



Proudly serving the counties of Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce, & Rock.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Whitney Abbott
Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator
402-336-2406
whitney@ncdhd.ne.gov

PSA: National Drug & Alcohol Fact Week

In response to National Drug & Alcohol Fact Week (January 23-29), the North Central District Health Department and the nine county coalition, Area Substance Abuse Prevention (A.S.A.P.), would like to inform the public of several myths associated with marijuana. The following information is from Prevention Plus Wellness' 2017 Marijuana Myths article.

1. "Myth: Marijuana is harmless.
The truth is that marijuana, like all drugs, poses both short and long-term risks. This is the case whether the drug is "natural" like alcohol or tobacco, or completely artificial like synthetic marijuana – Spice/K2. Negative effects of marijuana use for youth involve physical and mental health and social problems. These include, for example, vomiting, arguments with parents and trouble with the law, anxiety and depression, paranoia and hallucinations, poorer school performance, other drug use, accidental injury and death, and physical and psychological dependence
2. Myth: Marijuana is not addictive.
Marijuana, like all psychoactive substances, can be addictive. Marijuana use can result in psychological dependence resulting in it interfering with one's daily life. The term "pothead" is a slang term used to describe a person who uses marijuana habitually, even daily, and when a person's life becomes centered on his or her marijuana use. In addition, marijuana can result in physical addiction in which unpleasant withdrawal symptoms like anxiety, sleeplessness, fatigue, slow motor skills, and depression may result when an individual tries to abruptly stop using it.
3. Myth: It is safer to drive after using marijuana than after drinking alcohol.
Comparisons between marijuana and other substances, particularly alcohol, are usually presented by marijuana industry supporters to show cannabis is less risky or better than other drugs in some way. A more helpful question is does marijuana pose an increased risk for traffic and other accidents? Since marijuana slows reaction times, increases disorientation and preoccupation with surrounding stimuli, and affects decision-making, the answer is unquestionably yes. In addition, marijuana is not metabolized in the body as quickly as alcohol, so its effects on driving performance are likely last longer than those for alcohol."

###