



# RETAIL MARIJUANA IN COLORADO



## PREVENTION INFORMATION FOR YOUTH-SERVING PROFESSIONALS

What steps can educators, administrators and other youth-serving professionals take to prevent youth use of and access to marijuana?



### Review and align policies:

- The Tobacco Free Schools law (C.R.S. 25-14-103.5) requires that school districts prohibit marijuana use on school property. This promotes a safe environment that helps students make healthy choices and protects them from secondhand smoke.
- HB16-1371 passed in 2016, requiring districts to put policies in place regarding medical marijuana use on school property. Talk to your district legal staff to learn more about the policies in place in your area.

### Strengthen policies and programs:

- Ban possession of all marijuana products in addition to marijuana use.
- Include consequences for violations. Promote alternatives to suspension that improve educational outcomes, like restorative justice approaches or in-school suspension.
- Define smoking in your policy to include vaping and electronic smoking devices.
- Promote evidence-based substance abuse prevention curricula or programs available in the curricula section at [my.rmc.org/tfsmarijuana](http://my.rmc.org/tfsmarijuana). Engage youth to help select the program.
- All youth-serving organizations are encouraged to adopt similar policies and programs that promote healthy environments.

### Resources for youth-serving professionals

For more information on marijuana in Colorado, including methods of use and health risks, visit [colorado.gov/marijuana](http://colorado.gov/marijuana).

### Policy and program support

- Request a free Youth Bucket List Group Exercise to talk with youth about marijuana at [goodtoknowcolorado.com/bucket-list](http://goodtoknowcolorado.com/bucket-list)
- For school district policy support and evidence-based health education curricula for marijuana prevention, visit [bit.ly/RMC\\_MJ](http://bit.ly/RMC_MJ).
- For instructional units and evidence-based programs or curricula that prevent or reduce youth marijuana use, go to the “Working with youth” page at [bit.ly/YouthMJ](http://bit.ly/YouthMJ).

### Concerns about youth using marijuana

- For specific tips on age-appropriate ways to talk to youth, suggested talking points and how to spot high-risk behavior, visit [speaknowcolorado.org](http://speaknowcolorado.org).
- For more information on the laws and consequences for youth marijuana use, visit [bit.ly/CDE\\_under21penalties](http://bit.ly/CDE_under21penalties) or [bit.ly/MJ\\_Consequences](http://bit.ly/MJ_Consequences)
- To access Colorado substance abuse treatment professionals, visit [LinkingCare.org](http://LinkingCare.org).



## TALKING TO YOUTH AND THEIR PARENTS



Talk to youth about marijuana to help them better understand the risks.

Your influence matters. As an adult who youth trust, you are highly influential in the lives of the youth you work with. What you say, and the example you set, makes a difference. These tips can help you get a successful conversation started.

Listen carefully and stay positive. Keep the conversation open so they can come to you with questions. Knowing they can ask you questions helps youth make good decisions for their future.

What you talk about may depend on how old they are.

Talk about how marijuana damages their growing brains.

- Let them know that marijuana can make it harder to learn, sometimes weeks after quitting.
- Share with youth that negative effects increase with more marijuana use and that starting younger increases risk of addiction.
- Encourage youth to protect their brains by not using marijuana.

*Remind them that they're role models for younger students, athletes and siblings.*

Talk about how marijuana can get in the way of their goals.

- Ask about their goals and help them connect with what they need to achieve them.
- Be honest. Explain how doing well in school and staying out of trouble can help them reach their goals.
  - **Real-world Effects:** Talk about the real-world effects of use. Breaking school or activity rules have consequences. A teen can be sent to drug counseling, suspended, expelled, or kicked off of a team.
  - **Loss of Financial Aid:** Financial aid can help teens reach their goals. Marijuana charges can cause teens to lose financial aid for college.
  - **Sports & Activities:** Marijuana can affect how well they do at school or activities. Youth who use marijuana often are more likely to have a hard time learning, problems remembering and lower math and reading scores. Smoking marijuana can also affect how well they do in sports.

### Talk to parents

Encourage them to be good role models and to talk with youth about the risks of using marijuana. Refer them to [colorado.gov/marijuana](http://colorado.gov/marijuana) for parent-specific resources.

### Concerned about parents using marijuana?

Talk to them about your concerns. Remind them to provide a safe, smoke-free environment and to store marijuana in a locked area that children cannot see or reach.

- If you are unsure if marijuana use is a concern for the welfare of a child, contact your local Department of Human Services.
- If you suspect child abuse or neglect (i.e. that the health or welfare of a child is threatened), report your concerns to the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: **1-844-CO-4-KIDS**.
- You can learn more about the signs of child abuse and neglect from the Colorado Department of Human Services. Visit [coloradocwts.com/community-training](http://coloradocwts.com/community-training) to take the Mandatory Reporter Training.



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