

# B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol

Quarterly Newsletter

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## Local Coalition Aims to Tackle Youth Substance Use

The Bristol Prevention Coalition Eliminating Substance Abuse Together (B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol) is proud to announce that it has received a five-year federal grant that will significantly increase its ability to reduce the impact of substance use on Bristol youth.

A local coalition comprised of about 30 to 40 people from over a dozen community sectors, B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol aims to reduce the impact of substance abuse in the community, with a main focus on youth ages 12 to 17 years old.

Local data collection efforts have identified marijuana and underage drinking as the primary focus for the coalition in its first two years of prevention efforts. This data is in line with state and national data. Alcohol kills teenagers at a rate six times higher than all other substances combined. From higher graduation rates to less crime rates to higher employment rates for youth, addressing the substance abuse issue among Bristol youth and families will benefit the community in a variety of ways.

Last September, the coalition announced that it received the Drug-Free Community (DFC) grant, which totals \$125,000 per year. Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and administered through the city of Bristol, the grant will allow B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol to use effective prevention strategies that have been proven to reduce substance abuse among youth nationwide. The coalition serves as a great opportunity for youth, families, businesses and other community members to become engaged in helping Bristol move forward with this issue.

--Lisa Capobianco, Media Sector Representative, B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol

### What are we going to do?

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**Reduce the amount  
of Bristol youth who  
are drinking and  
using drugs**

### How are we going to do it?

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**Through community  
wide action and  
teamwork**

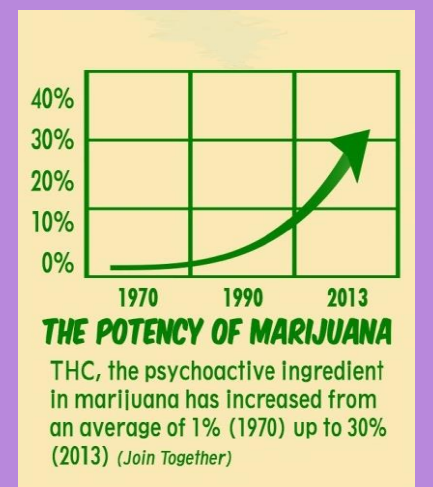
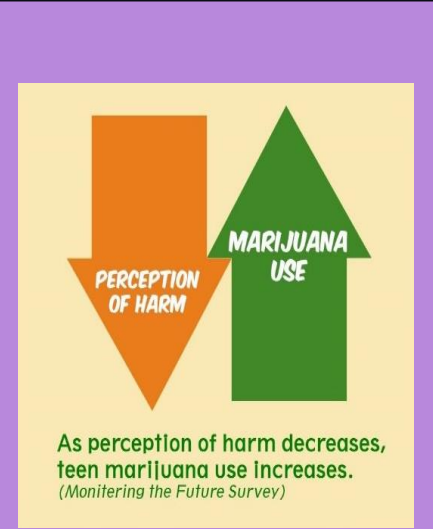


# Marijuana: We have a lot to learn

The federal government stands by its decision to classify marijuana as a Schedule I drug, which means it has a high potential for abuse and the potential to create severe psychological and/or physical dependence. The government also insists that marijuana has no currently accepted medical use. However, 25 states, including Connecticut have legalized it for medical use, and as of Nov. 9, 2016, seven states have legalized it for recreational use. Data is showing that perception of risk is decreasing with respect to marijuana. What is even more alarming is that many youth are reporting the perception of risk associated with marijuana use to be dramatically lower than other substances.

A 2013 Gallup Poll tells us that 58 percent of Americans age 18 and up favor legal use of marijuana. In Connecticut, marijuana has been decriminalized and parents report being less concerned about it. What many adults do not realize is that the marijuana being smoked today is not the same as it was when they were young. During the 1960's and 70's, the level of THC found in marijuana was 1 to 4 percent. Today, some marijuana has been tested to contain 30 percent of THC. THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, is the chemical responsible for most of marijuana's psychological effects. It acts much like the cannabinoid chemicals made naturally by the body, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse- Jesse Mancinone, Project Coordinator, B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol

<sup>1</sup> ONDCP  
<sup>1</sup> Gallop.com  
<sup>1</sup> NIDA



WHAT EVERY BUSINESS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT **MARIJUANA**  
 A QUICK GUIDE TO FAST FACTS

<p><b>ATTENDANCE</b>          Studies have linked workers' marijuana smoking with increased absences, tardiness, accidents, workers' compensation claims and job turnover. (Drugbase.org)</p>	<p><b>PRODUCTIVITY</b>          Drug abusers are less productive on the job and far more likely to miss work. (AccidentInsurance.com)</p>	<p><b>MEDICAL COSTS</b>          Medical costs for substance abusers typically run 300% more than those of other employees. (AccidentInsurance.com)</p>
<p><b>ACCIDENTS</b>          Substance abusers are almost 4 times more likely to be involved in workplace accidents. (NIDA)</p>	<p><b>EMPLOYMENT POOL</b>          Many employers have problems filling positions because applicants cannot pass drug tests. (Join Together)</p>	<p><b>EMPLOYERS SAY NO</b>          Three-fourths (75%) of employers report that they would not support legalization of recreational marijuana use. (2013 Alachua County Business Survey)</p>

**10X THE POTENCY!**  
 Edibles such as cookies and chocolates made from THC concentrates are typically ten times more potent than traditional joints (Poison Control Center)

*“Like Big Tobacco of yesteryear, Big Marijuana knows that it needs lifelong addicted customers to prosper. Addictive industries generate the lion’s share of their profits from addicts, not casual users. This means that creating addicts is the central goal. And — as every good tobacco executive knows (but won’t tell you) — this, in turn, means targeting the young.”*

<https://learnaboutsam.org/the-issues/big-tobacco-2-0-big-marijuana/>

### Myth 1-Marijuana is harmless

- ✓ 1 in 10 adults and 1 in 6 teens who try marijuana will become addicted. Children and teens are six times likelier to be in treatment for marijuana than for all other illegal drugs combined. 4
- ✓ Marijuana can cause brain damage in adolescents who are high frequency users (2-3 times/week). It affects the developing brain leading to an average of a permanent 8 point decrease in IQ.
- ✓ Marijuana use cause mental illness, especially schizophrenia to onset at a much earlier age.

### Myth 2-We will benefit financially

- ✓ Every dollar in alcohol and tobacco tax revenues costs society \$10 in legal, health, social, and regulatory expenses. 5
- ✓ In a recent CNN interview, the governor of Colorado talked about the fallacy of increased revenue in his state after legalization. 6
- ✓ Money that was promised to Colorado schools because of legalization never materialized in classrooms.
- ✓ Prevention dollars have not increased due to casino revenue or tobacco settlements in Connecticut.

### Myth 3-Legalization will reduce law enforcement costs

- ✓ Legalizing marijuana possession would not significantly reduce the state prison population. In fact, less than 1 percent of state inmates are behind bars for marijuana possession only. 7
- ✓ Among sentenced prisoners under state jurisdiction in 2008, 18 percent were sentenced for drug offenses. Of that 18 percent, 99.8 percent were sentenced for drug trafficking. 7

## Case Study: Colorado Lessons Learned

**Increase in youth marijuana use-** In 2013, the year following legalization, past 30 day use reported by youth (12-17) rose between 6 and 20%. Nationally, youth past month marijuana use declined 4 percent during that time. The latest NSDUH 2013/2014 results show that Colorado youth ranked #1 in the nation for past month marijuana use—up from #14 in 2006. 8 Drug-related suspensions and expulsions have increased by 34 percent. 9

**Driving under the influence-** Marijuana-related traffic deaths increased 48 percent in the three-year average (2013-2015) since Colorado legalized recreational marijuana compared to the three-year average (2010-2012) prior to legalization. During that time, all traffic deaths increased 11 percent. In 2009, Colorado marijuana-related traffic deaths involving operators testing positive for marijuana represented 10 percent of all traffic fatalities. By 2015, that number doubled to 21 percent. 10

**Impact on Business-** Studies have linked workers' marijuana smoking with increased absences, tardiness, accidents, workers compensation claims, and job turnover. 11 Many employers have problems filling positions because applicants cannot pass drug tests. 12

**“Right now, the Big Marijuana business is taking a page out of Big Tobacco of the 1950s -- advertising and making claims without any scientific merit or oversight”**

– Kevin Sabet, President and CEO for Smart Approaches to Marijuana(SAM)

## Connecticut Social Hosting Law: What Parents Need to Know

Effective Oct. 1, 2012: Anyone of any age in “control over any dwelling unit or private property” can be liable if teens are caught drinking on the property.

The newly modified law expands liability from those who “knowingly permit” underage drinking to those who “recklessly or with criminal negligence permit” the drinking.

What this means: the person in control (i.e. liable) doesn’t have to be present; doesn’t have to be aware of the drinking; doesn’t have to be an adult; but DOES have to attempt to stop any drinking.

*Learn the law and talk with your children about their responsibilities and liabilities concerning underage drinking.*

\*For more information on the Social Host Laws in Connecticut or underage drinking, please call

B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol at (860) 314-4690

or visit any of these websites:

[www.settherulesct.org](http://www.settherulesct.org)

[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

[www.toosmarttostart.samsha.gov](http://www.toosmarttostart.samsha.gov)



### Our Mission

B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol works toward unifying the community to promote wellness in our culture through increasing education, implementing strategies and enforcing policy to prevent substance abuse by youth and those who impact their development

### Our Vision

developing a culture of awareness and sustained action that will promote positive youth development and a healthier community

Do you have any questions or concerns? Contact: B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol’s Project Coordinator  
Jesse Mancinone at (860) 314-4690 or Email: [jessemancinone@bristolct.gov](mailto:jessemancinone@bristolct.gov)  
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