Marijuana: The Facts
Everybody’s Doing It…  
FALSE!

78% of Ball State students have NOT used marijuana in the last month.

Only 5.9% of BSU students are daily users.

Source: National College Health Assessment II: Ball State University, Spring 2013
It’s an herb. It’s harmless...

**FACT:** The active chemicals in marijuana can overstimulate and negatively affect the parts of the brain responsible for memory, thinking, concentration, coordination, balance, reaction time, and sensory and time perception (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2012). Sometimes, the brain becomes so overstimulated that the user can lose touch with reality. In addition, studies have shown that cannabis triggers an increase in appetite, commonly called “the munchies.” People who smoke marijuana regularly have been shown to gain weight over time.
Marijuana calms me down...

**FACT:** Research shows a consistent link between marijuana use and depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and attempts, psychosis (mental illnesses, short or long term, that cause hallucinations and delusions), and schizophrenia and personality disturbances, including anti-social behavior. For those with existing mental health conditions, marijuana will often worsen their condition; if mood disorders are being treated with medications, effects are, at best, canceled out or sometimes produce unpredictable reactions.
I can smoke weed tonight and be fine for my 8am class...

**FACT:** The length of the effects of smoking marijuana will differ by individual and can be affected by length of use, tolerance, and body composition. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main active ingredient in marijuana, is extremely fat-soluble, which means it is stored in the body’s fatty tissues and can slowly enter the bloodstream for **up to two days** after smoking.
Weed is safer than tobacco...

**FACT:** Marijuana smoke is an irritant to the lungs, and frequent marijuana smokers can have many of the same respiratory problems experienced by tobacco smokers, such as daily cough and phlegm production, more frequent acute chest illness, and a heightened risk of lung infections. One study found that people who smoke marijuana frequently, but do not smoke tobacco, have more health problems and miss more days of work than those who don’t smoke marijuana. It is not clear whether marijuana smoking contributes to risk for lung cancer.
I’m fine to get behind the wheel...

**FACT:** Marijuana affects the parts of the brain that control depth perception, motor coordination, and reaction time, much like alcohol. If law enforcement suspects you are high while driving, you will be asked to provide a blood sample at the nearest emergency room. Mixing marijuana and alcohol intensifies the effects of both and can pose serious risks.
Sex is better when I’m high...

**FACT:** Marijuana’s affect on sexual performance can vary from person to person and is “dose dependent”. At high doses marijuana can have a depressing effect, which can leave you without the energy to want sex, or the awareness of the way sex is feeling. Some research has also found a relationship between long-term use and erectile dysfunction. Finally, marijuana has the ability to decrease inhibitions; and users are more likely to skip using protection during intercourse, increasing the risk of STIs and unplanned pregnancy.
FACT: All marijuana possession, manufacture, sales, and use is criminalized in Indiana.

Possession or manufacture and distribution of marijuana up to 30 grams is a misdemeanor, punishable with up to one year in jail, a fine of up to $5,000, or both.

Possession or manufacture and distribution of more than 30 grams, or a 2nd possession conviction, is a felony, punishable with up to three years in prison, a fine of up to $10,000, or both.
I’m not going to get addicted...

**FACT:** Contrary to common belief, marijuana *is* addictive. Research has shown that long-term heavy use of marijuana, especially in people who start at a young age, can lead to addiction. Long-term marijuana users trying to quit report withdrawal symptoms including irritability, sleeplessness, decreased appetite, anxiety, and drug craving, all of which can make it difficult to abstain.
Campus Resources

• Office of Health, Alcohol and Drug Education
  – 2nd floor of the Health Center
  – (765)285-3775

• Student Health Center
  – 1500 Neely Avenue
  – (765)285-8431

• Counseling Center
  – Lucina Hall 320
  – (765)285-1736

• Student Rights and Community Standards
  – Student Center, Room L-4
  – (765)285-5036