



YOUTH AND MARIJUANA



HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO KNOW:

MARIJUANA USE BY COLORADO YOUTH

Four out of five high school students do not use marijuana.

- It is easier for youth to say no to peer pressure if they do not think “everyone” is doing it.
- In 2015, 21.2 percent of Colorado high school students used marijuana in the last 30 days.¹

Be sure to talk early and often with youth about the risks of using marijuana.

Of Colorado high school seniors who have used marijuana, more than **one out of three** started before age 15.²



YOUTH ARE AT SPECIAL RISK FOR HARM



Brain development is not complete until age 25. For the best chance to reach their full potential, youth should not use marijuana.



Youth who use marijuana regularly are more likely to have a **hard time learning**, **problems remembering** and **lower math and reading scores**.



Marijuana is addictive. It is harder to stop using marijuana if started at a young age.







Youth who start using marijuana, alcohol, or other drugs may be **more likely to continue using** later in life.

CONSEQUENCES FOR YOUTH AND TALKING TIPS FOR ADULTS



It is illegal for youth under the age of 21 to purchase, possess or use retail marijuana.

There are serious consequences for youth

- **Sports & Activities** 
If they're caught using retail marijuana, youth can be kicked off of their sports teams and other after school activities. They can also be suspended or expelled from school and/or referred to drug counseling.
- **Financial Aid** 
Marijuana charges, including Minor in Possession (MIP) charges, can lead to loss of federal financial aid for college. This includes Perkins Loans, Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, PLUS Loans, and Work-Study Programs.
- **Employment** 
Many employers don't allow their employees to use marijuana. This could mean losing a job. Losing a job also means losing a reference, which can make future jobs harder to get.
- **Freedoms** 
 - Getting caught with marijuana may mean getting charged with an MIP, which can involve fines, public service hours, misdemeanor/felony charges and even possible loss of driver's license.
 - It can also cause a young adult to lose their parents' trust, resulting in the loss of privileges.

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

- Only about half of Colorado high school students think that regularly using marijuana is harmful.¹
- Listen carefully and stay positive. Keep the conversation open so youth can come to you with questions. Knowing they can ask questions helps youth make good choices.
 - Talking with youth about their dreams helps them feel more connected to caring adults.
- Keep your relationship strong. Let them know you're on their side. You want them to make the best decision for themselves.
 - Youth who think marijuana is risky are much less likely to use marijuana regularly.³

Visit goodtoknowcolorado.com for more information on retail marijuana laws and health risks.

Visit SpeakNowColorado.org for warning signs of high-risk behavior and useful talking tips to help youth make healthy choices.

Request a free Youth Bucket List Group Exercise to talk with youth about marijuana at goodtoknowcolorado.com/bucket-list

REFERENCES:

- ¹ Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Department of Human Services - Office of Behavioral Health. *Healthy Kids Colorado Survey: Marijuana Overview of 2015 HKCS data.*
- ² Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. *Monitoring Health Concerns Related to Marijuana in Colorado: 2016. January 2017.*
- ³ US Department of Health and Human Services. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2011 Data, Trends in Adolescent Substance Use and Perception of Risk from Substance Use.*



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