

# South Central's Health on Blast

## *Substance Abuse amongst Youth*

- Almost 50% of high school seniors have abused a drug of some kind
- By 8<sup>th</sup> grade 15% of students have used marijuana
- Over 60% of teens reported that drugs of some kinds are kept, sold, or used at their school
- 64% of teens say they have used prescription pain killers that they have gotten from a friend or family member

# Why is Substance Abuse detrimental to the Brain?

*Substance abuse affects a teens brain by:*

- Interfering with neurotransmitters and damaging connections with the brain
- Creating problems with memory
- Ingraining expectations of unhealthy habits into brain circuitry

# Prevention

- *Youth-* peer mentoring and leadership programs mobilize a powerful prevention force and demonstrate the benefits of prevention.
- *Parents-* parents provide role models, define standards of behavior and achievement for your child. Parents or guardians who speak to their children about the issues tend to see a lower rate of use and abuse in their families.