

HEALTHY BRAIN



MARIJUANA USER'S BRAIN

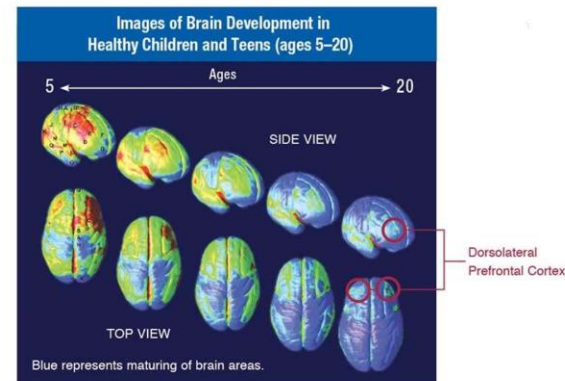
Did You Know?

February 2019

Marijuana on the Minor's Mind: Marijuana is an addictive drug in which a cannabis use disorder or dependency can be associated. Withdrawals, repeated relapse, loss of motivation, and a complete inability to stop are signs of a potential use disorder. The political push for widespread legalization has caused the public's perception of the drug to become much more relaxed. As we move forward, this notion becomes increasingly dangerous for our community's youth. If marijuana is more readily available recreationally, so will the opportunity for the substance to be abused.

What You Should Know:

- 1 in 6 teens who try marijuana will become addicted.
- The brain doesn't reach full development until somewhere around age 25.
- The teenage brain is more vulnerable to the effects of marijuana compared to alcohol.
- Teen marijuana use can be linked to memory loss, lowered test scores, trouble with higher problem solving skills, and difficulty learning and processing information.
- The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) reported in 2018 that 32.6% of 10th graders admitted to using marijuana at least once.
- Even small amounts of marijuana can affect the teenage brain. A recent study published in the Journal of Neuroscience showed a change in volume for areas of the brain that control emotions, memory, and learning for teens (14 years old) who reported using marijuana just once or twice.
- Marijuana use doubles the risk of a car accident. Usage slows reaction time and hinders ability to judge distance and time.
- Residents in states with legalized marijuana have double the abuse/dependency rates in comparison to states without such laws.



What You Can Do:

- **Write to your local representatives:** You have a voice so be sure to use it! Local politics and issues often set a precedent for what is to come on a state or national level. Write to your local representatives about marijuana concerns to get the ball rolling. If we all speak up, we can't be ignored.
- **Know the dangers:** Whether a teen or a parent, be sure to keep yourself up to date on the current drug trends and any newly released studies. Knowledge is power and a key step in prevention. If in need of assistance, you can contact the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (ECCPASA) by phone at 716-831-2298 or by email at eccpasa@eccpasa.org
- **Watch for the signs:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) uses the acronym HALT as a guideline for symptoms of substance use dependency. **Hungry. Angry. Lonely. Tired.**
- **Be Open:** It is a confusing world we live in today, full of contradictions. Creating a safe and comfortable space for nonjudgmental dialogue allows teens to open up, share, and ask questions.



Information obtained from: www.drugabuse.gov; www.ineurosci.org; <https://learnaboutsam.org/>; www.nimh.nih.gov

USE for PRESS RELEASE More info: Joshua Vacanti 716-831-2298 jvacanti@eccpasa.org

The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc., publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. ECCPASA • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.eccpasa.org