

Marijuana Use: What We Now Know and What Don't Know Yet *

There has been a lot of discussion in the media and across the nation lately related to legalization of marijuana and increasing access to marijuana for recreational use. There are many reasons to be concerned about the impact this could have on public health. Our coalition aims to be a local resource for sound research and information to design informed policy and practice that supports safe and healthy communities.

Some of the things we know:

Marijuana can be addictive - 1 in 10 people who try marijuana become addicted to it, developing a dependence that produces withdrawal and cravings. If someone starts using as a teenager, the chances of addiction are 1 in 6. Up to half of the people who smoke marijuana daily become addicted. In fiscal year 2011, Vermont spent 2.1 million dollars to provide treatment to Vermonters for marijuana addiction.

Marijuana use is bad for kids — Developing brains (the human brain is not fully mature until up to age 25) are particularly susceptible to consequences from marijuana use. Marijuana use directly impairs the parts of the brain responsible for memory, learning, critical thinking, and reaction for up to 28 days after someone is abstinent. In a well designed, longitudinal study released in 2012 researchers concluded that persistent heavy marijuana use in adolescence led to a drop in IQ of up to 8 points when tested in adulthood.

Potency has drastically increased— The increased potency of marijuana products available today may explain why more people are getting addicted, overdosing, and getting into car crashes. The concentration of the main active ingredient in marijuana – THC – has increased 5 times since the 1960s, estimated around 12% today.

What we don't know enough about yet:

Is it a "gateway" drug? - It is unclear. People who use marijuana are more likely to later abuse other drugs. But scientists aren't sure of the reason. Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse reports, "It's possible that marijuana, like alcohol and nicotine, prime the brain for a heightened response to other drugs. But it's also possible that people who are susceptible to drug abuse simply start with marijuana because it's more accessible."

"Occasional" use - Most research on marijuana is based on regular or daily use. We know less about the impact of using marijuana once a week or once a month.

This article provides only a small portion of the information and research available on this issue. We encourage you to visit the websites below to learn more and help add an informed voice to our state and national discussions about marijuana policy.

Vermont Department of Health "Marijuana Use in Vermont" www.healthvermont.gov/adap/drugs/marijuana.aspx

National Institute on Drug Use and Health www.drugabuse.gov

Marijuana Studies Program MarijuanaReport.org

* We did not have enough room to include citation info. in this article. Email mariah@burlingtonpartnership.org for citations.

We are excited to announce that we received additional funding from the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation to increase the reach of our YouParent program. Thank you VCTF for the opportunity to bring new and improved information and support to our community!



It's hard to know what to say and do during the challenging years of middle and high school...

You Parent
BURLINGTON
Real. Parenting. Support.

Empowering Youth to Engage & Lead

Engaging young people in school and community wellness initiatives and building a culture supportive of a substance free life is a strong component of our mission. Below are some of our recent collaborative activities with local school prevention groups. Join us in supporting and empowering one of our most valuable community assets - our youth.



If You Must Dream of the Life You Want, START Dreaming Out Loud!

Burlington's school youth prevention groups support their peers to live life at its best, substance free. Encourage your young person to get involved in activities to make a positive impact on the community. Organizations including BHS's **Students Taking Action and Risks Together (START)** and Edmunds and Hunt Middle Schools', **Vermont Kids Against Tobacco (VKAT)** offer tremendous opportunities for youth to feel empowered and have a voice in supporting health initiatives in the community.



Here are the contacts at each school to learn more:

BHS: Jill Nye-McKeown jnye@bsdvt.org

EMS: Angela Halsted ahalsted@bsdvt.org

Hunt MS: Peggy Weaver pweaver@bsdvt.org



PROJECT STICKER SHOCK: Keeping Kids Safe for Prom

Research shows that more teens die from drinking and driving during prom season than at any other time of year. This May, our staff and 5 students from Burlington High School's Students Taking Action & Risks Together group traveled to retailers in Burlington to implement Project Sticker Shock in the week before the BHS prom! The group placed bright stickers on alcoholic beverages and cooler windows at grocery and convenience stores that read: "Hey there, please keep this out of the hands of minors. Providing alcohol to people under 21 may result in fines up to \$2,000 and 2 years in jail." Sticker Shock is a great way to remind adults how important it is to support our youth in making healthy decisions and resisting negative influence. BHS student Tian Berry gave this reason for participating in the project, "Sticker shock is a way for us to start spreading the message around Burlington to adults and high school students that staying sober is okay, even if other people aren't, and that there are punishments for breaking the law." **Please help us thank the following Burlington retailers for participating this year:**

Waggy's Store & Deli

Bessery's Quality Market

Old North End Variety

Pearl Street Beverage

Kerry's Kwik Stop

Champlain Farms Sunoco-Shelburne Rd.

Pine Street Deli

Merola's Market

Coming Soon to a Community Near You...



Did you know the tobacco industry spends over \$19 MILLION a year on tobacco advertising here in Vermont and that youth are 3 times as sensitive as adults to that advertising? In Vermont, the majority of those advertising dollars go to "point of purchase" advertising that is most often seen in the small convenience stores where adults are stopping for their gas and morning coffee or our kids are stopping by after school to pick up a snack. Join with us and other

Vermonters to address the placement, quantity, and access to these adult products to create a healthy environment in Burlington for youth to succeed.

Want to help?

- Ask store owners to reduce their tobacco and/or alcohol ads.
- Teach your kids to think critically about advertising.
- Encourage our key leaders to create policies that reduce youth exposure to ads in Burlington.
- Contact us to get more involved!

JOIN US for our 6th Annual Roots of Prevention Award Celebration!

Help us recognize the outstanding individuals and organizations making a positive difference in the health and wellness of our city. This celebration is our annual way of bringing people together to support the hard work of individuals, programs, and organizations instrumental in creating a healthier, safer and more vibrant Burlington community!

October 22nd, from 8:30-10:30am ,
registration and breakfast buffet begins at 8:00am

ECHO Center, 1 College Street, Burlington

**donations are appreciated, but are not required to attend*

For a list of this year's awardees and registration info visit: burlingtonpartnership.org



A special thank you to our presenting sponsor Burlington Labs and our premiere sponsors below for supporting us to host this event for our community, free of charge!



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Increasing Support for Smoke-Free Public Spaces

The facts are clear. "There is NO risk free level of exposure to secondhand smoke" (Surgeon General's Report). For this reason, BPHC continues to support the Burlington community to promote community events, worksites, college campuses and major public spaces as smoke-free zones.

Our coalition now coordinates the Tobacco-Free College Campus Initiative for Vermont. Because young adults are the only group of the US population with increasing smoking rates we are working aggressively to support the colleges in our area and across the state to expand their smoke-free and tobacco-free policies.

In addition, our staff has been sharing facts and research with the appropriate policy makers, businesses, and community members about the effects of smoke-free outdoor spaces on smoking rates, youth initiation, and public health. Now it is your turn!

How you can help!

Create a smoke-free worksite: We have partnered with the Vermont Department of Health to spread the word about their new FREE metal signs to promote your smoke-free or tobacco-free zone! Contact Mariah at mariah@burlingtonpartnership.org for an order form for signs that can be customized with your organization or business logo in two different sizes. BPHC also provides small removable window decals that read, "Breathe easy. Smoke free zone" if you need something less permanent.

Promote your public events as smoke-free: We offer the use of smoke-free event signs, banners, and handouts for events in Burlington. If you are interested in borrowing the signs for an event contact Mariah at mariah@burlingtonpartnership.org or give us a call at (802)652-0997.

Support policies that eliminate smoking in public places: Now is a great time to reach out to the Burlington City Council and other policy leaders to share your opinions and ideas on how to reduce the negative health consequences of smoking in public places. Whether it be a physical letter, e-mail or phone call, all forms of thoughtful correspondence to city councilors on this issue are valuable.

Visit our website burlingtonpartnership.org to learn more about our work to create smoke-free zones!





**Our coalition is excited to help promote Vermont's 802Quits!
802Quits offers proven resources to help smokers quit.**

FREE smoking cessation support and resources to all Vermont residents, including students in residence at Vermont colleges.

- Online at 802Quits.org
- By phone at 1-800-QUIT-NOW
- In person with **Vermont Quit Partners** around the state

**YOU CAN QUIT.
WE CAN HELP.**

802Quits.org also offers tips, free tools to try at home, and support to help people quit smoking on their own.

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**Thank you for doing your part to make Burlington
such a wonderful place to be and live!**

A common phrase among people who work in substance abuse prevention is "prevention works!" The reason we say that is because researchers at Iowa State University found that for every \$1 spent on prevention efforts, it saves \$10 that would later be spent on treatment, associated health costs, emergency room services, and incarceration! **Would you consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation to BPHC?** Every gift, regardless of its size, will help us reduce youth substance use rates in Burlington and makes a BIG impact on our community's future.

Yes! I want to help make Burlington an even healthier place to live!

**Please accept my enclosed donation to assist with community efforts
to make Burlington a safer, healthier place for everyone.**

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

___ \$10 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ Other (\$____)

Thank you!

Please return this form and your tax-deductible gift to: BPHC, PO Box 1353, Burlington, VT



*We rely on the community's generous donations of
time, ideas, creativity and money. To get involved,
contact us, or make a donation:*

