Criminals or Customers
Communicating About Impairment
Motivations

- Anxiety, ADHD, and insomnia.
- Social
- Relax from stress
• Most prefer the comfort of their own home
• At a friend’s house
• In their car
• At family events
• In a dorm room
WHEN DO THEY NOT USE?

• Drug testing
• Job interview
• At work
• Using power tools
• Any time before 11 PM
• Interacting with parents or work people
• Studying “I can’t smoke and study.”
• Before work “My interactions with my staff would not be as focused.”
• Not around children or grandchildren “You need to react quickly” “It takes away their innocence to see you do that.”
• Driving motorcycle (admitted to driving his car while using marijuana)

*** No one mentioned driving.***
• Most saw negative effects
  • “I don’t like to combine the two. It’s just one extreme to the next. You don’t feel like you have an equilibrium.”
  • “It counters the effects of the marijuana.”
  • “You get horizontal pretty quickly.”

• Primarily for parties
  • “In a social situation, I use both. When I am alone, I only use marijuana.”
  • “I use marijuana when I am out with my friends drinking on the weekends.”
  • “I mix alcohol and weed on the weekends with friends.”
What’s the best word?

- High
- Baked
- Lit
- Clapped
- Plastered
- Buzzed
- Stoned
- …
• Getting stoned is not the goal for most marijuana users.

• Few admitted to getting regularly stoned.

• For most, getting stoned was not planned and was not enjoyable.

• Using edibles and mixed use was most common scenario for getting “stoned”.

• Descriptions of being stoned or so high were not positive.
  • “It is scary.”
  • “It’s not pleasant.”
DRIVING ATTITUDES

Considered safe and common

- “I use when I am sitting in traffic.”
- “My sister gets out of work and drives home high.”
- “I used to make sure I always had a joint rolled in my car.”
- “If I am smoking, I know I am driving safer.”
- “I drive better. I follow all the rules and speed limits.”

A clear minority said they would not use marijuana while driving. These people tended to be older and female.
PERCEPTION OF ENFORCEMENT

Not a deterrent
Not seen as enforceable

- “I think more people drive high because they are afraid of the alcohol breathalyzer.”
- “The bench-mark is .08 for alcohol, but none for weed so it is hard to articulate if high or so high.”
- “I don’t think you can smoke while driving, but if you are already high, how can they tell?
- “They can’t test you. There is no breathalyzer for marijuana.”
Alcohol is more stigmatized

- "My friends won’t drink and drive at all, but my friends will drive high."
- "Maybe someone who doesn’t use a lot shouldn’t drive, but, hey, there is a first time for everything."
- "Nobody is going to call an Uber because they are too high." (She talked about people using Uber when they have had too much to drink.)

Marijuana is not seen as being as dangerous

- "People are more cognitive with marijuana."
- "For someone who smokes multiple times a day, I don’t think there is anything such as too high. They just don’t get high. It is not the same comparison as drinking and driving."
- "I think it is more common to smoke weed and drive then to drive drunk, but driving drunk is more of a problem."
MARIJUANA MESSAGING

Dramatic and shocking messages will not work.

- “I don’t think driving high kills.”
- “How do you know the crash was caused by driving high? You wouldn’t know.”
- “You don’t hear about people getting in crashes because they are high!”

Grouping high driving and drunk driving together could make sense depending on the execution.
Guidelines

- Educate on the dangers and the law.
- Personalize the message
  - “Make it relatable.”
- Focus on personal responsibility - not fatalities.
- Don’t overdramatize.
  - “Don’t show anyone dying.”
  - “Dramatizing weed, I wouldn’t believe you.”
- Don’t use scare tactics.
  - “We don’t need panic for something that is not statistically proven.”
• Most do not believe that driving high can cause a crash.
• Most regular users drive high - there is little stigma
• Most see alcohol as more dangerous than marijuana.
• Not afraid of police
• Audience has been criminalized.
• Deemphasize enforcement

• Don’t be dramatic or shocking. It is not believable.

• Educate people about the physiological effects – discount “I drive better”

• Appeal to personal responsibility.
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