Public Service Announcements - Keep Your Body Healthy

Keep Your Body Healthy - Jack & Jill

Facts About Substance Abuse and Risky Sexual Behavior

Adolescents and other young adults who use drugs and alcohol often take risks that endanger their health and the health of others. One of the most harmful risks is that of engaging in risky sexual activities. Scientific research has demonstrated that the use of alcohol and drugs is related to the occurrence of unsafe sexual behavior that places adolescents at risk for pregnancy or contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), such as HIV/AIDS. Young people need to recognize the deadly consequences of HIV/AIDS, and that they are potential targets for infection.

- Adolescents are at high behavioral risk for contracting most STDs, and teens account for one-quarter of the 15 million new cases of STDs diagnosed each year. STD infection may result in infertility, birth defects, and the transmission of HIV.*
- It has been estimated that at least half of all new HIV infections in the United States are among people under age 25, and the majority of young people are infected sexually.*
- Since the HIV/AIDS epidemic began, injection drug use has directly and indirectly accounted for 36% of AIDS cases in the United States. Racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States are most heavily affected by injection drug use-associated AIDS.*
- From 1999 to 2000, the use of Ecstasy (MDMA) increased among 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade levels. For 10th and 12th graders, this is the second consecutive year MDMA use has increased. Past-year use of Ecstasy among 8th graders increased from 1.7% in 1999 to 3.1% in 2000; from 4.4% to 5.45% among 10th graders; and from 5.6% to 8.2% among 12th graders. Also among 12th graders, the perceived availability of Ecstasy rose from 40.1% in 1999 to 51.4% in 2000 (not measured for 8th and 10th graders).**
- White and Hispanic students show considerably higher rates of Ecstasy use than African-American students. For example, past-year use among African-American 12th graders is 1.3%, compared to 7.6% for white and 10.6% for Hispanic 12th graders.**
- Past-year use of steroids among 10th graders increased from 1.7% in 1999 to 2.2% in 2000. In addition, a decrease was noted among 12th graders in the perceived risk of harm from using steroids.**
- Since 1999, marijuana use has remained stable in all three grades.**
- Among 12th graders, past-year heroin use rose from 1.1% in 1999 to 1.5% in 2000, resulting in one of the highest reported rates of heroin use among seniors. This trend may reflect the increasing availability of high-purity heroin in smokable and snortable form.**

References:

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
**National Institute on Drug Abuse