





## **A Public Service Announcement (PSA)**

on

### ***Pot and Driving*** **for your Community**

#### **Background**

##### ***What is the Pot and Driving Campaign?***

People know that drinking and driving isn't safe, but what about smoking marijuana and driving? Alcohol is still the number one danger for drivers, their passengers or anyone else using the roads, but does that mean that smoking marijuana and getting on a vehicle is safe? The answer is no.

Many Canadians use marijuana, and some choose to drive high. In 2005, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) launched a Pot and Driving Campaign to inform young people about the effects of marijuana on driving and the risks of driving high. We talked to over 75 young people in several provinces about what our campaign should look like and what it should say. Almost all of the young people we spoke to said they used marijuana.

CPHA's Pot and Driving Campaign was geared toward the South where most people are drivers or passengers of cars or other kinds of road vehicles. While we were creating our campaign, we realized that youth living in the North might have a very different experience because of the different vehicles they used in their everyday life. After the campaign was launched in November 2005, CPHA partnered with the National Aboriginal Health Organization's (NAHO) Ajunnginiq (Inuit) Centre in early 2006 to find out how to make it more relevant to young people living in northern, Inuit communities.

We conducted twenty telephone interviews with nurses and doctors, bylaw and RCMP officers, teachers and school principals, as well as hamlet mayors, elders and hunters living in both larger and smaller communities in the Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut regions. We also visited a Nunavik community in early February 2006. We spoke to many adults and young people in the community. We also participated in a radio call-in show at the local community FM station.

Even though the visit was only four days long, we learned a lot! We discovered that adapting the campaign would not simply be a matter of editing our campaign materials, so we decided to produce a message on pot and driving that could be read over community FM radio and regional radio stations. The message - provided as a Public Service Announcement (PSA) - is based on the advice given to us by people in the communities, including youth and elders. It is designed to be relevant to youth and other people living in the North.

## ***Using the PSA in your community***

This PSA was developed for use on community radio to raise awareness about the effects of marijuana on driving and the risks of driving high. In addition to radio, the PSA may also be used in schools as an announcement over the P.A. system. The PSA may also be used with youth as a discussion starter in the classroom or youth centre. Please visit the Pot and Driving Campaign website [www.potanddriving.cpha.ca](http://www.potanddriving.cpha.ca) for Pot and Driving resources, including

- Discussion guide (for adults who want to engage teenagers in a discussion about pot and driving)

- Frequently Asked Questions (to inform the discussion)

- 10 Questions (a handout for teenagers to start the discussion)

- Responses to the 10 questions (handouts for teenagers to encourage talking and listening)

These resources are also available in Inuktitut syllabics and French on the same website.

---

### ***Pot and Driving PSA Text (166 words)***

*(for use on community and regional radio or as a Discussion Starter)*

"Some drugs affect your ability to drive. Marijuana (or Pot) is one of them. Marijuana can make a driver focus too much on some things and ignore others, like a person walking across the road or a snowmobile appearing fast out of nowhere. If you smoke grass and take control of a snowmobile, a Honda, or maybe a car or a truck, you have a greater chance of being injured or injuring someone in your community."

"Getting high and using a snowmobile or a Honda outside of town or out on the land is also risky. When you're driving high, you might not notice thin ice under your snowmobile or a rock or mound of snow that could flip your Honda. When you're in your community or out on the land, it doesn't make sense to drink alcohol and drive. Driving when you're high doesn't make sense either. To find out more about driving high visit [www.potanddriving.cpha.ca](http://www.potanddriving.cpha.ca)."

*Financial assistance provided by Canada's Drug Strategy, Health Canada.*

*The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.*