

Rising fatal car accidents after states legalize marijuana bringing attention to driving under the influence

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World warns about marijuana causing slow reaction time, slowed decisions, impaired coordination, and distorted perception

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, September 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The School of Public Health at the University of Illinois Chicago documented a link between legal cannabis and increased motor vehicle deaths. According to their article from March of this year, "The UIC researchers found that there was a substantial increase in crash fatalities in four of the seven states used in the study with legalized recreational markets and that, on average, recreational markets were associated with a 10% increase in motor vehicle accident deaths." (1)



Law enforcement checking for people who are high and driving. Credit:mpnews.org

These figures are also backed by the National Institute of Health (NIH) in a study that shows fatal traffic crash rates in the US between 2009 and 2019. Their study showed that "the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana was associated with a 6.5% increase in injury crash rates and a 2.3% increase in fatal crash rates." (2)

To teach more about the effects of marijuana, the Foundation for a Drug-Free World has broadly distributed their [booklet on marijuana](#) which states that it is one of the most abused drugs in the world; that marijuana is a drug like alcohol, cocaine, or ecstasy; and that like these other drugs, it has side effects that can be harmful.

A revealing fact pointed out in the booklet, alongside many other important facts, is that the chemical that causes intoxication, THC, is the protective mechanism of the marijuana plant. Many plants and animals in the wild have poisons or toxins that, when eaten, make animals sick.

This is a part of nature and survival in the wild. THC intoxicates, and intoxication literally means “to poison by taking a toxic substance into your body.” Any substance that intoxicates causes changes in the body and the mind. It can create addiction or dependence, causing a person to want to take that drug even if it harms him or her.

Since THC is a harmful and powerful toxin, it can cause negative effects on its users in their daily lives, in their relationships, and in their mental and physical wellbeing. According to the

[CDC](#), "an estimated 48.2 million people have used marijuana at least once in the year 2019," and marijuana "is known to impair important skills such as slowing reaction time and ability to make decisions, impairing coordination, and distorting perception." (3)



Ms. Thalia Ghiglia works in the community to share drug education materials.

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Thalia Ghiglia, Foundation for a Drug-Free World

This is a drug that has become legalized in many states and even in states where it is illegal, there are medical marijuana dispensaries and the ability to obtain this drug easily. Alcohol is still the biggest killer in car accidents while driving under the influence. However, other drugs cause impairment and have the ability, due to their effects on the mind and body, to cause accidents. A research article published by Boston University shows that "From 2000 to 2018 the percentage of crash deaths involving cannabis increased from 9 percent to 21.5 percent, and the percentage of deaths involving cannabis and alcohol also more than doubled, from 4.8 percent to 10.3 percent. Their

results also show that cannabis-involved car crashes are more likely to involve the deaths of passengers, as well as individuals younger than 35, compared to crash deaths not involving cannabis." (4)

The mission of the Foundation for a Drug-Free World is to educate youth and adults on the most commonly abused drugs so that people can be informed to make the right decisions. Whether it is peer pressure, or a friend or loved one under the influence, people do have the power to take a stand and choose to be drug-free, or not drive with someone consuming drugs if they are educated and equipped with the right information.

Thalia Ghiglia, Foundation for a Drug-Free World, said, "No one, especially a young person, likes to be lectured about what he or she should not do. The Foundation for a Drug-Free World provides facts that empower youth to freely choose not to take drugs. Additionally, The Truth About Drugs campaign consists of activities that they can join which popularize drug-free living. These activities are simple, effective and can involve people of all ages."

As the centerpiece of the Foundation for a Drug-Free World's current anti-drug program, there are sixteen anti-drug [public service announcements](#). These award-winning videos are based on real-life situations and expose the most commonly held myths about drugs. These videos are available in 17 languages at www.drugfreeworld.org.



Free education booklet on Marijuana available for download at drugfreeworld.org



Through a worldwide network of volunteers, 50 million drug prevention booklets have been distributed, tens of thousands of drug awareness events have been held in some 180 countries, and The Truth About Drugs public service announcements have been aired on more than 500 television stations. These materials and activities have helped people around the world learn about the destructive side effects of drugs and thereby make the decision for themselves to not use them.

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World's Washington, DC, chapter participates in many group and community events continually throughout the year to inform the public, their families, and children about the dangers of drugs. Thalia Ghiglia, Foundation for a Drug-Free World's faith liaison in Washington, DC, has given lectures to nearly one thousand school children in the DC area this year and is delivering lectures regularly to seniors, children, adults, and groups interested in the problem and how to prevent friends and relatives from taking drugs. She recently participated in a football camp in Baltimore, MD, with professional players urging kids to stay involved in sports and away from drugs.

Works Cited

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