

# News Release: Manatee Glens

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## MANATEE GLENS LAUNCHES “KEEP KIDS OFF GRASS” CAMPAIGN GOAL: SAVING IQ POINTS

(Bradenton, FL)... Manatee Glens launched an educational campaign to coincide with The 2014 Giving Challenge. The effort is designed to alert young people and their parents about the dangers of smoking marijuana. In order to reach more people, Manatee Glens is teaming with Manatee County Substance Abuse Coalition and Manatee County Youth Commission. For a play-on-words, Manatee Glens worked with Dieter’s Sod to tell the community, “This is the only grass kids should be on!”

Manatee Glens is posting videos with members of the Manatee County Youth Commission as well as clinical staff with the intent that these be shared. To see the latest photos and [videos](#), visit [www.facebook.com/Manatee-Glens](http://www.facebook.com/Manatee-Glens) and [www.manateeglens.org](http://www.manateeglens.org) The 2014 Giving Challenge runs from noon May 6 until noon May 7, visit [www.GivingPartnerChallenge.org](http://www.GivingPartnerChallenge.org). This is the online event for non-profits to receive donations with some opportunities for matching funds. All money raised by Manatee Glens during the 2014 Giving Challenge will go to Children’s Substance Abuse and Prevention and used for educational materials, bus passes so teens can come to counseling, and supplies for outreach activities.

“The human brain is still developing until 26 years old, so anything that can interrupt or interfere with that development is something we want to avoid,” explained Nestor Levesque, director of Manatee Glens Adult Outpatient Services and Chair of Manatee County Substance Abuse Coalition’s Marijuana Task Force.

Perhaps more compelling is the damage to intelligence. “Kids who smoke marijuana can lose up to eight IQ points,” stated Robert Boxley, Ph.D., Manatee Glens Supervising Psychologist. “That has real world consequences.”

The Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association (FADAA) released a policy statement opposing medical marijuana, joining the Florida Surgeon General, the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association. There is no medical science behind medical marijuana. But there is more than sufficient research documenting lowered IQ in youth, risk of psychosis, risk of addictions and permanent neurological change in marijuana users.

This campaign comes during the time that Florida is considering legalizing marijuana. FADAA adds, “If Florida’s approach to the prescription pain pill epidemic is any measure, medical marijuana will be marked by inadequate regulation and little or no additional funding for an already overburdened addictions treatment system.”

*Reporters who want more information about Manatee Glens, or to schedule an interview with Mary Ruiz, President/CEO, please call 941-782- 4320 or e-mail [Sondra.guffey@manateeglens.org](mailto:Sondra.guffey@manateeglens.org) or visit [www.manateeglens.org](http://www.manateeglens.org).*

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Manatee Glens is a specialty hospital and outpatient practice in the Tampa Bay area treating mental health and addictions in youth, adults and seniors.