



The Other Side of Cannabis  
Negative Effects of Marijuana on Our Youth

The Foundation of Every State  
to the Education of our Youth

**The Other Side of Cannabis**  
Negative Effects of Marijuana on Our Youth  
[www.oscdoc.com](http://www.oscdoc.com)

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**My Qualifications**

Masters-Addictive Disorders  
BSW-Social Work  
Certified Recovery Support Specialist  
Satori Lifestyle Coach  
Graduate Insight Seminars

KEYNOTE SPEAKER across USA  
conferences, coalitions, schools,  
professional organizations, parents, town halls  
INTERVIEWED ON NPR Radio and NBCTV  
among many others  
FEATURED IN magazine and newspaper articles  
PUBLISHED IN Journals  
[info@oscdoc.com](mailto:info@oscdoc.com)  
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**WHY USE WEED?**

Why do kids use drugs?  
They feel like they don't belong  
Drugs make them feel a part of a group  
They have mental health issues: anxiety, depression  
They think drugs will make them feel better  
They feel pressure from friends  
They see others using and want to try  
Their parents use  
Their siblings or cousins use

Why Marijuana?  
It's easy to get  
It's accepted by many  
It's thought of as harmless  
It's popular in our culture

Is it a Gateway Drug: Your first drug (alcohol, marijuana or other drug)  
is your gateway that opens you up for addiction.



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**As Perception of HARM goes down  
YOUTH USAGE goes up**



3.1 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 (about 1 in 8) used marijuana in the past year

6% of 12th graders (about 1 in 16) use marijuana on a daily basis



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**WHAT WE BELIEVED**

harmless... it's a natural plant

Just a phase

No one has ever died from it

It's JUST pot!

At least it's not addictive

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**WHAT WE HEAR**

It helps me sleep

It actually disrupts sleep patterns

It's a healing medicine

There are no studies indicating it is healing—placebo effect

It helps my anxiety

It makes anxiety much worse—and eventually disordered

I think clearer

It impairs thinking

It's natural and healthy—just a plant

So is arsenic and so is poison ivy "natural"

It's organic

Organic marijuana has tested positive for pathogens




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**WHAT WE KNOW**

advertisements  
billboards  
store window displays

**TARGETING YOUTH**



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**THE 3 KEYS to safeguarding youth** 

**1 UNDERSTANDING** THE CHANGES TO TODAY'S MARIJUANA

**2 AWARENESS** OF THE COGNITIVE, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND BEHAVIORAL EFFECTS ON YOUTH

**3 TOOLS** FOR PARENTING YOUTH WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO USING THC, INCLUDING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

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**Psychotic break**



**Cannabis Induced Psychosis**

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# 1 UNDERSTANDING CHANGES TO TODAY'S MARIJUANA

## NOT THE SAME DRUG


two main chemicals in cannabis  
(of more than 400)

**THC**  
delta 9-  
Tetrahydrocannabinol

PSYCHOACTIVE

**CBD**  
Cannabidiol

NON-PSYCHOACTIVE



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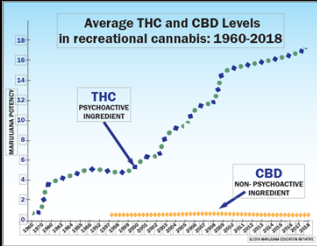
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## CHANGES IN POTENCY

60s and 70s THC levels were 1-3%  
\*\*Today, THC levels are on average 25%

*THC goes up*  
*CBD goes down*  
—lose protective quality



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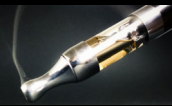
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## INTENSE METHODS OF USE




Vaping



Dabbing



Edibles



Spice

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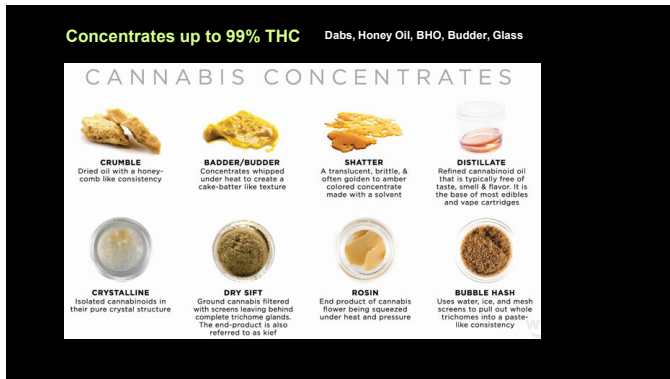
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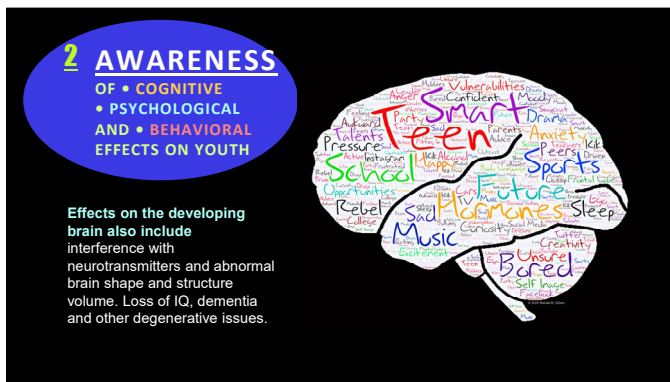
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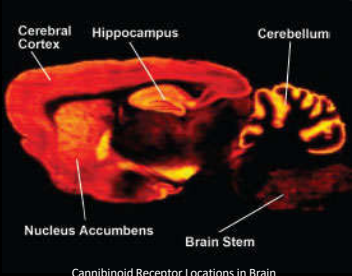
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## COGNITIVE

*mental processes of*  
Perception  
Memory  
Judgment  
and Reasoning



Cerebral Cortex    Hippocampus    Cerebellum  
Nucleus Accumbens    Brain Stem

Cannabinoid Receptor Locations in Brain

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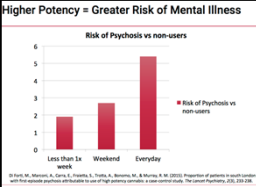
## PSYCHOLOGICAL

### THC Trigger for Mental Illness

Genetically predisposed or not



Higher Potency = Greater Risk of Mental Illness



Frequency of Use	Risk of Psychosis vs non-users
Less than 1x/week	~1.8
Weekend	~2.8
Everyday	~5.5

Paranoia  
Depression Disorders  
Anxiety Disorders  
Schizophrenia  
Bi-Polar Disorder  
A-Motivational Syndrome

17

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## Mental Illness

### Marijuana & SCHIZOPHRENIA


**Risk Factors Include:**

- Genetic predisposition to schizophrenia/psychosis (for one gene variant—risk of developing is 7x higher if use marijuana)
- Early marijuana use, especially before age 15
- Frequent, heavy, and/or high-THC marijuana use

### Marijuana & BI-POLAR DISORDER

New research suggests marijuana causes manic symptoms

Marijuana use is associated with a 3-fold increased risk for new onset of manic symptoms



JOURNAL OF ADDICTIVE DISORDERS, 2014

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## BEHAVIORAL

**Issues:**  
 Learning/School  
 Job performance  
 Driving/Accidents  
 Decision-making  
 Understanding

**Effects:**  
 Relationships  
 Grades  
 Income  
 Self-esteem  
 Less productive  
 Job attainment  
 Sense of well-being  
 Financial aid need  
 Homelessness

**Studies of chronic marijuana users under the age of 30**

**Early marijuana use and intensity of use are associated with lower educational attainment**

Source: Johnston et al. (2014) *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*

19

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**Behavioral choices lead to PHYSICAL EFFECTS**

- ✓ Addiction
- ✓ Illnesses:
  - Lung Issues: chronic bronchitis, lung disease
  - CHS - Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome
- ✓ Injuries/Deaths/Accidents
- ✓ Heart Attacks
- ✓ Dementia
- ✓ Low birth weight

Studies have also linked regular marijuana use to high blood pressure and increased risk for heart events. In addition to potential health effects, marijuana use can temporarily impair cognitive and motor functions like driving a car.

Source: NAB (National Academy of Sciences)

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## ADDICTION

**How do you get addicted?**  
 —Repeated use  
 —Genetics (single use), predisposed  
 —Potency  
 —Open pleasure center of brain

THC is both physically and psychologically addictive.

Using marijuana before the age of 18, risk is 4-7 times more likely to develop a marijuana use disorder than adults.

21

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## ILLNESS Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS)

Caused by chronic marijuana use

**SIGNS**

- \* Severe abdominal cramping and pain
- \* Dehydration
- \* Repeated and severe uncontrollable vomiting
- \* Severe bloating
- \* Weight loss
- \* Diarrhea
- \* Profuse sweating
- \* Nausea
- \* Taking hot showers/baths

CBD may make symptoms worse.

22

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## ACCIDENTS




✓ 12th graders who use marijuana are 65% more likely to crash,  
 ✓ Among 12th graders in the U.S., 1 out of 8 drove after smoking marijuana  
 ✓ 1 in 5 rode with a driver who'd been smoking.

SOURCE: "Marijuana Use & Educational Outcomes," National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institute of Health, Nov. 2014. Web. 3 Feb. 2016.

23

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## DEATHS

Richard had ingested marijuana candy and was hallucinating.

Richard had no prior history of mental, legal or other problems

→Marijuana debt dispute ended with shooting death.





Kristine Kirk

→Denver man, Richard Kirk, 47, accused of killing his wife, Kristine Kirk, 44, while she was on the phone with a 911 dispatcher.

SOURCE: CBS News Denver, CO

SOURCE: Central Maine, September 7, 2016

24

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**LOST LIVES TO SUICIDE**

**Shane Robinson, 23**



Shane suffered a second psychotic break and admitted he had returned to using marijuana. His "goodbye" note included love for his family and the haunting words "there is nothing anyone could do to have saved me—my choices led me to this point. I can't go on anymore." His diagnosis: "cannabis-withdrawal-suicide." *suicided 2012*

**Joe Dalidas, 24**



Once *Joey* got sober he realized marijuana made him feel worse. "We were so hopeful when he said that." But he went back to using—because he was addicted to marijuana. He told us shortly before his death he loved pot. It was his drug of choice (despite knowing the negative effects it had on him mentally). *suicided 2016*

**Andy Zorn, 31**



Andy's last 5 years were a downward spiral of marijuana abuse, calls to suicide help lines, hospitalizations in at least 5 different mental health hospitals, and 2 court-ordered mental health treatments. His last week he told his mother, father and social worker that he had to quit using marijuana to live, but he was unable to do so. He was addicted. He could not quit. When he tried, he had nightmares. *suicided 2014*

*"It will only get worse. My soul is already dead. Marijuana killed my soul + ruined my brain. I am doing everyone a favor."*

**It will only get worse.  
My soul is already dead.  
Marijuana killed my soul and ruined my brain. I am doing everyone a favor.**

[www.momsstrong.org](http://www.momsstrong.org)

**Andrew Steven Zorn, 31**  
*suicided 2014*



Once *Joey* got sober he realized marijuana made him feel worse. "We were so hopeful when he said that." But he went back to using—because he was addicted to marijuana. He told us shortly before his death he loved pot. It was his drug of choice (despite knowing the negative effects it had on him mentally). *suicided 2016*

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**3 TOOLS FOR PARENTING YOUTH**

**WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO USING THC, INCLUDING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

- ✳ **KNOW YOUR CHILD**
- ✳ **HAVE A PLAN**
- ✳ **GET HELP**

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**✳ KNOW YOUR CHILD Prevention**

- ✳ Be **vigilant** about who they hang out with
- ✳ Know their **friends**
- ✳ Connect with friends' parents
- ✳ Have the conversations about today's marijuana  
—*even if it's awkward for you*
- ✳ **Talk to them** about a sober school club—a **Natural Highs Program**
- ✳ Your job is to educate, protect and raise them  
—*don't be afraid to have strict boundaries*  
—*give them an excuse, security to fall back on*
- ✳ Be **loving**, but be **firm**—they will thank you one day
- ✳ Have a **plan**, code if they need your help
- ✳ Talk about importance of the **brain, the science**
- ✳ Give **incentives** for sober, healthy/good choices
- ✳ Be sober, set a good example at home



**My child's friend uses what should I do?**

- talk to their parents if appropriate
- share your knowledge
- express your concern
- confide in a counselor
- limit your child's exposure
- keep educating yourself, education is a powerful tool

27

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## DO YOU ALREADY HAVE A PROBLEM?

### SIGNS OF **ADDICTION**

- » Raging, Stealing, Lying
- » Grades dropping
- » Continue to use despite negative consequences
- » Relationship issues
- » Financial issues
- » Withdrawals when try to quit
- » Sleep problems
- » Tolerance: using more and more frequently
- » Thinking about using all the time
- » Weight loss or weight gain

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## GET HELP

- ♦ Contact a medical health professional or counselor
- ♦ Find a recovery center in your area
- ♦ Attend a sober meeting
- ♦ Get educated: the more you understand the better
- ♦ Be upfront and direct in requiring sober compliance
- ♦ Some County agencies have youth programs
- ♦ Watch The Other Side of Cannabis documentary
- ♦ Find resources in your region
- ♦ Join a support group



### Why?

- ✓ Healthy brain ✓ Better Outcomes
- ✓ Safe from accidents ✓ Best chance at the best future

29

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**Know the science**  
**Know the facts**  
**Know the risks**  
**Make an informed decision**



It's easier to never start—than to have to quit!

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Please get involved...



[www.heartsgate.com](http://www.heartsgate.com)

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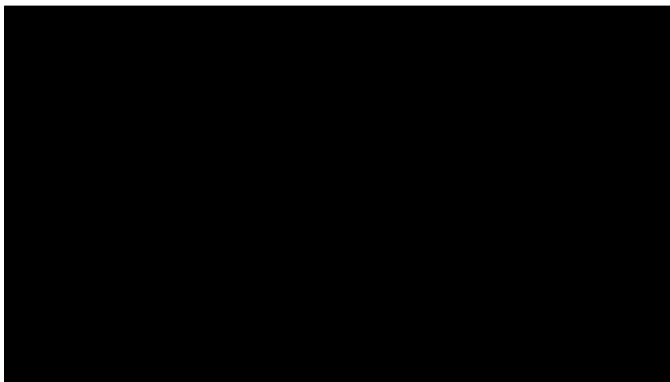
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