

April 20th, 2011 A.K.A. "420" A Marijuana Holiday



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Outpatient Treatment for Adolescent & Young Adults and Their Family's in Fair Oaks & Davis
916-276-0626

"420", April 20th, 2011

Ask teenagers local teens and young adults what "420" is, and the typical response is evasive. "Uh, I don't know what that is," a number of teens who were hanging out at the mall said Friday night. However they know.

"I don't know what you're talking about," others said, blushing. According to www.420.com, "420," pronounced "four-twenty," is a special date (April 20) and time of day for marijuana smokers to light up. The Web site says that 420 was a California tradition in the 1970s that became a nationwide ritual, a lingo and a holiday for cannabis smokers. The origination of the term has been attributed to the police radio code for marijuana smoking in progress, the California penal code section for marijuana use, the day Jim Morrison of the rock group The Doors died and the number of chemicals in marijuana. None are true, according to an article by the San Francisco Chronicle that was posted on the Cannabis News Web site last year.

The most popular myth is that 420 is a police radio code, but that is indicative of teens' desire to believe what they want to believe, said Jon Daily LCSW, CADC II, Director of an outpatient treatment program for teens and young adults with substance abuse issues:

www.recoveryhappens.com. "The kids really believe the origin is this police code," Daily said. "Kids don't know what the effects of drugs are going to be either, but someone can tell them it

will do certain things and they'll believe it." Daily and other counselors say April 20 is a problem. Chemically dependent teenagers celebrate the day like a real holiday, Daily said, and schools are likely to see a long list of absences. "April 20 means a time to get high," Daily said. "For chemically dependent kids, 420 happens every day. Parents and teachers have been in the dark. Kids aren't going to go to school that day. They're going to go get high." California penal code 420 refers to obstructing entry on public land. No police radio code for the Citrus Heights Police Department or the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department includes a 420 code, said Lt. Jim Bell of the Citrus Heights Police Department. Jim Morrison died July 3, 1971, and according to High Times, a drug culture magazine, marijuana has 315 chemical compounds.

Steven Hager, editor of High Times, said the term originated in 1971 at San Rafael High School. A group of about a dozen pot-smoking



students who called themselves the Waldos used the term as the time of day they would meet to light up at a statue of Louis Pasteur on campus.

"Waldo Steve," a former group member who owns a business in San Francisco, told High Times that the Waldos would salute each other in the school hallway

("420" continued)

and say, "420, Louis!" "It was a joke, but it came to mean all kinds of things, like, 'Do you have any?' or 'Do I look stoned?' " he said. "Parents and teachers wouldn't know what we were talking about."

Plenty of companies make money on the term. It can be found on stickers, patches, T-shirts and baseball caps. Clerks at Evangeline's in Old Sacramento say they can't keep some of the items on the shelves. "We have a calling list for some of the T-shirts," said clerk Jennea Morris. "We can't

keep them on the shelf." The 420 items have been popular for quite some time, said assistant manager Rob



Teresi. He said the items sell well year-round, not just near April 20. "It's been selling good for three or four years," Teresi said.

"Parents and professionals can use this information to educate the community about this phenomenon. It is an old issue that hasn't gone away. Certainly parents of drug using kids, probation officers and treatment programs need to have clear expectations with clear consequences about sobriety on this day. It is also important to offer teen drug users alternatives..." Daily, 2011.

I have also found interesting information on this topic at: <http://www.snopes.com/language/stories/420.asp>

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Monitoring the Future' Finds More Teens Using Marijuana While Alcohol Use Continues Decline - 2010

Daily use of marijuana has increased among eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade youth, while alcohol use -- at its lowest level since the survey began -- and binge drinking have continued long-term declines, according to [2010 Monitoring the Future Survey \(MTF\)](#) results released today.

MTF, an annual survey funded by the [National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#), has measured self-reported drug use behavior and attitudes among high-school seniors since 1975 and among eighth and tenth graders since 1991.

Researchers, led by Lloyd Johnston at the [University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research](#), surveyed 46,482 eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students in 396 public and independent schools across the country.

Prevalence measures of marijuana use rose in all three grade levels (measures included daily, past 30 days, past year, and lifetime use). When researchers combined data for all three grades, the one-year increases in marijuana use in all prevalence measures were statistically significant.

"Though this upward shift is not yet very large, its duration and pervasiveness leave no doubt in our minds that it is real," said Johnston. "Perhaps the most troublesome part of it is that daily use of marijuana increased significantly in all three grades in 2010."

From 2009 to 2010, daily marijuana-use rates increased from 1.0 to 1.2 percent for eighth graders, 2.8 to 3.3 percent for tenth graders, and from 5.2 to 6.1 percent for twelfth graders. That means that about one in every 16 high-school seniors who were surveyed self-reported daily use of marijuana.