



TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE

DISCUSSION GUIDE

It's never too early - or too late - to have this important conversation.

With adult-use cannabis now legal in Connecticut, you might find that questions are arising earlier for children and teens.

TIPS FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

- Plan to have many short talks.
- Keep it light and informal.
- Make your expectations and feelings about drug use clear.
- Talk about what they would do if faced with a choice about using substances like cannabis.
- Let them know you are always available to talk.
- Really listen to what your child has to say and answer their questions.
- Be sure to keep the conversation going.



To learn more, visit **BeInTheKnowCT.org** or scan the QR code.

KNOW THE LAWS

Under CT's social host law, it's a crime to allow minors to use cannabis or drink alcohol in your home. You could be fined or face other legal action.



NEGATIVE IMPACTS

Let your child know that marijuana can have a big impact on a developing brain and get in the way of achieving goals. The following issues may arise, particularly when this drug is used before the age of 25:

- Difficulty thinking, paying attention and problem solving.
- Problems with memory and learning.
- Negatively impact sports performance, athletic ability and coordination.
- Increased irritability or aggression.
- Lack of motivation, which can lead to poor performance at school or work.



PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Some users end up with physical health problems from cannabis as well, including:

- Breathing problems (coughing, wheezing, trouble with physical activity and lung cancer)
- Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome (frequent, severe vomiting)

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Cannabis use directly affects brain function and can also increase the risk of mental health issues, including:

- Lower intelligence or impacted ability to learn
- Anxiety and depression
- Mood swings
- Paranoia
- Schizophrenia, temporary psychosis and other long-lasting mental disorders
- Marijuana/cannabis use disorder (addiction)



DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that having a strong relationship with their parents can influence kids' decisions. Over 80% of Connecticut teens choose not to use cannabis at all.

POTENCY

As a parent, it's important to understand that the potency of cannabis products today is much higher than it had been previously. With greater potency comes greater risks.



- The percentage of THC in cannabis has been increasing from an average of 3% in the 1980s to around 15% today. This means users can now use too much too fast, causing physical and mental health issues.
- Edibles take longer to take effect, last longer and often have higher levels of THC.
- It can take anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour to begin to feel the effects of edible cannabis, and up to 4 hours to feel the full effects.
- The intoxicating effects of edible cannabis products can last up to 12 hours, so it's possible to be affected the next day as well.



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