

## Kids, Cars and Marijuana

Many young people are unconcerned about using marijuana and driving. Their attitudes and actions reflect this. According to The Anti-Drug website teen driving facts, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15- to 20-year-olds. Teens are at risk—both from driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol and from riding with drivers who are under the influence.

- ◆ Thirteen percent of high school seniors reported driving under the influence of marijuana in the prior two weeks, a number nearly equivalent to those who reported driving under the influence of alcohol (14%), despite higher prevalence of alcohol consumption among teens.
- ◆ High school students are more likely to drink, smoke cigarettes, and smoke marijuana after earning their driver's license.
- ◆ In a comprehensive study on unsafe driving by high school students, 30 percent of seniors reported driving after drinking heavily or using drugs, or riding in a car whose driver had been drinking heavily or using drugs, at least once in the prior two weeks.

For more teen driving facts and a complete reference list, visit [www.theantidrug.com/advice/teens-today](http://www.theantidrug.com/advice/teens-today).

## Learn More About Drugs and Driving

It's important to become informed about the issue of drugged driving and talk with young people about the dangers and consequences of driving while under the influence of drugs. There are many resources available to educate both adults and young people. We can make a difference.

For more information visit:

[www.elks.org/dap](http://www.elks.org/dap)  
[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)  
[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)  
[www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov)

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[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

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# Elks

NATIONAL DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM

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## What You Should Know About Drug-Impaired Driving

For years, Americans have been aware of the tragic problems caused by alcohol-impaired driving and the toll it takes on individuals, families and communities. Public awareness, increased law enforcement and community mobilization have had a powerful effect on the way we look at the issue, and over time attitudes and behavior have changed.

But many of us don't realize that impaired driving is not just an alcohol problem—it's drugs, too. And many people who are driving under the influence are our own kids. But it's not just users who are at risk—it's all of us, sharing the roads.

## Marijuana Use in America

Marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug in America, and today's marijuana is potent and harmful, especially to kids. Although the use of marijuana by young people has been significantly reduced, it's still a problem. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy:

- ◆ 102 million Americans (41% of the U.S. population) over age 12 have tried marijuana at least once.
- ◆ In 2008, 32.4% of 12th graders used marijuana in the past year.
- ◆ 65.5% of kids aged 15 to 17 admitted to drug treatment in 2006 were there because of marijuana.

## Marijuana and Driving

Many marijuana users—and those of us who drive on the same roads as they do—don't understand the dangers of mixing marijuana and driving. After alcohol, marijuana ranks as the highest-found drug in crash-involved drivers.

According to a 2007 study of weekend nighttime drivers cited by ONDCP, one in six tested positive for illegal drugs. The NHTSA indicates that the most commonly detected drug in drug-positive drivers is marijuana at 8.6%.

The effects of marijuana on drivers include:

- ◆ Relaxation, disorientation;
- ◆ Altered time and space perceptions;
- ◆ Drowsiness, sedation;
- ◆ Lack of concentration;
- ◆ Decreased car-handling performance;
- ◆ Impaired time and distance estimation;
- ◆ Increased reaction times;
- ◆ Impaired motor coordination.

***Marijuana can impair a driver's abilities for at least one or two hours after use, and residual effects can be found up to 24 hours. Marijuana has also been shown to increase the impairing effects of alcohol.***

In addition to marijuana, other drugs, including some over-the-counter medications, can impair a driver's ability to stay alert and focused.