The Relationship Between Marijuana Use and Intimate Partner Violence in a Nationally Representative, Longitudinal Sample

1. Jennifer M. Reingle, PhD1
2. Stephanie A. S. Staras, PhD1
3. Wesley G. Jennings, PhD2
4. Jennifer Branchini, MA1
5. Mildred M. Maldonado-Molina, PhD1

1. 1University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA
2. 2University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, USA

1. Jennifer M. Reingle, University of Florida, College of Medicine, Department of Health Outcomes and Policy and Institute for Child Health Policy, 1329 SW 16th St., Room 5130, PO Box 100177, Gainesville, FL 32610-0177, USA Email: jreingle1@ufl.edu

Abstract

Intimate partner violence is a significant public health problem, as these behaviors have been associated with a number of negative health outcomes including illicit drug use, physical injury, chronic pain, sexually transmitted diseases, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder. The current study examined the association between marijuana use and intimate partner violence using a longitudinal survey of adolescents and young adults ages 15 to 26 years. Data were obtained from 9,421 adolescents in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) Waves 1 through 4 (1995-2008). Marijuana use was measured in the past year at each wave and participants were categorized as “users” or “nonusers.” Partner violence was constructed using six items (three pertaining to victimization and three concerning perpetration) from Wave 4 (2007-2008). Using these six items, participants were categorized as “victims only,” “perpetrators only,” or “victims and perpetrators.” Survey multinomial regression was used to examine the relationship between marijuana use and intimate partner violence. Consistent use of marijuana during adolescence was most predictive of intimate partner violence (OR = 2.08, p < .001). Consistent marijuana use (OR = 1.85, p < .05) was related to an increased risk of intimate partner violence perpetration. Adolescent marijuana use, particularly consistent use throughout adolescence, is associated with perpetration or both perpetration of and victimization by intimate partner violence in early adulthood. These findings have implications for intimate partner violence prevention efforts, as marijuana use should be considered as a target of early intimate partner violence intervention and treatment programming.

- intimate partner violence
- dating violence
- longitudinal
• victimization
• marijuana