



CONNECTICUT Clearinghouse
a program of the Connecticut Center
for Prevention, Wellness and Recovery

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A Library and Resource Center on Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Mental Health and Wellness

Think Drug Use Doesn't Hurt Anyone? Think Twice

Sometimes, it's hard to see the damage that addiction causes, but it goes beyond the person using drugs. Drug use affects families, the medical system, the environment, innocent children, people killed by drunk/high drivers, and victims of terrorists, whose acts are financed with drug profits.

The Economic Cost

Over 26,000 people died from drug-related causes in the United States in 2002, seven times more than the number killed in all of the September 11 attacks. The direct costs of drug use include drug treatment, health care, the replacement of stolen goods, incarceration, and judicial system fees. Indirect costs are those incurred due to the loss of productivity from death or injury, drug abuse-related illnesses, crime and its effects on its victims. Every American family pays \$1500 in yearly taxes to pay for these drug-related costs to society.

Most people affected by drugs aren't users. But they pay the price - and so do you. When people choose to use, they are not just hurting themselves.

Traffic Accidents & Fatalities

Did you know that marijuana and other drugs are involved in many traffic accidents and fatalities? Many people are surprised to learn that, after alcohol, marijuana is the next most prevalent substance found in impaired drivers. When used together, marijuana and alcohol have a significant impact on a driver's ability to perform.



The Environment

The world's environment is being destroyed by coca, opium and marijuana planting, and the manufacture of cocaine and methamphetamine. From the clear-cutting of rain forests in Central and South America for the planting of coca fields, to the destruction of national forests in the United States for the growing of marijuana, to the dumping of hazardous waste byproducts into the water table after the manufacture of methamphetamine, illegal drugs have a far-reaching impact on the environment.



Global Terrorism

In many countries, terrorism and drug trafficking go hand in hand. American drug money finances terrorist activities and the international drug trade generates profits which help terrorists. The proceeds from the cocaine trade in Colombia and Peru were used by terrorist organizations to destabilize these governments. In Afghanistan, opium production profits benefited the Taliban whose regime sheltered terrorists.



Think about it...

Drug use isn't a victimless crime....

Drug Enforcement Agency
DEA Demand Reduction, 2006
www.justthinktwice.com/costs/