

Kristel Cano

Intellectual Freedom Project: MDMA

My Topic and Why I Chose It:

I chose to research about hallucinogens because according to many sources this is one of the types of drugs most commonly used and abused by teens in the form of MDMA. This drug is known to be very common in parties, concerts and music festivals and many people specifically around the age of high schoolers decide to experiment with it and this intrigued me to learn more about the effects of this drug and why it is so popular among teenagers as well to what are the drawbacks of consuming this drug with frequency as many teens do.

A Brief Summary of the Information Available:

For this topic I was able to find many good sources of information talking about the different effects of MDMA from a scientific point of view but what i also found was that many teenagers around the age of 17 were in different websites talking about their experience as well as how the decision of taking these drugs has affected their lives. There were many websites talking about the possibility of this drug being neurotoxic and how it specifically affected a person's body in the long run.

The Insight I Gained From My Research:

When I started looking for important information on MDMA i found out that it's in the top 5 of most commonly drugs used by teens and it stands in the third position of this list. I learned that this drug is specifically very popular in dance clubs and parents of teens think these places are safe because there is no alcohol served but in reality they are allowing their kids to be exposed to this drug that acts both as a stimulant and a psychedelic that produces an energizing effect. This drug messes with your perception, produces distortions in time and allows for the person on the drug to feel more enjoyment of “tactile experiences”. MDMA exerts its effects in the brain on neurons that use the chemical serotonin and this allows for the neurons to communicate with other neurons. This chemical is responsible for mood changes,aggressive behavior, sexual activity, sensitivity to pain, and can even affect your sleep. While taking this drug it is important to recognize that tolerance to the desired effects is possible and expected if taken consistently meaning that the “good” feeling goes away with time and makes people want to take higher dosages.

The effects in the long run for this drug are however not as fun as many teenagers describe it online or over text messages with their friends. According to research, chronic users of ecstasy perform more poorly than non users on cognitive and memory tasks. Even though ecstasy has most if its effects concentrated psychologically, there are also physical long term effects of this drug. Examples of the physical downfalls of this drug is that it can interfere with the body’s ability to regulate its temperature and lead to hypothermia that can affect your liver, kidney, cardiovascular system and it can lead to death.

Lastly when people try to get off this drug it is very hard because this can be addicting for many people. Approximately 60% of MDMA users experience withdrawal symptoms and these

symptoms may include fatigue, anxiety, trouble sleeping, trouble concentrating, loss of appetite, and depression.