

# Teens & Cannabis:

## WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW



The legalisation of cannabis for medical and recreational use abroad has made international headlines. Pro-cannabis supporters have pushed out many articles and reports online citing the 'benefits' of legalising the drug. However, the truth is the use of cannabis on 'medical' grounds is often a guise for recreational use, as the medical benefit of cannabis remains inconclusive to date.

With the media trivialising cannabis abuse, as well as celebrities purveying a drug taking lifestyle, many people are misled into thinking that cannabis is not harmful. It is inevitable that teens get influenced by these materials into forming liberal views about drugs.

Even if your teen may not be abusing drugs, it is important for parents like you to be equipped with the right knowledge to be able to take preventive measures to protect your child, or to make interventions before it is too late.

It's important to understand and educate your teenage child about cannabis' damaging effects and teach him/her to be a discerning reader.

### TALK TO YOUR TEEN AND LOOK OUT FOR THE WARNING SIGNS



**Connect with your teen through conversations.** It is not easy to start a conversation about drugs. Look for opportunities to bring up the topic naturally while watching a movie or the news together. Avoid forcing down your wisdom on them. Be a good listener and guide them to make the right choices.



**Monitor your teen's online activities** to understand the sources of influence it may have on him or her. Pay attention to their online activities to see if they display curiosity for certain websites or YouTube videos about drugs.

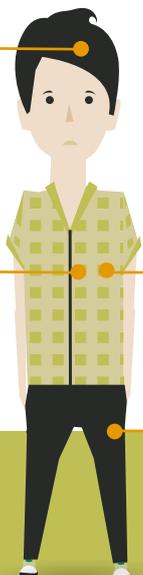


**Look out for warning signs.** These include sudden behavioural changes, physical tell-tale signs such as sudden weight changes, or bloodshot eyes. Also, be on guard by noticing the surroundings at home, whether there are instances of money or valuables missing.

### PROTECT YOUR TEEN

Possession or consumption of cannabis can lead to imprisonment of up to 10 years or S\$20,000 fine or BOTH

### HARMS OF CANNABIS



**AFFECTS MENTAL HEALTH**

Research shows that cannabis develops psychotic disorders, increases suicide risk and impacts adolescent brain development and functions.

**CAUSES RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS**

Smoking 1 cannabis joint had the same effect on lungs as smoking 2.5-5 tobacco cigarettes based on research.

**INCREASES HEART RATE AND RISK OF HEART ATTACK**

Cannabis increases heart rate by 20 - 100% while abusers' risk of heart attack increased by 4.8 times shortly after smoking.

**INCREASES RISK OF STROKE**

Cannabis abuse may increase risk of stroke in childhood.

Teach your teen to weigh the pros and cons on cannabis, especially on the harms that cannabis can cause to self, family and society.

Your teen may not be abusing drugs but there is a definite need to educate them about the risks in case they are tempted to try. Talk about these real dangers regularly before it's too late. The longer these drug prevention measures are avoided, the more potential harm your teen is exposed to.



Visit the **Preventive Drug Education Portal** [www.cnb.gov.sg/cnbpde](http://www.cnb.gov.sg/cnbpde) for more information on drugs.

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