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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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### **For Immediate Release:**

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### **Salvia Divinorum—Herb Used as Drug by Arizona Shooting Suspect**

*YES, a leading provider of substance abuse prevention and treatment in teens  
warns of this drug's dangerous side effects.*

**Background:** The New York Times reported yesterday ([click here to read story](#)) that Arizona shooting suspect, Jared Loughner, 22, was at one point a frequent user of the plant Salvia Divinorum, also known as diviner's sage, which he began smoking while in high school. No one is suggesting his use of this drug contributed to the shooting, but its side effects closely mimic psychosis and match his comments about how he sees the world and his existence in a dreamlike state.

**Media Opportunities:** YES' Substance Abuse Specialists are available for comments and interviews on the dangers and side effects of Salvia Divinorum and its use in Eastside teens. Please contact Cami Keyes at 425.241.1267 to arrange an interview.

**Facts:** **Salvia Divinorum** is a wild herb in the mint and sage families. Little research has been done on this drug, however it's a controlled substance in Scandinavian countries, but legal in the US. It's a potent hallucinogenic with effects similar to alcohol. Additional information from the National Institute on Drug Abuse can be found by [clicking here](#).

**Most common method of use:** Orally, Chewed, Smoked      **Length of high:** 1-4 Hours

#### **Effects vary based on dose and method of ingestion:**

- Loss of coordination & speech
- Uncontrollable laughter
- Sense of confusion
- Anxiety
- Blurring of reality
- Hearing voices
- Fear
- Visual hallucinations & closed eyes hallucinations
- Distortion of depth perception

#### **In most extreme reactions:**

- Loss of consciousness
- No memory of experience
- Falling down
- No perception of pain
- Trance like state
- Need for a 'sitter' to watch over the person
- Severe Anxiety

**What:** YES' Certified Substance Abuse Counselors are not seeing a lot of Salvia Divinorum use, however it is fairly common for kids to know about it. Among those who have used it, most report that they do not like the high. However, there is concern with increased reports of its use in the media, more kids may experiment with this potent drug.

**Parent Education:** YES recommends parents talk with their kids about this drug and its dangerous side effects. For tips and information to talking to kids about drugs, parents are encouraged to visit the YES web site at [www.YouthEastsideServices.org](http://www.YouthEastsideServices.org).

**Who:** YES is a nonprofit organization and a leading provider of youth substance abuse and counseling services in the region. We have a number of experts on the front lines working with youth and families in schools and at our offices in Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland. Since 1968, YES has been a lifeline for kids and families, offering treatment, education and prevention services to help youth become healthy, confident and self-reliant and families to become strong, supportive and loving. While YES accepts Medicaid and insurance and offers a sliding scale for their services, no one is turned away for inability to pay.