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Position paper

INTRODUCTION

The topic of teen drug abuse is a very big issue here in U.S and abroad. Drugs are very dangerous but some people trifle

with the Idea how dangerous they really are. I know they are dangerous from personal experience and it all starts from something seeming innocent and leads to

something harmful. The truth is so many people think marijuana is harmless but it is where it all starts. For those who use marijuana, “the risk of using cocaine is 104 times greater for those who have tried marijuana than for those who haven’t tried marijuana”.(Karen Bellenir 231). I believe

drugs are very harmful to teens and will explain why, I believe marijuana is a gateway drug and leads to other drug use. I also believe the media is responsible for promoting the use of drugs today. I will also share some reflections from my own experience from being a teen addict.



Figure 1 from a bettercasket.com-a lot of the time death occurs from drug abuse.

THE REALITY OF THE DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE

Now some drugs are more dangerous than others like cocaine or

heroin versus marijuana. The truth is it can be argued that hard drugs like opiates and cocaine have their medical uses. But hard drugs like cocaine and heroin are like a very deadly venomous substance that

accumulates over time and will cause death if abused. USnodrugs article "Drug Addiction Statistics" states that In the U.S the Mayo clinic recorded that there was 19,000 drug related death. According to wrong diagnosis article "Cocaine abuse: Deaths" the death rate of cocaine is about 1 person a week, 7 persons a month, and 87 people a year. Another exquisite danger is when you combine drugs together such as heroin and cocaine which is called speedball. A couple of famous known celebrities have overdosed from this deadly combination. Findadeath.com says that Chris Farley's death was a combination of opiates and cocaine. Findagrave.com states from the article John Belushi that John Belushi died from a "overdose of cocaine and heroin. I know many people through my life who have lost their lives to the battle of drug addiction. I knew an acquaintance who over dosed on heroin.

My brother knew a friend in high school who died from speed ball overdose. He had just recently got out of rehab and relapsed to his demon. I met a girl from one of my classes whose niece just overdosed and died from heroin. These individuals died at young ages and had their whole lives ahead of them. Their demons and drug addictions confiscated their happiness away from them. Not only do you take the risk of losing your life but you risk losing your liberty and freedom. Drugs including marijuana becomes like your totalitarian leader. It dictates your every move in your life and you start answering to the drug and not your own decisions. When I was addicted to drugs it was all I could think about-getting my next fix. Totalitarian leaders like Stalin and Hitler were not revered by people nor should drugs. Drugs become like a parasite that will not leave your existence unless you get the proper help needed to heal. Certain

drugs, when you decide to rebel from their tyranny will fight back. Withdrawal symptoms of heroin are excruciating; “NIDA Infofacts: heroin” say that withdrawing from heroin causes “restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea and vomiting, cold flashes with goose bumps”. Not only does your body have a physical dependence but you will have a major psychological desire for the drug. When you try to rebel from cocaine you don’t have any physical symptoms but your mind has shackles attached to the drug. Marijuana has withdrawal symptoms associated with it, according to “Marijuana withdrawal

symptoms –what marijuana detox is like” marijuana withdrawal causes anxiety, inability to sleep, and a suppressed appetite. Marijuana also is very psychologically addictive and will be on your mind a lot when you try to quit. Not only can drugs kill you themselves, but they can cause you to kill yourself. “Suicide in U.S.: Statistics and Prevention” says in 2007 34,598 people killed themselves and drug abuse and mental conditions played a role for 90% of these suicides. I personally know someone who associated with the group of people I used to do drugs with who committed suicide. As you can see drugs are like the devil in the flesh and make you a serf.



Figure 2 from Myspace.com-Marijuana is a gateway drug that leads to the HELL of addiction

IS MARIJUANA A GATEWAY DRUG?

Marijuana is the drug that most teenagers start out trying. That is why it is called the gate way drug. The article "Teens: Alcohol and other drugs" the mean age for first marijuana use is 14 years of age. "Safety For Use: Cannabis as a Gateway drug" says "Most users of illicit drugs have used marijuana first." Some say that marijuana as a gateway drug is a myth but I really beg to differ. Scott Morgan says it has to do with your "environmental circumstances". Which I do agree with, but that does not prove marijuana is not a gateway drug. Drug dealers hang out with drug dealers; they want to make money in any way possible. The majority of hard drug abusers start with marijuana. I started out smoking marijuana

when I was about 14. Then by the time I was 21 years of age I became a cocaine addict. Many of my past acquaintances all started out smoking marijuana and then they all moved on to other hard drugs. The young man I mentioned who overdosed on heroin earlier, he and I smoked pot together. He then moved on to heroin and then ended up losing his life to the drug. When you do drugs you build up what is called tolerance to the drug. This is one of the reasons marijuana is a gateway drug. You get tired of the effects of the drug so you want to try something new and different. It's just like if you eat the same meal for 5 to 6 years straight. You are going to get tired of it and want to eat something new and different. This is the reason why people try combinations of drugs because they want an increased sense of pleasure.

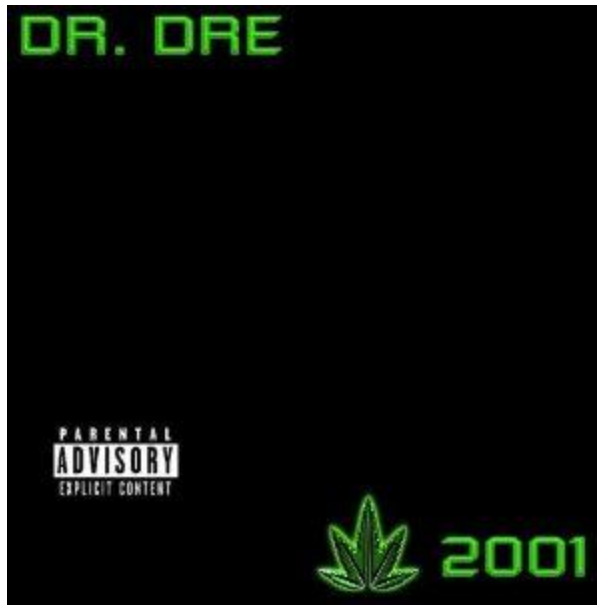


Figure 3 provided by amazon.com-The chronic 2001 album promotes drug use

THE MEDIA PROMOTES DRUG USE

The biggest influence of drug use in my opinion is the media. Whether it is the TV shows and movies we watch or the music we listen to. A great example of a movie that promotes drug use is "Scarface". It has scenes in the movie where drug use takes place, they snort cocaine. A child or teenager is not supposed to watch this movie but we all know that many children and teenagers will get the opportunity to watch this movie. They will see this behavior and deep down inside they may

think that it is cool to do. Not all children will accept it as cool. It's just like how the tobacco companies are rephended for the way they advertise for tobacco use. Drug use in movies and music is an advertisement to use drugs. There is a lot of music that's in the world today who glorify the use of drugs and drug use. Such as Cypress Hill, they have a song called "hits from the Bong". It glorifies the use of marijuana with the way the lyrics are worded and put together. Mac Dres music encourages the use of ecstasy or as he called it "thizz". Dr. Dres album "The chronic" and "The Chronic 2001", as seen in figure 3;both exemplify marijuana by

the cover of the album and the content. Songs like Motley Crews "Dr. Feel Good" advertise the use of drugs.

CONCLUSION

The truth there is many view points on how dangerous drugs really are. Some will say they are not harmful if taken responsibly. A quote from Seth Stevenson says "that all drug use lead

to disaster-is a bald faced lie" (Drug abuse opposing viewpoints 23). I truly believe drugs are dangerous being that I have experienced what first hand drug addiction is like. Some people are just not as blessed to have survived their drug addiction and lived to tell about it. I hope that no others will have to experience drug addiction as I did. It was the worst experience I had to face in this life

Proposal

INTRODUCTION

As everybody knows teenage drug abuse is a very bad thing here in the U.S. My proposal is an approach to try frustrating and preventing teenage drug abuse. I believe if you introduce these teenagers to the addicts and people who were addicts before and they hear their testimonies they will be less likely to use

drugs. The teendrugabuse.us article "Statistics on Teen Drug abuse" says "more than 60% of teens said that drugs were sold, used, or kept at their school". Drug abuse among teenagers is a major problem. Their drug abuse will lead them to be enslaved or even to the point they could lose their life.



Figure 4 from opiumpmuseum.com-An opium den in the 1800s

DESCRIPTION AND CAUSE AND EFFECTS

The problem of teen drug abuse is a very big thing we should take seriously. Teenagers are the future of our great country. We don't want an epidemic of teenage addicts. To really put drug addiction into context I would like to talk about the Chinese opium epidemic. According to the article "The Opium War and the Opening of China" "virtually all men under 40 smoked opium". That is a lot of men who smoked opium. The effects on the Chinese nation were very dire. It was even said "the entire army was addicted". It was said there was "12 million addicts" in China, at that time that was a lot of people. Just imagine if we had

a nation where everyone was addicted to drugs including the army. This problem was so acute opium smokers were spending more than the government was bringing in. The opium smokers spent 60 million more than the government brought in. Someone in the Chinese government wrote "If we continue to allow this trade to flourish, in a few dozen years, we will find ourselves not only with no soldiers to resist the enemy, but also with no money to equip the army." As you can see we don't want the drug problem to proliferate. If drug addiction can almost destroy a whole nation it can for sure ruin an individual. If we don't address this problem America could have

this problem if teenage drug addiction

proliferates hastily.



Figure 5 from soulpurposeministries.com-a before and after picture of a meth addict.

PLAN DESCRIPTION

Now my plan is very simple and gets straight to the point. I believe the best approach is to have children when they are at an age of understanding to go and hear the testimonies of recovering drug addicts and their families. Have the individuals and their families vividly expound the dangers of drug abuse and how it affected both their lives. To carry out my plan I would go to drug rehabs and ask the facilities if we can let the children hear the testimonies of the addicts so they will know the dangers of drug abuse from a person with first-hand experience. The benefit of talking to the recovering addict in person is the emotion that

will be expressed as opposed to just reading the testimony. Like the saying says, knowledge is power. Here is a quote from Emma Thompson from Brainy Quote, "Any problem, big or small, within a family, always seems to start with bad communication." We could apply this quote to not just within the immediate family structure; but to any individual here in the world. This quote emphasizes the vital nature of communication. My whole plan is based on the proper communication from one who has experienced this problem. After the teens have heard the testimonials of the addicts and their family's they will come to know how

atrocious drugs and addiction really are. They themselves will want to be proactive and audacious enough to want to prevent others from using drugs.

COST & BENEFITS

Overall the beneficiaries of my plan will reap the rewards of it. There will be no cost to the plan; it will be completely on a charitable basis. Addicts and families will donate their time to inform the children of the dangers of drugs. The benefits are as follows:

- Testimonials of drug abuse from addicts and families will deter teen drug abuse.
- Teens will have a call to action from testimonial that will encourage them to pay it forward and try stop their friends from doing drugs

- A drug free America will ensure a better future for our country and its people

CONCLUSION

No you can see that teen drug abuse is a dangerous enormity that needs some attention. This needs to be addressed immediately, any second a teenager could become addicted to drugs. Their life will be ruined and the road to recovery could be very daunting or could even lead to death depending on the circumstances. A drug free America would mean copious amounts of lives would be saved and fulfilled. It would also be conducive to family relationships and would help them flourish. May we all succor our fellow man and woman to avoid these behaviors. If you have any questions contact me at my email address Greenwood525@hotmail.com.

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