

Dear Bill:

I wanted to relate to you my family's experience with drug abuse and its consequences.

My wife and I live in Colorado and are firmly against the state's legalization of marijuana. It was dismaying, to say the least, when the law was passed not by a small margin in 2012.

Our son, the middle child of three, started using marijuana in middle school in the mid 1990s. We firmly believe in the "gateway" aspect of the drug as he progressed to experimentation with ecstasy, cocaine, and considerable consumption of alcohol in high school.

It got so bad that in his junior year we were forced to intervene. We sent him, against his wishes, to a seven-week rehab in the woods and then directly on to a therapeutic shelter. In the past we've gotten/forced him into multiple rehabilitation programs, none of which he successfully completed.

He's now 30, has a girlfriend, and has a decent job here in Colorado. My wife and I would agree that he's currently a functional substance abuser with a dark side that we find hard to penetrate. The effects have been costly. Besides the tens of thousands of dollars we spent in various programs, the impact on relationships within the family have been consequential. His siblings want the best for him but they are many times wary of his motives. Our marital relationship has suffered and at one point we separated briefly, fifteen years ago because of disagreements in how to handle our situation.

Let no one say that marijuana is just a simple, no-risk additive to the pleasure levers of life. The legalization step is a serious and a dangerous development for our culture. My personal conviction is that Colorado will rue the day that this law was passed.

Karl in CO

Bennett, William J.; White, Robert A. (2015-02-03). *Going to Pot: Why the Rush to Legalize Marijuana Is Harming America* (pp. 76-77). Center Street. Kindle Edition.