



## **YOUR KIDS KNOW WHAT “420” MEANS... DO YOU?**

When youth talk about “420” they probably don’t mean the date Apollo 16 landed on the moon or Michael Jordan setting an NBA playoff record. They’re probably referring to “National Weed Day,” which has been gaining momentum since the early 70’s. Although this *holiday* isn’t marked on the calendar, it is celebrated by some people who smoke marijuana. It might be difficult to recognize, but there are many signs and symptoms that may suggest your child is engaged in “420” activities. Be in the know as this *holiday* will be celebrated by marijuana users around the globe. Be aware that “420” refers to not only April 20<sup>th</sup> but the everyday afternoon hour of 4:20pm, as well.

### **What’s Happening While You’re at**

**Work** On April 20<sup>th</sup>, make sure kids go to school, attend their extracurricular activities and report home on time. Make it a priority to get involved and ask questions. **Remember, it’s parenting, not pestering!**

### **Some Facts on Marijuana:**

- Marijuana is a potent, addictive drug. THC (the psychoactive ingredient) levels in marijuana have gone from 2-3% in the 1970’s up to 15-18% and even greater today (up to 80% in concentrates).
- Regular use leads to significant withdrawal symptoms like anxiety, depression and insomnia.
- Research shows regular marijuana use can impair cognitive functioning, causing a drop in IQ which can last into adulthood.
- Use of marijuana directly affects the brain, especially young developing brains, increasing risks for mental illness and psychosis.
- Smoking marijuana can cause chronic respiratory issues.

### **Medical Marijuana in New Jersey**

With the recommendation of a licensed, registered doctor, it is legal in New Jersey to use marijuana for qualifying medical conditions. New Jersey has NOT legalized marijuana for recreational use. There are many myths associated with legalization of marijuana. More information can be found at [www.learnaboutsam.com](http://www.learnaboutsam.com) as well as [www.legalizationviolations.com](http://www.legalizationviolations.com)

### **Signs & Symptoms of Youth Marijuana Use:**

- Decrease in grades/change in attitude
- Mood or personality changes/lying/blaming
- Change in friends/clothing choices
- Weight gain/loss
- Inappropriate laughter followed by sleepiness
- Loss of interest and decreased motivation
- Drug paraphernalia in bedroom, car or locker (pipes, rolling papers, lighters, one hitter, flavored cigars)
- E-cigarettes, vaporizers, oils, USB chargers, wicks
- Use of incense, room deodorant and/or perfumes
- Blood shot eyes and use of eye drops

### **Electronic Cigarettes/Vaporizers (E-Cigs/Vapes)**

E-Cigs are battery operated devices designed to look and feel like an everyday cigarettes. Vapes are larger devices that come in a variety of colors and styles with refillable cartridges that can be filled with liquid nicotine and/or other oils. Not only are these addictive and harmful, but they can also be used to engage in marijuana smoking. These odorless vapors make this growing trend very hard to detect drug use. Although product advertisements claim to encourage users to quit smoking, they are attracting more and more young people to start. Like tobacco, these products are banned in all smoke-free areas.

To learn more about the **Prevention Coalition of Mercer County (PCMC)** please see our link at [www.mercercouncil.org](http://www.mercercouncil.org) or contact: [bsprechman@mercercouncil.org](mailto:bsprechman@mercercouncil.org) or [sdawes@mercercouncil.org](mailto:sdawes@mercercouncil.org)  
For more on talking to youth about marijuana, visit <http://www.drugfree.org/MJTalkKit>