

SAMHSA NATIONAL PREVENTION WEEK

MAY 18-24

National Prevention Week is a SAMHSA-supported annual health observance dedicated to increasing public awareness of, and action around, substance abuse and mental health issues. National Prevention Week 2014 is about Our Lives. Our Health. Our Future. We'll be highlighting the important role each of us has in maintaining a healthy life and ensuring a productive future.

The Time Is Now to Prevent Drug Use Issues in Our Community – It's Our Health, Our Future

Marijuana use and prescription drug abuse are widespread problems in the United States. In 2012, 18.9 million people aged 12 or older used marijuana, and approximately one in four of them used marijuana on a daily or almost daily basis. In addition, an estimated 8.9 million people aged 12 or older used other illicit drugs in the past month, most commonly prescription drugs for nonmedical purposes.¹ Use and abuse of illicit and prescription drugs can result in short term side effects, including hallucinations, dangerous levels of dehydration and overheating, and feelings of sadness, anxiety and depression. Their use also carries long-term consequences, such as liver and lung disease, heart failure, coma, and death.²

A serious concern is that usage trends show some increases, specifically among young adults:

- Since 2006, there has been a 74.2 percent increase in the number of people aged 12 or older who used marijuana on a daily or almost daily basis in the past year.
- In 2012, young adults aged 18 to 25 years old were more than twice as likely as people aged 12 to 17 and 26 years and older to have used illicit drugs in the past month. The rate of use among 18 to 25 year olds (21.3 percent) has also risen over the past 10 years.³

You can help change these numbers. Statistics show that a person's willingness and ability to use illicit drugs is directly impacted by the attitudes and actions of friends and relatives. Over 50 percent of people aged 12 or older in 2011-2012 who used pain relievers nonmedically in the past year got them from a friend or relative. Furthermore, in the past year, youth aged 12 to 17 who believed their parents would strongly disapprove of their using specific substances were less likely to use those substances.⁴ Even one person's actions can have an important effect on a loved one's health and future.

¹Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). *Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings*, NSDUH Series H-44, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 12-4713. Rockville, MD. Retrieved September 25, 2013, from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2012SummNatFindDetTables/NationalFindings/NSDUHresults2012.htm>.

² Above the Influence.com. (n.d.). Drug Facts. Retrieved November 19, 2012, from <http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/facts/drugfacts>.

³Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). *Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings*, NSDUH Series H-44, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 12-4713. Rockville, MD. Retrieved October 17, 2013, from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2012SummNatFindDetTables/NationalFindings/NSDUHresults2012.htm>.

⁴Ibid.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
<http://beta.samhsa.gov/prevention-week>