

Examining the Relationship between Marijuana Use and Abusive and Neglectful Parenting: Lessons for Legalization

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Why marijuana use?

- Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug
- Received little attention from the child welfare system, to date
- Rapidly changing policy environment suggests that we can no longer ignore the issue

What about child welfare?

- 6% of mothers use marijuana while pregnant
- Poisonings of children < 12 years due to marijuana ingestion increased in Colorado
- Medical marijuana use made people better parents by helping them relax vs. hitting or yelling at their children

What about availability?

- 23 states plus the District of Columbia allow for medical marijuana use
- More dispensaries, more marijuana use
- This increased availability could lead to a rise in parents using marijuana

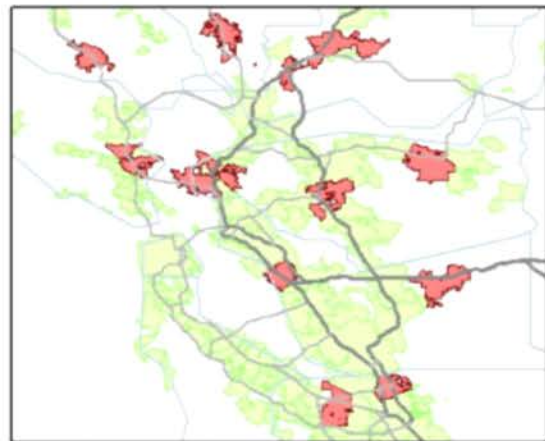
Research Questions

- How is marijuana use related to physical abuse, supervisory neglect, and physical neglect?
- Is the physical availability of marijuana related to physical abuse, supervisory neglect, and physical neglect?

Research Design

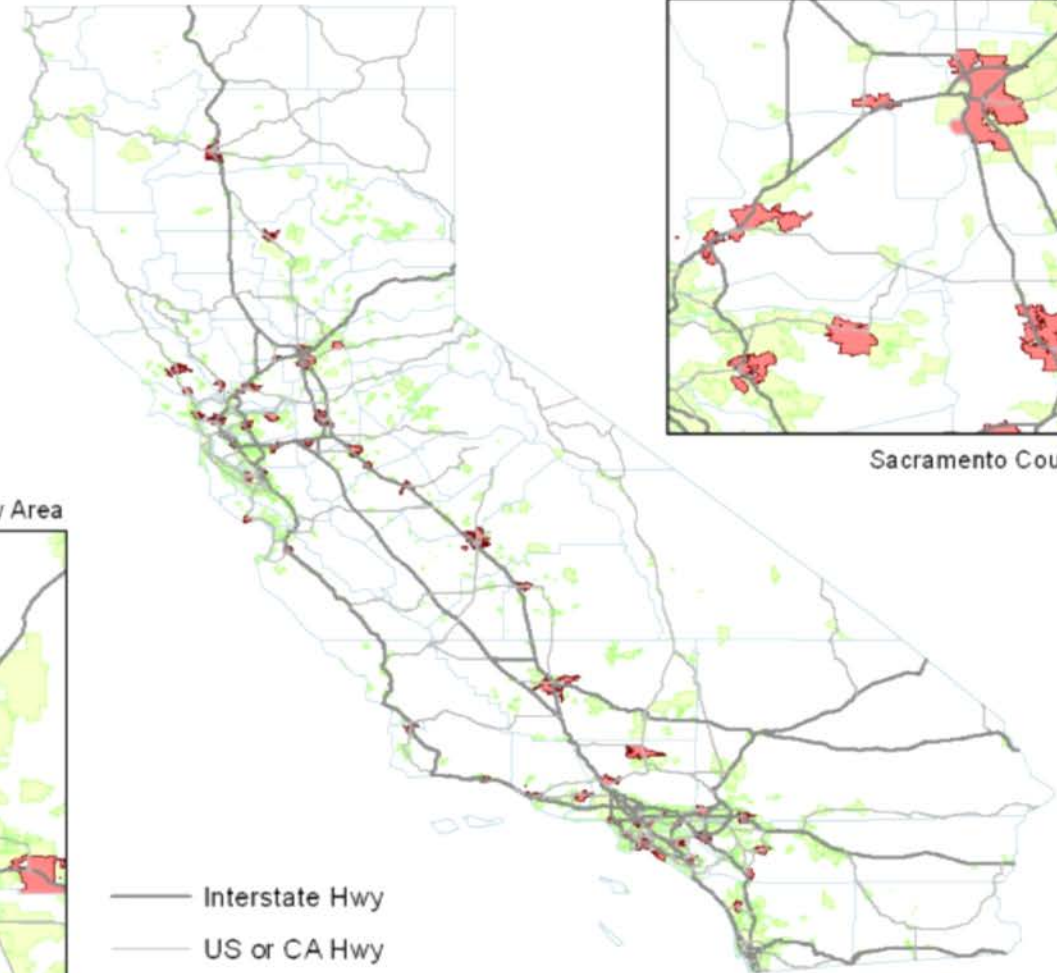
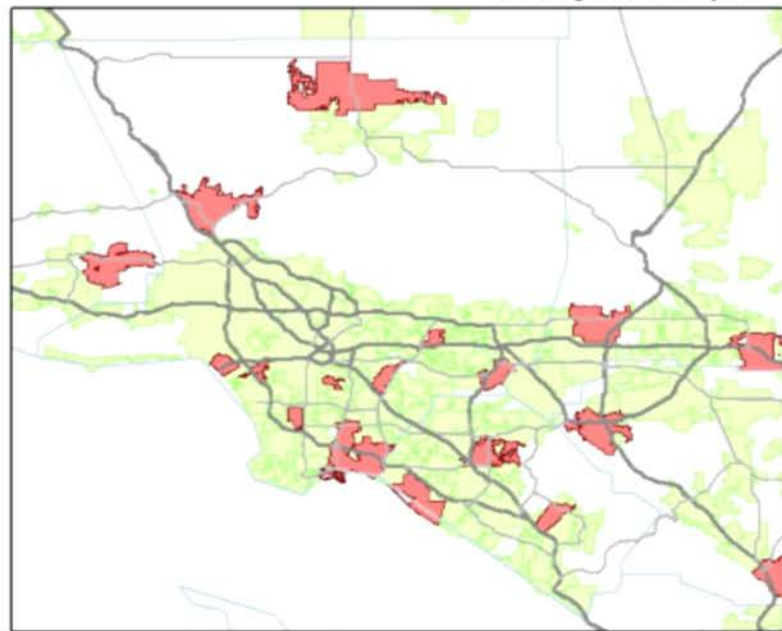
- 3,023 parents from the general population
 - 50 cities in California
 - 50,000 – 500,000 in population
- Recruited via listed samples
- 47.4% response rate overall
- Use of Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology to ask about abuse and neglect

The 50 Cities - Environmental Approaches to Prevention



San Francisco Bay Area

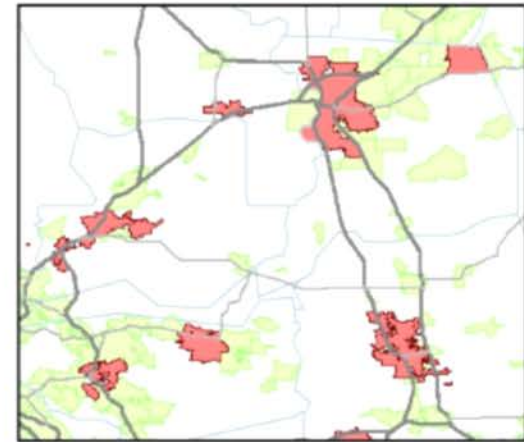
Los Angeles County Area



- Interstate Hwy
- US or CA Hwy
- 50 Cities
- Other Cities
- County Boundaries

0 50 100 200 Miles

Enlargements are 4x the State Map



Sacramento County & Delta

Measures

- Dependent Variables
 - Physical abuse (Conflict Tactics Scale, Parent-Child Version)
 - Supervisory neglect (Multidimensional Neglectful Behavior Scale)
 - Physical neglect (Multidimensional Neglectful Behavior Scale)

Measures

- Independent Variables
 - Current marijuana use (individual level)
 - Physical availability of marijuana (city level)
 - Medical marijuana dispensaries
 - Delivery services

Analysis

- Multilevel models
 - Individuals Nested within Cities
 - Negative binomial random effects (frequency of physical abuse)
 - Regression random effects models (physical and supervisory neglect)

Results

Physical Abuse

	Physical Abuse	
Variable description	IRR	SE
Marijuana Use	2.911	1.308*
Medical Marijuana Dispensaries	1.305	0.175*

At the *individual level* also control for child gender, child age, race/ethnicity, age, gender education, marital status, number of children, employment status, income, anxiety, depression, impulsivity, social support, and alcohol use.

Results

Supervisory Neglect

	Supervisory Neglect	
Variable description	B	SE
Marijuana Use	0.038	0.038
Medical Marijuana Dispensaries	0.007	0.010

At the *individual level* also control for child gender, child age, race/ethnicity, age, gender education, marital status, number of children, employment status, income, anxiety, depression, impulsivity, social support, and alcohol use.

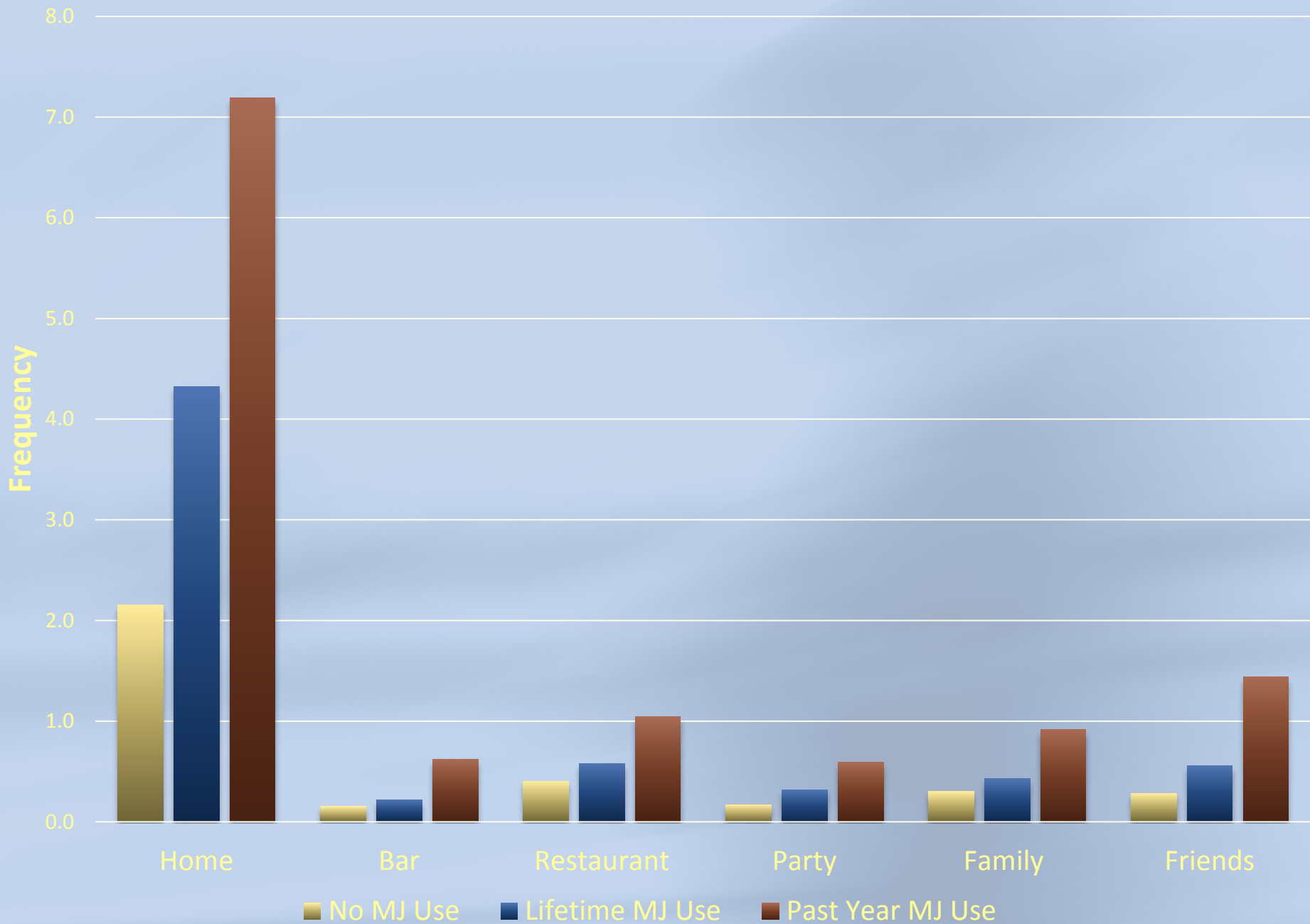
Results

Physical Neglect

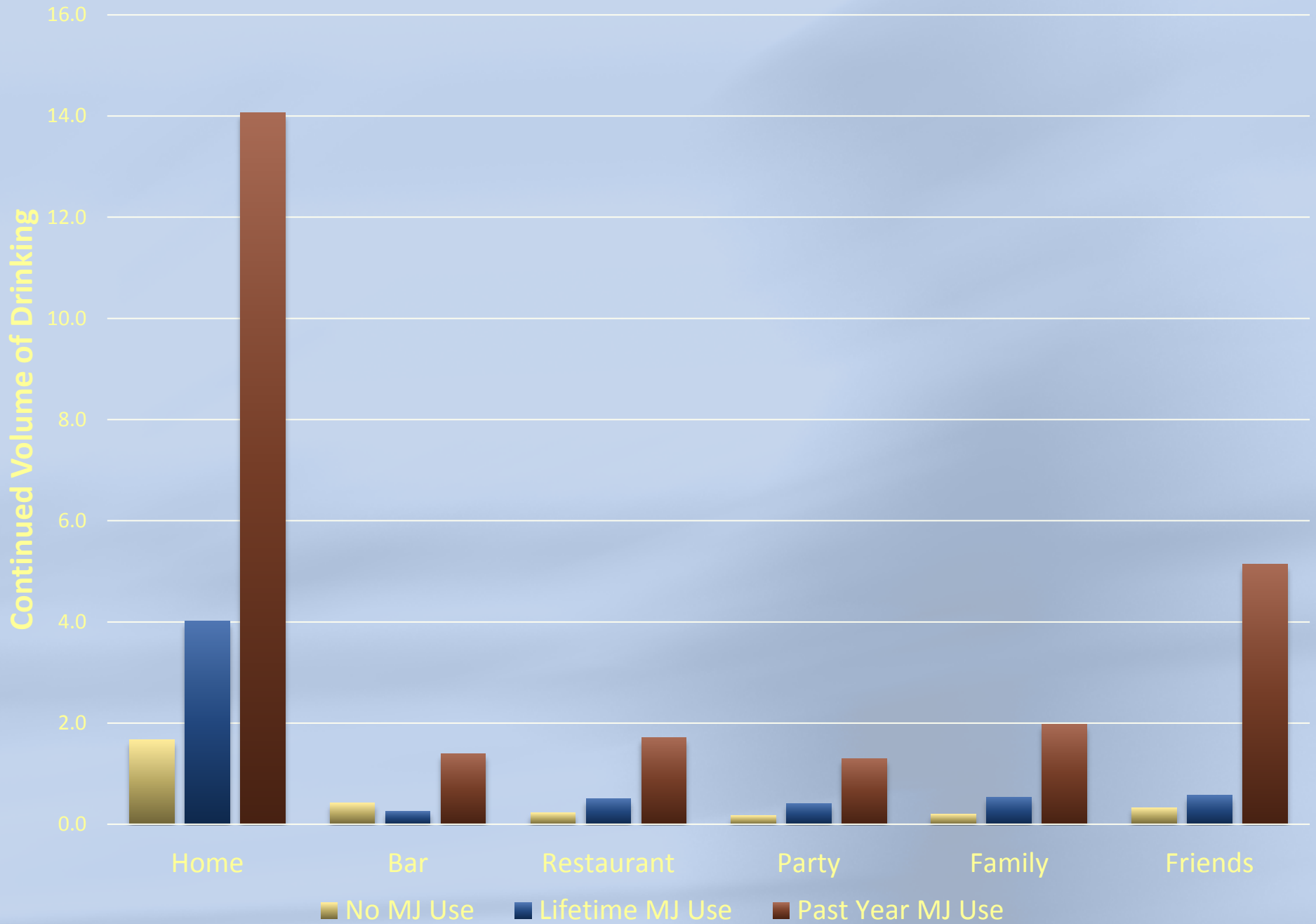
	Physical Neglect	
Variable description	B	SE
Marijuana Use	-0.124	0.046**
Medical Marijuana Dispensaries	-0.001	0.014

At the *individual level* also control for child gender, child age, race/ethnicity, age, gender education, marital status, number of children, employment status, income, anxiety, depression, impulsivity, social support, and alcohol use.

Context-Specific Drinking Frequency and Marijuana Use



Context-Specific Continued Volume and Marijuana Use



For Discussion

- Is this a timing issue?
- If true medical users, could pain, stress of illness be a measure predicting both?
- Surprising relationship between physical neglect and marijuana use. . .or is it?