

Discussing Marijuana with your Child

In recent years, marijuana use inside the country has grown astronomically. Nationwide, as many as 1 in 3 teens report having taken marijuana, with 1 in 5 reporting that they currently take it. The largest reason for its growing use is that youths incorrectly believe that it is much safer than it truly is. Several factors have aided in the growing social tolerance toward marijuana. Multiple states have decriminalized it, with a few legalizing its manufacture and sale altogether. Even in states where it isn't legal, smoke-shops selling CBD, which is also derived from marijuana, has given a false impression that the substance is benevolent. As well, vaping THC has become an extremely popular using method, which assists in using quickly in public, without much less of an odor.

Because of the positive outlook that the media takes toward marijuana, it's important to discuss this topic with kids, preferably starting around middle school, in order to make sure they've been presented with both sides of the debate. While they may still feel pressured to experiment with THC eventually, knowing the facts may help them to resist peer pressure and show moderation if they do decide to try it. Some important points to cover are:

- There are long-term effects of marijuana that effect brain development, particularly the pats associated with decision-making and impulse control. As well, it can trigger schizophrenia and other similar disorders, particularly if someone has a family history of the illness.

- It can cause chronic cough/bronchitis, as well as worsen asthma. Additionally, vaping THC can cause additional health risks, including VALI, which is Vaping Associated Lung Injury.
- Marijuana use is the most prevalent drug in the blood of those who get in car crashes.
- There is an incorrect belief that one cannot be addicted to marijuana. However, this is untrue. Just like any other drug, frequent and excessive users build tolerances, experience withdrawal, and feel strong urges to use.

While some adults may see THC as relatively harmless, it's important to remember that its potency has increased greatly as compared to even the early 2000's. In addition, vaping marijuana has greater potency still. This, combined with people's newfound trust, makes it easier than ever to form a bad habit.

If you're concerned that your child may already have a problem, having an open, non-judgmental conversation is the first step. It's much more important to understand why they use, as well as discussing the health effects of marijuana, rather than simply punishing them for it. As well, these are a few of the online resources for teens and families of teens that may have an addiction:

- <https://drugfree.org/article/marijuana-what-you-need-to-know/>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>
- <https://craftt.org/resources/>

References

<https://crafft.org/resources/>

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

<https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/health-effects/teens.html>

<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/TTHY-Marijuana-Broch-2020.pdf>

<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/TTHY-Vaping-Broch-2020.pdf>

<https://drugfree.org/article/marijuana-what-you-need-to->

[know/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIv5m9_pPF-wIVI_bjBx3YWwcAEAAYASAAEgKLC_D_BwE](https://drugfree.org/article/marijuana-what-you-need-to-know/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIv5m9_pPF-wIVI_bjBx3YWwcAEAAYASAAEgKLC_D_BwE)

<https://drugfree.org/article/understanding-vaping-illness-its-symptoms-and-more/>

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Marijuana-and-Teens-106.aspx