

A Parent's Guide to:

Teen Marijuana Use

The National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) reports that 30.7% of high school seniors used marijuana in the past year.¹ With strong evidence that parents have an important influence on young people's choices about substance use, now is the time to start talking about marijuana use with your teen.



Trends:

- Today's marijuana is more potent and contains higher percentages of THC (the psychoactive component that makes people feel "high").
- Increased popularity of vaping products allows for more undetectable use of marijuana.



Risks for Teens:

The brain continues to develop until around age 25. Marijuana use during adolescence and young adulthood may harm the developing brain.^{2,3}

Negative effects of teen marijuana use include²:

- Difficulty thinking and problem-solving,
- Problems with memory and learning,
- Reduced coordination,
- Difficulty maintaining attention, and
- Problems with school and social life.

How marijuana can impact a teen's life:

- *Increased risk of mental health issues.* Marijuana use has been linked to a range of mental health problems, such as depression and social anxiety.²
- *Impaired driving.* Driving impaired by any substance, including marijuana, is dangerous and illegal.⁴
- *Potential for addiction.* Approximately 3 in 10 people who use marijuana have marijuana use disorder.⁴ The risk of developing marijuana use disorder is stronger in people who start using marijuana during youth or adolescence and who use marijuana more frequently.⁵



Parent Tips:

Most parents want to start talking, but don't know where to start. These tips can help you feel more confident when having the drug talk.

- Be a good listener and stay on topic.
- Use open-ended questions.
- Set clear expectations about drug and alcohol use, including real consequences for not following family rules.
- Discuss different scenarios and coach your teen on how to respond to each one.
- Get to know your teen's friends, their parents, and where your teen hangs out.
- Talk to your teen often and keep the conversations casual by allowing them to happen in the car, over dinner, etc.
- During every conversation, let them know they can always come to you for advice.

Learn more: www.cdc.gov/marijuana/health-effects/teens

Adapted with permission from the Washtenaw County Health Department

Funded by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Cannabis Regulatory Agency (LARA)

Revised August 2023

References:

1. Miech, R. A., Johnston, L. D., Patrick, M. E., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg J. E. (2023). Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use, 1975-2022. Monitoring the Future Monograph Series. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan.
2. National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine, "The health effects of cannabis and cannabinoids: Current state of evidence and recommendations for research," Washington, DC, 2017.
3. Batalla A, Bhattacharyya S, Yücel M, Fusar-Poli P, Crippa JA, Nogué S, Torrens M, Pujol J, Farré M, Martin-Santos R. Structural and functional imaging studies in chronic cannabis users: a systematic review of adolescent and adult findings. PLoS One. 2013;8(2):e55821.
4. Hasin DS, Saha TD, Kerridge BT, Goldstein RB, Chou SP, Zhang H, Jung J, Pickering RP, Ruan WJ, Smith SM, Huang B, Grant BF. Prevalence of Marijuana Use Disorders in the United States Between 2001-2002 and 2012-2013. JAMA Psychiatry. 2015 Dec;72(12):1235-42.
5. Winters KC, Lee C-YS. Likelihood of developing an alcohol and cannabis use disorder during youth: Association with recent use and age. Drug Alcohol Depend. 2008;92(1-3):239-247.