Legalising Harm: Why Cannabis Legalisation is an Egregious Error

Introduction

Okay, so what well-worn narrative is being parroted on this latest 'let's legalise cannabis' campaign?

- Still leading with the '*War Against Drugs Has Failed*' mantra?
- Is it, '*thousands are incarcerated for simply blazing a spliff*'?
- Or the newer tune on the playlist. '*all the money that will be saved by not having to enforce anti-drug laws*'?
- And is the refrain still '*everyone is using it or okay with people using it, so time to legalise after all, it's just a plant*'?

Well, before we get into the science – if that still matters? Let's unpack these 'old chestnuts' of pro-pot propaganda and at least have a little look at reality behind the '**smokescreen**' of *Sativa sound-bytes.*

What war on drugs?

Let us be perfectly and irrefutably clear on this… Australia, has never ever, had a 'war' on the drug issue. In fact, in 1985 when the first iteration of the National Drug Strategy was released, it was labelled 'Harm Minimisation', because the policy makers had decided that drug use, whilst undesirable, harmful and problematic, was 'part of our society'. So, one does not go to war with something that one has acquiesced to. Ah, so now the term 'war' has to be redefined, if we are going to use that meme to garner support.

The War We Never Fought – a Review of Journalist Peter Hitchens Book. This work, now 10 years old, still speaks volumes, not only about UK drug policy application, but even more to our own.

Australia have done even less than a *No War on Drugs* in the past near 40 years of drug policy. Prohibiting dangerous, health and safety harming activities in the public (more importantly in private when it comes to psychotropic toxins) is the purview of any responsible government – Federal and down.

Prohibition is not a 'war', it is a proactive and protective posture as outlined in the following statement; *"Governments should aim to… a) Protect their citizens from harm. b) Provide environments that enable its citizens to reach their full productive potential."* Gus Jaspert The Deputy Director of UK Home Office speaking at the 3rd World Forum Against Drugs. 'Protecting citizens from harm' starts with primary prevention measures, not damage management ones. Harm Reduction in the Australian Policy space was never meant to be about 'keep using drugs, just don't die', but it has been over many years, re-tasked from keeping people alive to enable them to *exit drug use*, to now simply meaning finding ways to keep the drug user, using drugs, and trying to slow the inevitable short and permanent harms.

To that end, in the last 5 years specifically we have witnessed what is now the ***growing War FOR Drugs***, in which language is hijacked, terms, phrases and even platforms are 'redefined' or 're-tasked' in such a manner to tacitly enable, endorse, equip or empower

on-going drug use right under the banner of the *Three Pillared National Strategy*. In the last 5-10 years Demand Reduction on tobacco and alcohol have increased, but on illicit drugs – it has gone the opposite direction.

The important 'harm reduction' pillar, initially created to help keep current drug users alive whilst *enabling to exit drug use*, has now become the umbrella title and policy interpretation for all three pillars. Harm Reduction vehicles are now being used, not to exit drug use, but maintain it… Of course, this actively undermines the Demand Reduction pillar. Addiction and/or dependency *guarantees* Demand, and where there is demand, supply follows. I'm sure you don't require further explanation of this clear cognitive dissonance, and now open sabotage of policy frameworks. However, if you do an entire series has been done looking at this issue. Drug Policy: Prevent Don't Promote – Changing the Narrative.

See also

- Festival of Dangerous Ideas - Hitchens
- 30 Years of Harm Minimisation – How Far Have We Come?
- Ripple Effect – Chemsex, Violence, Road Toll, and the Growing Failure of Misused Drug Policy: Reducing or Increasing Harms?
- Who is Promoting Demand?

Cannabis & Crime

(Incarceration Narratives and Facts: In Gaol for smoking a Joint?)

Our investigation of the incarceration rates for simple drug use discovered a dearth of evidence. In our Submission to the Federal LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE on ***The Criminal Code and Other Legislation Amendment (Removing Commonwealth Restrictions on Cannabis) Bill 2018*** we went to lengths to research the evidence on incarceration rates for those in correctional facilities for simply using any drug, not just cannabis.

Some recent reports have offered data on incarceration rates for simple cannabis use that seem to place it as extraordinarily high. Yet earlier data sets and research narratives tell a different story. What's of even greater interest is that in the last 5 years, policy around cannabis infringements (outside of drug driving) have been less and less.

Earlier data

It has been falsely stated that prisons are full of people incarcerated for cannabis use. Many states in the U.S. continue to criminalise cannabis, despite many states recently legalising the drug under different modes. However, incarceration rates for cannabis possession are negligible. The Bureau of Justice Statistics showed a mere 0.7% of all inmates were imprisoned for marijuana possession (with many of them pleading down from more serious crimes).

- In total, one tenth of one percent (0.1 percent) of all state prisoners were marijuanapossession offenders with no prior sentences.
- Other federal data shows that the vast majority (99.8%) of federal prisoners sentenced for drug offenses were incarcerated for drug trafficking not possession for personal use.
- Carnegie Mellon's Jonathan Caulkins, formerly the co-director of Rand's drug policy research center, found that more than 85% of people in prison for all drug-law violations were clearly involved in drug distribution and the records of most of the remaining

prisoners had at least some suggestion of distribution involvement. Only about half a percent of the total prison population involved with marijuana possession. Caulkin noted that this figure was consistent with other mainstream estimates but not with estimates from the Marijuana Policy Project (a legalization interest group), which, according to Caulkins, "naively … assumes that all inmates convicted of possession were not involved in trafficking." He concluded that "an USA DATA 2014 implication of the new figure is that marijuana decriminalization would have almost no impact on prison populations."[13]

What of Australia?

In 2018, then Senator David Leyonhjelm stated that there are 80,000 Australian inmates charged with marijuana related crimes as consumers. However, this needs clarification. Charges and incarceration are completely separate issues. According to the ABS December Quarter 2017 report, the entire full-time prison population is less than 42,000.[14]

Incarceration rates from ABS data [15] (2015–16 to 2016–17) according to the offenders' principal offence are as follows:

1. Homicide and related offences decreased for the second successive year, down by 5% or 37 offenders
2. Robbery/extortion increased by 6% or 194 offenders
3. Theft increased by 4% or 3,025 offenders
4. Illicit drug offences decreased 3% or 2,044 offenders

(This was the first time the number of Illicit drug offenders declined since the beginning of the time series in 2008–09.)

Senator Leyonhjelm's blanket statement gives the impression that cannabis users are languishing in prison is misleading. As proponents of legislation also use this argument to convince the public that the already high cannabis related incarcerations will decrease.

The following questions need an explanation from Senator Leyonhjelm and any other would be 'legaliser'…

1. Is this figure of 80,000 cannabis consumers due to primarily possessing cannabis?
2. Was the offence part of multiple criminal charges? That is, cannabis and dangerous driving or cannabis and aggravated theft, etc?
3. Did the charge lead to conviction?
4. Did the conviction lead to prison?
5. Were the charges for first time or repeat offenders?

The very latest data coming out of the US confirms the ongoing and conveniently misleading narrative of incarceration for Marijuana use.

Data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) show only 12.6% of state prisoners are behind bars for drug-related crimes and only 3.2% are locked up on possession charges – while five times as many people are in state prisons for violent crimes rather than drug charges…"It's been a long-time talking point, particularly around cannabis legalization, to say our prisons are full of pot smokers and nonviolent drug offenders. It's just something that has never been true, certainly for cannabis. You can get a night in a jail still for cannabis but going to prison is pretty much impossible anymore, not that it ever was possible."
Keith Humphreys, American psychologist (Source)

Once again, a careful analysis is required. Data collected in 2016 through self-reporting, reveals that 45 per cent of detainees tested positive for cannabis.[16] However, this statistic does not relate to the reason for their incarnation.

This submission posits that it is highly unlikely that there is a single case in Australia of incarceration for merely 'smoking cannabis'. This was evidenced in Melbourne where 100s of protesters openly smoked cannabis without a single arrest.[17]

Cannabis, Violence, Crime and Mass Murder – The War FOR Cannabis Continues and with Mounting Casualties.

> *“Legalization of recreational cannabis in California has likely invited more criminality connected to the production and transportation of the drug.”*

The cannabis cartel is upset with the latest ONDCP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) report that was sent to Congress. Here is what Marijuana Moment, the cartel’s online newspaper, has to say about the report.

It compiles a long list of law enforcement complaints about cannabis legalization.

The Northern California HIDTA, for example said in the report that illicit cannabis “remains readily available” in the region despite the state’s legalization law” and that “consequently marijuana use remains extremely high and prices remain stable.” The California officials cited by the White House argue that state-level marijuana legalization “has likely invited more criminality connected to the production and transportation of the drug, especially by [drug trafficking organizations] and organized criminal groups” and that criminal groups “have created or partnered with ostensibly legal businesses to conduct illicit production and trafficking” in the state’s “highly accessible and lucrative cash-sales commodity.” They also claim that violent incidents and “weed rips” in which products are stolen “have become more common since legalization,” citing further concerns about human trafficking and smuggling related to the cannabis trade. Illegal growing on public lands like state and national parks “continues to pose a serious environmental threat, polluting and diverting water sources, and poisoning wildlife,” the section of the report says, adding that “THC extraction

labs are a significant public safety hazard" with the propensity for explosions. There are now "many large labs selling manufactured products to legitimate storefronts," it says.

Separately, the North Central HIDTA, which covers parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin, said that "demand for higher-potency marijuana and marijuana-related products has remained high over the past several years," claiming that illegal trafficking groups "source the majority of marijuana and THC products from Colorado and West Coast states that have legalized" cannabis for recreational and medical use."There is continued concern over the relationship between marijuana trafficking and distribution and firearms and violent crime associated with these activities," the regional outfit said. "In addition, the demand for and use of high-potency edibles, oils, and vaping products has remained high, creating a serious health risk to the user community."

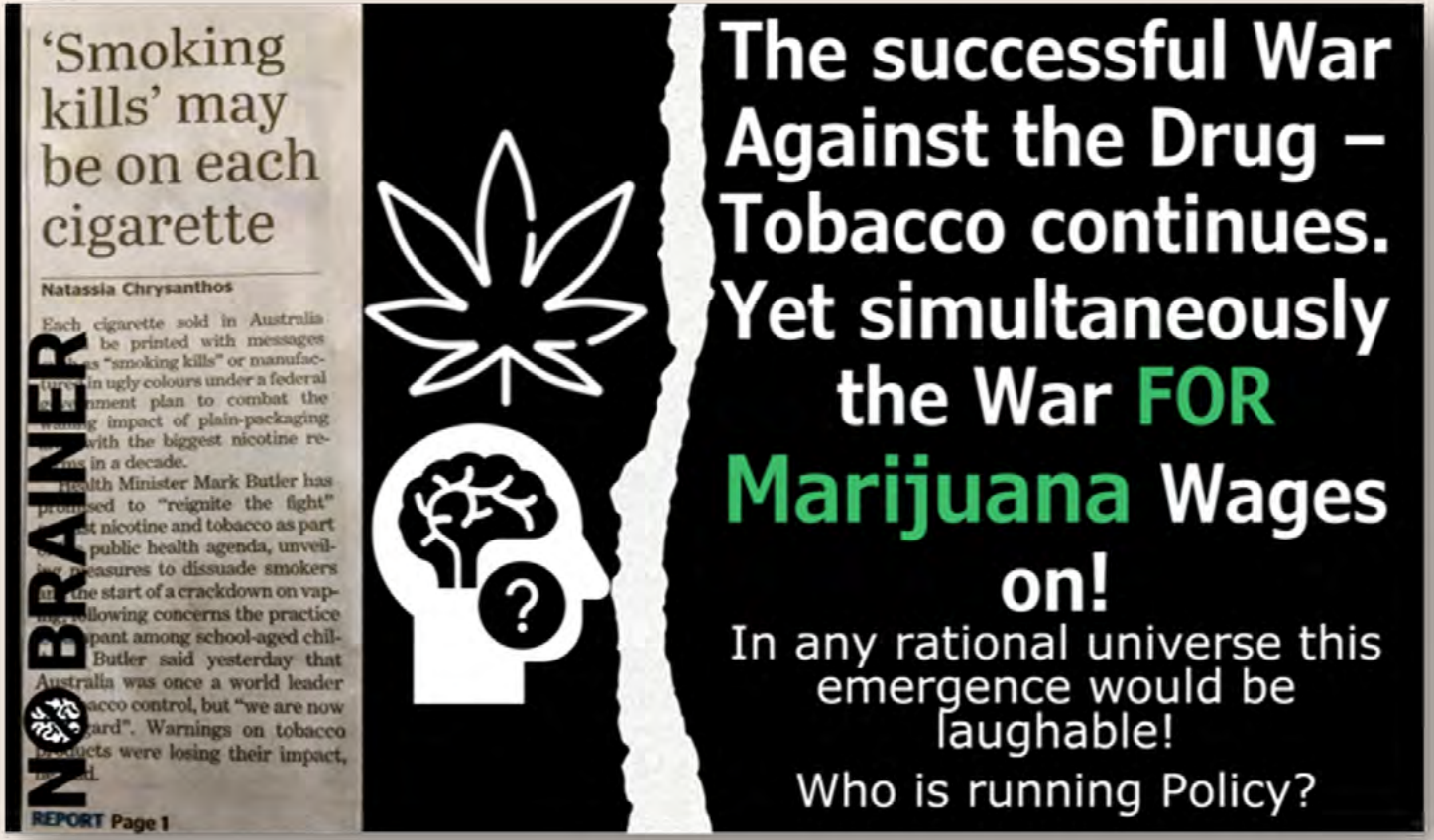
Meanwhile, the Ohio-based division of HIDTA had additional negative comments to make about the implications of state-level reform, arguing that the state's medical cannabis program "has led to an even greater amount of marijuana usage" and that marijuana "remains the number one recreational drug used in the" region. But it also said that other states with broader recreational legalization are source points for cannabis that's being consumed in the Ohio area. "Nearly all of the respondents to the 2020 Ohio HIDTA Drug Threat Survey reported the majority of marijuana consumed in their area was coming from the Western Region of the United States. It is not uncommon to see bulk shipments of high-grade marijuana products being brought into Ohio from states that have legalized marijuana such as California, Colorado, and Washington." Cannabis vaping "has become one of the most common forms of illegal use of marijuana," it said, expressing concern that such vaping products contain exceptionally high concentrations of THC. It added: "Edibles are becoming more popular with the legalization of recreational marijuana in Western States and medical marijuana in Ohio."

The South Florida HIDTA, meanwhile, said that cannabis poses a "material threat" to the region, expressing concern that "the perceived danger of marijuana by the public is diminishing in scope due to the legalization of medical marijuana" in the state. "In addition, marijuana grow operations and the parcel shipment of commercially packaged marijuana from states where it is legal to Florida, where these activities are prohibited, are vast," it said.

The Texoma HIDTA, which covers parts of Oklahoma and Texas, similarly cited concerns about drug trafficking organizations that "specialize in distribution of high-grade marijuana obtained from states with legalized forms of marijuana." "These controlled substances are every bit as destructive as other 'hard-core' drugs and negatively impact the quality of life and safety of communities throughout Texas and Oklahoma."

Read the full story at: Marijuana Moment

Source: Executive Office of the President Office of National Drug Control Policy High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program 2022 Report to Congress



One last, but by no means, least imperative before we continue; Every politician or policy maker who wants to further unleash, under government mandate, this psychotropic toxin, should be compelled to spend at least two hours talking with <u>families who are dealing with the tyranny of cannabis harms in their settings and lives.</u>

#PublicHealthMatters

What should we be looking to when it comes to public health and safety policy, especially around the use of psychotropic toxins? The Cannabis industry? Social Media noise? The 'felt needs' of the drug user? Are we going to continue with the 'vote for medicine' style antics of recent years, or again, are we going to look at best practice health and safety policies for our community over the demands of drug using constituents?

When it comes to cannabis, the Cannabis Industry is driving the 'economics' that have only made them rich, not the public purse. Drug user 'sentiment' harnessing worn mantras with new spin like 'war on drugs is a war on me!" to garner support. What seems 'voiceless' in the public square is, Public Health policy and practice.

See

No State Successful in Regulating Marijuana

Ah, but these are the key tools you want in play when Normalisation is the key. Once there is a 'sentiment' in the collective psyche, real or imagine, then we can push for legislation that is not only counter intuitive, but ultimately counter-productive to society, in many metrics.

The drugs, the substances, that do the greatest harms in our community are the legal ones – Currently alcohol and tobacco. 'Permission' enshrined in legal right is one of the greatest demand drivers for consumption, and this is no less true than for substance use.

We, as a society are working tirelessly to end the harms of tobacco and rein in the ever-growing suite of health and social harms of alcohol, yet some want to add another psychotropic toxin to this legal genre of harm producing substances and thus grant it protected status. A Status that will not 'maybe', but most definitely increase

multiple harms (along with all the attending costs) to our community.

There are libraries of evidence-based, peer reviewed and published research and data on not only the failed 'promises' of cannabis purported therapeutic offerings, but more so the incredible and growing list of harms to our community and its families – our health, productivity, safety and well-being.

Over the past four to five years a number of Inquiries have been conducted by pro-drug activists to gain legal status for not only cannabis, but as we have seen in the US and now in (in part) in our Australian Capital Territory, a releasing of all psychotropic toxins from under United Nations Conventions of illicit drugs.

- The Minority Report Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee Inquiry into the Use of Cannabis in Victoria Introduction
- Victorian Parliamentary inquiry into Cannabis – an Exercise in Better Public Health Promotion or Manufacturing Consensus for Promoting Permission?
- United Nations Report Scolds Countries for Cannabis Legalization
- Successful Submission: The Criminal Code and Other Legislation Amendment
- Recreational cannabis legalization alters associations among cannabis use, perception of risk, and cannabis use disorder treatment for adolescents and young adults

If you say NO to family violence – and we must – then we cannot say 'yes' to any drug use!

An Introduction to the Evidence of Harm

A Federal Parliamentary Inquiry was held and disturbing findings of the Impact of Illicit Drugs on Families was released in 2007. This alone should bring sober pause to any policy maker seeking to 'unleash' more psychotropic toxins of any kind, on an already damaged and struggling family culture.

The following is quite literally a *minute* sample of the disturbing and, it would appear largely, ignored science and evidence on the spectrum of harms this 'harmless' drug inflicts.

Public Health & Safety:

- State Empowered Cannabis Induced Psychosis – What Legalizing Cannabis Does to Public Mental Health
- Different Effects of Cannabis Abuse on Adolescent and Adult Brain
- Marijuana & The Workplace
- Genotoxic Portfolio of Cannabis Info Sheet
- Risks of Marijuana Use
- Association Between the Use of Cannabis and Physical Violence in Youths: A Meta-Analytical Investigation
- Legalization of Cannabis Linked with Increase in Alcohol Consumption
- W.H.O on Cannabis - But Need to Update the Rapidly Growing Harms
- Cannabis, Violence, Crime and Mass Murder – The War FOR Cannabis Continues and with Mounting Casualties.
- Cannabis May Increase the Likelihood of A-motivational Syndrome – Understanding how cannabis can blunt the reward system.
- United Nations Report Scolds Countries for Cannabis Legalization
- Marijuana, Opioids, Endocannabinoid System Debunked! Marijuana = More Opioid Deaths
- CBD to THC and Poison Gas Creation by Simply Vaping CBD
- Exploring the Neighborhood-Level Impact of Retail Marijuana Outlets on Crime
- Slew of New Research Mounts on Failures of Marijuana Legalization: Pot Shops Linked to More Youth Use, More Crime, No Reductions in Drinking
- Comprehensive Study Finds Marijuana Legalization Drives Youth Use, Crime Rates, The Black Market, And Harms Communities Of Color

Mental Health:

(since the collapsing of 'drug use' harms into the mental health statistics, it is almost impossible to determine the staggering toll that drug use has in this arena.

But the human and attending fiscal costs are staggering. Legalising this psychotropic toxin will not only add to that even a commercialization model will fail to even breach a 'break even' gap

- Cannabis Use & Risk of Psychiatric Disorders
- The Lancet Psychiatry: Single dose of psychoactive component in cannabis could induce psychotic, depressive, and anxiety symptoms in healthy people
- All Young Cannabis Users Face Psychosis Risk
- Cannabis use produces persistent cognitive impairments
- Cannabis & Mental Health
- C.I.P Cannabis Induced Psychosis - Prominent, Growing & Devastating
- High-strength cannabis linked to addiction and mental health problems
- Dr. Marta DiForte on Cannabis Induced Psychosis
- The Real Danger of Cannabis

Road Safety:

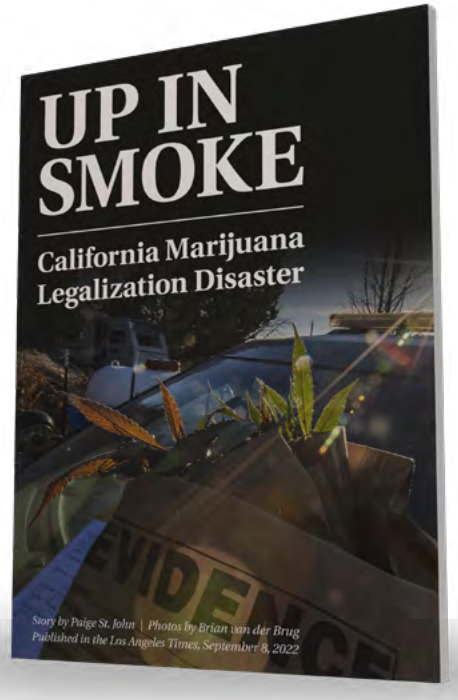
- Cannabis use altering key functions like three-dimensional vision
- More Folks Drive High When Pot Made Legal
- Medicinal Cannabis & Driving – Is it an Issue?
- Changes in Traffic Crash Rates After Legalization of Marijuana: Results by Crash Severity
- Effects of cannabis on visual function and self-perceived visual quality
- Marijuana Impact on Driving - Latest Data
- Cases of Drug-Impaired Driving up for Fourth Straight Year: Statistics Canada
- Cannabis Legalization and Traffic Injuries: Exploring the Role of Supply Mechanisms
- Cannabis Legalization and Detection of Tetrahydrocannabinol in Injured Drivers
- Is Cannabis Legalization Associated with an Increase in Cannabis-related Motor Vehicle Crash Fatalities?

Children's Harm:

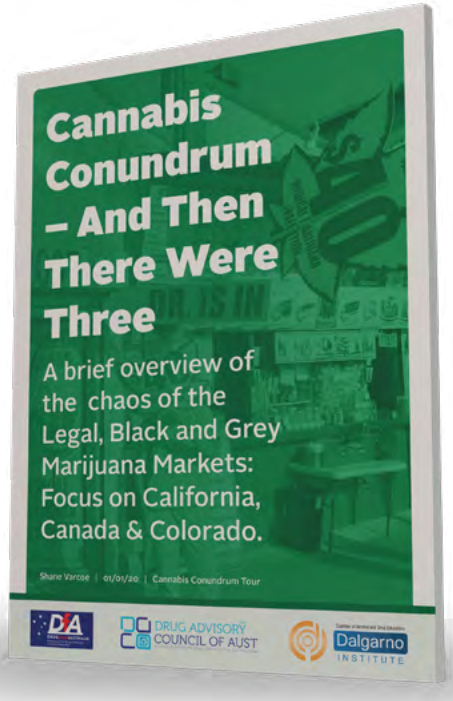
- Adolescent THC exposure induces differential acute and long-term neuronal and molecular disturbances in dorsal vs. ventral hippocampal subregions
- Permissive Norms and Laws and Longitudinal Harm to Youth
- All Young Cannabis Users Face Psychosis Risk
- Kids Continue to be Casualties of 'Grown Ups' Pot Fixation
- Worsening toll of teens hooked on cannabis is a 'silent epidemic'
- Long-Term Outcomes of Adolescent THC Exposure on Translational Cognitive Measures in Adulthood | Adolescent Medicine | JAMA Psychiatry
- Cannabis and the Gateway Drug Theory: Correlation or Causation – Where does the Evidence Point?
- Pediatric cannabis intoxication trends in the pre and post-legalization era
- The Genotoxicity of Cannabis & Why Doctors Should NOT Prescribe it!
- Cannabis Leads the Way in Children's Poisoning – Over 300,000 and Counting`
- E-Cigarette/Vaping Use of Cannabis – Next Level Concerns!
- Pediatric Hospitalizations for Unintentional Cannabis Poisonings and All-Cause Poisonings Associated With Edible Cannabis Product Legalization and Sales in Canada
- Link between teen cannabis use and other illicit drug taking in early adulthood – University of Bristol
- Cannabis and the Gateway Drug Theory: Correlation or Causation – Where does the Evidence Point?

Revenue promises not possible:

- Up In Smoke – The Californian Legalization Disaster
- No State Successful in Regulating Marijuana
- Economic & Social Costs of Legalizing Marijuana
- Then There were Three – Marijuana Markets paper
- Legalize cannabis and a veritable cornucopia will emerge.
- Environmental costs of Cannabis are Staggering
- Promised benefits of legalising cannabis are hot air – The Utterly Failed Promises of Cannabis Industry
- Cannabis Industry Can't Complete with Illicit Markets – Forbes
- The Wild 'East' of Weed" New York's Cannabis Circus proves "Biggest Fool" Theory? Legalise cannabis and regulate it to make at least enough money to offset the harms? Reduces enforcement costs, but increases 'regulatory' and crime costs? A Cannabis Industry that isn't! Three markets exist now! This is the chaotic reality of cannabis legalization. https://poppot.org/2022/12/13/new-york-wild-weed-sales-biggest-fool/

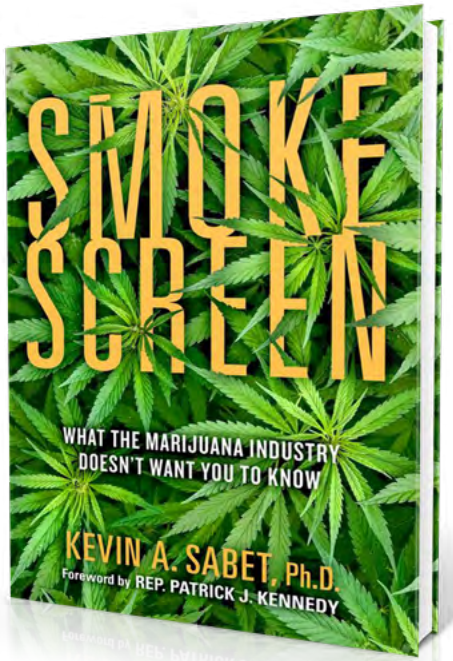


Further Evidence Based Resources & Expertise



- Smart Approaches to Marijuana
- International Academy on the SCIENCE & IMPACT OF Cannabis
- Society for Prevention Research
- Cannabis Library Resources
- Episode #80 High Truths on Drugs and Addiction with Ben Cort on Cannabis Use Disorder
- A fact-checked debate about legal Cannabis (USA)

Companies have always understood that if you are going to still be in business in in the future, a core strategy is to market to the young – children. The Addiction for Profit sector is no different. In fact, they do understand the vulnerability of the young to addiction and whilst they may feign 'concern' for this demographic, they fully understand that once the adult population embraces this drug use as normal, children will follow.



Smoke and minors:

Child marijuana use has soared 250% in last 20 years – replacing alcohol as the drug of choice for under-18s

The latest study involved nearly 340,000 reports to poison centers involving all drugs over 20 years. Researchers looked solely at those involving children aged six to 18. They found cases involving marijuana rose the quickest of any substance, replacing alcohol in 2014 and rising fastest between 2017 and 2020 – when weed began to be decriminalized at the federal level – *The sharpest surge in marijuana use was between 2017 to 2020, rising by about 40 percent in three years.*

- **Researchers in Oregon looked at 338,000 cases of intentional abuse or misuse**
- **Found marijuana has been leading cause of poisoning for children since 2018**
- **Researchers warned it was linked to legalization making drug more accessible**
- **Marijuana is considered particularly dangerous for young, developing brains and may permanently change their structure leading to a loss of IQ.**

Dr Adrienne Hughes, an emergency medicine expert at Oregon Health and Science University who led the study, said: 'These findings may reflect the impact of rapidly evolving cannabis legalization on this vulnerable population.

'Along with increasing cannabis legalization, we are also seeing the emergence of alternative modes of consumption, especially non-combustible products such as edibles and vaping devices. 'These edible products and vaping products are often marketed in ways that are attractive to youth, can be used with more discretion, and are more convenient. 'A focus group study with teenagers found that edibles were attractive to those concerned about smoking or the smell associated with smoking marijuana.'

(Source: Child marijuana use has soared 250% in last 20 years - replacing alcohol)

See also
Women in States that Legalize Cannabis are Five times More Likely to Use Cannabis While Pregnant

Research shows cannabis use in adolescents linked with anxiety and memory loss

by Prabhjot Sohal, University of Western Ontario

Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry researchers have shown that chronic exposure during adolescence to tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main psychoactive component of cannabis, may induce long-lasting memory impairments and increased anxiety levels.

The study, published in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*, uses a rodent model to pinpoint two different parts of the brain—the dorsal and the ventral regions in the hippocampus—and shows evidence of different sets of abnormalities in each region following THC exposure.

The researchers identified several key molecular and neuronal anomalies in specific regions of the hippocampus that might be independently responsible for the cognitive and emotional side effects. The study confirms previous work from their lab that shows THC exposure during adolescence can induce long-lasting disturbances.

> *"Following the legalization of cannabis, there is evidence of a reduction in perceived risks associated with cannabis use. There is a need to expand knowledge on the potential negative consequences of cannabis exposure during adolescence and this study addresses some of those gaps," said Marta De Felice, who emphasized the need to have crucial scientific evidence to inform public health policy.*

"Adolescents consuming cannabis may not be thinking of the negative long-term impacts. Our findings suggest adolescent cannabis use may affect cognitive and emotional functions through different brain pathways," said Laviolette. "The detailed anatomical findings of the study give us a chance to use more targeted interventions that might reverse the long-lasting impairments and symptoms following cannabis exposure during adolescence."

For complete article
https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-12-cannabis-adolescents-linked-anxiety-memory.

Research:
https://www.nature.com/articles/s41386-022-01496-x

Impacts of recreational cannabis legalization on cannabis use: a longitudinal discordant twin study

***Cannabis + Legalization = Greater Recreational Use (a 20% increase no less!)* This may not just translate into a 20% increase in harms - it may do exponentially more, when you consider the layering impact of physical, mental and genetic harms of this highly engineered substance!**

First published: 24 August 2022 https://doi.org/10.1111/add.16016

ABSTRACT:
To estimate the effect of recreational legalization on cannabis use frequency and sources of variance across legal environments.

Design: Longitudinal discordant twin and gene–environment interaction models in twins recruited from birth records and assessed prospectively.

Setting: The United States, including states with different recreational cannabis policies before and after 2014, when recreational cannabis was first legalized.

Participants: Two longitudinal, prospectively assessed samples of American twins aged 24–47 (n = 1425 in legal states, *n* = 1996 in illegal states), including 111 monozygotic pairs discordant for residence.

Measurements: Current cannabis use frequency (measured continuously and ordinally) was the primary outcome, and the predictor was recreational status of cannabis (legal/illegal) in the participant's state of residence at the time of assessment. Covariates include age, sex and cannabis use frequency prior to 2014.

Findings: Accounting for pre-2014 use, residents of legal states used cannabis more frequently than residents of illegal states ($b = 0.21$, $P = 8.08 \times 10^{-5}$). Comparing 111 pairs of monozygotic twins discordant for residence confirmed the effect ($b = 0.18$, $P = 0.014$). There was inconclusive evidence for genetic influences on cannabis use frequency that were specific to the legal environment [$X^2 = 2.9 \times 10^{-9}$, degrees of freedom (d.f.) = 1, $P > 0.999$]. Existing genetic influences were moderated by the

legal environment, as the genetic correlation between marijuana use before and after legalization was lower in states that legalized ($r_{genetic}$ = 0.24) compared with states that did not ($r_{genetic}$ = 0.78, $P_{difference}$ = 0.016).

***Conclusions:* In the United States, there appears to be a ~ 20% average increase in cannabis use frequency attributable to recreational legalization, consistent across increasingly rigorous designs. In addition, the heritability of cannabis use frequency appears to be moderated by legalization.** (Source: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.16016)

We here at the Dalgarno Institute are no longer bewildered by the ignoring by policy makers of this disturbing and mounting evidence. The revisited '*Reefer Madness*' as part of its new iteration, embraces the '***smokescreen***' of pro-pot propaganda, that any *'minor negative outcomes, are not only insignificant, but will be remedied in the future, we don't doubt!'*

The replication of Big Tobacco playbook is crystal clear, but now the populace is not being cleverly misinformed - no, now with all the history and data we have in play - they chose, it seems, to be willfully ignorant. That is the key factor to 1) an unfettered #addiction for #profit #cannabisindustry having its way in our culture; but more concerningly 2) an absolute #publichealth disaster for the immediate, but shockingly, future generations.

If the above is still not enough fact, evidence and data, then read on!

- Marijuana with high THC levels linked to addiction, psychiatric illness, study finds
- United Nations Report Scolds Countries for Cannabis Legalization
- Pediatric cannabis intoxication trends in the pre and post-legalization era
- Cannabis Legalization and Detection of Tetrahydrocannabinol in Injured Drivers
- Changes in cannabis use modes among Canadian youth across recreational cannabis legalization: Data from the COMPASS prospective cohort study
- Legalization of cannabis sparks curiosity in people who haven't used it in years – or ever
- Changes in Healthcare Encounter Rates Possibly Related to Cannabis or Alcohol following Legalization of Recreational Marijuana in a Safety-Net Hospital: An Interrupted Time Series Analysis
- Moral Injury Project

Coalition of Alcohol and Drug Educators

Dalgarno

INSTITUTE

Dalgarno Institute is a very long standing Not-for-profit, public interest, Health Education Charity with over ***"150 years of Minimising Harm, by Maximising Prevention."***

United Nations Office of Drugs & Crime – *Dalgarno Institute Policy Alignment*

Australian National Drug Strategy – *Dalgarno Institute Policy Alignment*

Parliamentary Inquiry Into Communication Campaigns Targeting Drug & Substance Abuse *(Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement)*

Peer-reviewed and Published Journal Articles on Cannabis Genotoxicity and Teratogenicity

1. Reece A.S. "Known Cannabis Teratogenicity Should be Carefully Considered" BMJ Rapid Response. Accepted 06/08/2018. URL: https://www.bmj.com/content/362/bmj.k3357/rr-0 Chosen as Editors Choice for BMJ 23/10/2018.

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Cannabis & Violence

1. **The Relationship Between Marijuana Use and Intimate Partner Violence in a Nationally Representative, Longitudinal Sample**

   In conclusion, any marijuana use during adolescence nearly doubles the risk for intimate partner violence perpetration and both victimization and perpetration. Future studies should examine the relationship between the eventspecific co-occurrence of marijuana use and intimate partner violence, as well as the differential effect of marijuana use on intimate partner violence by characteristics of the relationship (age discordance, number of common friends or acquaintances, etc.). These results have implications for intimate partner violence prevention efforts, as marijuana use should be a target of preventative and early intimate partner violence intervention and treatment programming.

   https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3782298/

2. **A Review of Cases of Marijuana and Violence (See Attached)**

   The main scope of this paper was to inform the public about the relationships between marijuana and violence in the general population and in individuals with mental illnesses, as recent findings do link marijuana with cases where psychosis was present. This article is a case review and not a research study; therefore, the chief limitations regard inferences that can be made from a case study. However, the findings suggest a further need for research on marijuana and violence. The authors of this paper did not intend to take sides regarding the legalization of marijuana. The focus was public health in regard to marijuana [2,11,14,18,36].

3. **Cannabis use and violence in patients with severe mental illnesses: A meta-analytical investigation (see attached)**

   These findings are clinically relevant for violence prevention/management and highlight the necessity of further investigations with methodologically-sound studies. Thus, longitudinal studies adjusting for important confounding factors (i.e., psychopathic traits and stimulant use) are warranted.

   https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2020.19101008

4. **Association Between the Use of Cannabis and Physical Violence in Youths: A Meta-Analytical Investigation (See Attached)**

   These results demonstrate a moderate association between cannabis use and physical violence, which remained significant regardless of study design and adjustment for confounding factors (i.e., socioeconomic factors, other substance use). Cannabis use in this population is a risk factor for violence.

5. **Interactive effects of PTSD and substance use on suicidal ideation and behavior in military personnel: Increased risk from marijuana use**

   https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31475423/

   Results suggest marijuana, especially for military personnel experiencing elevated PTSD symptoms may negatively impact suicidal thoughts and behavior. These results are relevant to suggestions that medical marijuana could be used in treating or augmenting treatment for PTSD.

6. **Geographical variation in hospitalization for psychosis associated with cannabis use and cannabis legalization in the United States Submit to: Psychiatry Research**

   https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35016118/

   This nationwide study identified a greater proportion of hospital discharges for psychosis associated with cannabis use in the Pacific census division, the area with the most liberal cannabis legalization policies in the United States. We found a significant correlation between the proportion of hospitalizations for psychosis associated with cannabis use within each division and the Census Division Cannabis Legality Score, a novel score that we developed and validated to represent the status of cannabis legalization within each census division, suggesting that areas that implemented more liberal cannabis legalization policies were more likely to have a greater proportion of discharges for psychosis associated with cannabis use.

7. **The contribution of cannabis use to variation in the incidence of psychotic disorder across Europe (EU-GEI): a multicentre case-control study**

   https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366(19)30048-3/fulltext

   "In conclusion, our findings confirm previous evidence of the harmful effect on mental health of daily use of cannabis, especially of high-potency types. Importantly, they indicate for the first time how cannabis use affects the incidence of psychotic disorder. Therefore, it is of public health importance to acknowledge alongside the potential medicinal properties of some cannabis constituents the potential adverse effects that are associated with daily cannabis use, especially of high-potency varieties."

8. **Cannabis and Psychosis: Recent Epidemiological Findings Continuing the "Causality Debate"**

   https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.ajp.2021.21111126

   "The increase in the prevalence of psychosis reported in this issue by Livne et al., which parallels the liberalization of cannabis laws, offers potential opportunities to delineate the causal influence of cannabis on psychosis in a counterfactual or "potential outcomes" framework. It will be critical to follow the trend observed in the study in future waves of nationally representative surveys, to inform public health policy on the mental health impact of recreational cannabis consumption."

9. **Association of High-Potency Cannabis Use With Mental Health and Substance Use in Adolescence British Journal of Psychiatry**

   https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/2765973

   *"**Conclusions and Relevance:** To our knowledge, this study provides the first general population evidence suggesting that the use of high-potency cannabis is associated with mental health and addiction. Limiting the availability of high-potency cannabis may be associated with a reduction in the number of individuals who develop cannabis use disorders, the prevention of cannabis use from escalating to a regular behavior, and a reduction in the risk of mental health disorders."*

10. **Reviews of cases of Marijuana and Violence**
    https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7084484/
    https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32121373/
    https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/5/1578

    https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/relationship-between-cannabis-and-violence-review

    https://www.drugfree.org.au/images/pdf-files/library/Marijuana_/A_Review_of_Cases_of_Marijuana_and_Violence.pdf

    Chronic Marijuana Use and Violence
    https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-files/library/Brain_Mental_Health/Chronic_Marijuana_Use_and_Violence__Linked.pdf

11. **Association Between the Use of Cannabis and Physical Violence in Youth: A Meta-Analytical Investigation**

https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/appi.ajp.2020.19101008

"The results demonstrate a moderate association between cannabis use and physical violence, which remained significant regardless of study design and adjustment for confounding factors (i.e. socioeconomic factors, other substance use). Cannabis use in this population is a risk factor for violence."

12. **Violence and Cannabis Use: A Focused Review of a Forgotten Aspect in the Era of Liberalizing Cannabis**

https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2020.567887/full

13. **TEXAS Uvalde killer and his marijuana use**

https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-files/library/Brain_Mental_Health/TEXAS_Uvalde_killer_and_his_marijuana_use.pdf

14. **Association of Cannabis use with self-harm and mortality risks among youths with mood disorders**

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2775255

15. **Recreational marijuana legalisation and domestic violence**

https://everybrainmatters.org/science/marijuana-violence/

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