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MARIJUANA

Marijuana use is at an all-time-high amongst high school and college aged students in the United States. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)¹, when the public becomes aware of a drug not posing as much of a risk as previously thought, there seems to be an increase in the use of said drug. The calming effects of marijuana are appealing to students who may be stressed from school related socializing and homework. Not only has it become quite easy to procure marijuana, but also the way it is portrayed in films is extremely appealing to young people. Every drug comes with a set of side effects and studies have shown that the younger you start using marijuana, the more likely you are to sustain permanent damage.

A 2012 study conducted by New Zealand researchers concluded that there is a direct correlation between young people using marijuana and a permanent drop in IQ. When examining people between the ages of 13 and 38, the study revealed that marijuana was directly responsible for a drop in IQ of up to 8 points when regularly used. Marijuana use is most detrimental to brain function when exposed to the developing brains of people under the age of eighteen.

In August 2013 the Obama Administration announced that they would not interfere with state laws permitting the recreational sale of marijuana, as long as it was small quantities and not being sold to youth and gangs caught up in drug trafficking. The legalization of marijuana began as a way to help people suffering from glaucoma, cancer, and other terminal illnesses cope with

¹ Taken from NIDA website <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana> September 1, 2013.

the pain and side effects of other medications. Because of its medicinal qualities, more states are adopting the idea of legalization and green pharmacies. Although it is legal to possess marijuana in 15 states and Washington D.C., it is still against U.S. Federal Law.