



Parent Assignment #2: Grade 4

Myths and Facts About Marijuana

Do you know the facts about marijuana? Here are some common myths.

MYTH: Marijuana is harmless.

FACT: Marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug among youth today and is more potent than ever. Marijuana use can lead to a host of significant health, social, learning, and behavioral problems at a crucial time in a young person's development. Getting high also impairs judgment, which can lead to risky decision making on issues like sex, criminal activity, or riding with someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, teens that use drugs are five times more likely to have sex than teens who do not use drugs. Getting high also contributes to general apathy, irresponsible behavior, and risky choices.



MYTH: You can't get addicted to marijuana.

FACT: Don't be fooled by popular beliefs. Kids can get hooked on pot. Research shows that marijuana use can lead to addiction. Each year, more kids enter treatment with a primary diagnosis of marijuana dependence than for all other illegal drugs combined.

MYTH: There's not much parents can do to stop their kids from "experimenting" with marijuana.

FACT: Most parents are surprised to learn that they are the most powerful influence on their children when it comes to drugs. But, it's true, so this message needs to start with parents. Kids need to hear how risky marijuana use can be. They need to know how damaging it can be to their lives. And they need to begin by listening to someone they trust. By staying involved, knowing what their kids are doing, and setting limits with clear rules and consequences, parents can keep their kids drug-free.

MYTH: There are no long-term consequences to marijuana use.

FACT: Research shows that kids who smoke marijuana engage in risky behavior that can jeopardize their futures, like having sex, getting in trouble with the law, or losing scholarship money. Marijuana can also hurt academic achievement and puts kids at risk for depression and anxiety.

MYTH: Marijuana isn't as popular as other drugs like ecstasy among teens today.

FACT: Kids use marijuana far more than any other illegal drug. Among kids who use drugs, 60 percent use only marijuana.

MYTH: Young kids won't be exposed to marijuana.

FACT: While overall marijuana use has decreased, many children and teens are still using it. According to the annual Monitoring the Future national poll, in the past seven years, the number of eighth graders who had used marijuana decreased from approximately one in five to slightly more than one in 10. With recent research now linking marijuana use to mental health disorders like depression and schizophrenia, this is still far too many. The same report notes that, by 12th grade, marijuana use increases to more than two in five teens.

MYTH: Parents who experimented with marijuana in their youth would be hypocrites if they told their kids not to try it.

FACT: Parents need to make their own decisions about whether to talk to their children about their own drug use. But parents can tell their kids that much more is known today about the serious health and social consequences of using marijuana.

Source: <http://www.theantidrug.com>

Assignment

Ask your child to review the day's lesson, and handouts with you. Discuss their feelings about the lesson, and any issues that may have come up for them that day in school.

Choose one or more of the following:

1. Ask your child what he/she learned in class regarding Marijuana. Talk about the dangers of Marijuana and share the Myths and Facts with them. Make up a "Game-show" scenario where your child is the contestant. Read a myth and ask your child to put his/her thumbs up for true, or thumbs down for false.
2. Healthy Alternatives. Set aside some time during the month for your child to choose a family activity. Ask your child to take into consideration your families/individual likes and dislikes (and budget). This will help your child practice decision-making.
3. Friends have a strong influence on children's behavior and choices. Invite your child's friends for a sleepover or daytime activity. You'll be able to monitor who his/her friends are and discover whether they are suitable playmates.
4. Game Night! Pull out the old board games, charades and other fun activities and devote one night a week or month as Game Night. Make it a special occasion with pizza or party food and enjoy some quality time together.
5. Give your child responsibilities. Let them learn assigned tasks, preferable things they have already shown an interest in. This builds self-confidence and helps develop a sense of responsibility to self, family and eventually, society. Some jobs will be paid, others will be ones they are expected to do because that is their responsibility. By contributing to the smooth running of the house, children feel needed, valued and competent.



Livingston Youth and Community Services

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Student's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Which assignment did you choose, and why? _____

Was this lesson helpful? Yes/ No

Please explain _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Raffle Entry

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Student's Name: _____ Parent's Name: _____

School: _____ Grade 4

Please complete this sheet and return to LYCS, PO Box 822, Livingston, NJ 07039,
Fax: 973-992-9318, email: lycs@livingston.org, or leave at reception in school