

## DanversCARES Coalition Facts about Marijuana Use and Youth

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DanversCARES is community coalition working to prevent youth substance use. Marijuana emerges as the most commonly used illegal drug among Danvers youth, and rates of student marijuana use surpass the rates of all other illegal drugs combined. Among Danvers High School students, past month youth marijuana use is higher than past month tobacco use and while other adolescent drug use has decreased steadily since 2008, marijuana use has increased. (Danvers Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2008-2014)

### **Marijuana has long-term negative health effects on youth.**

- **Marijuana is addictive.** The National Institutes of Health found that the earlier marijuana use is initiated, the higher the risk for drug abuse and dependence. About 9% of all users become addicted to marijuana; for teens this increases to 17% (1 out of 6 teens) that become addicted, and to 25-50% for people who use daily. (NIDA Research and Report Series: Marijuana)
- **Marijuana use negatively affects adolescent brain development.** A study by the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and the National Institute on Mental Health found that adolescents and young adults who are heavy users of marijuana are more likely than non-users to have disrupted brain development. Researchers found abnormalities in areas of the brain that involve memory, attention, decision-making, language and executive functioning skills. A large, long-term study in New Zealand showed that people who began smoking marijuana heavily in their teens lost an average of 8 points in IQ in adulthood. (NIDA Drug Facts/Marijuana)
- **Marijuana use negatively affects academic achievement.** Youth with poor academic results (average grade of D or below) were four times more likely to have used marijuana in the past year than youth with an average of higher grades. (U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health/NSDUH)
- **Marijuana is the primary drug for youth in treatment for substance use in Massachusetts.** In Massachusetts, among youth receiving treatment services for drug stabilization or detoxification, marijuana is listed as their primary drug with 85% indicating past 30-day use of marijuana. (MA DPH/BSAS).

**Thank you to those who support DanversCARES mission to reduce youth substance use.**

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