



# What's SAPpening

Brought to you by your Center For Humanistic Change Student Assistance Program Liaisons

MARCH 2014

## March is:

- Self Harm Awareness Month
- National Social Work Month
- March 7-13 National Problem Gambling Awareness Week
- March 24-Kick Butts Day



## References:

Parents 360: Synthetic Drugs: Bath Salts, K2/Spice: A guide for parents and other influencers. Accessed February 14, 2014. Available at: [http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Parents360-Synthetics-Bath-Salts-K2-Spice-Parents-Guide-FINAL-2-13-12.pdf?utm\\_source=Drugfree.org&utm\\_medium=PDF&utm\\_campaign=Synthetic%2B\(K2-Spice%2B%26%2BBath%2BSalts\)%2BDrug%2BGuide%2BFor%2BParents](http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Parents360-Synthetics-Bath-Salts-K2-Spice-Parents-Guide-FINAL-2-13-12.pdf?utm_source=Drugfree.org&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=Synthetic%2B(K2-Spice%2B%26%2BBath%2BSalts)%2BDrug%2BGuide%2BFor%2BParents)

DrugFacts: Spice (Synthetic Marijuana). Accessed February 14, 2014. Available at <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/spice-synthetic-marijuana>

## Synthetic Marijuana

Synthetic marijuana is a designer drug in which herbs, incense or other leafy materials are sprayed with lab-synthesized liquid chemicals to mimic the effect of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive ingredient in the naturally grown marijuana plant. Synthetic marijuana is ingested in a similar manner to cannabis. Synthetic marijuana is either smoked in a joint or devices like a pipe or a bong. It can be rolled into a joint with tobacco or natural marijuana. Synthetic marijuana may also be baked into foods, such as brownies, or made into tea.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has designated the five active chemicals most frequently found in Spice as Schedule I controlled substances, making it illegal to sell, buy, or possess them. However, as the DEA bans various substances the manufacturers substitute different chemicals in their mixtures to get around the law.

### Physical Symptoms

- Loss of control
- Lack of pain response
- Increased agitation
- Pale skin
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Profuse sweating
- Uncontrolled / spastic body movements
- Elevated blood pressure, heart rate, and palpitations

Users report elevated mood, relaxation, and altered perception—and in some cases the effects are even stronger than those of marijuana. Some users report psychotic effects like extreme anxiety, paranoia, and hallucinations. Effects can last between 1 and 8 hours.

Street Names for Synthetics: You will often hear girls discuss having “tea parties” which are when they are abusing synthetics and trying to cover it up around adults. Other names include: Spice, K-2, Blazed, Black Mamba, Bombay Blue, fake weed, Genie, Cush, Bliss, Ninja, Voodoo Wet, Cloud 10, Diamond, Spaced Out, Aztec Warrior, Dreamsmoke, Bayou Blaster, Stimulus, Agent M, Comatose Candy, Wicked X. Street names are a courtesy of Pyramid Healthcare, Inc.

### Upcoming Events for SAP Teams

#### • Effectiveness Checklists

In March, your SAP Liaison will be working with your team to collect responses for the annual SAP Effectiveness Checklist self-assessment tool. Please take the time to respond to the survey, which will be used to identify team strengths and develop plans for building an even stronger team moving into the 2014-2015 school year!

#### • Student Assistance Program Certification Training: March 31<sup>st</sup>, April 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>

Registration is still open for this training and space is available-if you want to round out your SAP team with additional members before the end of the school year, now is the time to register! Funding is currently available to train members for new SAP teams starting up in elementary schools. Registration is available at: [http://www.thehc.org/programs\\_services/sap.html](http://www.thehc.org/programs_services/sap.html)

#### • Lehigh County SAP Networking Meeting:

Monday, April 14, 2014, from 9:00am to 12:00pm  
Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, Room 261  
Southern Lehigh School District  
5438 Route 378, Bethlehem, PA

#### • Bullying Prevention Programming at DeSales University March 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>

Kids of Character and Stand for the Silent present an evening bullying prevention program on March 12<sup>th</sup> from 6:15 to 8:15pm. Parents, educators, and students 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up are invited to attend this event offering education and tools to prevent bullying. To register, contact: [gwen.pongracz@gmail.com](mailto:gwen.pongracz@gmail.com)

#### • SAMHSA's Girls Matter! Webinar Series

SAMHSA is offering monthly webinars held during after-school hours (3:00-4:30pm) focusing on helping teen girls thrive in the face of challenges and pressure of adolescent life. Continuing Education credits are available for participation. The topic for the March 13<sup>th</sup> webinar is The Girl in the Mirror: Behavioral Health Challenges of Adolescent Girls. To register, visit the following webpage: <http://womenandchildren.treatment.org/HERR%20page.asp>

# Prescription Medication Abuse: The Gateway to Heroin

We discussed in our February newsletter the fact that prescription drugs are serving as a gateway to heroin use. A recent survey shows that 24% of high school students have abused prescription drugs and 20% of the 24% of these teens report that their first experience was before the age of 14.

We know that heroin use has increased dramatically over the past year, this could be attributed to the fact that prescription drugs have become more expensive and difficult to attain while heroin is much cheaper.

## **Background:**

Americans make up 4.6% of the world's population, but consume 80% of the world's opioid supply, 99% of the hydrocodone supply and 66% of the world's illegal drugs.

## **Why is it growing?**

The rise of the prescription drug abuse has been driven by more aggressive treatment of pain in response to patient advocacy groups. This, in turn, has initiated the development of new opiate painkillers which has caused an increase in marketing of these drugs and more prescribing by doctors.

## **Where are teens getting the prescriptions?**

60-70% of teens who abuse prescription drugs report getting them from their medicine cabinet at home. Many also obtain them from their friends or family members medicine cabinet. Others are getting them from students at school who are either handing them out or selling them to make a profit. A small percentage of students are getting these drugs from an actual prescription from their doctor.

## **Why are teens turning to prescription drugs?**

Teens are buying into the myth that prescription drugs are a "safer" alternative to illegal drugs. They believe this because doctors are prescribing these drugs so they assume they are safer. Teens also believe that their parents aren't as concerned with prescription drug use as much as they are with illegal drugs. According to the partnership at drug free survey, 16% of parents believe that prescription drugs are safer than street drugs.

## **How can schools help?**

Schools can help by raising awareness about the dangers of prescription drugs among students and parents. National statistics are showing that both students and parents don't believe prescription drugs are as dangerous as illegal drugs, and can lead to addiction and death. Some parents are unaware that prescription drug abuse among youth is in fact a problem, thus, they leave unused prescriptions unlocked where teens can access them.

## **References:**

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Preventing Teen Abuse of Prescription Drugs: Factsheet. *The Partnership at Drug Free*. Retrieved <http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Preventing-Teen-Abuse-of-Prescription-Drugs-Fact-Sheet-2draft-Cephalon-sponsored.pdf>.

The Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic. *Brandeis University, PDMP Center of Excellence*. Retrieved from <http://www.pdmpexcellence.org/drug-abuse-epidemic>.

Sack, David, MD. (June 18, 2013). The Unlikely Force Driving Teen Prescription Drug Addiction: Parents? Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-sack-md/prescription-drug-abuse\\_b\\_3455031.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-sack-md/prescription-drug-abuse_b_3455031.html)

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