

MARIJUANA YOUTH ACCESS WORK GROUP

SAN DIEGO COUNTY MARIJUANA INITIATIVE

February 2014

AT A GLANCE



LIVE WELL, SAN DIEGO!:

The work of the Marijuana Prevention Initiative (MPI) supports the Countywide strategic initiative,

Live Well, San Diego! which aims to improve the health and well being of residents. The MPI will educate the community about the negative health impacts associated with marijuana use and will address common misconceptions regarding harmlessness, particularly with youth use.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION:

High levels of marijuana use by youth across our County negatively affect overall health and contribute to family, educational, and community problems.

- Adolescents who frequently use marijuana experience difficulties learning, paying attention, and processing information.¹
- Marijuana use is associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression among young people.²
- Marijuana may be at least five times stronger than it was 30 years ago.³
- Marijuana exposure during teen years has been found to decrease IQ and impact cognition.⁴
- Students who smoke marijuana tend to get lower grades and are less likely to complete high school.⁵
- High school students are more likely to smoke marijuana than cigarettes.⁶
- Marijuana is overwhelmingly the drug of choice for adolescents admitted into treatment, with approximately two-thirds of all adolescent admissions due to marijuana use.⁷
- Among 11th graders living in San Diego County about 1 in 5 reported having used marijuana within the past 30 days.⁸
- High school students in San Diego County (7th, 9th and 11th graders) perceive marijuana to be less harmful than alcohol or cigarettes.⁹

GOAL:

Reduce youth use and access to marijuana by increasing public awareness regarding the adverse effects resulting from youth marijuana use.

OBJECTIVE:

Decrease community acceptance and tolerance of youth marijuana use.

TARGET POPULATION:

Youth living in San Diego County between the ages of 12-25.

STRATEGY:

The San Diego County Marijuana Initiative, *Youth Access Work Group* will focus on implementing recommendations identified by the *Marijuana Initiative Key Leadership Team*, a multi-sector leadership team working to advance innovative solutions to reduce youth access to marijuana. The *Work Group* will use research-based strategies for all community interventions and ensure efforts are measurable (SMART - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely). The focus of the *Work Group* will be to leverage actions across the county to build capacity and a sustainable regional effort to reduce youth access to marijuana in San Diego County.

It is anticipated that the *Marijuana Initiative Key Leadership Team* may establish additional *task forces* as the Initiative continues to move forward. Other focus areas may include: availability, normalization or high-risk youth populations.



WORK GROUP MEETINGS: Participants of the Work Group will consist of up to two representatives from each of the six regional Alcohol and Drug Services Prevention Contractors.

Meetings with Work Group members will be conducted bi-monthly. For more information contact the Marijuana Prevention Initiative Facilitation Services, Program Manager, Joe Eberstein at (619) 528-2235 or visit mpisdcounty.net.

1. Jacobus, J., Bava, S., Cohen-Zion, M., Mohmadd, O., & Tapert, S. F. (2009).
2. McQueeny, T., Padula, C. B., Price, J., Medina, K., Logan, P., & Tapert, S. F. (2011).
3. University of Mississippi Potency Monitoring Project, 2009
4. Meier, et al., National Academy of Sciences, 2012
5. National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2012
6. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2011
7. County of San Diego CalOMS, 2011
8. California Healthy Kids Survey, 2008-2010
9. California Healthy Kids Survey, 2008-2010