Drugs and Nutrition: Marijuana

Elizabeth Williams
Jeff Willoughby
Drug classification and facts

- Considered a schedule 1 narcotic
  - Substances, or chemicals are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse
  - Which makes research in the U.S. difficult
  - Despite 30 states approving of medical marijuana and 8 states approving recreational use
- The plant contains THC which is the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis
- Methods of consumption
  - Smoke/vapor inhalation
  - Ingestion
  - Topical ointments
- In 2002 the approval rating for marijuana was at 34% in 2017 the percentage has risen to 64% (per Gallop)
Marijuana in media

- Illicit drug use is most common in movies than any other type of media
  - One study showed that drug use occurred 22% of movies
  - Almost half the time in these movies no consequences are shown
- Marijuana is most frequent “illicit” drug used
- Columbia university found that watching R-rated movies was associated with a sixfold increase of risk of trying Marijuana in teens
The American Academy of Pediatrics found that...

- Young people view 1000-2000 alcohol advertisements annually.
- All of the top 15 teen televisions programs aired alcohol advertisements
- “Teen-oriented magazines contain 48% more advertising for beer, 20% more advertising for hard liquor, and 92% more advertising for sweet alcoholic drinks that do magazine aimed at adults of legal drinking age”
- Being so exposed to such advertisements causes children to grow up with a positive attitude towards drinking.
- The pharmaceutical industry spends 6 billion dollars a year on advertising.
- This causes children to grow up with the idea that there is a pill to fix everything.
Theories

- Marijuana causes brain damage
  - Research suggests: Cannabis use has a greater impact on younger, developing brains than older brains.
- Marijuana is a gateway drug
  - Research suggests: marijuana is not a gateway drug
- Marijuana has efficacy when dealing with particular cancers, diseases, and disabilities
So, is marijuana really a gateway drug?

Especially, considering the targeted advertisements of alcohol and prescription drugs? Some say yes, some say no. What we do know though is...

- 65% of people’s first drug experience is with alcohol
- 80% of people addicted to heroin started out misusing prescription drugs
- Often beginning while they are still technically children.
- This notion that marijuana is a gateway drug stems from it’s prohibition
Medical Use in Children

- Autism
- Epilepsy
- Cancer (Vice’s Weediquette)
Discussion questions

- What’s the earliest age you noticed marijuana in media? What effect did it cause if any?
- If Marijuana became legal for medical and recreational use throughout the entire United States how would this affect children and teens?
- When should Marijuana be used, if ever, by children, teens, and adults?
References: