

# EDIBLE CANNABIS AND YOUTH



## Concerns for Youth Who Use Cannabis

- Cannabis dependence increases when someone starts using at an early age.
- Cannabis use increases the risk of abuse/dependence on other substances.
- Edible cannabis products pose a risk of accidental poisoning.
- Regular THC use can impair memory, concentration, and impact learning.
- Cannabis use by youth may increase if it is legalized and becomes more available to them.

## Keeping Edibles Out of Youth Hands

- Store them like any medication: out of reach or in locked locations.
- Be a role model. Don't use edibles in front of youth.
- Do not drive. Driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal and you could be charged with a DUI.
- Avoid buying edibles that look like real candy or treats.
- Talk to family members and friends, in order to avoid unintentional exposure.

## Effects of Edible Cannabis on Youth

Anyone who consumes edible cannabis products can experience effects, such as:

- Altered perception, intoxication, nausea, and vomiting
- Anxiety, panic, and paranoia
- Dizziness/weakness, poor coordination, and slurred speech
- Excessive sleepiness, apnea (not breathing for 10 seconds or longer), and heart problems

## Preventing Youth Cannabis Use

Prevention is possible when youth have positive influences, including:

- Parent/caregiver support, engagement, monitoring, and disapproval of substance use
- School connectedness, academic support, and extracurricular activities
- Access to health resources and medically accurate information
- Public policies that support prevention and prevent access to products

## Tips for Talking to Youth

### Ages 8-12:

- Understand if the child is looking for connection, facts, or direction.
- Build trust- parents are the main source of influence.
- Start conversations now to build foundation for the future.
- Set clear boundaries and share reasons for not using.
- Use simple facts but at this age they can also handle some complex information.

### Ages 13-17:

- Focus on the youth's life & goals.
- Talk factually. They often know more than we realize.
- Be open to questions.
- Set clear expectations without shame.
- Let them know it's OK to be honest.
- Talk about what to do if they find themselves in a situation where others are using or they are offered edibles.

### Ages 18-21:

- Educate yourself on the facts versus myths.
- Respect their boundaries, and yours too.
- Don't judge or talk down.
- Listen more, talk less.
- Know where you stand but allow room for disagreement.
- Discuss what to do if they are offered an unknown substance or another person is in trouble.