

# Substance Use Prevention Through Community-Based Interventions



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## I. Introduction

Koreatown Youth + Community Center (KYCC) is a non-profit organization in Los Angeles, California whose mission is to serve the evolving needs of the Korean American population and the multiethnic Koreatown community. Within KYCC, the Prevention Education (PE) Unit leads efforts to reduce substance use among youth in the Koreatown community using environmental and community approaches.

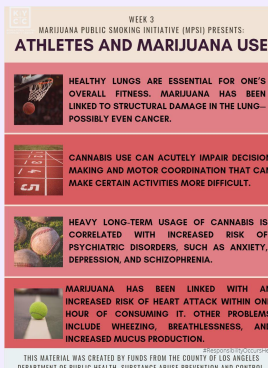
The Marijuana Public Smoking Initiative (MPSI) is an environmental-based project to examine public perception of marijuana use in public spaces. The communities surveyed were Koreatown, Pico-Union, and Westlake in collaboration with the Los Angeles Department of Public Health.

The purpose is to understand current perceptions of marijuana use in MacArthur Park and reclaim public-shared spaces as marijuana smoke-free places for community members. This goal is centered on disseminating survey findings to the MacArthur Park community and offering resources to understanding the dangers of marijuana use and overall well-being.

This work was supported by the Occidental College Urban & Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI) and the Office of Undergraduate Research.

## II. Methods

KYCC brainstormed possible community events that allowed for social distancing and methods to share information on marijuana use through social media outlets. The Team developed various flyers on Canva that shared information pertaining to marijuana use. Topics varied from *Data Findings*, *The Effects of Secondhand Smoke*, and *Athletes and Marijuana Use*. Moreover, they organized the 1st Virtual Marijuana Prevention Art Contest. Through this event, where community members will have the space to share their own perceptions of marijuana use and how they have been affected by the problem behavior.



## III. Results

MPSI Data in Action is an ongoing, evolving project. The flyers created will be shared with KYCC's youth and adult groups, such as Youth Drug Abuse Prevention Program (YDAPP) and Los Angeles Youth First Tobacco Coalition (LAYFTC). The Marijuana Prevention Art Contest will be hosted in August.

Additional data will be collected to analyze the number of community members in MacArthur Park reached and how the perception of marijuana use has shifted in the long-term. They will be collaborating with the MacArthur Park Community Initiative (MPCI) to develop specific strategies to address marijuana use in the community.

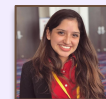
## IV. Conclusions

As anticipated, MPSI Data in Action will offer community members a comprehensive understanding of marijuana use and how it affects all members of the community, including non-users. All events were created with the intention of encouraging storytelling among individuals and community members to better grasp the effects of marijuana use.

Additionally, community members will learn more about their mental, social, and physical well-being by understanding how marijuana use inhibits one's overall health. By understanding its implications, the community will have the tools to better address the issue.

## V. Acknowledgements

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