

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris

516- 676-2008

[safeglencove@yahoo.com](mailto:safeglencove@yahoo.com)

### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports – The Science of Cannabis**

The NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) recently released an overview of Cannabis, synthetic cannabinoids and its effects on the brain to raise awareness in the aftermath of the legalization of marijuana.

According to OASAS, the brain develops until the age of 21 and therefore is more sensitive than the mature brain to environmental influences. Adults who smoked cannabis regularly during adolescence demonstrated the following long-term effects on the Brain: Impaired connections between neurons in specific brain areas; Impaired Precuneus- part of the brain that involves integration of information; Compromised alertness and self-conscious awareness; Impaired area of hippocampus involved in learning and memory; Compromised prefrontal areas involved in executive functioning; Compromised subcortical networks that process habits and routines. Additionally, brain imaging studies have shown decreased activity in prefrontal areas and reduced volume in the hippocampus.

The consequences of these effects include difficulty with attention, memory deficits, encoding deficits (flow of information throughout the brain), consolidation deficits (converting short term memories into long term) and difficulties with complex tasks such as problem solving, mental flexibility (shifting to thought patterns to respond to given situations) and integrating information.

Cannabis is a complex plant that produces multiple compounds with THC and CBD. Cannabis use has been associated with a number of health effects. Research evidence demonstrates problems with attention, memory, and learning. development of Cannabis Use Disorder, psychosis in vulnerable populations. E-cigarette or vaping use –associated lung injury (EVALI) with use of unregulated cannabis e-liquids, Cannabis Hyperemesis Syndrome (vomiting in daily long term users), Low/lower birth weight and small gestational age.

The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) is a State agency whose mission is to improve the lives of all New Yorkers by leading a comprehensive premier system of addiction

services for prevention, treatment, and recovery. For more information about OASAS please visit <https://www.ny.gov/agencies/office-addiction-services-and-supports>.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is concerned about marijuana use and its consequences on the health and development of youth. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE's website to learn more about marijuana use at [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).