



Welcome to SMARTNews, part of the [Start SMART NY](#) campaign to reform New York's marijuana laws. Start SMART NY is supported by a coalition convened by the Drug Policy Alliance and comprised of various groups and organizations dedicated to ending marijuana prohibition. We will be your monthly source of news and events related to the campaign.

Marijuana Updates

- Advocates are officially launching the campaign to legalize marijuana in New York. Start SMART NY, a coalition made up of criminal justice groups, civil rights organizations, and community members will announce the new campaign, present the coalition, and rally in support of the updated Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act at a press conference in Albany on Monday, June 12. [Learn more.](#)



LEGALIZE MARIJUANA

start SMART

SENSIBLE MARIJUANA ACCESS THROUGH REGULATED TRADE

June 12 | Albany

BUSES FROM UNION SQUARE & BUFFALO @ 7 AM

RSVP at bit.ly/legalizeNY

We are the Drug Policy Alliance. VOCAL NEW YORK IDP LATINO justice Cannabis Cultural Renaissance

[Learn More](#)

Marijuana Stat of the Month

11x

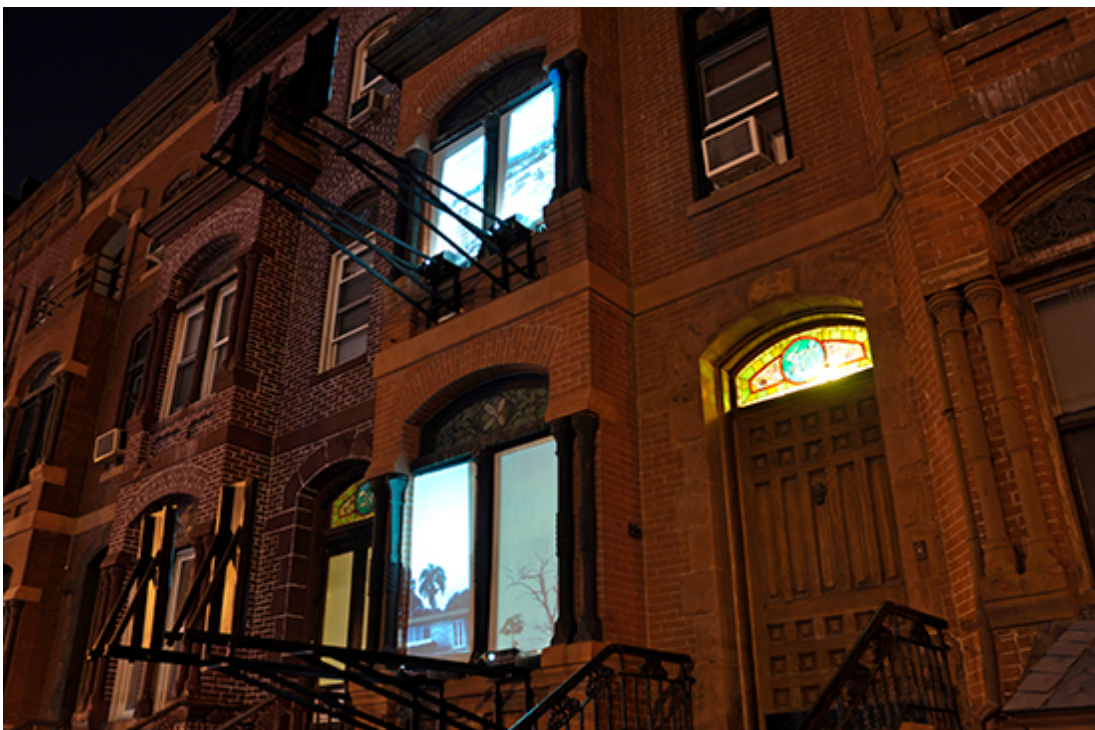
In Manhattan, Black people are 11 times more likely to be arrested for drug possession than white people, despite similar rates of use.

According to a 2016 report by the ACLU and Human Rights Watch.



Beyond the Numbers

Each month in this newsletter we will share the personal stories of the people who are being directly impacted by New York's marijuana policies. Their full names will not be shared.



The Bronx, New York - Carlos was sitting outside his girlfriend's Bronx home one evening when he encountered firsthand how marijuana prohibition can be used as a pretext for police stops and searches. He was talking to a neighborhood friend when, all of a sudden, he noticed a flurry of activity. Two plain clothes officers came out of a nearby car and walked directly up to him and his friend. They demanded that he put his hands behind his back.

Not knowing how he should respond, Carlos complied. He was justifiably confused but after being quickly handcuffed, it became evident that they were looking for somebody specific and they assumed that Carlos was that person. They searched him and then the surrounding area for approximately 20 minutes. The arresting officers then called for backup and two more police cars quickly arrived. Carlos was arrested and brought to the precinct on the claim that the officers found marijuana; they claim they found a joint in the area, although nothing was found on Carlos. He was given a Desk Appearance Ticket (DAT) at the precinct and will now have to appear in Court.



Why is marijuana legalization a SMART choice for New York?

"New York State prohibited marijuana for non-medical use in 1927. In the past 90 years, we've reaped the bitter fruit of our great grandparents' folly—hundreds of thousands of arrests, criminalization of communities of color, the loss of marijuana as a medicine and an explosion of the use of far more toxic drugs. It's time to start the conversation about how New York SMARTens up to heal the sick, grow opportunities for minorities instead of taking them away and provide safer alternatives to alcohol and opioids. It's time to end marijuana prohibition in New York State."

Doug Greene, Legislative Director, Empire State NORML



Featured Event

Marijuana Reform Legislative Action Day: Start SMART NY Campaign Coalition

Over the last twenty years, the enforcement of marijuana prohibition has devastated communities across the state of New York. It has been a tool for the hyper-criminalization of young people of color and has been the justification for unconstitutional policing practices. All of this has come at a great human and financial cost--the Start SMART NY campaign believes it is time to find another way.

Join the Start SMART NY campaign in Albany on Monday, June 12th for a day of action as we demand an end to marijuana prohibition in New York.

Albany, New York
June 12th

Start SMART NY Press Conference and Campaign Launch

Buses leaving from Buffalo and NYC @ 7am

RSVP for Buffalo bus [here](#).
RSVP for the NYC bus [here](#).

For more information, please contact Chris Alexander
at calexander@drugpolicy.org

Learn about more upcoming events related to marijuana reform

Get Involved

Marijuana Prohibition is coming to an end - join the fight.

For more information visit our [website](#) or contact us
at startsmart@drugpolicy.org





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