MARIJUANA USE and PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

PREVALENCE

- 39% non-college peers use marijuana annually
- 6.7% college males use marijuana daily
- 3.4% college females use marijuana daily
- 11.8% non-college peers use daily
- 4.8% college students use daily

Under Federal Law, marijuana is a Schedule I Controlled Substance defined as a drug with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

Annual Rate of Rx Drug Misuse/Abuse in College

- Prescription Stimulants: 11.1% in 2012, 6.7% in 2015
- Prescription Sedatives: 4% of non-college peers use, 4.4% of college students use

Driving while intoxicated

1 in 6 college students drove under the influence of a drug other than alcohol at least once in the past year

Impairment of motor coordination

CONSEQUENCES

- Euphoria
- Confusion, psychosis, hallucinations, hostility, paranoia
- Missing class, lower GPA
- Addiction
- Increased risk for cardiac effects
- Increased usage of alcohol

PREVENTION

Preventing Marijuana Use and Prescription Drug Misuse

- Help students understand health risks and consequences
- Focus on demographic and social groups at higher risk (i.e., fraternity and sorority life)
- Screen students to identify frequent marijuana users to address potential academic consequences
- Address misperceptions of perceived use versus actual use
- Work with physicians to inform students about potential health and/or legal consequences of prescription drug misuse
- Work with physicians to not overprescribe

MOVING FORWARD

- More data collection and research needed
- Conduct campus and community needs assessments
- Use campus- and community-specific data to drive prevention programming
- Evaluate efforts to determine what’s working...and what’s not
- Share findings with others to celebrate success and collaborate on challenges

Joseph Espinoza

United States Department of Justice • Drug Enforcement Administration