

2019 Montana DPHHS Medicaid Claim Treatment Data



The National Institute on Drug Abuse... warns marijuana is linked with a range of lung conditions.

Same carcinogens as tobacco and in some cases a
higher concentration. Smoke is typically inhaled more
deeply and held longer than tobacco smoke,
quadrupling the amount of tar deposited in the lungs.

Healthy Mind and Cognitive Impairment

Mixing any
intoxicating chemical
into the soft layer of a
developing brain can
forever alter the
way it works.

Marijuana use affects
the hippocampus
creating deficits in
verbal learning, verbal
working memory and
attention.

More frequent marijuana use is associated with discontinuous enrollment,
skipping more classes, and lower GPA

(Arria, et al., 2013, 2015)

Risk of Psychiatric Disorders

Individuals who used marijuana 10 or
more times before the age of 18 were
2-3 times more likely to be diagnosed
with schizophrenia.

12% of psychosis cases could be
averted if cannabis use was
prevented.

Additional studies encourage attention
to cannabis use related to depression
and suicide.

Marta Di Fori, et al. Lancet Psychiatry, 2019

Degenhart, et al. 2010

Sarafini et al. Frontiers in Psychiatry, 2013



Academic Failure

Substance-using students, compared
with non-users, are at increased risk of
academic failure, including dropout.

Marijuana has a stronger negative
relationship to academic outcomes,
such as grade point average and risk
for dropout than alcohol does.

Those who began using marijuana in
their teens showed a poorer ability to
learn and remember new words by the
time they reached middle age than
people who started later.

DuPont et al, 2013.

Journal of the American Medical Association, 2016

Driving Under the Influence of Marijuana

Montana Law Annotated 61-8-401 Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (DUI)

- The basis for the charge is evidence that a person's ability to safely operate a vehicle has been diminished by alcohol and/or drugs.
- Drugs include methamphetamine, marijuana (even if the driver is a registered card holder), illicit drugs, or any other drug, or any combination of drugs and alcohol that impair safe operation.
- With sufficient evidence that you are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, you can be convicted of DUI even if your BAC is below 0.08.



Montana Law Annotated 61-8-411 Operate a vehicle with excessive marijuana concentration

- With blood levels of 5 ng/ml of Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol or more, a driver is presumed to be too impaired to drive safely. Effective October 1, 2013.
- With sufficient evidence of impairment, a person can be convicted of DUI with a THC level below 5 ng/ml.
- Applies to all commercial and non-commercial drivers, including individuals registered as cardholders with Montana's Marijuana Program.

Identification of Effective Programs, Policies and Practices

Developing and implementing effective marijuana policies necessitates building upon evidence-based practices and community values/opinions, flexibility and working with a variety of public agencies and private sector partners.

Montana Evidence-Based Work Group

To be included on the list of approved evidence-based programs for Montana substance use prevention, program effectiveness must be supported by one of the following:

Tier 1) Inclusion in a Federal registry of evidence-based interventions

Tier 2) Publication in a peer-reviewed journal

Tier 3) Documentation based on work group guidelines.

Effective & Promising Evidence-based Programs and Practices for Marijuana Prevention

Programs

- American Indian Life Skills
- Communities that Care
- Family Matters
- Good Behavior Game
- Guiding Good Choices
- Botvin Life Skills
- Lions Quest for Adolescence
- Prime for Life
- Positive Action
- Project Northland
- Project Towards no Drug Abuse
- Prevention Plus Wellness
- Strengthening Families

Practices

- Mentoring Programs– Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Parent Engagement
- Media Campaign



Policy and Environmental Change

Talking with Municipalities:

- Zoning ordinances: banning the location of a dispensary within a certain distance of schools or parks, which are both locations where youth are found.
- Advertising/signage restrictions: restriction of public advertising or advertising within view or a certain distance from schools or parks.
- Local Tax Policies-prevention dollars from local taxes. Funds could purchase evidence-based curriculum to reduce youth marijuana use.

Schools:

- School policy review or development: does it include a referral program for education or treatment for students caught using marijuana?
- School policy development
- Choosing evidence-based programs, policies and practice

Coalitions:

- Promoting awareness of focus problems
- Social Norms Campaign
- Advocating for community policies

