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Epidemiological and Psychosocial Perspectives on Adolescent Drug Use

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Patterns of use of legal and illegal drugs among adolescents, with special emphasis on marijuana, are reviewed. Developmental patterns of drug involvement and a possible maturational trend in early adulthood are highlighted. Correlates, antecedents, and consequences of marijuana use are discussed. Despite dramatic increases in the use of marijuana in American society over the last decade, youths who use marijuana in 1980 show the same pattern of disaffection from major institutions as users in 1967. Many of the factors found to be associated with marijuana at one point in time precede rather than follow from its use. Illicit drugs appear to be used by some adolescents to handle feelings of distress.



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