

Regional Advisory Board (RAB) of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions

February 2022 Newsletter

A new study reports that many marijuana vendors are targeting underage users on social media Jan. 21, 2022 (HealthDay News) -- Some recreational pot shops are using tricks from the old playbooks of alcohol and tobacco companies to target underage users on social media, a new study reports. Despite state laws restricting such marketing, researchers found marijuana retailers on social media promoting their wares with posts that:

- Featured cartoon characters like Snoopy, SpongeBob SquarePants, and Rick and Morty.
- Presented store-branded merchandise like caps and T-shirts.
- Offered discounts and deals, like a Memorial Day sale or a regular Friday special.

About 12% of the social media posts also promoted the idea that you should use marijuana products until you're very impaired. "In alcohol advertising, you don't often see ads that say things like, 'Hey, use our products so you can get drunker. Use our product so you can achieve a better buzz,'" Moreno said. "That's absolutely not allowable in alcohol literature, but we see a lot of that content in the cannabis literature, saying things like 'Use our product to get higher, use our product to reach that higher place we know you want to go' — really pushing people toward the idea that you should use until you feel impaired."

Linda Richter, vice president of prevention research and analysis with the Partnership to End Addiction, noted that this is all happening in states with "some of the most robust youth protection provisions in their recreational, or adult use, marijuana laws." Because of that, "the findings are likely quite conservative regarding the extent to which cannabis businesses stray from state marketing restrictions and requirements, such that the actual state of affairs is probably worse and more damaging to teens than reflected in this study."

<https://consumer.healthday.com/1-21-many-pot-vendors-aim-advertising-at-kids-study-2656425558.html>

Social connectedness, sleep, and physical activity associated with better mental health among youth during the COVID-19 pandemic

Longitudinal survey data of more than 3,000 adolescents ages 11-14 recorded before and during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 found that supportive relationships with family and friends and healthy behaviors, like engaging in physical activity and better sleep, appeared to shield against the harmful effects of the pandemic on adolescents' mental health. The research, published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, was supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and other entities at the National Institutes of

Health. The research is based on data from the [Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development \(ABCD\) Study](#), the largest long-term study of brain development and child health ever conducted in the United States.

A study on secondhand nicotine e-cigarette exposure found that the secondhand exposure was associated with increased risk of bronchitic symptoms and shortness of breath among young adults.

<https://thorax.bmj.com/content/thoraxjnl/early/2022/01/05/thoraxjnl-2021-217041.full.pdf>

- ▶ Secondhand vape exposure was associated with increased risk of bronchitic symptoms and shortness of breath in young adults, even after accounting for active smoking and vaping. Why read on?
- ▶ Primary and secondhand exposure to vaping is highly prevalent among the adolescents and young adults but there has been little research investigating the effects of secondhand vape exposure on respiratory health

A new study led by Beth Han, MD, and Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of NIDA at NIH, assessed intentional drug overdoses or suicide by overdose of medication or drug. Approximately 5% to 7% of drug overdoses each year 1999-2020 were recorded as intentional, but the actual numbers are likely even higher. Researchers analyzed multiple causes of death data for 2001-2019 from the CDC NVSS.

“Despite the steep increase in overdose deaths broadly, the study found that intentional overdose deaths in general have declined in recent years, decreasing among women between 2015-2019 (from 1.7 to 1.5 per 100,000 people), and among men between 2012-2019 (from 1.6 to 1.2 per 100,000 people). In each year analyzed, women ages 45 to 64 had the highest rates of intentional overdoses.” Researchers also detected “an increase in young people aged 15-24, older people aged 75-84, and non-Hispanic Black women. In addition, factors such as time of year, length of day, and day of the week appeared to be associated with intentional overdose death rates.” Intentional overdoses were found to be highest on Mondays and lowest on weekends and highest in late spring and summer and lowest in December. **News Release: [Suicides by drug overdose increased among young people, elderly people, and Black women, despite overall downward trend | National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#)**
American Journal of Psychiatry: [Psychiatry Online](#)

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