



# Pathway to Prevention

Educating Parents about Prevention of Teen Drug & Alcohol Abuse



April 2015

## "It's just pot...or synthetic weed. What's the harm?"

Families are already confused by the mixed messages we send kids about marijuana. In some states, it's legal; in some states, it's not. If it's dangerous, why would it be legalized? So if it's legal, it must not be dangerous! That faulty logic makes it even more difficult to reason with and raise drug-free teens.

A yearly survey of middle and high school students shows that rates of marijuana use have steadied in the past few years, after several years of increase. However, fewer and fewer young people believe that it's risky to smoke or otherwise consume pot. Even worse, kids aren't concerned about the potential danger of **fake weed**, and they are latching onto synthetic pot because they think it is "natural" and therefore harmless. Known by a variety of names including Spice, Mr. Smiley, Skunk, Blaze or K2, fake weed is ten times more powerful than the real deal, and it's the second most popular drug on high school campuses, where genuine pot wins the dubious honor of "Drug of Choice."

Spice/K2 is sending kids to Emergency Rooms in record numbers. Spice users who have been taken to Poison Control Centers report symptoms that include rapid heart rate, vomiting, agitation, confusion and hallucinations. Spice can also raise blood pressure

### Tip of the Month

It's a given that your kids know much more about the local drug scene than you do. They know the lingo, they know where to find drugs, and they know whose using. But do they know the facts about Spice/K2? It's time to talk with them and set the record straight about this dangerous drug.

Here are some things to talk about: "Have you heard of Spice/K2? What have you heard?" "Do you know the difference between Spice/K2 and marijuana?" "Did you know that Spice/K2 is ten times more potent than marijuana?" "Do you know what is in Spice/K2?"

We plan to post a Parent Awareness Report about Spice/K2 on our [Facebook page](#). In the meantime, check out our [Top Ten Tips for Having an Honest Discussion about Drugs and Alcohol with Your Teen](#).

and cause reduced blood supply to the heart, and in a few cases it has been associated with heart attacks. Regular users may experience withdrawal and addiction symptoms.

Spice is easily and legally available with no age restrictions. Kids can buy it in head shops, gas stations and even online from Amazon and eBay. It's sold in kid-friendly cartoon-like packages that appear fun and innocent. Being labeled "Not for human consumption" isn't stopping kids from smoking it or turning it into edibles like brownies.

The loss of a promising young man who took one LEGAL hit of Spice makes this story all too real for his devastated family. Education and awareness can prevent future tragedies, so please spread the word that fake pot kills.

Sincerely,

*Kim Box*

Executive Director, Pathway to Prevention

## Your Support Can Help Us Stop Teen Substance Use or Abuse Before It Starts

Pathway to Prevention, is a program of Full Circle Treatment Center.

Please consider a tax-deductible donation to help us keep our community safe from teen substance use and abuse. Make sure you specify that the donation is for Pathway to Prevention!

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## Parting Notes

### Get educated

- In less than 27 minutes, you can watch the Collision Course - Teen Addiction Epidemic documentary. This Emmy-winning documentary will open your eyes - and the eyes of your teens - about young people's substance use and abuse in our region.

### Talk with your teen

- "Navigating the Teen Years: a Parent's Handbook for Raising Healthy Teens" can help guide those important conversations. View or download your copy of Navigating the Teen Years here.

### Find help if your teen is drinking or drugging

Thanks to the Teichert Foundation for grant funding to strengthen our social media presence. Their financial support helps

- Where to start? This [comprehensive overview](#) from the National Institute on Drug Abuse will help you understand the big picture.
- DrugFree.org's helpline (English and Spanish) can answer your questions about drug and alcohol use and abuse.. Call 1-855 378-4373.
- The [National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence](#) can also help find local resources.
- [Al-Anon and Alateen](#) offer support, hope and recovery to anyone affected by the substance use or abuse of a loved one.
- If you are struggling with the chemical dependency of a child of any age, go to [ParentPathway](#) to find online resources, experience, strength and hope.

us reach out to targeted audiences and provide information and tools to keep our community safe.