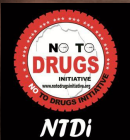


THE TRUTH ABOUT

# JOINTS



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Behind the smokescreen of a drug  
that destroys from the inside out

Smoke  
Chronic Weed Pot  
Herb Grass  
Dope

## WHY THIS BOOKLET WAS PRODUCED

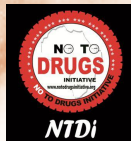
**D**rugs destroy millions of lives every year, yet the most disturbing aspect of this problem is the damage drug abuse does to our young people and to the future of our country. With more and more young people being introduced to drugs, we must provide educational materials with factual information about their dangers.

This booklet is dedicated to those individuals, groups and organizations working to salvage others from the ravages of drug abuse. Society owes them a debt of gratitude for their cooperative efforts and we hope this booklet will assist them.

Sadly, some in society seek to promote and spread drug use for profit or gain—a fact that has been exposed too many times for anyone to be fooled.

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# WHAT IS marijuana?

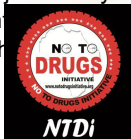
**M**arijuana is the word used to describe the dried flowers, seeds and leaves of the Indian hemp plant. On the street, it is called by many other names, such as: astro turf, bhang, dagga, dope, ganja, grass, hemp, home grown, J, Mary Jane, pot, reefer, roach, Texas tea and weed.

Hashish is a related form of the drug, made from the resins of the Indian hemp plant. Also called “chocolate,” “hash,” or “shit,” it is on average six times stronger than marijuana.

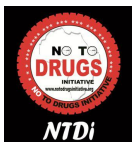
“Cannabis” describes any of the different drugs which come from Indian hemp, including marijuana and hashish.

Regardless of the name, this drug is a hallucinogen – a substance which distorts how the mind perceives the world you live in.

The chemical in cannabis that creates this distortion is delta 9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). The amount of THC found in any given batch of marijuana may vary substantially, but overall, the percentage of THC has increased in recent years.



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# How is it used?

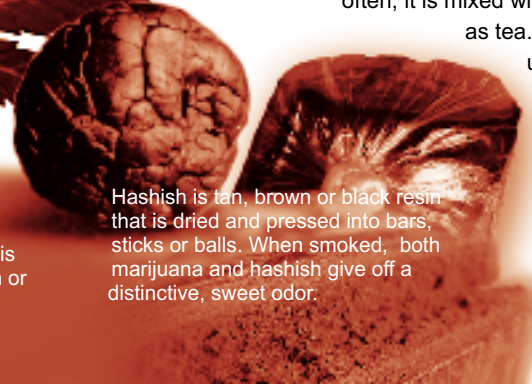
**M**arijuana is the most commonly used illegal drug in the world. A survey conducted in 2002 found that 14 million individuals in the United States alone had smoked marijuana at least once during the previous month.

Marijuana is usually smoked as a cigarette (joint), but may also be smoked in a pipe. Less often, it is mixed with food and eaten or brewed as tea. Sometimes, users open up cigars and remove the tobacco, replacing it with pot – called a “blunt.” Joints and blunts are sometimes laced with other, more powerful drugs, such as crack cocaine or PCP (phencyclidine).

When a person smokes a joint, he usually feels its



Marijuana is a mixture of dried out leaves, stems, flowers and seeds of the hemp plant. It is usually green, brown or grey in color.



Hashish is tan, brown or black resin that is dried and pressed into bars, sticks or balls. When smoked, both marijuana and hashish give off a distinctive, sweet odor.

effect within minutes. The immediate sensations – increased heart rate, lessened coordination and balance, and a “dreamy,” unreal state of mind – peak within the first 30 minutes. These short-term effects usually wear off in two to three hours, but they could last longer, depending on how much the user takes, the potency of THC and the presence of other drugs laced into the mix.

As the typical user inhales more smoke and holds it longer than he would with a cigarette, a joint creates a severe impact on one’s lungs. Aside from the discomfort that goes with sore throats and chest colds, it has been found that consuming one joint gives as much exposure to cancer-producing chemicals as smoking five cigarettes.

The mental consequences of marijuana use are equally severe. Marijuana smokers have poorer memories and mental aptitude than do non-users.

Animals given marijuana by researchers have even suffered structural damage to the brain.

## street names

SK	Sconk
Dope	Kush
Blar	Lala
Ganja	Kpoli
Bgannar	J
Weed	Mary Jane
Grass	Reefer
White Widow	Roach
Ganja	Texas Tea
Astro Turf	Hashish
Bhang	Chocolate
Dagga	Hash
Wolar	Shit
Hemp	Home grown
Pot	Herb



# Marijuana its background

**T**he hemp plant (from which cannabis drugs like marijuana and hashish are made) was grown for use as a hallucinogen more than 2,000 years ago.

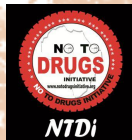
Although cannabis contains over 400 different chemicals, the main ingredient which affects the mind is THC. The amount of THC in the hemp plant determines the strength of the drug. The weather, soil and other factors determine the percentage of THC found in the plant. But by using

modern farming techniques, hemp growers have developed strains of cannabis which have much higher levels of THC than in the past. THC levels used to average 1 percent in 1974, but by 1994 this had risen to 4 percent. The levels in hashish are even greater.

One form of cannabis, called Sinsemilla (Spanish for “without seeds”) may have THC levels from 7.5 to as much as 24 percent.

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# ALCOHOL VS. MARIJUANA

Is smoking a joint the same as drinking alcohol?

You decide. Here are the facts:

Alcohol consists of one substance only: ethanol. Marijuana contains more than 400 known toxins and cancer-causing chemicals.

Alcohol is eliminated from the body in a few hours; THC stays in the body fat for months, possibly longer. Thus, a person who smokes two to three joints a week is constantly under the influence of the drug.

THC damages the immune system. Alcohol does not.

There is no intention here to minimize the dangers of alcohol abuse, which can be equally harmful. Alcohol, however, can be used in moderation without causing severe damage. Cannabis, which is used almost exclusively as an intoxicant, is far more dangerous even when used in small amounts because its active agent continues to build up in body fat.

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# International Statistics

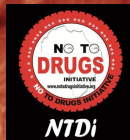
According to the United Nations, 161 million people around the world use marijuana – more than 4 percent of the entire population of planet Earth. Over 94 million in the U.S. have admitted using it at least once.

In 2001 alone, there were an estimated 2.6 million new users.

During one 12-month period, there

were 3.1 million people who used marijuana on a daily or a near-daily basis.

- During 2002, Mexico produced about 7,900 metric tons of marijuana; Colombia produced 4,000 metric tons. Not surprisingly, 58 percent of teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17, state that pot is easy to obtain. U.S. marijuana users spent approximately \$10.5 billion on the drug in the year 2000.
- In 2002, marijuana was the third most commonly mentioned drug by patients in drug-related hospital visits.





- In 2002, more than 40 percent of those arrested in 36 separate locations across Nigeria, tested positive for marijuana in voluntary urine tests.

- Of adults 26 or older who used marijuana before age 15, 62 percent went on to use cocaine at some point in their lives; 9 percent went on to use heroin at least once; and 54 percent made some non-medical use of psychopharmaceuticals.

- Next to alcohol, marijuana is the second most frequently found substance in the bodies of drivers involved in fatal automobile accidents.



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# THE DETSTRUCTIVE EF FECTS OF MARIJUANA



**T**he immediate effects of taking marijuana include rapid heart beat, disorientation, lack of physical coordination, often followed by depression or sleepiness. Some users suffer panic attacks or anxiety.

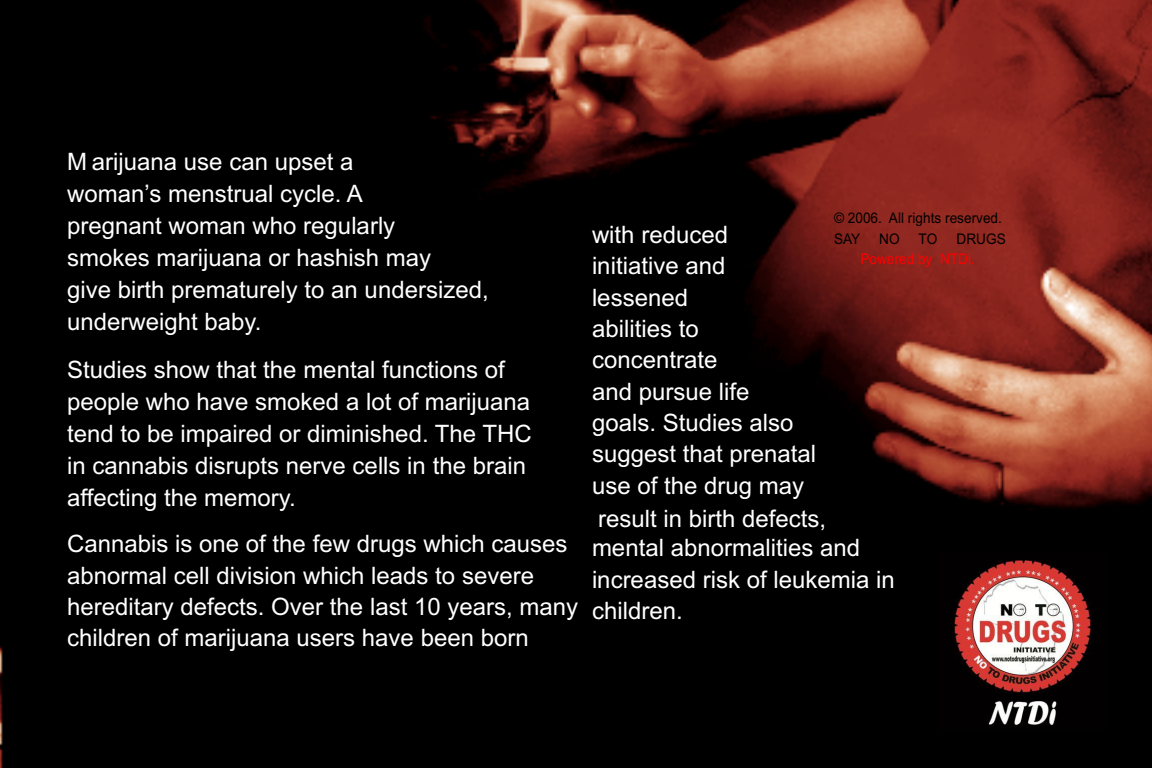
But the problem does not end there. The active ingredient in cannabis, THC, remains deposited in fat cells and organs such as the brain, sex glands (testicles and ovaries), spleen, liver and lungs.

What does that mean to you? Even if you stop using the drug, you can continue to experience harmful physical and mental side effects from it for months or even years.

Smoking marijuana and hashish causes more lung damage than smoking tobacco. The risk of lung cancer is many times higher for joint smokers than for cigarette smokers. Marijuana smoke contains 50% to 70% more cancer-causing hydrocarbons than cigarettes and one joint is equal to 5 tobacco cigarettes. Chronic joint smokers often suffer from bronchitis, an in Êammation of the respiratory tract.

Marijuana changes the structure of sperm cells, deforming them. Thus even small amounts of marijuana can cause temporary sterility in men.





Marijuana use can upset a woman's menstrual cycle. A pregnant woman who regularly smokes marijuana or hashish may give birth prematurely to an undersized, underweight baby.

Studies show that the mental functions of people who have smoked a lot of marijuana tend to be impaired or diminished. The THC in cannabis disrupts nerve cells in the brain affecting the memory.

Cannabis is one of the few drugs which causes abnormal cell division which leads to severe hereditary defects. Over the last 10 years, many children of marijuana users have been born

with reduced initiative and lessened abilities to concentrate and pursue life goals. Studies also suggest that prenatal use of the drug may result in birth defects, mental abnormalities and increased risk of leukemia in children.

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## SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

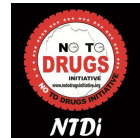
- Sensory distortion
- Panic
- Anxiety
- Poor coordination of movement
- Lowered reaction time
- After an initial “up,” the user feels sleepy or depressed
- Increased heartbeat (and risk of heart attack)

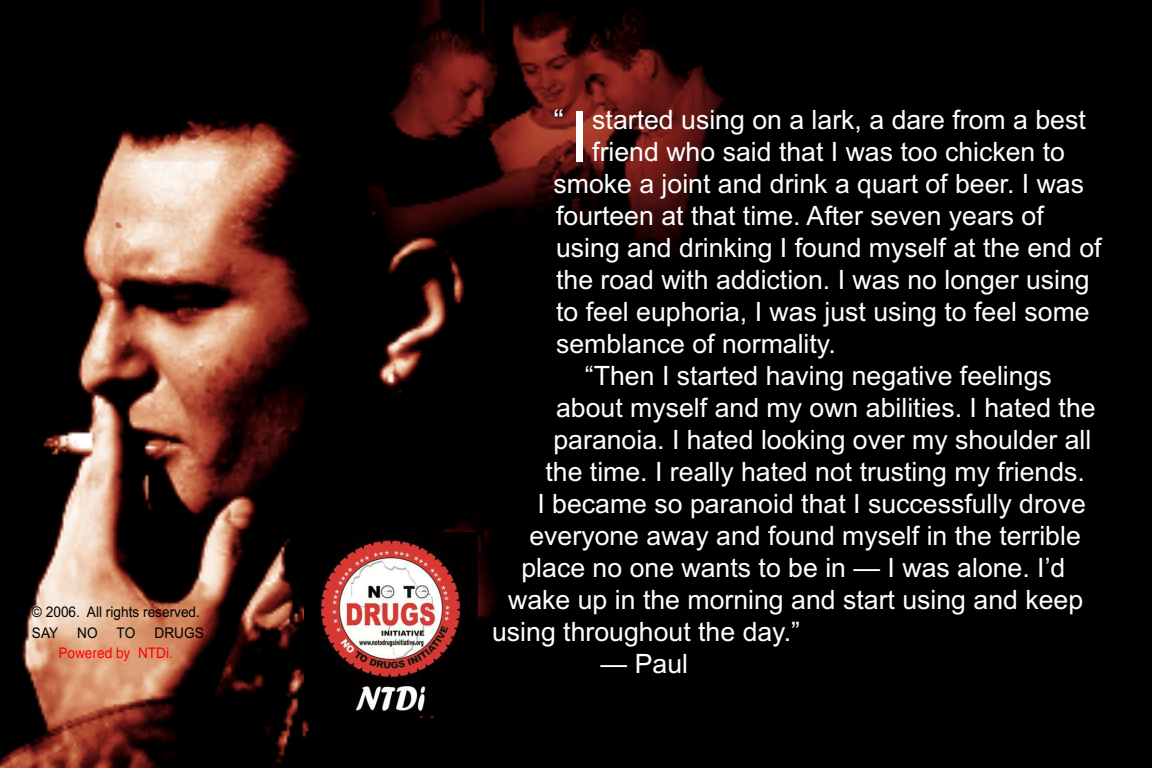
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## LONG-TERM EFFECTS

- Reduced resistance to common illnesses (colds, bronchitis, etc.)
- Suppression of the immune system
- Growth disorders
- Increase of abnormally structured cells in the body
- Reduction of male sex hormones
- Rapid destruction of lung fibers and lesions (injuries) to the brain could be permanent
- Reduced sexual capacity
- Study difficulties: reduced ability to learn and retain information
- Apathy, drowsiness, lack of motivation
- Personality and mood changes
- Inability to understand things clearly





I started using on a lark, a dare from a best friend who said that I was too chicken to smoke a joint and drink a quart of beer. I was fourteen at that time. After seven years of using and drinking I found myself at the end of the road with addiction. I was no longer using to feel euphoria, I was just using to feel some semblance of normality.

“Then I started having negative feelings about myself and my own abilities. I hated the paranoia. I hated looking over my shoulder all the time. I really hated not trusting my friends. I became so paranoid that I successfully drove everyone away and found myself in the terrible place no one wants to be in — I was alone. I’d wake up in the morning and start using and keep using throughout the day.”

— Paul



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# ON THE ROAD TO DRUG ABUSE

**B**ecause a tolerance builds up, marijuana can lead users to consume stronger drugs to achieve the same high. When the effects start to wear off, the person may turn to more potent drugs to rid himself of the unwanted conditions that prompted him to take marijuana in the first place. Marijuana itself does not lead the person

to the other drugs; people take drugs to get rid of unwanted situations or feelings. The drug (marijuana) masks the problem for a time (while the user is high). When the “high” fades, the problem, unwanted condition or situation returns more intensely than before. The user may then turn to stronger drugs since marijuana no longer “works.”



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The vast majority of cocaine users (99.9 percent) began by first using a “gateway drug” like marijuana, cigarettes or alcohol. Of course, not everyone who smokes marijuana and hashish goes on to use harder drugs. Some never do. Others quit using marijuana altogether. But some do turn to harder drugs. One study found that youth (12-17 years old) who use marijuana, are 85 times more likely to use cocaine than kids that do not use pot, and that 60 percent of the kids who smoke pot before the age 15 move on to cocaine.

Marijuana is sometimes combined with harder drugs. Joints are sometimes dipped in PCP, a powerful hallucinogen. PCP is a white powder which is available in liquid form, which is what is used with cannabis. PCP is known for causing violent behavior and creating severe physical reactions including seizures, coma and even death.

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“ I was given my first joint in the playground of my school. I’m a heroin addict now, and I’ve just finished my eighth treatment for drug addiction.”

— Christian, 23 years old



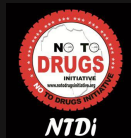
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# Behind the smoke screen

The use of marijuana is not only harmful to the pot smoker himself. He can also become a risk to society.

A study in the United Kingdom found that 74 percent of cannabis-smoking drivers had driven on the road while stoned. And 70 percent of those who drove admitted that it had a bad effect on their driving. Yet many pot smokers interviewed during that study insisted it was OK to smoke and drive — even when they were “very high.”



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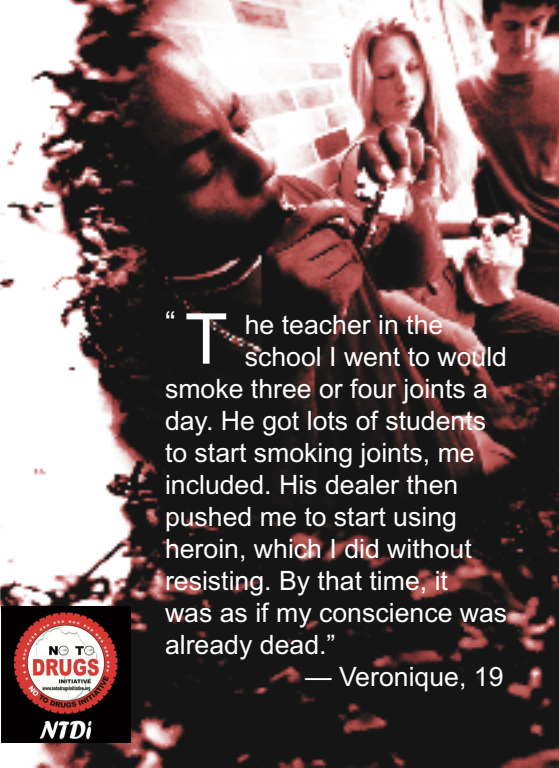
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In Australia, a study found that cannabis intoxication was responsible for 4.3% of driver fatalities.

It is almost impossible to grow up in America and not be exposed to drugs. Peer pressure to do drugs is high and honest information about the dangers of drugs is not always available.

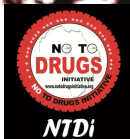
Many people will tell you marijuana is not dangerous. Consider who is telling you that. Are these the same people who are trying to sell you some pot?

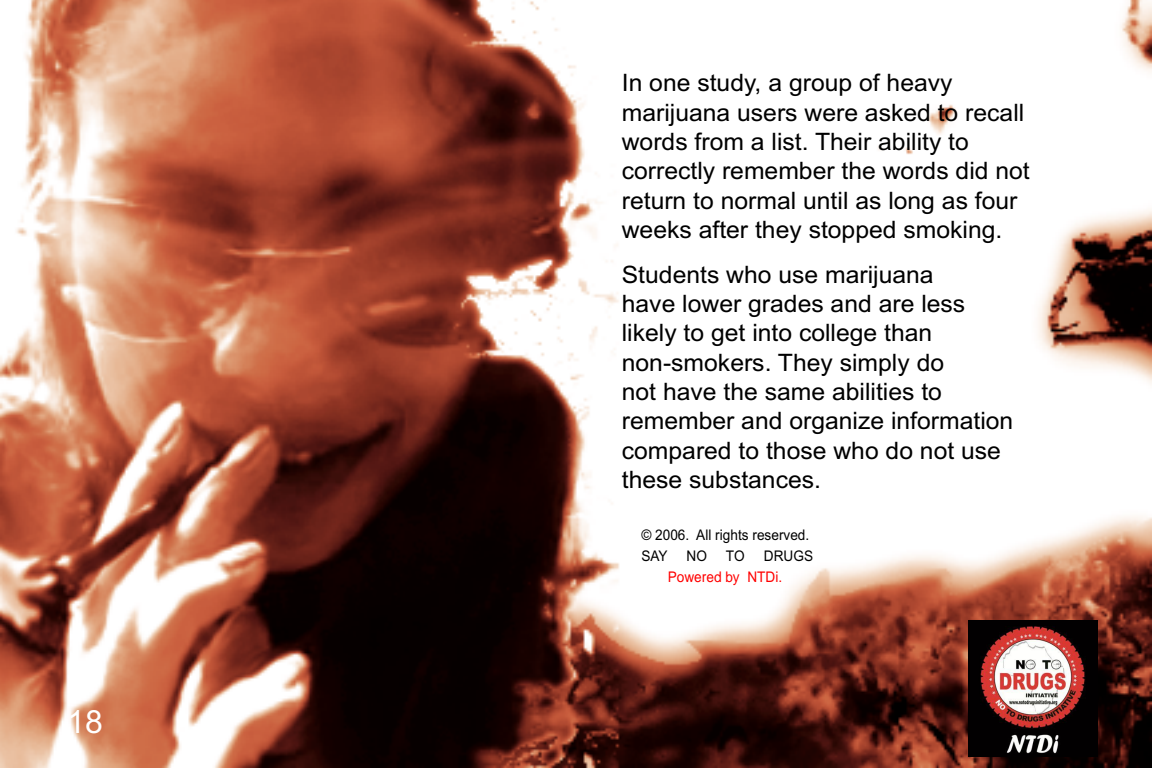
Marijuana can harm a person's memory — and this impact can last for days or weeks after the immediate effects of the drug wear off.



“The teacher in the school I went to would smoke three or four joints a day. He got lots of students to start smoking joints, me included. His dealer then pushed me to start using heroin, which I did without resisting. By that time, it was as if my conscience was already dead.”

— Veronique, 19



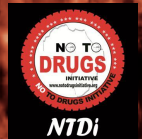


In one study, a group of heavy marijuana users were asked to recall words from a list. Their ability to correctly remember the words did not return to normal until as long as four weeks after they stopped smoking.

Students who use marijuana have lower grades and are less likely to get into college than non-smokers. They simply do not have the same abilities to remember and organize information compared to those who do not use these substances.

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## A MESSAGE TO PARENTS:

If you are a parent reading this booklet, consider this: Young people are the hope for the future. But what promise is there if the social leaders of tomorrow are crippled by drugs today? Talk to your children. Spend time with them. Listen to their problems and share their dreams. Support their efforts. Encourage their good will and their responsible independence. Talk to them about the dangers of drug use and abuse. You may save your child's life. Children who learn about the risks of drug use from their parents are 36 percent less likely to smoke marijuana than kids who learn nothing from them.



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## A MESSAGE TO CHILDREN:

This booklet is intended to provide facts about the dangers of drugs. Share the information, look at the facts and make up your own mind. Be willing to talk to your parents about drugs; your parents can help you.

A harsh reality lies behind all the reasons people give for using marijuana and hashish. Corrupt, unaware or ignorant individuals try to spread the message that: "Joints aren't dangerous." Unfortunately too many people fall into this trap.

We hope we have helped you avoid becoming one of them. But remember — the best solution to drugs is never to start using them in the first place.

# The Truth About Drugs

**D**rugs are essentially poisons. How much is taken determines the effect.

A small amount gives a stimulant (increases activity). A greater amount acts as a sedative (suppresses activity). A still larger amount acts as a poison and can kill one.

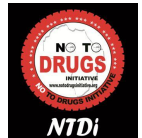
This is true of any drug. Only the amount needed to achieve the effect differs.

But many drugs have another liability: they directly affect the mind. By reactivating incidents from a person's past, below his

conscious awareness, they can distort the drug user's perception of what is happening around him. As a result, the person's actions may be odd, irrational, inappropriate and even destructive.

Drugs block off all sensations, the desirable ones with the unwanted. So, while providing short-term help in the relief of pain, they also wipe out ability, alertness and muddy one's thinking. Long-term drug use robs life of the pleasures and joys which are the only reasons for living anyhow.

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The real solution, however,  
is not to begin using  
drugs in the first place.

Taking drugs is not  
an answer.

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In the end, one has a choice between being dead with drugs or being alive without them.

As terrifying as the consequences of drug use are, and as hopeless as they can seem to the addict, there are solutions to the drug problem and, on a broader scale, the war on drugs can be won.

The first step is to understand why a person becomes trapped by drugs. In May 1969, when the international drug crisis was reaching its peak, author and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard wrote “When a person is depressed or in pain and where he finds no physical relief from treatment, he will eventually discover for himself that drugs remove his symptoms.

“In almost all cases of psychosomatic pain, malaise or discomfort the person has sought some cure for the upset.

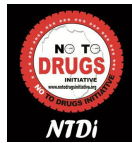
“When he at last finds that only drugs give him relief he will surrender to them and become

dependent upon them often to the point of addiction.”

Growing up and living in this world can be very hard. Simply taking a long walk to look at things until one can focus one’s attention outward and again feel relaxed can work wonders. Talking problems over with a friend or a minister or trusted family member can also help.

And for the person with a drug problem, there are also real solutions to their addiction. Say No To Drugs, a drug habilitation program that utilizes the methods of Rand.o.o, has a success rate of more than 75 percent. ([www.notodrugsinitiative.org](http://www.notodrugsinitiative.org))

The best solution, however, is not to begin using drugs in the first place. Taking drugs is not an answer. As difficult as it can be to confront one’s problems, the consequences



The best solution, however, is not to begin using drugs in the first place. Taking drugs is not an answer. As difficult as it can be to confront one's problems, the consequences that come with drug use are always worse than the problem one is trying to avoid when he or she begins to take drugs.

And the long slide into hell that comes as a result of taking drugs is even worse.

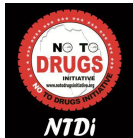
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Research  
Tulane University  
University of Texas at Dallas  
National Institute on Drug Abuse

Department of Health and  
Human Services  
World Customs Organization  
European Monitoring Centre  
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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page 2: Corbis/party shot; page  
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Say No To Drugs is a community drug education and drug prevention program initiated by NTDi, No To Drugs Initiative. It educates children and youth about the dangers of drugs and challenges them to remain drug-free and to set a good example to their friends and family.

The program acts through clubs by and for young people. These clubs reinforce a positive message of drug-free living through the distribution of educational literature that provides facts about illicit drug use and the effects of drugs on the spirit, mind and body, through group activities to popularize drug-free living, and through the support of civic leaders and members of other groups with similar aims.

Experience has taught us that people in general, and youth in particular, when they understand the destructive effects of drugs, and when they are provided with positive role models and the support of their peers to remain drug free, they inevitably come to the conclusion: "I don't want to take drugs" – which is of course the ultimate purpose of the program.

This booklet is presented as a public service by NTDi, No To Drugs Initiative. It is part of a series of booklets to educate young people in the truth about drugs. The booklets in this series provide the facts about cannabis, crack and cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, prescription painkillers and other addictive drugs, allowing the reader to decide for himself to live a drug-free life.

To obtain more copies of this or the other booklets in this series, or to learn more about the discoveries of NTDi and his workable technologies that rid people of the harmful effects of drugs, visit or contact:

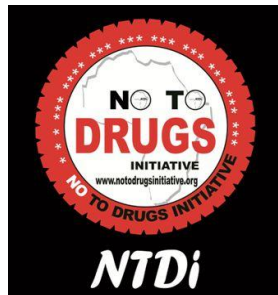
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No To Drugs Initiative; is a humanitarian foundation with the aim of creating strong awareness to sensitize the youths in Nigeria and Africa at large on the negative and physiological effects of drugs and substances.

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



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