Trends in Youth Drug Abuse

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• Trends are consistently changing in the area of drug abuse
  • Especially with our youth
• Popularity of drugs change with time
  • Even the main stay drugs are changing
  • Main stay drugs are getting more potent

Trends in Youth Drug Abuse

• What are some of the drug trends
  • Synthetic Marijuana or Cannabinoids
  • Prescription Drugs tied to Street Drugs
  • Methamphetamine Production Method

Synthetic Cannabinoids
Synthetic Cannabinoids

HISTORY
- 1995 Creation of Synthetic Cannabinoids
- 2004 First appearance on the Internet
- 2004 First Appearance in Europe
- 2008 Wide Spread use in Europe
- 2008 First Appearance in United States
- 2008 First Analysis of SPICE at University of Freiburg
- 2009 Wide Appearance in United States
- 2009 First inquiry Fall 2009
- 2010 Laboratory Testing of Spice Available
- 2011 Temporary Ban by DEA
- 2012 Permanent Ban

John W. Huffman, Ph.D., Clemson Univ.
- Made first synthetic cannabinoid in 1995
- Published formula for JWH – 018 in Bioorganic and Medicinal Chemistry
- Noticed by “underground” Chemists in 2004
- Synthesized over 400 synthetic cannabinoids, none patented
- Retired in 2008

When asked if he felt any responsibility that he made the drug………

“you can’t be responsible for what idiots are going to do.”

January 26, 2011
Chemical & Engineering News

Synthetic Marijuana

- "At a time when youth drug use in America is on the rise, it is critical that parents act today to talk to young people about the harms of drug use, including synthetic marijuana products like Spice and K2 that are marketed as incense. I commend the DEA for using their emergency scheduling authority to protect public health… Until the risks associated with ingesting these products and chemicals can be studied and understood, there is no place for them on the shelves of any legitimate business."
- Director Kerlikowske Office of National Drug Control Policy
Synthetic Marijuana

- Street terms for synthetic marijuana
- Spice
- K2
- Skunk
- Moon Rocks
- Fake marijuana
- Yucatan Fire

Effects of the substance on the user

- The compounds often have similar effects of Marijuana
- These compounds bind to the same receptors in the body as THC
  - Some are stronger and can lead to more powerful and unpredictable effects
- Physiological effects
  - Paranoia, panic attacks, and giddiness
  - Irritability, less motivation, and fatigue
  - Many users report a headache when they come down
- Physical effects
  - Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and palpitations
  - Vomiting, seizures, lack of pain response
- There have been reported overdoses and deaths

Most users are younger in age group

- Teenagers
- Juveniles on probation use it to avoid testing positive for drug use
- Now there are drug tests for it

Federal Regulations

- DEA banned synthetic cannabinoid by placing them in Schedule I
  - Emergency ban went into effect in December 2010
  - Emergency ban lasted for one year
  - Use this time to test and determine dangers of the substances
  - Ban expanded to over 15 substances in July 2012
Synthetic Marijuana

- Federal Regulations
- The following synthetic cannabinoids were made schedule I
  - JWH-018
  - JWH-073
  - JWH-200
  - CP-47 & 400
- Cannabinoids named after John W. Huffman and Charles Pfizer
  - Credited with creation of cannabinoids

New Mexico State Regulations

- The penalties for synthetic marijuana are the same as for marijuana
- Passed in legislative session 2010
- Listed the different synthetic cannabinoids
  - 30-31-6 Schedule I
  - Section C(19)(a)-(h)
  - This is for Possession and Distribution

Problem for Law Enforcement is knowing if substance is sprayed with one of the ban compounds

- Some field tests kits available
- Estimates there are as many as 20+ backbone compounds used
- Even though compounds cause similar effects as marijuana they are not an analog of THC
- Cannot just regulate them under analog so more difficult to keep up with the synthetic cannabinoids being used
Synthetic Marijuana

- As marijuana becomes more available through reduced penalties, decriminalization and medical marijuana it would seem there would be less use of synthetic marijuana
  - That will be determined over the next few years
  - Due to lack of testing abilities and confusion on what is illegal will limit enforcement actions

Synthetic Cathinones/Bath Salts

- Street names such as Vanilla Sky, Ivory Wave, White Rush, White Lightning, Hurricane Charlie
  - Intention is a legal synthetic drug
  - Fake cocaine

Synthetic Cathinones

- Synthetic Cathinones
  - Derivative of cathinone, a central nervous system stimulant, which is an active chemical found naturally in the khat plant
Synthetic Cathinones

- Used by sniffing them just like you would meth or cocaine
- Also can smoke or inject it
- Very addictive
- Often packaged with warning NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION
- That is sure to stop kids from trying it

Effects vary based on what is really in the product

Common effects
- Meth or cocaine type high
- Extremely combative
- Paranoid
- Hallucinations
- Emotionally unstable
- Constipation
- Anorectic
- Manic behaviors

Sold in head shops, gas stations, convenience stores
- Places you normally get bathing supplies

FEDERAL STATUS
- DEA places Bath Salts on October 8, 2011
- Schedule I drug
  - MDPV
  - Mephedrone
  - Methylone
Bath Salts

New Mexico State Law
- New Law passed in the last session
- Schedule I (30-31-6 (C) (20)-(25)
  - 3,4 methylenedioxymethcathinone
  - 3,4 methylendioxpyrovalerone
  - 4-methylmethcathinone
  - 4-methoxymethcathinone
  - Say those three times really fast
- NM Board of Pharmacy and State Law now covers 24 compounds
  - As of November 27, 2011

Penalties
- First offense for Possession is a misdemeanor
- Drug free school zone Possession is a 4th degree felony
  - Exceptions of house or driving through zone
  - Minor in possession is a petty misdemeanor
  - Fine under $100.00 or 48 hours community service
  - Distribution is a felony
    - Under 30-31-22 classified as schedule I non-narcotic

Prescription Drugs

- The increase in abuse of prescriptions has increased the most in the younger age groups
- High School and College age groups
- There are many reasons kids are abusing prescription drugs
  - Easy to obtain - get from medicine cabinet at home or from friends
  - Think the drugs are safe since the are medicine
  - Don't think the drugs are addictive
  - Prescription drugs are not illegal or not a serious crime

- Is this really a problem?
- Number of teenagers abusing prescription drugs is close to those using marijuana
- Estimated 97,000 or 6.1% of New Mexicans age 12 or older have used prescription drugs for nonmedical use
  - In the past year
  - 25% met diagnostic criteria for abuse or dependence of prescription pain relievers
  - Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration
Prescription Drugs

- More overdose related deaths from prescription drugs than any illegal street drug

Prescription Drugs

- Methods to obtain drugs
  - Theft from medicine cabinet
  - Mom and Dad number #1 dealer to kids
  - Steal for friends medicine cabinets
  - Most people don’t keep track of the number of pills they have

Prescription Drugs

- The prescription drug getting the most media attention is OxyContin
  - OxyContin is the trade name for the narcotic drug Oxycodone hydrochloride
  - OxyContin is time released Oxycodone hydrochloride
  - Available in different doses amounts
    - 10mg, 20mg, 40mg and 80mg
  - mg is milligrams
  - Pill had OC on one side and the dose amount on the other side

Prescription Drugs

- OxyContin
  - OC pills were time released but it was easy to crush the pill and defeat the time release
  - Now pills have been reformulated and have OP stamped on them
  - Purdue pharmacy claims pills cannot be crushed and defeat the time release
Prescription Drugs

- Drug abusers report the OP can be defeated
  - Heat it up until it is melted and then freeze it
  - Then crush the remains
  - Then smoke or inject it
- Pharmacists advise people are not refusing the OP pills like they used to
- Perception is reality in the drug trade

Prescription Drugs

- Effects of abused OxyContin
  - Produces an euphoric rush and feeling to the user
  - How is it used determines how quickly the effects hit the user
  - Injecting and smoking give the quickest effects
  - Effect is very similar to heroin

Prescription Drugs

- Abuse of OxyContin will result in the user developing a tolerance to the drug
  - Requiring more of the drug to get the euphoric effect being sought
- Long term abuse can create a physical addiction
  - Short term will create a psychological addiction

Prescription Drugs

- OxyContin abusers switch to heroin due to the cheaper cost for the same type of high
  - Pills can run $1.00 per milligram so a single pill can cost as much as $80.00
  - Dose of heroin $20.00
Prescription Drugs
- As users find it more difficult to buy or steal OxyContin they switch to heroin which is much cheaper per dose
- Danger is street heroin is of unknown purity versus OxyContin

Heroin
- Danger with the heroin use is lack of control
  - Heroin can range from 7% to 80% purity
  - This lack of control of purity can result in “hot shots” of heroin
  - Overdose from too high of purity of heroin

Heroin/Fentanyl
- Heroin is not always strong enough for the addict so dealers want to increase the high by adding other drugs
  - One method was adding a stimulant drug
  - Another which is slowly making a comeback around the country is adding fentanyl to heroin

Heroin/Fentanyl
- Fentanyl can be manufactured in clandestine labs
  - Increase in these type of labs seized in U.S. and Mexico
  - March 16, 2011 fentanyl lab seized in Upper Paxton, Pennsylvania
  - Powder fentanyl mixed in with heroin
  - Fentanyl is 80 to 100 times more potent than morphine
  - This increases the risk of overdose significantly
Meth Labs

- Trends in the manufacturing methods
- Two most common methods of manufacture in the United States
  - Red Phosphorous
  - Anhydrous Ammonia
- There are several variations to the Anhydrous Ammonia Method
  - One Pot method
  - Shake and Bake method

Shake & Bake method
- Similar to the One Pot method but does not use true anhydrous ammonia
- Make condensed ammonia
- Using ammonia sulfate or ammonia nitrate and sodium hydroxide
- Add water
- All other items are used as with the Nazi method
- Lithium metal and Pseudoephedrine

Methamphetamine

- Types of methamphetamine
  - L-methamphetamine
    - Limited production and use - primarily medical use
  - dl-methamphetamine (P-2-P)
    - Limited production and use but this process has reemerged in some areas
  - d-methamphetamine (Ephedrine Reduction)
    - Highly addictive and most potent, widely abused form of methamphetamine

- dextro meth (d meth) vs. dextro-levo meth (dl meth)
- These are stereoisomers that are mirror images of each other
  - d-methamphetamine is 2-3 times more potent than dl-meth and 5 times for potent than l-meth
  - You could not look at a pile of meth and tell if it was d-meth or dl-meth
Methamphetamine

- Imitation methamphetamine
- First report from the Four Corners area
- San Juan Sheriff’s Deputy stopped subject near the state line
- Subject showed all indicators of a “Tweaker” but he said he had used Red Rocket Fertilizer Supplement
  - Which he had bought at a Smoke Shop in Durango, CO
- Subject said he shot up the Red Rocket the same way meth is used
- Medical professional in Cortez, CO have also reported people admitting to using this imitation meth
  - Done since it is legal

Trends in Youth Drug Abuse

- Drug trends are constantly changing and it is important for law enforcement officers to keep up with the new trends
- Determine what drugs are creating the most problem
  - Not which is just getting the most media attention
- Knowing the trends will assist in making cases on the drugs which are creating the serious problems