

Tips for Parents, Caregivers and Trusted Adults

Prom, Graduation, Year-End Celebration Season



Spring is here—and with it comes prom, graduation, parties, and end-of-year celebrations. This is an exciting season for teens and families, and in some cases it is the start of new challenges for graduating students. Take this important opportunity to talk with your teen about marijuana.

Marijuana is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to use recreationally, but unfortunately, marijuana and marijuana products are readily available to teens in various forms, from slow-acting edibles to ultra-potent THC in vape pens that may contain unsafe inactive ingredients including cancer-causing chemicals, heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead, and other tiny particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs.

Your voice matters. Even when it doesn't seem like they're listening, **they are**. Stay connected, keep the conversation going, and remind them that your goal is to support their success and safety.

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BASIC TALKING POINTS

- **Legal doesn't mean safe.** Marijuana may be legal for adults in some states, but that doesn't make it safe for teens. The adolescent brain is still developing and THC can interfere with that development.
- **It can limit your teen's full potential.** Frequent THC use is strongly associated with failure to complete high school and not attaining a college degree.
- **There are serious mental health risks.** High Potency THC can worsen symptoms of anxiety and depression. It can increase panic attacks, hallucinations, and paranoia. Daily use increases the chance of psychosis by 5 times – especially with today's high-potency products.
- **Family history matters.** If your family has a history of mental health challenges or addiction, now is a good time to talk about it. Teens with a genetic predisposition may be more vulnerable to marijuana's harmful effects.
- **Marijuana and driving don't mix.** THC impairs reaction time, depth perception, and decision-making. Driving under the influence is dangerous and illegal, and riding with someone who's high puts everyone at risk.

Wrap up the conversation by making your expectations known. You might say:

"I care about your health and your future, and I expect you not to use marijuana. If you're ever in a situation where you're unsure or feel pressured, you can always come to me—no judgment."

Research shows that **teens who know their parents disapprove of marijuana use are 72% less likely to use it.**

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

As summer approaches, be aware that the first-time use of many substances, including THC, tends to spike by about 30% during these months. This makes it a critical time to talk to teens or young adults about the risks associated with THC use.

- Have you discussed what they should do if someone offers marijuana or other substances?
- Can they call you anytime for help or a ride with NO judgment?
- Discuss finding substance-free events and substance and mental health resources at their college or trade school including stress reduction and coping skills using meditation, exercise, hobbies, or me time.

Know that the marijuana industry is just like any for-profit industry, using enticing advertising and innovative products to gain new users. Ask your teen to consider:

- -Is the message truly about their well-being or is it profit-motivated?
- -What is the background of the author, and funding that paid for the study or research?
- -Does the spokesperson have a monetary interest in the industry directly or indirectly?

GET EDUCATED

Parents make the difference:

<https://onechancetogrowup.org/resources-new/>

The basics: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/cannabis-marijuana>

Know what THC looks like (It's not just a plant): thcphotos.org

Marijuana risks: <https://www.samhsa.gov/substance-use/learn/marijuana/risks>

Talking with your child about marijuana: <https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/sma18-5081.pdf>

Drugged driving: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drug-impaired-driving>

One Chance to Grow Up safeguards kids from today's marijuana through community education and groundbreaking policy. We don't take sides on the politics of legalization but instead serve as a reliable resource for parents, media, policymakers, and all who care about kids. Started by concerned parents, we're a 501(c)(3) nonprofit supported by charitable contributions.

Check out our website and follow One Chance on social media: onechancetogrowup.org

