

Science Spotlight

From the National Institute on Drug Abuse

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Social media can influence teens with pro-drug messages

A new NIDA-funded study analyzed the content and demographic reach of a popular pro-marijuana Twitter handle in 2013 and found that only ten percent of the messages mentioned any risky behaviors associated with marijuana use.



Given that over 70 percent of followers were 19 years of age or younger – an age group that is using social media at increased rates – these findings underscore the importance of monitoring social media sites that focus on drug use and to use this information to develop strategic prevention efforts. Messages could include the risks that increase when marijuana use begins as a teen, including addiction, cognitive impairments, and the dangers of driving while intoxicated.

For a copy of the study abstract, go to: <http://www.jmir.org/2014/6/e157/>. For more information about marijuana and its effects in teens, go to www.drugabuse.gov/publications/marijuana-facts-teens.

For more information, contact the NIDA press office at media@nida.nih.gov or 301-443-6245.