

## **Concerns about Substance Use in Our Community Synthetic Cannabinoids**

Given alarming trends in substance use among the youth and adults in our community, the Substance Abuse Advisory Council (SAAC) was compelled to address these trends by collecting basic information about the use of synthetic cannabinoids in our community. Responding to substance use trends and changes is prudent and necessary to keep our youth and community healthy and safe.

### **Availability of Synthetic Cannabinoids**

- According to recent unconfirmed reports, at least 2 Gillette convenience stores may be selling synthetic cannabinoid products, such as Spice or K2.
  - Gillette PD narcotics officers are investigating the locations that reportedly sell the products to confirm these reports.
- All these products (i.e., Spice, K2, JWH-018 bonsai fertilizer) are readily available for purchase through the internet.
- Spice or K2 products are sold in surrounding communities in Wyoming and South Dakota.
- Some individuals create their own Spice blend, which is more dangerous as the potency of the chemicals may be extremely high.
  - At-home Spice blends are made by purchasing the JWH-018 chemical powder and mixing the chemical with acetone to turn the chemical into a liquid. This liquid mixture is then sprayed onto dried herbs, tea leaves, or tobacco. (Acetone is used as a binding agent between the JWH-018 chemical and the herbs; also, the acetone chemical will evaporate and leave behind the chemical.)
  - Both local adult and juvenile probation officers have confirmed that probationers have created Spice blends using this process.

### **Who is using in Gillette and Campbell County?**

- Campbell County Juvenile Probation started testing probationers for using Spice or K2 approximately 2 weeks ago, as it is a violation of probation to use the substances.
  - To date, 11 juveniles have been tested for the use of synthetic cannabinoids. Six juveniles had positive results. Several juveniles also admitted to using the substances.
- Campbell County Adult Probation estimates that 30% to 50% of the 550 probationers use synthetic cannabinoids.



Information compiled by Kellie Furman, Project Coordinator for the Substance Abuse Advisory Council (SAAC). For more information, please contact her at 307-686-5334 or at [kellie@ci.gillette.wy.us](mailto:kellie@ci.gillette.wy.us).

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- Probationers use this substance because they believe it is safe and because it is legal. Thus, the probationers often times brag about using the substance.
- At least 8 students have had a Campbell County School District (CCSD) expulsion hearing due to Spice or substances believed to be Spice.
- Four teens have been hospitalized due to reactions to using Spice or the JWH-018 chemical.
  - To address the rapid increase in use of Spice, CCSD administrators are revising policies to prohibit the distribution, possession or use of the substance.



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