Students and Alcohol & Drug Issues

The Counseling Center & the Office of the Dean of Students

MARIJUANA BY THE NUMBERS

- Out of students who reported ever using marijuana, only 12% reported “daily use”, while 49% reported “less than monthly use”
- On a scale of 1-10, 37% of all students “strongly agreed” that regular marijuana use can adversely affect academic success
- 84% of marijuana users reported use on Saturdays, compared with just 26% of students reporting use Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday
- The most frequently reported negative consequence was “feeling sluggish or tired the morning after using marijuana” at 30%, while the least reported negative consequence was “getting into fights” at 1%

*Data taken from Fall 2018 3rd Millennium results (2,138 incoming freshmen and transfer students)

SPOTLIGHT

Be aware of the college’s policies on alcohol and drug use and other related information, which can be found via this Drug Free Schools and Community Act link.

- Standards of conduct that clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees
- A description of the applicable legal sanctions under federal, state, or local law for the unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol
- A description of the health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and the abuse of alcohol
- A list of drug and alcohol programs (counseling, treatment, rehabilitation, and re-entry) that are available to employees and students
- A clear statement of the disciplinary sanctions students and employees may face for violations of standards of conduct relating to drugs and alcohol.

3rd Millennium is CofC’s mandatory online Alcohol, Marijuana and Consent training for all incoming freshmen and transfer students under the age of 25. In fall 2018, registration holds were placed on accounts of students who did not complete the training. Our enhanced communication about the holds significantly increased our completion rate compared with previous years. Holds will be placed after the withdrawal date each semester if students have not completed all of the training.

You can help by reminding students about the training in freshman seminars or advising sessions. Reminders are sent out multiple times a month through their college email, so please encourage them to check their email regularly!

For more information about 3rd Millennium training or requirements, please contact Rachel Goulet at ragoulet@cofc.edu.
Most people recognize this:

But what about this?

In a world of ever-changing technology, it makes sense that the way people use substances are changing also. Flower buds and rolling papers are being exchanged for an oil rig, butane lighter or torch, and glass jars of wax that can contain up to 99% pure THC concentrate.

Dabbing... what is it and why should we care?

Dabs are made by pouring butane over marijuana, which allows THC to leave the plant material and dissolve into the butane. The butane-THC solution is then pressed through the filter and is placed in a dish or tray. The remaining gummy, solid product is high in THC and does not contain much else. People often use modified water pipes to smoke the dab, but dabs can also be put into an e-cigarette and be vaped. Dabs are not green or leafy. They look like wax, butter, oil or amber colored glass shards, called “shatter.”

The appeal, as explained by a CofC student during an AOD assessment, is because of how fast it hits you, how strong the high is, and the fact that you can do it anywhere if you use an e-cig or vape-“there isn’t a weed smell.” All of these points might be seen as benefits to seasoned users, but what about the freshman student who has never smoked marijuana before, and decides to try a dab with their new roommate?

It can be likened to someone’s first time trying alcohol and drinking one beer versus drinking a fifth of whiskey- taking a hit off of a joint is going to be a very different experience than smoking 90% pure THC concentrate. Side effects can be the same as marijuana, but much more intense- paranoia, panic attacks, rapid heartbeat, psychosis, and even blacking out. Because the waxes are often homemade, there is no good way to judge potency, which can result in users smoking too much and experiencing negative side effects. There have also been reports of injury and deaths caused by people using homemade tools to light the wax that end in explosions.

From a mental health standpoint, two major concerns are the high concentrations and how rapidly it affects the brain- which we know leads to a higher tolerance and greater likelihood of developing an addiction, particularly in adolescents and young adults whose brains are still developing.

Campus Tips: If your curriculum includes topics about substance use, incorporate other forms of marijuana into the discussion. I would estimate that about 40% of students I assess for marijuana violations are using vapes (hash oil) or dabs rather than green, leafy buds, so knowing the differences between them affects how I conduct my assessment!

- Rachel Goulet, AOD Counselor, Prevention and Outreach, The Counseling Center at CofC

Additional information: National Institute on Drug Abuse Marijuana Extract Article
SPOTLIGHT ON: SOCIAL NORMING

CofC’s 2018-2019 Social Norming Campaign

Have you seen these messages around campus? On social media? Have you ever wondered what they meant?

These messages and their various iterations have been disseminated for the past 3 years as part of a college-wide Social Norm campaign targeting substance use and mental health service use.

Social norming campaigns such as this one are typically used in an effort to correct college students’ overestimations of normative substance use rates. Students’ misperceptions/overestimations of peer substance use can influence students’ own substance use through initiation or increased use, particularly as these behaviors become normalized. By informing students about actual rates of consumption among peers, and stressing that the majority of students do NOT consume substances regularly, this Social Norming campaign aims to curb student substance use behaviors. In the fall of 2017, the social norming campaign was extended to target mental health concerns that may underlie substance use behaviors. As such, the campaign is also aimed at normalizing support seeking behaviors and raising awareness of the prevalence of mental health concerns among CofC students.

SAVE THE DATE:

The 2019 Student Health Survey will be launched March 25th (right after Spring Break) and we ask that you please encourage students to take it. The Student Health Survey (SHS) is an anonymous web-based survey developed and launched in 2017 by College of Charleston faculty members as part of a College-wide initiative to evaluate the social norming campaign described above, and to gather data on student mental health and substance use behaviors. Specifically, using validated measures adapted/adopted from sources such as the CORE Alcohol and Drug survey, the SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health, and academic literature on help-seeking behavior and mental health, the SHS survey measures students’ mental health status, actual alcohol and drug use behaviors, motivations for use, and support seeking behaviors, as well as students’ attitudes, perceptions, and opinions about alcohol, drugs, and mental health services. The survey is revised and conducted in the spring semester of every academic year and data is used in Student Affairs’ and Counseling Center’s continuous process improvement efforts and to plan and evaluate alcohol and drug and mental health education/intervention initiatives campus-wide.

For more information please contact Christy Kollath-Cattano (Public Health); kollathcattanocl@cofc.edu and Sarah Hatteberg (Sociology); hattebergsj@cofc.edu
CRP RECEIVES GRANT TO FURTHER MISSION

The Collegiate Recovery Program at College of Charleston has recently been awarded the first-ever grant to a four-year institution from the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services. This two-year grant for $120,000 will help the Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) further its mission to help students in recovery from substance use and and/or addictive disorders stay substance-free through peer-to-peer support, group support and through connection to the local recovering community. The CRP provides a safe and nurturing student-focused community in which students in recovery can be empowered in furthering their academic, professional and personal potential to become healthy, responsible, productive members of society.

Goals for funding over the two-year period include hiring academic support specialists for students, conducting peer recovery-support trainings, having more opportunities for students to travel to conferences and events with other recovering students from around the country and to explore dedicated sober living options on campus. CRP Director, Wood Marchant, ’89, was excited about the potential of the grant’s impact saying, “Our plans for the DAODAS grant look to strengthen the program we have built over the last three years. The support we continue to have on- and off-campus leads us to help students live more freely and more fully and we look forward to sharing with other colleges and universities around the state what has been working for our recovering students.”

RESOURCES
On Campus
The Counseling Center
Robert Scott Small Bldg, Rm 300
843.953.5640
Narcotics Anonymous
Robert Scott Small Bldg, Rm 319
Saturdays, 9 p.m.
Collegiate Recovery Program
Wood Marchant
843.953.6630

Off Campus
Charleston Center
843.958.3300
MUSC Institute for Psychiatry, Center for Drug and Alcohol Programs
843.792.9162
Palmetto Lowcountry Behavioral Health
843.747.5830

PROFESSORS: DO NOT CANCEL THAT CLASS!

Out-of-town conference? Medical appointment? Before canceling your class, contact Rachael McNamara, our Health Educator, and consider having a campus presenter for your students instead! Presentations can cover a wide range of topics, from healthy relationships to healthy college habits, substance use or suicide prevention.

For an easy way to arrange a program, complete the Do Not Cancel that Class form two weeks before the date of the class, but last-minute requests will also be considered. If you want a specific topic let us know and we can discuss creating one specifically for your class!

Class is Not Cancelled today