



**THE FACTS:  
WHY MARIJUANA  
SHOULD NOT  
BE LEGALIZED!**

### • Alcohol and Drugs

The dangers and costs associated with alcohol abuse and intoxication are staggering, even though a majority of adults who use alcohol on occasion as a beverage avoid intoxication. For youth, however, underage drinking is a major risk since alcohol is usually consumed for the specific purpose of intoxication or getting high. Underage drinking is never a responsible choice.

Marijuana and illegal drugs are solely used for their intoxicating effects by adults and youth. These substances are always used to get high or stoned and do not serve as a beverage. When a substance is used for the purpose of intoxication, treatment experts call that a form of abuse. The United Nations defines all use of illegal drugs as abuse.

### • Drug "Rights"

Individual rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. Illegal drugs inevitably lead to intoxication and impairment of good judgment. Impaired minds often make unsafe decisions about child care, driving, and safety in the workplace, putting non-users at risk. Non-using children have the "right" to drug-free schools, sober drivers, parents, neighborhoods, and teachers. Drug use costs society \$60 billion a year and drug use returns no public benefit.

### • Is Giving Up an Option?

An argument is made: we cannot stop all drug use so we might as well legalize, tax it, and learn to live with it. Does the same hold true for racism, hate crimes, pollution, or child abuse? If we are going to accept enslavement of some children to drugs, whose children will they be? Tobacco and alcohol taxes do not come close to paying their social costs.

### • Pot Never Killed

Accidents are the leading cause of death among youth. Today's marijuana is much stronger than ever before and is linked to tens of thousands of impaired driving accidents each year. A cheaper, stronger, legal marijuana would lead to even more accidents, both on the road as well as in the work place, resulting in the deaths of youth and adults alike. Marijuana smoke has the same cancer causing chemicals as tobacco and causes respiratory damage. The drug is correlated with failure at school, depression, and memory loss. Marijuana is the number one drug problem for youth in treatment centers in the United States.

### • History Lesson

In 1979 numerous states decriminalized marijuana, the White House supported it, and the marijuana smokers' lobby power was at a peak. The result: the highest levels of youth drug use of any civilized nation with one in ten high school seniors stoned on pot every day of the week!

Parents, not government, reversed this policy and with smart enforcement and strong preservation and treatment policies, youth drug use was cut in half and is still on the decline.

### • Drug Enforcement Reality

Legalizing marijuana will not reduce drug related arrests. There are more alcohol related arrests than marijuana arrests already and alcohol is legal. Nationwide, 70% of all arrests are for public nuisance offenses, and intoxicated people account for a high number of these.



## [ GOOD NEWS ]

Drug use among U.S. youth was cut in half since 1980 and is on the decline. This was accomplished through prevention, education, treatment, law enforcement and community initiatives.

## REALITY

Nations that liberalize drug policy, such as Great Britain and Spain, experience increased rates of marijuana and drug use among youth.

By legalizing drugs, no nation has ever lowered drug use among youth.

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Distributed by the Elks Drug Awareness Program



Funded by a Grant from the Elks National Foundation, Inc.