

YOUTH MARIJUANA USE: WHAT ADULTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IMPACTS OF MARIJUANA ON TEEN HEALTH

March 30, 2021– With medical marijuana and adult recreational marijuana legal in the State of Michigan, youth have more access and temptation to try the substance than ever before.

Research shows that the teen brain is actively developing, and often not fully developed, until their mid-20s. Marijuana use during youth and young adulthood could cause short-term effects, including:

- Altered senses
- Distorted sense of time
- Mood swings
- Slow reflexes
- Loss of balance and coordination
- Increased appetite
- Trouble thinking and problem solving
- Memory loss
- Hallucinations
- Delusions
- Psychosis

In addition to the short-term effects, youth marijuana use can impact brain development and lead to permanent problems with memory, learning, and thinking. Long-term marijuana use can increase a teens normal heart rate and put them at a higher risk for a heart attack. Inhaling marijuana smoke can irritate the lungs and cause the user to develop a chronic cough and youth who use marijuana are at an increased risk for depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts.

Youth who smoke marijuana tend to have reduced performance in school, yielding lower grades, and are more likely to drop out than their peers who do not use. Research also suggests that youth who regularly use marijuana are less satisfied with their lives and have more relational problems compared to those who do not use. These youth are also more likely than their peers to try other illegal substances.

It is important that adults educate youth about the risks of drug and alcohol use, including marijuana. If you are an individual who uses medical or recreational marijuana, avoid using in front of children and teens, keep marijuana stored in a locked, not easily accessible location, and be sure to have conversations around youth drug and alcohol use expectations. If you need help starting the conversation or are looking for more information about youth marijuana use, visit www.TalkSooner.org.

About DHD #10

District Health Department #10 (DHD #10) is Michigan's largest geographical health department, mandated to promote and protect the public from unsafe and hazardous

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conditions and provide methods of promoting good health and disease prevention. Some of the vital programs provided by DHD #10 include Immunizations, Infectious Disease Control, STI Testing and Counseling, WIC, Maternal Infant Health Program, Healthy Families of Northern Michigan, Children's Special Health Services, Hearing and Vision Screening, Family Planning, Cancer Screening, Worksite Wellness, Smoking Cessation, Substance Use Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention, and Environmental Health Services. DHD#10 serves Crawford, Kalkaska, Lake, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Missaukee, Newaygo, Oceana, and Wexford counties. For more information, visit www.dhd10.org.

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