

SHARED THC STORIES FROM JOHNNY'S AMBASSADORS

Reprinted from johnnysambassadors.org/share

Your Stories About THC

Lisa R. – May 11, 2020

Our son triggered his illness using marijuana during his teen years. He did not know he had a genetic vulnerability to THC and it triggered bi-polar and schizophrenia. He had his first psychotic break going into his senior year in high school, that was in 2008. We have been on this journey with him now for 12 years. We are thrilled that he has now gained the most traction he has ever had in his battle. We will be celebrating 3 years without a relapse. Before that, he would relapse about every 2 years and even more frequently. His journey has been life threatening multiple times and he came very close to suicide (either intentionally or unintentionally) three times.

While we had to grieve the son we used to have, we have learned to love and appreciate our new son. He is my hero and we cherish every moment we have with him as we never know when it will be our last. We have learned a lot on this journey, and I am sharing some of my journal with you. I do want to respect his privacy, but I hope that our journey give strength to others. The laws need to change. Thank you for what you are doing.

September 11, 2012- Relapse

Watching our son slip away and succumb to the darkness of the valley of the shadow of insanity is terrifying for us, just think how much more terrifying it is for him. Like Charlie in Flowers for Algernon, during the last 18 months he has had the opportunity to realize his great potential, his gifts and talents only for them to be stolen away again. Those who love him struggle to keep him from falling over the cliff- gripping tighter as inch by inch he keeps slipping. Our hearts digging into the ground plowing a trench as the weight of the illness pulls him further over the cliff toward the valley. His eyes have lost their brightness as he struggles to make meaning of what is happening to him. Our hands are burned by the rope as it slips a little more each day, our arms are cramped; our hearts are breaking.

Lord give us strength today to hang on, help our son to know he can trust us, his doctor and the medications. We pray that our voice, the doctor's voice and his dream of graduating from college will be a bright light in the darkness, like a foothold to give him strength to pull himself back to reality. In Jesus name, Amen.

Sally S. – September 2, 2020

A 2014 Open Letter to the Person Who Called Me a Failed Parent

I belong to the club no one wants to join. My son Andy died by suicide in March 2014 at age 31 in Arizona. I have since met other mothers enduring this life change and trying to heal as I am. I find we mothers feel and behave like all mothers – trying desperately to protect our young. We protect children we still have and others threatened by the same harm that took our children. Some of us behave like badgers – we are serious and a force to be reckoned with. Like disturbing a bees nest – we go to work to rebuild our lives honoring our children that left us far too young.

My son left a note that included these words "Marijuana killed my soul + ruined my brain." My son desperately tried to break his marijuana addiction in his last days. Whenever I hear and read the words that marijuana has never killed anyone, is harmless, is not addictive, my heart hurts.

My new friends in the club no one wants to join and I work to educate others, especially other young people and the medical profession. There is a strong relationship between marijuana use and psychosis and suicide. But a terrible thing can happen when we speak out. When we publish our stories, offered in efforts to protect and educate others, the comments that ensue in social media can be brutal.

We have been called liars. I have been named #FailedParent. Commenters diagnose our children, usually with PTSD and mental illness and claim marijuana should not be blamed. Since he was a veteran, I have been told George Bush killed my son. I have been



told I killed my son.

I volunteer with an AZ organization that fights to educate young people about substance abuse. My organization has been criticized for taking advantage of me and my son and told they should be ashamed of doing that.

Who attacks well meaning parents and community service organizations working for public health? I am never approached personally, thank goodness. Attackers make it clear they support normalizing and commercializing drugs, claiming that will be safer for our children. I cannot understand that. Especially now that I look at that from the perspective of a mother missing her wonderful son who should still be here today.

Update 2020:

I am gratified to find in the year 2020 there are more parents willing to share their testimonies about the risks and harms of marijuana. There is more and better science confirming our experiences. But I am saddened that the media and legislators still seem to pardon the drug for the damage done to our families.

I am grateful to organizations like Johnny's Ambassadors that bring light to the issues and problems. I am just so sorry that my son Andy and Johnny Stack now know each other in Heaven rather than in life with us here on Earth. My Andy would have really enjoyed knowing Johnny. We miss our children every minute of every day.

Aubree A. – August 28, 2020

In 2014 when we lived in Colorado, my son celebrated the legalization of marijuana by writing 420, which is code for the marijuana holiday and a time promoted to smoke marijuana, on his clothes and arms. He was a boy scout and played baseball. He was loved by his teachers and friends and had a lot of support. He was in the 8th grade that year and we saw his behaviors changing, he was starting to self-harm. We thought he was upset about a breakup with a girlfriend and we did not know he was using marijuana edibles from the industry. He had access to these products in school and at his friends' homes. We got him into counseling and his school provided support too.

By his freshman year, he was getting in fights and skipping school. It was clear he was coming home stoned and he was arguing with us that marijuana is medicine, despite the education we provided him. In February 2015 he was irrational, paranoid, inconsolable, and he was repeating statements that did not make sense. That same night he was so violent to my younger son, that my younger son ran bare foot through the snow to get away from him. Then, He attempted to kill himself.

I woke up the next morning to see my son laying on the couch saying he did not want to go to baseball practice, and his bedroom was covered in vomit. We found the empty bottle of ibuprofen pills. He was hospitalized for 5 days in Parkview Medical Center. After he was discharged, he was still using marijuana and was still suicidal. I took him back to the ER and we were sent home. I will never forget the psych liaison couldn't understand why I was so upset and said to me, "It's just marijuana."

My son did not improve, and I took him back to the ER a few days later. The psych liaison said there were no beds available in our town of Pueblo, and eventually found one in Colorado Springs. He was hospitalized for another 5 more days.

When he was discharged again, he told me he was using dabs and he knew they were making him feel crazy, and that he was trying to quit. I had no clue what a dab was. He explained to me and said, "Dabs are strong marijuana, they're crack weed."

After educating myself, I could not believe that my community of Pueblo embraced these products and called "dabs" medicine. I volunteered my family for crisis intervention with the dept of social services because I couldn't find treatment for marijuana addiction.

At first, my son did get better but relapsed back to marijuana, then moved onto using meth and heroin. He was hospitalized in Denver for 3 months at a residential treatment program where he was given a lot of psych medications. He was a walking zombie. He was drooling and sleeping in the hallways.

I fought to get him off all medications and brought him home. We still had problems and my son kept running away, and eventually social services discharged us, because they said they could not help us anymore. Soon my son was relapsing again and started using marijuana, the drug that he thought was the safer drug. These beliefs are propagated from the marijuana industry. At this point he was on the streets for days, hanging around homeless people, begging for food and water in front of a gas station near our home. He even had a family harboring him and giving him marijuana.

I had walked away from my job because finding him treatment was my full-time job. I also couldn't trust him to be alone with my younger son because he had violent behaviors. At one point he showed up back at home and was vomiting all day and taking long hot showers. I took him to the ER and he only tested positive for marijuana.

Eventually, I found a treatment center in Utah and made plans to take him there. He accepted that he needed help and agreed to go, but the night before we were going to leave, I was told I could not bring him unless I had \$36,000.00. The treatment center explained to me that our private insurance would not reimburse them in a timely manner, and they had to keep their lights on, and their staff paid. I did not have the money, so within a week after he stopped vomiting about 7 times a day, he was back on the streets for days.

When he showed up back home, I called the police and social service said they could not help us anymore. By the grace of God, my friend was able to find a consultant and we were connected to a dual diagnosis treatment center in California. This was the beginning of our recovery. He was 16. This treatment facility understood the effects of marijuana.

I knew I would not bring my son back to Colorado and I found a wonderful recovery community in Houston Texas where host families opened their homes to him. He was part of an intensive outpatient program and a recovery community for 3 years and remain sober, but now the drug culture and addiction wins, and he is using again.

I knew it would not be good to bring him back to Colorado, so I moved my younger son and I to Houston in July 2018. I am currently the parent coordinator for the same recovery community my son was part of. My younger son who doesn't have a drug problem but has a lot of trauma is part of this recovery community too and even attends a recovery high school, Archway Academy. Yes, I send my sober son to a school with other kids recovering from drug addictions because they have support, accountability, and a culture of honesty, respect, and building healthy relationships. They learn real life coping skills. A skill we practice every day is setting strong loving boundaries, keeping our connection, and to remain hopeful that my older son will come back to his recovery. Even though I live near my son now, I miss him. I also miss my Colorado home, and my parents who still live there.

My marriage is ending as my husband also believed the marijuana lies. My husband started using marijuana as medicine. Marijuana harmed him, it did not help him, he now suffers from extreme depression and anxiety. Please listen to his testimony.

My neighborhood has more crime than ever. When you allow every home to grow marijuana, you turn every home into a potential drug house and fuel the black market.

A man named Brad Fowler was killed over a marijuana deal near my parents garage and 3 blocks away from my home on a Friday morning. We have never had a homicide that I knew of in my neighborhood before. We even had a shooting one Friday afternoon. I didn't let my family walk our dogs around the neighborhood after this shooting because it happened right in front of my home.

I tell my story throughout the country. I am horrified to see the marijuana industry gaining more power, impersonating medical professionals, and harming unborn children. It sad to know marijuana is a factor in the increase of teen suicides and drug use in Colorado. Now I represent a parent group called Moms Strong; we tell our stories to unmask the marijuana charade, and just this year I have been hired as the Asst. Director of a non-profit called Parents Opposed to Pot.

I also have been involved with documentaries with Smart Colorado and Drug Free Idaho. I'm sure you've seen Chronic State? In this documentary I say, "In order for the marijuana industry to grow or maintain their sales, they need more and future users. Those users are the children of our communities."

My parents still live in Colorado where they had to deal with an illegal marijuana grow next door to them. They do not have the resources to move, and they had to smell dead skunk all the time, even inside their home.

My son is now 20 years old. He told me he used marijuana again and freaked out. His friends didn't call for help that night. How many more assaults to his brain can he take before it's permanently broken? He encourages me to keep fighting for his generation and he is angry that many elected officials push the marijuana nightmare. He's scared that marijuana use is so prevalent with his friends, but they don't understand that it's a hard-dangerous drug. He encourages me to share his story. I won't stop advocating until the predatory marijuana industry stops poisoning our children.

I miss my home, and I want you to know that prior to marijuana legalization my family was never exposed to marijuana advertising, smells, or crime. It wasn't even a topic of conversations. But now Kindergarteners know what marijuana is and while they are playing, they act like they are smoking it.

Thank you,
Aubree Adams
soccer mom for kids in recovery
Momsstrong.org
#EveryBrain Matters

Alisha R. – September 3, 2020

Our oldest son began using marijuana at 15, he is now 23 and it has been a constant 8 year battle. He has spent his 17th, 19th, 20th, and 22nd birthdays in rehabs. Although he has used other drugs, his main drug of choice is marijuana. "Medical marijuana dabs" caused him to have his first psychotic break over a year ago which ended up in a wreckless driving incident that nearly lost the lives of several people including his own. He was taken to a psychiatric hospital and diagnosed with Bipolar 1 with Paranoia. A diagnosis he still has today. He has been prescribed Wellbutrin and Olanzapine. When he takes the medications consistently as directed, he maintains a job, works out, and is pleasant. However, he is paranoid about the medications. And he often goes back to marijuana over and over. The marijuana further feeds his paranoia. Just today, we learned that he stopped taking his meds earlier this week and used marijuana (in some form) yesterday. He called and asked me to bring him to our house (he has no car). He began by talking conspiracy theories for a few hours around current events. He fell a sleep for 30 minutes. When he woke up he was in a full-blown, suicidal rage. We managed to get him calm and agree to resuming his medications by the end of the night. We had the help of his cousin who used marijuana for 16 years and now is on the other side of it and so he gets it and is a calming influence on our son. Thankfully our younger son and my father who lives with us were both away for the day and so they did not witness our oldest son's F-bomb rage attack.

Ann C. – September 6, 2020

When my son Brant was seventeen years old, he had a devastating experience while smoking a large quantity of THC-marijuana. It led to a sudden, major psychotic break, emergency room care, hospitalization for nearly a week, and ultimately his suicide two weeks later.

Before this experience, my son was a bright, happy, healthy, and normal teenager, but after the psychosis began, his thinking became paranoid and hopeless. He insisted to the doctors in the hospitals and to me, his mother, that the marijuana he had smoked had permanently damaged his mind and even ruined him.

The public needs to be warned that the high-THC content of today's marijuana can cause extreme and unpredictable mental health effects in some individuals, especially in youth whose brains are still developing.

I believe that my son would still be alive today if he had never used marijuana. For more details about Brant's tragic story, and for the latest scientific research about the link between marijuana, psychosis and suicide, please read my new book, "Gone to Suicide." It can be purchased through Amazon or ordered wherever you buy your books.

Thank you,
Ann Clark

Joanna D. – September 11, 2020

You represent so many families, including mine, whose children have suffered the devastation of thc abuse. On Sept 19 we will gather to remember our sweet Joey. Gone too soon, he was barely 24 years old when he ended his struggle. My only comfort is knowing he no longer suffers. I can attest to the fact it's not only marijuana anymore. Joey dabbled. We had no idea how serious his addiction was. When we were told he "only" had thc in his system we were lead to believe it wasn't anything as serious as heroin and to be grateful his drug of choice was "only pot." It's no wonder he couldn't find the help he needed, the rehabs didn't/don't regard marijuana as a serious drug. Professionals insisted he had to be doing real drugs. That "just marijuana" doesn't cause violent behaviors, or induce psychosis. Or suicide. But why not? Pharmaceutical can cause these same problems, And yet pot can't? With potency as high as in the 90 percent. How can anyone not believe the effect this strength would have on the brain?

With legalization marching forward, and our youths at such great risk, I fear for their future. Living in a country that would rather profit over sales then spare the lives of innocent children being made to believe it's "just marijuana."

I am sorry we share such a similar story Laura. Thank you for all the work you are doing to educate, advocate, and for the lives your foundation will save. I support and applaud you.

Betty H. – September 6, 2020

My son found out he was going to be a dad on March 27, so he stopped "smoking weed," dabbing, and cigarettes that very same day. Withdrawals were so bad that by Tuesday he was having hallucinations and asked me to take him to Rivervalley after-hours facility. He begged them for help, and because of COVID I had to stay in the car. The Rivervalley nurse called me on speaker with my son and talked to me she said his tox report only showed marijuana and that he didn't present a danger to himself or to anyone else. Even though we begged she said unless there were other criteria met he would have to go home. He went home with me and that Saturday, 4 days later he took his own life. They could have helped and they chose not to. He was a 22-year-old begging for help. If he had been brought in by the police, they would have helped him. I'm so angry with the "system."

Elisabeth V. – October 29, 2020

My son started using cannabis in high school and usage increased a lot when he moved out and went to college. He had 4 psychotic manic episodes and ended up in the hospital 3 times. He was diagnosed with Bipolar 1 disorder and addiction. He went to jail twice and then ended up in prison for 3 years for selling drugs. When he got out 4 years ago, we thought he would be done with pot. But I recently learned he started smoking pot here and there when he got out and started using it almost daily this spring. His excuse being that he and his wife suffered a miscarriage in March. I noticed at the end of July that he started becoming manic. It turned into a full blown mania with spending sprees and sexual promiscuity. He moved to Florida and left his wife and basically bankrupted his business. As parents we are heart broken about all this. We feel helpless; we cannot do anything unless he's a harm to himself or others. It started with a wrong choice and now he is mentally ill...again. He refuses to come home (Indiana). My mom gave me a recent edition of "the Epoch times," and I read your article about Johnny. The website is wonderful and I've watched 2 of the podcasts. It is, by far, the most helpful and informative website that I've come across. Thank you.

Daryl B. – November 2, 2020

Hi Laura, I read you and your husband's article in the Epoch Times. I am a 60 year old man from Arizona, retired Probation Supervisor. I was a user 3 years ago. I was shared my wife's medical marijuana. I had a psychotic episode 3 years ago and could not figure out what happened until I read your article about your son. I am so sorry for your loss. I was using marijuana daily. My wife bought a vape from the medical pharmacy. The staff at the pharmacy told her to be careful with that particular vape. I smoked the vape for a week before my episode. I went on a camping trip and met some friends, and my episode started there with delusional behavior. I ended up driving around and entering people's homes for no reason. I drove home that evening 50 miles on highways and don't remember how I got there. I left my truck in the middle of the road close to our home. I heard I ran out of gas. When I arrived home my wife could see that I was delusional, and she took me to the hospital. I kept leaving the hospital and started roaming the streets. I also had multiple contacts with the police. This went on for the entire weekend. I worked in the mental health field so no psych hospitals would accept me. I eventually came to and stopped using the vape. I sunk into a deep depression and had thoughts of suicide. Eventually I leveled out under the guidance of a Psychologist. Today I live a normal life and run 7 wellness centers for the seriously mentality ill. Thank you for being brave enough to share your story, because now have some closure on my episode. If I can be of any help please let me know.

Doug K. – November 4, 2020

Dear Laura and John,

When I read the article about your son Johnny in The Epoch Times it was identical to my daughter, Abby, except she fortunately is still with us. I got chills reading and was emotional. I'm in Canada (Ontario) which legalized Marijuana in 2018 under our disingenuous hopeless Liberal government, who used it in the campaign to secure the young vote and use it as a tax grab. Anybody over the age of 19 can buy it in Ontario. As many of us know (or maybe our politicians don't) a person's frontal lobe or Cerebral Cortex which is basically the CEO of the brain and responsible for cognitive functions, emotions, problem solving etc isn't fully developed until age 25, so marijuana under 25 can be VERY dangerous! It's disgusting how many of our young people this is hurting! My daughter Abby (Abigael – Abs for short) was born one day after Johnny on February 8, 2000. In late 2018 and early 2019 she experimented with weed and found it helped her when she was having trouble falling asleep. It worked briefly, but she became dependent on it over time and it started to make her anxious and on and on. As a result, she was smoking every day and tried dabbing. In late May, she started to feel the effects and began to experience some odd thoughts, not quite herself. I noticed she was acting a bit goofy and told her to lay off the weed. She didn't! On June 13th, she came to talk to me and was NOT herself. She was acting very out of it and not making sense, I said "Ab you HAVE to stop smoking!" She said I know. The next night, she went out to a bar but before they even went in her boyfriend called me, scared, because she was so out of it. She was acting paranoid and delusional but kept saying she's not suicidal. God Bless her, she knew something was wrong. She said to her boyfriend, "Call my Dad." Those 3 words are so dear to me it meant she trusted me but was scared! When I went to get them, she was so whacked and out of touch with reality. I said, "What else are you on besides weed?" and she said nothing else. When we finally got her blood results (weeks later) all she had in her system was the THC. I was up all night with her, she kept calling me to come to her room and stay with her and she finally fell asleep at 6am. I really hoped she would sleep it off, but nope! She woke up at 10am the same, so on Father's Day, Sunday June 16th 2019 I took her to the emergency room, and the real nightmare began. I won't go in to every detail but the next four months after Father's Day were a complete nightmare. We were so frustrated with the system, and the doctors at the hospital were ZERO help and gave us no information and released her after 6 days. Abby's Mother and I were taking care of a 19-year-old, who was an adult and could conceivably go and do anything she wanted and had mostly lost touch with reality suffering brain damage. She was having conversations with Siri in her room and called the Police and asked if they were following her, every day for weeks she thought she was going to fall asleep and never wake up it was HEARTBREAKING!. Long long story short, Abby made it I give her all the credit. In December 2019, she wanted to go off her anti-psychotics, but her Psychiatrist wanted her to stay on for three more months. When we left the office, she told me they were messing with her head. The fear was she would relapse off the meds, she knew she wouldn't! She also told me that she stopped taking them cold turkey for 6 days so I made her promise me to keep taking them if I agreed to lower her dose to wean off. I made her promise me to take half a pill for one month, so I literally self-medicated her but it was better than cold turkey, I was alone with no help. She's been off ever since 100% recovery attending freshman year at University!

She no longer smokes anything God Bless her! PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW this tax grab is hurting our beautiful kids. Legalized Marijuana is something that is here to stay like it or not but the legal age for purchase MUST be raised to 25.

I applaud you and John's efforts I think you are making a difference I'm so proud of you!

Roger S. – November 25, 2020

Your story really hit home with my family. On January 6, 2020, we got the knock on the door from the police, who told us our son Justin had fallen from a crane over 15 stories high. We struggled over a year prior to try to get him some help, with little or no success. On Christmas Even 2019, he was taken to the hospital by police in an ambulance, because he was running out in traffic, taunting cars to run him over. Days later, he ended his own life because of high-potency marijuana. He was into the bud and the shatter and also did some LSD, which the toxicology report revealed. We felt helpless and tried many resources as we could, but he was unwilling to give up the marijuana and get help, which made it much more difficult. My son changed so much in the span of 12 months, from being an outgoing kid with a love for life, people, and hockey, to becoming a reclusive, paranoid person. He thought we, his parents, were trying to poison his food, so he stopped eating our meals. He abandoned school, hockey, and friends, and stayed away from home for days at a time. We had to report him as a missing person to police a few times, because we didn't know what else to do. Maybe his story will help other parents get the conversation going with their kids. I've heard many stories of kids losing their lives similar to mine this year, but your story really hit us in the heart. Please know you're not alone in your pain and struggles. All the best to you and your family.

Geoff R. – January 5, 2021

My son Daniel was a wonderful boy. Growing up, he was everything you can ask for in a child. Sadly, after my divorce it affected him, he started using marijuana sometime in 2018. We didn't find out about the THC oils until he had a breakdown. We got him into rehab, and he was seeing a counselor after that up until 2020. Then, we found out he was using again. On November 21, 2020, without notice and no note, he took his life. We are heartbroken and in deep anguish.

Sonia J. — January 26, 2021

My son was at a rehab in December after being admitted three times to a mental hospital for weed induced psychosis. Each time he was diagnosed as Bipolar and put on antipsychotics and mood stabilizers. Nobody on either side of my son's family is bipolar. The last time he was released after 7 days at mental hospital, he came medicated on two antipsychotics and Lithium. With a few hours he was in complete psychosis. He came home and immediately started dabbing. He become psychotic, delusional, and aggressive. I had to call the police to take him back to the hospital. While he was gone I search his room too to bottom and found his collection of empty dab pens and a full pen he had on his bed. I called the hospital to inform them what I found. My sons psychosis was caused by WEED.... he's not Bipolar. He was transferred to a rehab two days later. The counselors at the rehab did not believe did not believe his psychosis was brought on by weed. I will be sending them all the information I find in this group. My son is now sober.... no weed , no antipsychotics. He does have major depression....started taking an antidepressant last week. The depression did hit hard.... he appears to be getting over that hump. He's home with me now... he has no desire to smoke weed. He's more in shock to look back now that he's living in reality instead of psychosis.

Bart B. — February 9, 2021

On August 14, 2018, my son, Kevin, died by suicide. He was 29 years old. Kevin suffered from depression and cannabis-induced psychosis, (a diagnosis in the DSM-5).

Kevin told my wife and me about his cannabis use at 15

He agreed to get help. Over the next 14 years, Kevin participated in many recovery programs. He experienced periods of health and happiness while in recovery. Unfortunately, after a while, he would go back to his drug of choice, high THC cannabis. As he increased his cannabis use we started witnessing psychotic behavior. (We learned, after Kevin's suicide, about cannabis-induced psychosis. We read about it on the Johnnysambassadors.org website.)

One of the last articulate things Kevin said to me was, "Cannabis has ruined my life."

About 15 months before Kevin passed away, my wife and I flew to Spain to walk the last 80 miles of the Camino pilgrimage. We were spiritually and emotionally exhausted! We made our way to Sarria, Spain, and stayed overnight. The next morning we started our eight-day journey to Santiago de Compostela. I anxiously asked God for guidance. I didn't feel or hear anything.

The next morning I repeated my request and again, all I heard was the wind rushing through the trees. The third day began like the first two, however, I LET GO of any expectation and focused my eyes and attention on my feet. That's when I heard, "STEP AWAY." I raised my head, looked around to find the source of the two words I heard, no one in sight. That's when I realized God had answered

my prayer. In my Al-Anon and Mar-Anon meetings I read and hear the sayings, “Detach with Love” and “Let Go, Let God,” now I know what those words mean.

After Kevin took his life I felt empty again.

It was as though God had stayed in Spain and I was on my own. I started drinking more, thinking I could fill the emptiness inside me. After realizing I was going in the wrong direction, thanks to my wife’s help, I started another 12-step program. My soul began to heal as I reached out for help.

My sponsor said something that changed my life. I don’t recall his exact words however, I do remember how his words made me feel. I had hope again. His message was: If you can’t find God, help others and God will find you.

God and Kevin are in my life again

I can’t see them but I feel their love every day.

Thanks to my wife, Anne Moss Rogers, and many others for encouraging me to dig deep and help myself and others. And thanks to my Higher Power for two words,

“STEP AWAY,” and for being there every step of THE WAY.

Marni M. — February 18, 2021

I recently joined your page because I have a nephew, who died by suicide last year. Today he would have been 22 years old. He was very troubled his whole life, but his first drug abuse was high-potency marijuana. His parents supported this use, and he was hospitalized many times. In the earlier discharge papers the diagnosis was ‘poly substance abuse induced psychosis’ among other things. Although true, the marijuana led to alcohol, meth, heroin, and basically anything he could get his hands on. I read your article in the Seattle Times and felt so relieved that SOMEONE made the connection. The psychosis appeared after marijuana, before the other substances began being abused. In addition, they medicated him with antipsychotic medication by injection, then released him back into the streets of Seattle multiple times. He never had a chance. His uncle and I played more of a role to help him more than anyone else. I blame myself for not being a better advocate for him. We would not let him stay with us because he was determined to be a danger to himself and others. He was obsessed with drugs and refused to abstain. We went to him to assist him in staying out of trouble and following his mental health requirements. We failed. Thank you for what you are doing. I read your page daily and am learning so much. I will help as much as I can.

Darla D. — March 16, 2021

“This could very well be my story. My son is just completing his treatment program thru CU ARTS program. If wanted, they come to your home and counsel you and the family twice a week for an hour and half, plus they have a bonus-based drug sobriety testing program. It has been successful for us going on 5 months of sobriety! <https://www.artstreatment.com> I was referred to the program by his pediatrician. I was at my wits end when I finally enrolled. I’ve been fighting this since he was 13 or 14 years old with no success and a variety of different interventions with no return on my very large investment. I was always wondering if I was going to wake up to a cold body most mornings. The fighting and the stress all of it all has been very difficult for our family. Finally getting the correct ADHD and depression diagnoses and dialing in on the right medication to help him sleep and feel better were also key. Kudos to you for creating such an amazing resource and turning your tragedy into something that will help countless people! He is now in the teen diversion program and has a paper due on the effects of THC. I will be recommending your online curriculum as a resource to the teen diversion program administrator with the town of Parker.”

Brandon R. — April 21, 2021

As I sit here in my cell and reflect on my teenage years, I think back to how weed was the norm in high school. I would literally smoke every single day, cut class to smoke, and miss family events to smoke. I quit things I loved doing to smoke a little bit of weed. I really didn’t care about myself or others around me, and honestly, I didn’t think I had a problem. Nobody admits they have a problem when they’re in that deep and I was tired of hearing it was a ‘gateway drug.’ I should have listened...

Once I got into dabbing THC, it led to acid, Molly, and eventually alcohol. Nothing else mattered at that time. My days were consumed with getting messed up to pass the time and hide the pain.

Since the age of 14, I’ve been in and out of the legal system. Help was in front of me the entire time, but I was too distracted to reach out for it. By the time I was ready to change, it was too late, and no rehab facility, therapist, or doctor was going to get me to do it. I hurt a lot of people, physically and emotionally. I destroyed relationships with family members and friends because of my substance

abuse. It all comes down to you WANTING TO CHANGE. My drug habits were so bad, I couldn't control my emotions and ended up getting arrested over and over again until I was 21 years old. Then I went to prison.

For me personally, I had to hit rock bottom. It was the only thing that was going to save my life. It didn't matter what my family and friends said. Either I was going to change, stay locked up, or even worse, 6 feet under.

What I'm trying to tell you is that people love and care about you, no matter how much you tell yourself otherwise. There is a positive outcome after all of this, but you have to be the one to make it HAPPEN. Don't listen to the negative influences you've surrounded yourself with. Drop those 'friends' of yours. They don't care. Let your loved ones help you. That is why they're there. You don't need THC or other substances to feel happy or relaxed. FACE your problems head on, because I promise you that you'll be 1000% stronger when you get to the other side.

Being in prison is not cool. I've meet a lot of people here who are never going home, because of a split decision they made while out of control. You can end your life theoretically by doing something stupid while under the influence. You need to make a change before it's too late, because this is real; I've lived it.

To the parents who may be reading this, I can understand how hard it might be to watch your child turn into something they're not and have no idea how to help them or what to do. My best advice (and this is from what my parents did for me) is to seek professional help. If they need a rehab facility, take them. I think seeing a therapist regularly to help talk through some of the issues is very helpful. A mentor is also helpful, especially someone who has had similar experiences who can talk to your child honestly. My parents did all of this with me, and I can tell you from going through it, all of the support helped me become the man I am today.

Tammy H. — May 12, 2021

Our 18 year old son walked in the front door. We were surprised to see him. Our son always worked on Monday nights from 5:00-9:00 pm. I asked him, "What are you doing home? It's only 7:00." His response was, "I don't know." I said, "What do you mean you don't know? Didn't you go to work?" He said, "I don't know." I inquired, "Are you sick? Did they send you home from work sick?" He said, "I don't know." Turns out our son had vaped marijuana multiple times that day, including earlier at school, after school, and just before he walked in the front door. Our teenage son was experiencing cannabis induced psychosis (CIP) for the first time.

THC, the psychoactive ingredient in cannabis, can cause psychosis which is a mental health condition that occurs when a person begins to lose touch with reality and may experience visual or auditory hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, or disorganized thinking. Our teenage son had vaped a lot of marijuana that day. He was experiencing mental confusion, auditory hallucinations, and delusions. He didn't know if he had been to work or not. He believed his lap top and the TV were directly speaking to him. Earlier that day at school he had heard music playing in the classroom when there actually wasn't any music playing. He was beginning to lose touch with reality as a result of vaping high potency THC.

Our journey officially began 14 months earlier when our son was given marijuana to try at a high school party in the fall of his junior year. He had just turned 17. We found out two weeks later when he didn't come home one Saturday night. We didn't know where he was. We frantically tried texting and calling him. He finally responded. He was high on marijuana and couldn't drive home so we picked him up. The next day we talked with him and told him that we didn't think he should use marijuana. He told us that it was too late because he "loved the way marijuana made him feel." After that conversation I called our pediatrician and he recommended a drug counselor whom our son saw reluctantly about 4 times. Our son agreed to only use marijuana occasionally on weekends with friends. He told us, "Everybody is using marijuana." Unfortunately, he quickly became addicted to marijuana and within months of trying it, he was vaping marijuana daily. Just a year after he started using marijuana he developed cannabis induced psychosis.

As a result of treating his cannabis induced psychosis, our son also became addicted to benzodiazepines which were prescribed to him to treat the nasty side effects from the antipsychotic medication prescribed to him to treat the psychosis. Later that same year he had a grand mal seizure and almost died. The neurologist attributed the seizure to benzodiazepine withdrawal. Luckily for us a nurse who was nearby at the time of the seizure rushed to his aid and cradled him in her arms. When the seizure ended our son's body went limp and his heart stopped. He was in cardiac arrest. The nurse performed CPR and saved his life. He was rushed by ambulance to an Emergency Room at a top Boston hospital. This happened on his 19th birthday. We almost lost him that day.

Before the cannabis induced psychosis, our son was an excellent student. He had been admitted to multiple universities and received scholarships. The cannabis induced psychosis interfered with his ability to concentrate on his high school work. His grades and attendance suffered after he experienced the cannabis induce psychosis half way through his senior year of high school. He ended up not starting college that fall as planned. He has a severe cannabis use disorder (CUD). By definition, a cannabis use disorder is the continued use of cannabis in spite of the serious distress or impairment it causes. As a result of his recent drug use, he has lost two jobs, was evicted from his apartment, his license was suspended, and he has lost friendships.

How has my son's marijuana use affected me? I have had many sleepless nights worrying about him. I worry if he will be able to overcome his cannabis use disorder? I worry if his cannabis induced psychosis will be permanent? I worry if he will be able to support himself financially? I love my son very much and I hope he will be able to conquer his marijuana addiction. Sadly, it has caused him and our family great harm.

Anonymous — May 12, 2021

I have a 17 year old who is struggling with marijuana/THC/vapes everything you mentioned. We did send our child to wilderness therapy and from there to a therapeutic boarding school. Eleven months later our child came home and is back to using. I had my husband join me on the zoom meeting. We live in SC and it's not legal YET. I pray hard every day our child will use the tools learned in treatment but I'm afraid as you said the withdrawal is worse than parents imagine. I truly appreciate you and what you are doing to educate and bring awareness for the sake of our children. I can't imagine the pain you have of losing your son. Without a doubt I know you are a wonderful person. God Bless.

Jahnu P. — May 18, 2021

We are a first generation immigrant family. We migrated to America for a brighter future for our children. We worked tirelessly so we could afford to move to a town with top notch public schools. It was all going according to plan until our eldest son got to high school. We notice his grades starting slipping. His attitude towards the family also started to change. Since he was our oldest child, we attribute the change to normal teenage behavior. However, by 11th grade, it had become obvious there was something very abnormal happening. He started to threaten to kill people. He started getting violent and destroying things around the house. Additionally, he'd find the smallest of reasons to skip school. As a family, we had placed the highest priority on education. I started to look all around for the answers. I reached out to friends and family, his school guidance counselor. Through the process, I learned how kids are innocently roped into drugs by consuming what appears to be candies, but laced with marijuana. My son has always been a very unassuming child. He tries hard to fit in. We suspect this path led him down to vaping. Our fears were confirmed when we found vaping pens and cartridges hidden in his backpack. When confronted, he would always make excuses that it did not belong to him. The harder we tried to separate him from hanging around with his friends and vaping marijuana, the more he started to rebel. We tried to control his afterschool activity, but he always figured out a way to stay after school for one reason or another. Several times after an argument, he'd leave the house in winter without proper clothing. He was willing to freeze to death but not give in. At that point, we had to ease up. We started to seek professional help. We got him to accompany us a few times but then subsequently refused to go. It's hard to force a 17 year old to do something against his will. We continue to preach about the dangers of marijuana use/vaping. The damage that is already done is hard to reverse. He continues to struggle along in academics and life in general. Our childhood dreams of him have been shattered. Additionally, this has caused severe distress within the family. My wife has developed anxiety as a result of this experience. This was a wake up call for us. We are immigrant, well educated, middle class, strict hindu, vegetarian, non alcohol consuming, never exposed to any type of drug use family. There are no stereotypes or bounds, this can happen to anybody.

Kim S. — May 20, 2021

Laura thank you for sharing your story. My son died by suicide May 21, 2020. He started by smoking Marijuana then moved on to dabs. I sent him away to rehab when he was 15 yrs old in effort to help and cure his drug addiction. It is a long story, but basically, rehab discharged him after he was no longer in an emergent phase, and I could not pay the ridiculous amount of money they required to keep him in treatment. When he came home, he eventually started using again. Due to his major depression/anxiety disorder and drug addiction, he had limited coping skills. One sad night he tragically chose to end his life. It will be a year this Friday. God's comfort and peace has brought me through this far and will continue. When I saw your post about marijuana/dabs, I knew I could relate immediately. And I also share in believing that it is God who is our comforter and healer. He will walk with us through this difficult journey.

Jules — May 23, 2021

Hi Laura, I am so very sorry for your loss. I am certain Johnny was an amazing young man. His story is so very similar to my son's, and they were born the same year. My son started using his junior year in high school when he was 15. He was young for his grade. By the time he went off to a UC he was smoking daily. This highly academic student began to lose the ability to focus, and his anxiety got out of control. We had our first indication of psychosis on Mother's Day 2020 when he was home during lock down. We took him to the ER and he was diagnosed with "cannabis use disorder." I did not understand at the time that this meant "your son is addicted." He got into an outpatient program through his UC and after a brief stint at sobriety, he relapsed. He subsequently had 5 more hospitalizations within a brief 3-month period. Luckily we got him into an inpatient rehab program for dual diagnosis since the medical community cannot untangle true underlying mental illness from CIP until the patient is 6 months sober. He was there for 2 months. He's now been sober for 8 months. His bipolar diagnosis has been revised to CIP. He attends MA regularly and is in therapy. He is ready to return to university this fall. BUT my God, this could have easily been a different ending. It still could be. Sobriety is something my son will have to remain actively committed to the rest of his life. Anyway, I want to thank you for sharing your story, for setting up a non-profit to spread awareness of CIP. Without awareness and education, this tragedy will play out across too many

families. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Jrre T. — May 20, 2021

I love your non profit and what it does, I read the article on your site about Johnny and all it did was remind me of myself. I was born July 1999. I went to cherry creek high school. My freshman year I was trying to fit in and stole eye drops from king soopers for these kids and that's when my curiosity all started. My friends Dad Todd Romero gave me free nuggets tickets a lot of times and one time I went to a game with 3 so called friends, I was 15, some of us were 16, the driver was 16 driving a newer Audi he got for his birthday. That day I had never smoked anything in my life, but on the way to that nuggets game, those kids decided to start dabbing while on I-25, I roll windows down and driver rolls them back up and locks them and they just get to hotboxing the car with dabs and I was forcibly high and didn't even enjoy my time at that nuggets game. Being young and stupid knowing what they did was wrong, I forgave them because they were the kids I wanted to fit in with but fast forward to my 18th, I go to relaxed clarity and 5min into my appointment I have my Medcard and the next 2 years of my life was spent just letting my friends use me for what I had and could get and I just feel sooo compelled to message you after reading johnnysambassadors because you're so right in everything you've typed. I'm now 21 and you don't even understand how bad I wish to start over and never had smoked weed. It's not just Dabs it's the flower also. From 15-18 before having my medcard, it was way more easier to access wax dabs shatter, and to get flower was way more harder. It was like you had to go to aurora or the hood to find flower and I know to this day it's still that way as my little brother goes to creek right now and tells me but anyways yeah I'm just so happy to see that there's a conversation around this type of stuff because I felt alone. What Johnny told you at dinner is what I wish to tell my parents but our relationship is sour anyways so it's never crossed my mind to but sorry to type so much I just am in love with your non profit and mission and wishing I could somehow get more involved because it does remind me of myself a lot except I'm still here. I'm so sorry for your loss, it's very complicated, I'd never say preventable because I don't see how or a way for my parents to ever save me.. I haven't been diagnosed with schizophrenia but I've been prescribed anti depressants and chose to not take them and tell myself I'm not sick.. but then after reading everything about Johnny, made me think if I might be the same. I'm sorry let me stop now but thanks again for fighting for the youth, I truly would've never, if I knew all information I know now.

Susan P. — May 20, 2021

I don't use marijuana, however in 2016 I voted to legalize marijuana in Massachusetts. I thought it was a "soft" drug. I thought it was a safer option for people than alcohol. Even for teenagers. I remember telling a friend who suspected her teenager was smoking marijuana that it was probably better than if he was drinking alcohol. After all, alcohol is known to be bad for health and to cause young people to make poor decisions such as risky behavior and driving while intoxicated. It can become a dependence. But marijuana, that just "chills you out" and is not addictive. I wish I had known then what I know now.

We live in a middle class suburban town. I'm a stay at home mom who along with my husband did my best to raise our children to make good choices, have decent values, and be contributing members of society. I wanted to be realistic with teaching the kids about drugs. I drilled it into them to never try a "hard drug" such as cocaine or heroin because it "only takes one time to ruin your life". I told them never take a pill or anything you don't know what it is and warned them that even though this is something a lot of youths might do it could be such a "grave decision". While I never allowed it or gave a message that it was okay, I also never spoke negatively about marijuana. I had the mindset of maybe if I only drilled the negativity of "horrible" drugs they might actually listen rather than the just "don't do drugs" and "all drugs are bad". Again, I wish I had known then what I know now.

Our oldest son who is kind, independent, and a very intelligent out of the box thinker had dreams to attend college and become an entrepreneur. His senior year started with him doing great in school, working a part time job, and planning to go off to college the next year. Near the end of his senior year he couldn't work and was barely able to attend school due to his sudden extreme anxiety and paranoid and delusional thinking. Fortunately, because it was so close to the end of the year and he had done well for most of the year, he managed to still graduate even with missing most of the last weeks of school and all of his finals. He did not however attend any senior events including graduation. He could barely leave the house at this point. We thought he had had a nervous breakdown. We didn't even know what psychosis was at this point. The search started to find him help, which was not easy because he was now an 18 year old who did not want help. I did find a psychiatrist who would talk to me even though his practice was booked solid and my son was an "adult" and the first thing he said was "does he smoke a lot of pot, because we are seeing a huge problem with teens who smoke that are becoming depressed and lacking all motivation". I did know that my son had used marijuana, I had caught him a few times, but I only thought it was occasional and part of the usual teenage experimentation. I still did not think it had anything to do with his "breakdown". We finally ended up at a major hospital in Boston and he was eventually diagnosed with psychosis and anxiety. At this time he was still not honest about his marijuana use and the doctors only casually mentioned that it could be a contributing factor. Because the connection was not made, he continued to use even with going on anti-psychotic meds because it made him feel better in the moment. Fast forward over two years with some ups and downs, med changes, trying to go away to college, and a doctor change we finally got to a place where we really understood the possible connection between his marijuana use and the psychosis. Once we understood this, our son opened up about how much, how long, and how early he starting using marijuana. Apparently, he had been using for over a year and had quickly moved from smoking it, to vaping it (no smell so easier to hide), to dabbing it (also easy to hide). The problem is the vaping, eating, and dabbing of marijuana can be at so high of a

concentrated level of THC it is nothing close to the amount in a plant one would smoke (and even today's plant concentration levels are way higher than they were 20-30 years ago). Research is showing that these higher concentrates correlate with a higher risk factor for developing cannabis induced psychosis. Again I wish I had known then what I know now.

Once our son was able to make these connections and be honest about his use, his hospital team was able to help him more. He quit using cannabis, has started working full time, and he is starting to see his anxiety improve. This took over two years because we did not make the connection. Now, unfortunately because he kept using for those two difficult years, it may be too late to reverse the effects. Research shows that the sooner one is treated for first episode psychosis the better the outcome. If left untreated and cannabis use continues, the cannabis induced psychosis can turn into full blown schizophrenia. Our son's doctors will take the next year or so and slowly wean him off the anti psychotic medication to see if it is too late for him or not. This only became an option once the doctors knew how much cannabis he had done (they now made the connection that this is likely cannabis induced psychosis) and once he was truly committed to not using anymore (they would not even consider reducing his anti-psychotic medication while using cannabis because of the connection with cannabis and psychosis) . This risk of cannabis induced psychosis is not very well known to the public. The marketing of cannabis products that advertise it as safe and healing make it even more difficult to make the connection. I still believe people should make their own choices if they want to purchase and use products with THC. BUT, I believe that if we as a commonwealth are going to allow this it is our responsibility to make it known and clear the possible risks of doing so. Not just so people can decide if the risk is worth it, but also so that they can recognize if and when a negative side effect occurs. Again I wish I had known then what I know now.

Jim D. — May 25, 2021

We live in a small town in Massachusetts. I am married with three boys. One of my sons started using marijuana at age 13. At first he had a casual fascination with marijuana. By age 14 his use had progressed to daily and by age 16 it became evident that he now suffered from Cannabis Use Disorder. Clearly addicted to what we all thought was a non-addictive substance, he began increasing the potency of the cannabis he was using. "Dabs," "Wax" and "Shatter" were the terms he used to describe this new highly potent form of cannabis. With THC levels up to 80%, his use of this dangerous high potency marijuana increased to two to three times per day with disastrous consequences. One day (at age 18) he suddenly became paranoid and delusional. He lost touch with reality and had to be hospitalized in a psychiatric ward. Since that first episode he has been hospitalized 9 times including 4 psychiatric hospital stays. Police have been called to his residence 5 times to defuse a potentially violent episode of behavior. He has a record which includes Assault and Battery with a dangerous weapon and possession of a Class E Substance. Psychosis and paranoid delusions led him to self medicate using stronger drugs including Benzodiazepines, Opioids Cocaine and Ecstasy (Molly). Today I worry that it is too late for him to recover; that his mind is a lost cause. It may be easy for some, to judge us as parents; to blame us for not seeing the signs and symptoms. I think about this often and worry that I let my son down by not doing more. However, until you have lived this type of experience it is impossible to judge. And today, with odorless vaping cartridges delivering high potency THC and with the surge in edibles, parents have an obligation to become informed and to assist your child/loved one in gathering the facts on marijuana. This along with common sense legislation that will put significant consumer protection measures in place, will help mitigate the disastrous consequences of chronic and/or high potency cannabis use in our young adults.

Kathleen K. — May 26, 2021

I'm the mom of four children. Marijuana use has significantly affected the development of two of them. My children were raised in a two-parent home with limited screen time, lots of exposure to sports and outdoor activities. They were alter servers and belonged to our church youth group. They worked as soccer refs and at the local orchard and volunteered at local food pantries. They were far from perfect kids but we thought we were doing most things "right" and had discussed the perils of cigarette smoking and "drugs."

My two youngest boys, however, were just the right ages to "misunderstand" the 2012 law legalizing medical marijuana and to feel embolden by the 2016 law allowing recreational use. They were both under 21 in 2016 but both had started using as young teens so once it was "legal" they most certainly believed they were included in this new legal freedom.

For one child, it's watching him continually fail college classes despite his achieving a near perfect score on his SATs, his having a photographic memory and being one of the top students each year until high school. He is functional in that he can hold a job but it is clear that he believes he needs marijuana to help with his anxiety. This jeopardizes his position on the track team, has led to job loses and a level of shame with each failure that draws him ever deeper into his dependency.

For my youngest child, his use cost him the vocational technical HS he longed to be at and the trade he hoped to be working at post HS. It helped to fuel a low-level drinking problem resulting in an additional dual diagnosis at age 15 (both alcoholism and marijuana disuse disorder) on top of his already diagnosed mental health disorders. Eventually, all of it resulted in a CHINS petition, a DA diversion contract and ultimately 2 years in DYS custody.

I have to say I'm blessed that neither of my boys ever developed psychosis from their marijuana use. But I'm angry and frustrated that I was one voice of accountability among a sea of voices stating that pot use was "okay" and that recreational use was "fine". It

is not “fine” or “okay” for adolescents’ period. It is not “okay” that my son attacked his brother while under the influence. It is not “fine” that my son struggles to hold down a job or face stressful situations with a clear mind. It is not “okay” that both my boys will forever experience changes to their developing brain due to their early use of marijuana. And it certainly is not “okay” that there were severely limited resources and supports in place to help me help them.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has updated its guidance to include: “New research has also demonstrated that the adolescent brain, particularly the prefrontal cortex areas controlling judgment and decision-making, is not fully developed until the mid-20s, raising questions about how any substance use may affect the developing brain. Research has shown that the younger an adolescent begins using drugs, including marijuana, the more likely it is that drug dependence or addiction will develop in adulthood.” (<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/135/3/584>).

Developmentally, we know that the “cause and effect” part of the brain is not fully developed till age 25. We knew this prior to passing the 2016 law. The 2016 law was crafted to match the drinking and smoking ages in part because of that knowledge. We have worked for years, as a society to curb teenage cigarette smoking and drinking. We have groups like SADD, MADD and we have created smoke free zones and increased education in schools on fact-based dangers of tobacco smoking. We ban advertising of cigarette smoking and drinking on teen focused media. The recreational law in 2016 passed without any of the teenage prevention strategies we know have worked for cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption. It’s time to change that. It’s time to be honest about the dangers to our teens and use the knowledge of our pediatricians and researchers to create public service messages and in school fact-based education on the dangers of adolescent marijuana use.

Tom V. — May 28, 2021

My name is Tom and I live in Deerfield which is a small town in Western Massachusetts. I spent my adolescent years growing up in impoverished Hispanic communities like the South Bronx in New York City, and then in Holyoke and Springfield, MA up until my late 20s. Today, I am an insurance industry consultant by trade, but more importantly I am a husband, a Dad to my one and only teenaged son, and until last year, I was a brother to one of my late mom’s five sons.

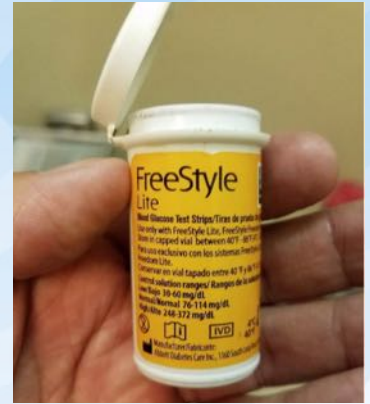
My older brother Carlos fell into the marijuana culture in his early teenaged years, and it stayed with him his entire life. It stifled his upward mobility in school, at work, and in his social and family life as it often does in our underserved inner city Hispanic communities where marijuana use rates among us often outpace those of any other race or ethnicity. His venture into marijuana also emboldened him to abuse alcohol and other drugs. Fast forward into my brother’s early 50’s and his body began to show early signs of breaking down. He was managing his conditions well enough to still be mobile and active in caring for others in their home as a Personal Care Attendant while under the care of his own local doctors. Then, in 2018 a marijuana shop opened in his home city of Northampton, MA. Influenced again by his friends and local budtenders, he suddenly stopped taking his prescribed medications in favor of “medical marijuana”. The first recreational shops on the east coast opened around Thanksgiving of 2018. My brother would be dead just a year and half later, at just 54.

When my younger brother and I cleaned out his apartment, we discovered that Carlos was storing away all of his prescribed medications, one of which prevented strokes. We found unopened prescription bottles and unopened CVS prescription bags still stapled shut, some from the very week he died. When I checked his phone to notify his friends, he had voicemails and text messages from CVS reminding him to pick up his prescriptions. None of which he intended to take because he believed marijuana would treat all of his ailments. Under his bed lay his CPAP machine, covered in dust from being ignored. Displacing his prescribed medications on his mantle and in his medicine cabinet were small bags and small plastic containers of loose marijuana as well as open cigarette boxes filled with marijuana joints.

The coroner’s report says he died of cardiac dysrhythmia. Cardiac dysrhythmia is what can occur when strong strains of marijuana are smoked or ingested as edibles. Something I’ve seen first-hand throughout my own social circles. According to emergency room doctors in our region, marijuana is known to cause adverse cardiac events like dysrhythmias. My state of Massachusetts is legislatively pro-marijuana but what happened to my brother was a combination of unsuspecting self-harm and negligence by state legislators and regulators failing to protect my brother from this predatory industry that thrives on uncapped marijuana potencies and marketing disinformation directly aimed at vulnerable populations, like mine. Like my brother.

This was my brother’s medicine cabinet the day we arrived to clean out his apartment.





Atorvastatin is a cholesterol medication that should not be taken with illicit or herbal drugs. My brother was on medications that controlled the rate his heart would beat, keeping his heart from beating too fast. Some medications are specifically designed to control the electrical rhythm of the heart, keeping it from becoming more irregular and chaotic. (Source Rxlist.com)

My brother believed in marijuana as medicine so much that he emptied all of his prescription medication containers in his cabinet, replacing their contents with loose marijuana flower.

Notice how my brother kept his smoking pipe in his medicine cabinet. Behind that you will see a tube of Triamcinolone Acetonide .1% cream. Its used for skin conditions like eczema, rash, etc . Drug interactions for this product warn against using immunosuppressives like Marijuana (Sources: Kaiserpermanente.org and Leafly.com)

My brother in his healthier years



Don't let what happened to my brother, happen to your brother, sister, daughter, or son. My Massachusetts legislators are too afraid to address the issue publicly. We need to vote them out. We need to demand that existing legislators tighten restrictions on cannabis sales, marketing, advertising, and use. Better yet, demand they take the stand of preventing the industry from entering our communities all together.

Denise C. — June 2, 2021

I share my family's story in hopes that no other family has to go through what we have experienced.

My daughter was a sweet, friendly, honor roll student and cross country athlete who loved to do charity work & help others. She was raised in a very loving family, she was very close to her younger twin sisters; she was a joy to all of us. She was admitted to all four of the competitive colleges she applied to and looked forward to a future career in Psychology or Social Work. We did talk about the dangers of drug use but with her quiet nature and being a health conscious athlete, it wasn't something I felt I had to worry about with her. She never caused me an ounce of trouble in High School.

In fall 2016, she entered her first semester of her Sophomore year at Lesley University. When I dropped her off at the dorm, the smell of marijuana wafting through the hallways was overwhelming. When I raised my concerns to her, suggesting maybe we should look into alternative housing options, she told me it's legal now in Massachusetts, harmless and all of the colleges are the same way and she wanted to room with her friends.

Not far into the fall semester, my daughter had her first hospitalization. She said she was feeling suicidal and mentally off but after a week in this facility she wanted to return to college. Within a short period of time, she then dropped out of school and moved in with a friend and began using THC products heavily.

In February, 2017 my daughter was admitted to Mclean Hospital suffering from another psychotic episode. At the time of her

admission, THC was the only substance found in her system. She was delusional, incoherent, and experiencing suicidal thoughts. She was diagnosed with PTSD from some unknown event even to her and we were told *over and over again* that THC could absolutely in no way be responsible for her condition. After four long months in the “short term” unit, she was released with prescriptions for heavy psychiatric drugs which took her years of painful withdrawal to come off of (Subutex, Gabapentin, Prazosin, Ativan and Cymbalta). She is still suffering today.

As the years have passed, I have connected with many other parents whose children have also experienced cannabis-induced psychosis. THC was the root of my daughter’s mental illness and her life has been inexplicably altered by the fact that it was not acknowledged/understood at the time.

It is my hope that this is now recognized in the medical community and with early intervention, family education and support, other young people would receive proper treatment and not leave facilities addicted and misdiagnosed.

This is becoming a very common problem with the legalization of marijuana and the prevalent societal view that it is a harmless substance. It is my hope that Mclean as an institution is now acknowledging this and providing patients and their families with the support and guidance they need to understand this condition and properly recover from it. My daughter came a long way and had a lot of success at a long-term care facility in CT (also not covered by insurance). Not long after, she eventually relapsed, ran away and cut off all contact from friends and family. We have tried for three years to reconnect and get her the help she needs. We send financial support and receive periodic updates from the people she lives with and continue to pray that she comes back to us. She isn’t the same person she was before she became involved with marijuana and neither are we. Her family is heartbroken.

When I see others sharing their stories that took place in the years after my daughter’s experience; I wish that I had been better informed by the medical community, that had I known the connection, that THC is NOT harmless, gotten her the appropriate care and been able to spread the word to other parents and spare them the same grief.

Janean Q — June 3, 2021

I am so sorry. This is so similar to my son’s story except his ended in suicide. He was never hospitalized bc he was so fiercely independent that we weren’t always aware of his psychotic episodes until after the fact. He was, on some level, aware that his brain wasn’t functioning properly. Yet he thought he was “Uber smart” while high. Sadly, he had been Uber smart before he started using and after 18 months he could no longer manage his own finances or hold a job. He also dropped out after his junior year of college. He no longer trusted us to help him. He was afraid of being “institutionalized” or being placed on meds. I am a nurse and his dad is an MD and still we couldn’t help our son. Meanwhile the industry has his siblings so brainwashed that, though they don’t use, they don’t believe that MJ was truly responsible for their brother’s demise. I find myself disconnecting at times from this campaign because I know people think I am just a crazy bereaved parent. Clearly it doesn’t affect everyone the same- but for the ones that fall prey, it is the worst slippery slope. I continue to share my story with other parents who will listen. If I can prevent one family the devastation that we have experienced, I believe my son will be honored. He never intended to die by suicide. He was full of life and love and ambition. He was altruistic, intelligent and the kindest person that I have ever known.

Sarah H – June 3, 2021

I have been wanting to post our story for a while and today is that day. Our story is a mirror of many of those before us. Days after our son turned 18, he had his first psychotic break. 2 months later his older brother had his first psychotic break. This was 2 years ago and it has been very difficult ever since. Both boys were using high Thc in the Forms of dab pens, wax, and edibles. We , like so many of you, knew nothing about this “new drug- I say new because it is not the same drug as it was years ago(as we all now know). I had been to many drug talks at our high school and never heard anything about what high thc was let alone the dangers that could occur. My husband and I found weed paraphernalia when our son was 17, confiscated it, but actually breathed a sigh of relief that it was only weed he was experimenting with!! Over the last 2 years, our younger son has had some successes but recently had his 4th hospitalization. His older brother just had his second. We have tried everything, therapy for them(which they never really liked) therapy for us, his parents, NAMI classes, and many online groups. After this past hospitalization we sent one son to PACE dual diagnosis and another to a mental health facility in eastern pa. We still have hope and pray that this will make the difference. One son has an addiction and the other has never stayed on medication long enough for us to know why the delusional thinking still exists. Both boys had delusion thinking, auditory hallucinations, and anxiety. We have no family history of any of this. We are a close big family, I’m a stay at home mom, my husband has worked from home for years, we eat dinner together every night, we have wonderful extended family,... I could have never, ever have believed this could happen to us- but it did. Weed is not legal recreational in our state but it is easy to get. In fact my son was even ordering weed and psychedelics on the dark web and paying for it with Bitcoin! I will pray for all of you and do whatever I can to help educate anyone who will listen.

Caroline S. — June 10, 2021

Our 25 year old son is essentially lost to us right now. He has been down a long dark road that started in early high school when he began to use marijuana. He has continued to use it, but has progressed to abusing alcohol, prescription drugs, street drugs of all

kinds, and has had a screen addiction for years as well.

He is bright, funny, sweet, musically talented and highly intelligent. He was brought up in a loving healthy home in which we shared values of love, service to others, and a deep faith. He had plans to pursue a medical career in order to do something significant towards helping others and make a real difference. He graduated from high school only due to a lot of support, encouragement, and push from his family and committed educators at his school, (despite the fact that his standardized test scores were the highest in his class.)

He planned to go to a good college but withdrew before classes started that fall. He later made another attempt at college but quickly flunked out.

He moved into his own apartment, was working, and the substance abuse accelerated. We counseled and encouraged him to make better choices and when he refused, we just hoped and prayed that with experience and maturity, he would grow out of this phase.

We were totally shocked and unprepared when he had a complete psychotic break over 3 years ago. He spent a month in a psychiatric hospital and came out with a diagnosis of bipolar 1 and psychosis. Since then he has vacillated between manic episodes where he has done crazy and sometimes harmful things to himself and others, and deep depression. He has been suicidal several times. He has had numerous hospitalizations, been to many treatment facilities, and run through many physicians, counselors and other mental health professionals, all of whom he has rejected as not helpful. At this time he is in a psychotic state much of the time, believes that he does not need help, and often does not allow us to be involved in his life much. He seems like a different person.

He is now in such a compromised state that he can no longer drive a car or hold a job. Our hearts are broken to see him so disturbed and so unreachable. Most of our conversations with him these days are not based in reality, yet as much as he needs help, hospitals will only keep him involuntarily when he is a danger to himself or others.

He has admitted that marijuana causes him to be “lazy and unmotivated”, which we could clearly see happening, but none of us had any idea it could cause psychosis! We also didn’t know that the THC levels in marijuana are now so much higher than they once were until we were educated by friends who have experienced this with their loved ones. We have read *Tell Your Children : The Truth About Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence* by Alex Berenson, and numerous articles and online resources, and our eyes are now opened to this painful reality. We’ve learned much that we wish we knew then and have to fight frustration and anger at the massive and misguided push to legalize, and even more so, to elevate the use of marijuana as a benign and helpful substance.

Susan W — June 12, 2021

When our son was in psychosis he would stop using THC but when he would recover he would go back to it. It’s taken 4 years of constantly standing with him through this and encouraging him to remain on his medications and refrain from THC. We have continued to tell him our home is his and it’s always open to him. At this time he is what we would say recovered – has a job, works out and is drug free and medication compliant. He continues to live with us for the support he needs so he can heal. We can see his brain continuing to heal from the damage high concentrate THC has caused. We are not sure if he will ever be the same son we once knew, but we see signs of recovery and our hearts will never stop hoping and loving him. We have had seasons of recovery and almost wellness and then a switch flips inside him and he turns back to THC and it’s a new season of hard work and prayers- and continuous supervision and support. We have worked from home to be there with him and had extended family stay too over the past 4 years while in psychosis. I’ve had many moments of crying so hard I couldn’t catch my breath and felt like we couldn’t go on anymore like this. This has been a long and hard journey. I wish I had known so much of this when our son first became ill. From the ER doctor who had no clue to the last psychologist we saw. We must educate and inform the public! We are down to 20 mg of Geodon in the mornings and he just went from 40 at night to 20. We are praying he doesn’t have any symptoms resurface. Right now he is working – his second week of full time work. We aren’t sure he can handle going back to school just now. One step at a time but for now he’s making progress and we pray and hope.

Anne H – June 16, 2021

Before going to work in a Massachusetts medical marijuana dispensary for a year and a half as a budtender, I was a mentally healthy physical therapist. I was passionate about the cannabis plant. I believed that not only was it natural, harmless, and non-addicting, but also that it was a beneficial medicine for the body and mind. I was experienced with marijuana. I thought that I knew marijuana.

After going to work for the marijuana industry and consuming its high THC products, I learned that commercialized, industrialized marijuana products are unnatural and extremely harmful. Since day one the marijuana industry, in its quest for billions of dollars, has been all about profit over health and lives.

My marijuana corporation’s CEO told us budtenders that its priority was to sell BHO (Butane Hash Oil) high THC concentrates (wax

and shatter), that were over 90% THC. We budtenders were told that high THC wax and shatter were a “more medicinal way to medicate”, compared to our flower that was 20-30% THC.

When the big day finally arrived, when my corporation achieved its prime directive of selling high THC wax and shatter, I bought a gram of shatter and a dab rig from the dispensary. I went over to a fellow budtender’s house after work in order to learn how to dab because I was an old school marijuana user. I was completely clueless about dabbing and intimidated by the unfamiliar blob of shatter, the dab rig and butane torch. After inhaling my first dab hit of 98% THC shatter, my mind was overpowered with an incredibly stupefying high. I kept saying “WHOA!” over and over again between coughing fits, because I could barely handle the dab hit effects.

I should have heeded the disconcerting effects that dabbing had upon my body and brain, but being under the influence of high THC made that impossible. I immediately became hooked on dabs. High potency THC concentrates became my main method of consumption. I became a great promoter of high potency THC concentrates.

At my budtender counter, I educated and upsold high THC concentrates to customers, which included 15 year olds. I parroted what my management told me to say, that high potency THC concentrates were a “more medicinal way to medicate”.

However I began to witness harms of high THC upon co-workers and customers, who started to demonstrate escalating psychological problems, aggression and explosive outbursts. Yet I was completely incapable of perceiving the harmful effects that high THC had upon me.

High THC caused me to develop a severe marijuana addiction, a Cannabis Use Disorder. I became what the marijuana industry values and creates: one of the 20% of heavy users who consumes 80% of its products. I eventually had all 11 out of 11 characteristics of Cannabis Use Disorder. I continued to use despite experiencing alarming symptoms. After dabbing, my eyes would roll up in the back of my head and I would pass out. I would remain unconscious for some time, come to and then dab again.

Even more disturbing, I experienced onset and escalation of Cannabis Induced Psychosis: paranoia, hallucinations, and vivid daydreams of committing violent acts. First I thought about vandalizing cars. Then I imagined beating people with a baseball bat, stabbing people with a knife then shooting people. My thoughts were so terrible and my self-hatred grew so great that I began to think of ways to commit suicide.

Friends told me to stop dabbing but I felt powerless to stop and continued to dab more and more. I was caught in a high THC death spiral but was fortunate to wake up to the harms before it was too late. I quit my job as a budtender, threw out my dab rig and stopped using marijuana.

However I was far from being out of the dark woods of high THC. I went through a painful detox, losing 15 pounds in a few weeks. I was not eating or sleeping. Despite my not consuming marijuana, my mental state went from bad to worse. I used to wonder why this happened until I found research. A study shows that increased metabolism with loss of weight results in a substantial release of THC from fat stores into the blood known as “THC re-intoxification”. After having dabbled up to a gram of shatter daily for almost a year, the tremendous amount of THC stored in my fat was released.

My Cannabis Induced Psychosis worsened substantially. It went into a whole new level of bizarre and scary. I was suddenly convinced that there was an Illuminati conspiracy using 4th dimension shapeshifting reptilians to manufacture poison marijuana to bring about an apocalypse and a New World Order. Since I was the sole human on the planet who knew about this dastardly plot to end humanity, 4th dimension shapeshifting reptilians were going to find and kill me in a most brutal manner.

I became completely terrified and incapacitated. I stopped speaking. I armed myself with 4 knives 24/7 but still did not feel safe. I thought that my phone was bugged, my friends’ entire house was full of hidden cameras, and their phones were bugged. I was afraid to go out in public and be around people, because I could encounter a person who was not really human, someone who was actually a 4th dimension shapeshifting reptilian out to kill me. I began plotting ways to kill my corporation’s upper management in order to save humanity.

My friends were extremely worried about me, as my mind was teetering on a precipice, and they believed it highly likely that I would either have a complete psychotic break or kill myself. Fortunately this did not happen, for as time passed and the months went by, my mental state slowly improved and I managed to recover my mental health. When I was finally able to perceive reality clearly, I felt greatly ashamed of the delusions that I had been utterly convinced of and how close I had come to harming others.

It took a heck of a long time, but the day arrived when I no longer felt shamed into silence by what high THC dabs did to my mind. I am just one of many harmed by the marijuana industry and its unnatural, harmful high THC products. I am fortunate to have been a middle aged woman with a fully developed frontal lobe, able to survive and be a voice for those who perished from high THC, such as

young Johnny Stack.

The greedy, callous marijuana industry should be shamed for its harmful ways, for the destruction it causes. If the marijuana industry continues to be at the reigns of regulation, acting with impunity for the carnage it produces, lives maimed and destroyed, the tragedy of high THC will intensify.

Sean K — June 17, 2021

I saw your sons story on the news about a month ago. First off, I am so deeply sorry for the loss of your son. I can't imagine the agony and the loss. I'm so, so sorry. Thank you for educating people, and especially young people on the dangers of dabbing. This is extremely important work that you are doing.

Our 18 year old sons' story is eerily similar to Johnny's. Before he became addicted to dabbing in the past six months, he was a very bright, loving, articulate, kind, intelligent, talented, considerate, polite and funny young man with a super bright future ahead of him. He has a mother and father who have adored him from day one, and two sisters who love him very much and many friends, unfortunately, many who dab high THC and use pot – in our state, perfectly legal, at least for those over 21.

He has never suffered any abuse from either his mother or father, or anyone else – except for what I would consider normal arguments between a teenager and his parents in his later teenage years. He has had some minor underlying anxiety during covid, and the past few years of HS, but nothing he was ever treated for and he never mentioned suicide before a few months ago when he started dabbing daily and heavily. Once he started dabbing high THC concentrates, his behavior very rapidly changed and became very, very disturbing. He turned into someone we don't even recognize at all.

We feel that he now has Cannabis Psychosis, Paranoia (the govt. has bugged my phone, people are spying on me) and even some Schizophrenic type symptoms – grandiose feelings, disorganized thinking, not making any sense, saying very odd things. His anger is through the roof, he punches himself in his face, punches holes in the walls of our house. He blames all of his problems on his mother and I and will take responsibility for nothing (YOU guys have a BIG problem, not me). Last night he told me he wishes me dead, wants me dead and hopes I soon will die. Before this, we had what I would describe as a loving and close relationship, not perfect though, but no relationship ever is.

He is now suicidal. The police have been called nine times to our house due to his threatening suicide – in just the past three months. He is now completely unrecognizable to us. His eyes look different, his mannerisms are different, he has lost a bunch of weight and his anger at us is off the charts, especially when we say no to his demands. Dabbing THC is legal in our state!

He has been on three 72 hour holds. The 3rd 72 hour hold resulted in transfer to a behavioral health and addiction hospital where he stayed for three nights. They recommended he go to a partial hospitalization program at a different behavioral health and addiction hospital closer to our house, 9-2pm five days per week. We think he needs full hospitalization for detox from this high THC dabbing. He is scared to death of any group type therapy or hospitalization, even partial hospitalization where he gets to live at home. He called the new hospital for a phone assessment and told them that he was fine, just suffering a little bit of anxiety and that their program wasn't right for him. His lying has been pathological and compulsive and continues to be.

About a month ago, he crashed his car by running a red light, multiple witnesses said he was doing over 100mph in a 45mph zone. He crashed into a woman's car at around 40mph, totaled his car and hers. He didn't check on the older woman he crashed into, he then left the scene of the accident, ran into a nearby store and assaulted two workers there, threw a ladder at one worker and grabbed the other man's eyeglasses after the man dropped them and he then broke them in half. He blames this all on hitting his head in the accident, not the THC. After his accident, I went through his car at the towing yard and found 3-4 empty containers of weed, two empty containers of dabbing THC wax, multiple vaping pens and a blowtorch on his seat. He denies being high when the accident occurred... I believe otherwise.

Over the past few weeks, when he asked to borrow one of our cars (I took him off of our insurance after his car was totaled as our insurance premium skyrocketed) and when I said no, he started violently punching himself in his face. He then tried to rip a heavy duty metal hangar for a bird feeder off our deck saying he would stab and beat himself in his head with it. Then he punched a hole in the wall of his bedroom and ripped up some things in his bedroom. All MY FAULT according to him. I made him do it because I wouldn't let him use one of our cars in his condition. It couldn't possibly be the high THC dabbing to blame.

He currently has a warrant out for his arrest for missing court dates for speeding tickets. All of these behaviors before dabbing would have been absolutely and undeniably unheard of for our son, as he has always been a polite, kind, compassionate, loving, considerate young man. We have never had any sort of problems like this with him before and never any involvement with the police.

We have kicked him out of the house six times over the past three months, letting him sleep at home on occasion, the last being three nights ago and the previous 4-5 nights before that. He stays up all night and is extremely angry at us, this is all our fault, banging on our door, volatile, screaming, crying, blaming us for everything, and more. We had to kick him out again as we can't live like that. It has gotten to the point that we are now concerned for our own safety, not knowing what he is capable of with his extreme behavior. On one occasion he ran out of the house, screaming at the top of his lungs at my wife "My Mom is a fucking psychotic bitch", over and over again. That tidbit is one of so many since he started dabbing high THC concentrates. All of this behavior would have been absolutely unheard of for our son, pre-dabbing.

After his car crash, I got into his iPhone and read through all of his texts. He had texted the word/action of Dabbing 80 times in the previous 10 weeks plus 45 times words like "bud, pot, weed". These were all things like "I'm dabbing with XXX at XXX Park", "come dab with me, I'm at XXX's house", "can I buy 2 grams of wax from you", "lets dab and then go skate", etc. He obviously had been driving high as a kite many times as many of his dabbing texts occurred in his car. In the hospital stays he has tested only positive for THC. His doctors and our psychologist and family friend who has a lot of experience with meth, suspected meth based on all of his behaviors. Based on his own texts, he had dabbled high concentrate THC 1.6 times per day, every day, seven days per week the previous 10 weeks. That's what his texts went back to as he had gotten a new phone.

He is now homeless, has no money, no job, no car and won't seek help because he doesn't have a problem. All of this would have been inconceivable to us pre-dabbing. The police tell us "Sorry, there is nothing we can do except another 72 hour hold". Dabbing high THC concentrate wax should be banned in CO. We are at our wits end with him, with no clue of what to do. Do we attempt to get him into some sort of interventionist type program involuntarily?

I feel like I am in a race and a battle to save his life, but it appears there is nothing I (we) can do. Everyone says to keep our distance and not give him any money, don't enable him, etc. We have been doing that but it is a dilemma as we love him so much and we want to save him and protect him from this poison that is ruining his life. We know it's the drug, the THC that is causing his erratic and very strange behavior as his behavior rapidly went downhill at the same time as he started dabbing THC. He often (daily) says how much he despises us, how we have abused him his whole life (all untrue and all delusions). I want to help him, protect him and save him from himself, yet I can't.

Everyone tells us to not give him money, they say he will use it for drugs – He says he will only use it for food, "he's starving to death and WE WON'T HELP HIM!". Nor should we give him a place to sleep as that is just enabling him – even our psychologist has been saying these things. My son says "I'm homeless because of YOU". I have told him that we will drive him to court dates, a job – if he gets one, and to treatment and that's it. That only makes him madder.

I have spent hundreds of hours and many sleepless nights researching dabbing THC and addiction in general. I have forwarded many, many scholarly medical research articles on the dangers of dabbing THC to our son, including the one about Johnny & his family, all to no avail.

Jo C – June 22, 2021

My son Joseph, I call him Joey, is my only son, and the youngest of three. He would be almost 29 years old. I am in the 57th month since he left this earth and I still wondering what might have saved him if circumstances had been different. I don't have the answer but this I know, without people willing to telling their story there would be very little hope for the families that are impacted by their children's substance addiction(s). It is through advocacy we are able to educate. And make families aware of what today's marijuana is really about. Joey started drinking alcohol fairly young, probably about age 14, and quickly moved onto pot. Over the next few years we started to notice behavioral changes that ultimately caused him to go into his first of many hospitalizations. My husband and I were of the peace era, we smoked pot. Pot was our drug of choice, as it was our son's. The thing about us is, we smoked it, we weren't dabbing, and high potency was, if we were really lucky, was maybe 20 percent, not the 90 + percentiles of today. Joey was admitted several times due to erratic, and eventually psychotic behaviors. The first two admissions he tested negative for everything except pot. Well how could that be ? How could his violent behaviors be driven by pot alone ? It was inconceivable to his dad and I. My husband and I said "but it's only marijuana" more times then I care to admit. We had no idea, for lack of a better word, how sophisticated marijuana had become. Nor how addicted our son was to it. Eventually Joey went on to use other substances but he openly admitted his drug of choice was pot. His quantitative levels were so off the charts that it took 58 days for him to test less then a trace. 58 days ! We tried everything. Rehabs. Tough love. Unconditional love. We cried. We fought. We begged. We even bribed. But nothing worked. He lost his soul to weed. He was making his own dabs and shatter, and selling it to support his habit. He was arrested for possession of felony status amounts, and the DA went after him hard. Now with a criminal record, student loans were off the table. Getting a job without a background check was getting harder, he couldn't travel out of the country to attend a family wedding, life got very serious very quickly for him, and it just became too much for him. So one early morning after a night of partying he washed down a handful of pills with a bottle of wine. Was it intentional? I won't ever know. He bought some munchie food only an hour before sending his best friend a picture of his fist full of pills along with a text that read Love You Rachel . He had a pizza in the oven that went uneaten. Regardless if his death was intentional, dead is dead and the living are left behind to navigate

gut wrenching, heart shattered child grief. I honestly don't think he cared if he woke up or not. At least not at that very moment. Maybe if he had woken the next day he might have thought well that was stupid of me. I don't doubt he probably escaped death more than once. Drugs have a way of making you not care about reality. And today's pot is definitely drug. Fast forward to the day he died. I had flown in to visit him and his sisters when I got the call that would forever change my life. "Mama D, Joey is gone." "Gone where Jeromy? Gone to Colorado?" "No Mama D, he was found dead." My daughter had just pulled off the highway seconds before the phone rang. Why she pulled off was a God thing. Because when she heard the news, I was on speaker phone and she heard this horrible news at the same time I did. Her reaction so violent and agonizing I don't doubt we would have been in an accident. I couldn't help but thank God for this lifesaving favor. As much as I wanted to die,....how would I live without my child? But I am very grateful our tragic loss of Joey wasn't compounded by a car accident. I often wonder did God spare my son from suffering more harm and pain had he lived. I won't ever know. I just know my child was struggling and I know he didn't like what he had become. Truthfully there were many times it was hard to like him under the influence of drugs. Countless times I had to remind myself it's ok to hate the addiction but still love the addict. And he was that. Addicted to weed. Who knew this was possible? We were told it wasn't. It was Joey that told us he was. Proven to us after every rehab he would eventually circle right back to pot because he was, in his own words, an addict. He never connected the dots that the weed was a precursor to all of his other drug related decisions, and problems. What a catch-22. But it's only pot, right? NOT. He was cremated a week later. And I flew home with his remains in a 10 x 5 inch box. It sat on my lap the entire flight. I was a flight attendant and my son flew as my passenger several times. My son who loved to fly was going home with me in a way none of us expected. If I could ask him if he had any regrets I am sure he would have said "but mom it was only pot." His first love and it killed him. Yes, he was high on other substances the day he died as his peers are quick to remind me. But they fail to see pot as the devil in disguise. They are so conditioned to think it's benign. But how can anything that alters the brain chemistry be benign? Even under the disguise of gummies, brownies, candies, and coffee shots laced with thc, it is a powerful designer drug. Gone is yesterday's marijuana. And gone is my beautiful boy. He spent 10 years in hell fighting against what it did to him. I am angry and sad at the predatory industry that is targeting the youth with their omission as to how insidious today's marijuana is. I am angry with the politicians for signing legalization into law. But I am grateful for organizations like Johnny's Ambassador and Parents Opposed To Pot for their courage, and grass root movement to change the legalization direction. We must never give up. Our children and their children deserve better. Their lives matter. Love Matters.

Michelle L – June 22, 2021

My beautiful boy Trevor died 3 days before Johnny Stack died, 11/17/19, in his dorm room at Sonoma State University, after ingesting a "blue 30" street pill that was a lethal dose of 3 types of fentanyl. His unformed brain caused the neurons to search out a higher high after being introduced to cannabis at age 14.

My son became addicted to cannabis as a freshman in High School. When I discovered that my 14 year old son was using cannabis regularly, I learned all I could about the new marijuana. I learned that the pot my friends smoked in college was maybe 2-4% THC, and 6% if you were lucky to score Maui Wauai. THC amounts in today's medical marijuana strains average around 25%, with some award-winning strains up to 35% THC, and Dabs up to 99% THC. This is not hippie grass. Marijuana affects brain plasticity and proper neural function in youth.

Our family did all we could to stop our son's addiction (a 14 year old brain gets hooked quickly). We sent him to rehab, where he was diagnosed with Cannabis Use Disorder. He came home, only to experience even greater addiction a year later, including finding multiple very fake IDs and cannabis club memberships, and having our home, vehicles, and even myself a punching bag for his drug-fueled rages when coming down from his high. He ended up attending six high schools including three rehabs before graduating from High School in 2019. And yes, the day after his 18th birthday, his first legal medical marijuana card appeared in the mailbox, despite his long-standing issues with drugs.

Since his death, I have been an outspoken advocate against youth use of marijuana – particularly the facts which led to Trevor's addiction and ultimate death.

- Potency. Encouraging people to learn about the strength of today's marijuana – it is not "just pot".
- Biology. How the brain is not fully formed until age 25 in most young adults, and the likelihood for addiction increases to 1 in 6 for youth using marijuana when starting before the brain has reached adulthood.
- Gateway. Today's marijuana leads many young people in search of a higher high.
- Suicide. How marijuana use in young adults increases suicide ideation seven-fold (additionally, toxicology results in suicides show a 10% increase in marijuana since legalization in CO.)

I have nothing against medical marijuana use, and was made fully aware of its benefits as a breast cancer patient in 2019. I have nothing against responsible adults' use of marijuana.

I am appalled, however, with my local CA policymakers who equate support of Prop 64 with opening cannabis retail storefronts, and am currently part of a local advocacy group showing the harm of youth access to cannabis and the normalization that happens when a storefront goes in. One of our nearby towns, Sausalito CA, is the latest jurisdiction to consider breaking ranks with the rest of my

county and allowing a portal for the highly commercialized recreational cannabis industry in their community. I have to point out Sausalito's proximity to the Golden Gate Bridge and note that adolescents who use cannabis have a seven-fold increase in making suicide attempts. I have first-hand experience of the tie between cannabis use and suicidal ideation from sitting in 12-step and grief groups with parents whose children have been lured to Sausalito's International Orange icon. Another one of Trevor's cannabis-addicted friends was dialing Uber to order a call to take him to the Golden Gate Bridge, when Trevor intervened and "talked him off the ledge". In the first four years since legalization, Colorado coroners have seen a 10.5% increase in the prevalence of positive marijuana tests in toxicology reports, increasing from 11.8% at the onset of legalization in 2012 to 22.3% in 2016.

The latest marijuana statistics include:

- 30% of marijuana users have a use disorder.
- 9-17% of people who try marijuana will become addicted.
- And yes, marijuana is a gateway drug, especially for those with unformed brains, under age 25.

My son is more than a statistic. What tax revenue will be gained to make up for the price of my son? And that revenue increase will be at the cost of more people addicted to cannabis in my county. How do I know that? Because we have seen the same practices with the tobacco, alcohol and pharmaceutical industries. They profit from the suffering of others.

Personally, I have nothing to lose in this game except time. I already lost my oldest son to fentanyl poisoning caused by his addiction. I advocate against commercial retail cannabis because I know increased normalization and access will further hurt the youth of our county. Students themselves tell us how easy it is to get a fake ID or have someone go in a store to buy for them. Marin CA already has skyrocketing youth cannabis use numbers – and with a dispensary nearby, Marin teen cannabis use rates will just get worse. For the record: this isn't a "parenting problem" as some people would like to suggest to abdicate responsibility for our community's youth. I was the perennial room mom in my sons' classes. We had family dinners regularly. They had an allowance and had to earn money to buy any earthly goods they desired. Our family is not divorced, nor are our boys adopted. I spent a month recently writing thank-you cards for the literally hundreds of condolence cards and memorial donations we received, so many of them sharing how our family is such a cornerstone of our community. The thing is, parents can't fight this alone. We need policy that shows youth that we value their health and safety. We need local leaders that recognize the crisis we have in our county and take responsibility for their part. We need community that doesn't point fingers and parent-shame, but instead asks – what can we all do to make sure we don't lose more kids?

If your State or Community is considering changes to marijuana laws, I implore all involved to consider the good of your entire community's health over money. In our case, we need to decide what is best for all of our local community, since there are no gates to wall in the city of Sausalito, so whatever is decided will affect all of our county. Our kids (and many adults) are growing up with marijuana use being marketed, normalized, and pushed by the cannabis industry. Our minds naturally and powerfully say "illegal is bad, legal is good", and marijuana is no exception.

Trevor L — June 24, 2021

Letter of Accountability

Dear Mom and Dad, As you probably know, I am writing a Letter of Accountability to you. In this letter, I will talk about my past actions and what was going on for me. I know my using has affected you... **My using made me lose motivation for school also.** I would sometimes ditch class and get high with friends. This led to falling even further behind in school. I still wanted to succeed(sic) academically, but when I showed up to class I often wouldn't know what's going on and I'd leave. This made me feel inadequate and embarrassed. When I got in trouble for using and getting caught, I denied it so I could do it more. In these moments I felt mad that I was punished for it and only made me want to use more. After situations like this I often became angry. I felt like you were trying to stop me and punish me for my actions which made me feel ashamed and violated. I had a tunnel vision towards getting high as it's all I could think of. I tried gaining attention by self-destructive behaviors such as stealing your car, hitting myself and your property, saying depressing remarks and mean things towards you as well as more things. These events were in an act of rebellion and to gain attention to me as I felt inferior in most situations at home. I also recognize that I have problems with the law and I've gotten in trouble with the police on more than one occasion. An example of this is the incident that ended me up in Juvy and eventually going to (wilderness)... I already felt frustrated, powerless, and inferior. I then started arguing and my anger boiled over. I got up in your faces and yelled, threw my backpack at a wall, which made you call the police on me. I felt abandoned and broke the house phone and walked up the hill where the police were. I got in their faces and ended up at (a 5150) where they released me to Juvy. I felt like I was an outsider and I felt ashamed and abandoned. At this point I knew I needed help and agreed to get it. This is something I had a hard time with in the past. I was in denial of lots of things including my using and aspects of my at home life. I denied I had a problem with drugs and denied that they had an effect on the way I act. I also denied when I got in trouble. An example is when you'd find my drugs or smell it and I would say that I'm holding it for a friend, or that I wasn't doing anything. I tried to lie and deny to make you not as disappointed in me and also so I could keep doing what I was doing. This damaged our relationship and I always felt disappointed(sic) in myself.

When I used there was always a lack of honesty and communication because I felt like you would always fear the truth. This made me feel sad that I couldn't openly talk about everything. Often I'd hang out with friends and lie about my whereabouts. This made you guys scared, especially when I'd disappear(sic) for a couple days and you'd have no idea where I was. Not only did my actions affect you, but it also affected (my younger brother.) I am ashamed that I couldn't be there for him in the past, and that my actions likely hurt him...

When I couldn't provide for my using I started selling to gain extra money. I would sell to my friends so I could have a little extra pocket change to provide for my using. I got a natural high from selling and this fueled my self-esteem, and my self-image, making me feel better about myself. I loved the rush that drugs, and selling, gave me and I chased that high which led to stealing. I didn't do this to (sic) often but when I would I would steal from other kids to get the high, get what I wanted, and to boost my self-esteem. My morals and beliefs did not match up with my actions. I often felt bad about what I did/was doing. I felt haunted by the damage I caused to the family and your property... In the future I'd like to be able to communicate openly and assertively. Love you, Trevor

Sadie – June 27, 2021

Hi Mrs. Stack,

I first wanted to say that I know it's been a bit, but I'm so sorry for your loss. I don't know if you remember me or not, but I went to school with Johnny since I could remember (since first grade until graduating high school). When he passed I reached out to James and asked how you all were doing, since I went to school with James as well and always loved your family. James let me know that there would be a funeral for Johnny on December 9th, which was my 20th birthday. So when I let my mom know of this situation, we discussed it quite a bit before we agreed that writing a letter to Johnny and sharing it with you later would be the best option for all of us. I want you to know that when I first found out about Johnny's passing, I was wondering what I could do for his family first and foremost (since family was always so impactful to us from Wildcat to Rock Canyon). And that my wish on my 20th birthday was that you all would find comfort and peace in knowing how much of an impact your son had on so many lives. I just came across the letter I had been saving to send to you all, and went to your Facebook to send you this message only to find your daughter just got married. And I just know that Johnny would be so happy and proud of his family; every time I talked to him I always asked how you all were doing and he was always so ecstatic to tell me that you 4 were thriving and as happy as could be. 2 years ago I wrote this letter physically and since my handwriting is absolutely horrible, I typed it out because I want you to know how much Johnny was loved and cherished.

"Dear Johnny, You were always known to us as a little quiet, but since I can remember, I have always remembered you as a breath of fresh air. Whether it was elementary school when the little boys were all so reckless and immature, middle school when they really started becoming gross, or high school when they were still gross but now also breaking girl's hearts, you were always the sweetest. You never started trouble, you were kind and compassionate to all, and you always kept and proved my very high opinion of you. You always joked around with me in elementary school, and every time I passed you in the halls in middle/high school you'd say hi and had a conversation with me that left me feeling loved. Most recently, I would snapchat you and ask about your adorable puppy or you'd ask me how school was going. No matter what, I always felt uplifted whenever I got to have a conversation with you. And watching the video of your memorial I know that so many people felt this way and that you were so very loved. You touched so many people, and I promise to carry on that legacy that you left for so many. So, to the boy that will always hold my highest opinion, you will forever be loved and missed."

I know that it's much later on, but I hope you know that I've wanted to send this for quite some time to let you know that your son touched so many of us. And I want to thank you and Mr. Stack for raising such an incredible friend. He will always be remembered in the highest regards. I hope you all are doing amazing and know how proud Johnny would be that you all are carrying on his positivity.

Angie L – June 28, 2021

I wanted to give some parents Hope out there. A few months ago I joined this group feeling very concerned and worried about my 16-year-old son. Since joining we have turned a massive corner. He is no longer dabbing. He has returned to my happy child. And is being more respectful and grateful than ever. I feel like this crap is finally out of his system and my son has returned.

We sat him down with 6 weeks of school left and grounded him for 3 weeks. No friends at all. We told him the following:

He will be drug tested everyday for 6 weeks with an adult present. After that he will be randomly tested from now on throughout college. We dated every test and all of us were amazed at how long it took to get out of his system. It was a good thing for him to see.

If he does test positive we told him he will be sent immediately to an Inpatient facility for months and he will lose his car and we will remove him from his private school. He knows we are dead serious. We told him that our insurance covers it and we have already spoken to them regarding this.

We got him a licensed trauma counselor who is a body builder and is more like a mentor. Super amazing guy that works with him at

the gym and does his counseling there. He was a gift from God. I prayed for Him. He not your average counselor. I still search his phone and room whenever I get the urge or a gut feeling. He is now limited on who he can spend the night with if at all. We talked with some of his friends and said we absolutely will not tolerate him smoking this. We pray he continues to obey our rules. He has dramatically changed back to our sweet boy. It was very hard at first, but he finally understood we meant business and he finally complied. And here we are. No drugs and good behavior.

It took about 2 months to see a change. We were strict and followed through. With him being a minor we fully intend to let him know who's running this show...and it's not him. We told him that we view this as Dangerous as heroin and will not put up with it in the slightest. If he chooses to do it when we are no longer financially paying for anything that is his choice but until then he will accept our rules or suffer the consequences.

I hope this helps someone out there...we had a no tolerance policy...and we are seeing positive things now. Praying it continues.

Michelle P — July 14, 2021

Our son began using high potency THC products at the age of 14, during his freshman year of high school at a friend's house. He quickly spiraled out of control... he got in trouble at school and was expelled. He lost many friends and ended up dropping out of high school by his junior year. We ended up asking him to leave the family home because he was defiant, depressed, occasionally violent and unpredictable. We had to install locks on our bedroom and office doors to keep our possessions safe and to sleep well at night. His addiction lasted for over 4 years... he just turned 19 and spent his birthday at The Foundry. He was there for over 6 weeks. He returns home in a couple of days and we feel that we have our son back. He will continue out-patient therapy for some time and we know that his journey is far from over... but we have hope again. The pit in my stomach and my shattered heart are beginning to heal. I feel that other adults really need to understand what is at stake! I would love to help in any way that you need.

Lisa B. — July 20, 2021

Yet another similar story. Our son (20 as well) became psychotic after ingesting a 50 mg edible on his birthday (6/10) while he was also going through a dab cartridge every few days. He became increasingly paranoid and angry (180 degree turn from his usual gentle nature) to the point where he was so aggressive I had to leave my own house. The police were no help – going away was actually their suggestion and when I tried to come back he had decided that he owned the house and paid the mortgage (when he had just quit his job the week before because he thought all his co-workers were talking behind his back). The county health department was no help because he had to be the one to ask for help and he didn't think he had a problem. My best resources were found at treatment centers – talking to everyone I could about what was going on and it was through that I discovered intervention. We hired an interventionist to research a good treatment facility for him and went through the intervention process – it wasn't a smooth path, he ended up leaving the treatment facility the first night but fortunately because he was so disoriented in a new town he was hospitalized the next day on a 3 day psychiatric hold, followed by a 14 day hold where he is now. Progress on the meds is slow but we know he's safe and we have a 45 day treatment facility lined up for him after. This time I hope he stays.

Betsy — July 23, 2021

My son graduated high school in 2013, he didn't seem much different from the rest of his brothers except that he was hooked on hockey. He wanted to eventually play for the NHL. He and his father had a strategy on how to proceed. He would live at a junior hockey camp and continue with that until picked up by a college for their hockey team. It was the end of his first year in 2014 that we were first faced with the THC addiction.

We had a horrible summer ahead of us. We went to the emergency room after a week or so , I thought he might die. The doctor did blood work and said he was saturated with THC. Told us there was nothing they or anyone else could do. Hospitals wouldn't take patients like him as they were too much trouble. Our family doctor put him on an antipsychotic and checked his blood and urine every week for the rest of the summer. He got settled enough to take 2 jobs – not that he was ambitious – but we were forcing him.

Come the fall he and his father decided he could go back to Junior hockey. I was not at all wanting him to go but I really never expected that anyone would go through what he did and do it all over again. He would continue to go to his doctor once a month.

Same old same old nothing changed, he was a great hockey player even under the influence. 2015 is a blur for me. The fall of 2015 he changed teams and things got much worse, the coach didn't trust him so he never got played, by January of 2016 he was traded to a team that really needed him. He was fabulous in the beginning then down the hill he went. In spite of himself he got picked up by a college team and a good one.

2016 and 2017 were the worst years of our entire families life. He was delusional and every other mental condition you can think of. He was very angry, but he was up against his mother's unshakeable faith. My moto is NEVER NEVER NEVER give up.

I managed to get him to go to World Youth Day in Poland with me. He was violent but wanted to go, no drugs, which made for serious withdrawals. The absolute grace from God was that he would sleep as soon as his head hit the pillow. He says to this day that it was a very good experience. It did not change the insanity, he was dabbing at this point and supposed to be ready for college at the end of August. I couldn't get it out of my head that he couldn't play college hockey, so we went ahead and set him up at a reputable college. At our first meeting the college master and psychologist told incoming freshman parents that they preferred the students smoke pot rather than drink. The pot smokers were much less likely to get in trouble for being loud or hospitalized for being sick.

He was still psychotic, lasted 3 weeks and asked to be picked up.

We went to a few more doctors and realized that if the THC didn't stop his life was over. He went on some kind of medication, and we got him a good job with a man who knew how to handle him. He worked construction for almost a year and the mental fears and anger were back. I could never smell anything. He was always home by midnight or 1am.

Words from Jesus, they are legalizing the death of my children."

He told me one night that a friend of his had a great mix of liquid THC and he was going for more. I tried to stop him, and it got very messy, my husband, my middle son and I drove to our vacation home 2 hours away just to get away from him.

He ended up out of state on the highway out of gas. The police recognized his situation and took him to a hospital. His brother came up from Florida and took him back to Florida. His brother was very strict. Wouldn't give him ten cents. He went to an AA meeting just one. He and his brother fought, and he sent Justin out on the streets of Miami, no money no home. I had people all over the country praying for him. We tried to get him into several rehabs, but he would not cooperate. He finally got some medication to calm him enough to get himself a job. After a few months my son got transferred to San Francisco and couldn't take his brother. We got him back. He got a job in a restaurant and continued on the medication. His brother set him up with a good job in San Francisco so off he went. Made lots of money, after a few months he went to a pot festival and his mind was gone again. Brother beat him up and sent him on a plane to us only he stopped midway and decided he was no longer Paul but Jerome his middle name. When he didn't arrive on his flight, I had to tell the airport that he was mentally ill and could they look for him. I sent a picture.

They found him and hospitalized him. We could not find him as he was in a complex of hospitals that had 6 emergency rooms. We sat in one of the lobbies and kept asking people where he might be as the EMT's assured us that he was in the ambulance #14 and sent to the ER. Finally, a woman asked for his middle name and so it was he was there in another part of the hospital tied to a bed. They wouldn't let us see him as he was so angry, finally they gave him a shot of something to put him out for a good long time. He was transferred to another hospital. We didn't see him for at least a week. More craziness, he fooled the councilors at the hospital into thinking he had been diagnosed with mental conditions and would go home and be good as long as he kept up his shots of Abilify. That drug was the first good thing that happened. It wasn't good enough for us to take him home so much to his surprise and there's we told the hospital they could drop him at a homeless shelter. He went from there to the airport and then to LA, to become an actor.

After about a week he came home, so full of anger I threw him out with only his clothes. It goes on and on. He was living with a man who had already spent time in jail and could warn him about why he needed to go straight. He got a job and has been digging out ever since. We had moved to a different part of the country. This also helped as his friends were not able to take him in. He did not give up the pot right away. His cousin came for a visit and took him to hospitals and finally found a clinic he agreed to be supervised by. Back on shots of Abilify. He came home but it was still difficult. Between his cousin, the Abilify, his friend who turned out like a brother he is normal and has been for over a year. He has a very nice girlfriend, no drinking no drugs not even Abilify. He is preparing to run a Marathon this fall. Somewhere in all of this he read Alex Berenson's book, "Tell your children about Marijuana and mental illness," and when he put it down, he said, "I was only surprised by the murders."

Nothing surprises me anymore; he has a good life but who knows.

May God Bless all of you who read this, my husband and I pray the Rosary every morning, my husband has a special prayer to the Sacred heart of Jesus for him.

Many more things of a bizarre nature went on, but it would take a book, I am not ready for that.

Catherine W — July 26, 2021

My daughter has been using Stizzy heavily; it's 80% THC, and suffered cannabis induced psychosis. The last three months she has some level improvement but not much, and the day before yesterday, she decided to go out on her skateboard on a very busy street at midnight, and she was hit by a car. She's so lucky to be alive — she chipped her teeth, and she had a big gash on her head.

I believe the owner of Stizzy needs to be held accountable For the mini kids who are going to suffer brain damage because of his Vape pen and 80% concentrate that is out of this world too strong. Gone are the days of safe joint smoking. People like the owner of Stizzy have now made pot the most dangerous drug on the planet! I hope my friend an accident injury lawyer will pick up this case, because I feel the kids all over the nation and world are being brain-damaged unknowingly. I'm so sorry for your loss, and I'm so grateful for your foundation, and I will contribute just as soon as I possibly can.

J.T. — August 8, 2021

Thank you, Laura, for organizing this walk and making this happen so we can help educate others and effect change in legislation. My son had 2 psychotic episodes and is now 22. My husband and I are both MDs and we were completely unaware of the high dose THC available and the many terrible health consequences. We lived in town with easy access to illegal and/or high potency THC. Our son has withdrawn from college twice medically, and we fear his mind will never be the same. We are fortunate to have him with us, yet heartbroken about his illness and addiction. This walk is just what I needed to begin my journey of healing through advocacy, education, and prevention.

Beth D. — August 16, 2021

My son took his life on Aug. 7, 2021. He was 33 years old – had a Medical Marijuana Card and was using a lot from November 2020-June 2021. He was living at home and struggling with failed financial investment business (three engineering degrees – master's in mechanical engineering).

He was admitted to the hospital on the Baker Act on May 28, 2021 and diagnosed with Cannabis Induced Psychosis. He came home and seemed to be doing better, but he was depressed and down. There seemed to be hope, and we thought he was on the other side of all this. He started recreational pot at age 15 and felt it helped him preform – but knew he could not use to this degree – and after release was using occasionally and many days not at all. We talked about it, and he knew the dangers.

When he was admitted in May, he had 540 nanograms in his system (50 nanograms is a positive test for pot). He was very disciplined – avid cyclist – raced competitively. But was not doing any of the things he enjoyed and broke up with his girlfriend in February.

We would have never expected him to take his life at this point. He talked to us the last week about starting a blog – and getting the word out about the dangers. He was very talented – could do anything he set out to do – traveled the world. He opened an Ameritrade account on August 6 and was excited to do some trading for himself. We just don't know why he took his life at this point. We cannot say he was in an altered state – at least there were no signs like the terrible psychotic period in May. He was sober and looked healthy and not sure why. We would have expected it in April or May but not now.

The hospital nurse just moved back from Seattle and told me that they were seeing this a lot in Seattle. She said that the doctors hate this being called "Medical Marijuana" She said Florida has no idea what they are in for...

I would like to get involved and get the message out. I tell everyone I know here my concerns about the access and amount that you can get with the card – my son had 540 nanograms in his system when he was admitted. He was held for 9 days. The judge extended the order, because of his state and would not let him out until cleared. They gave him Abilify to treat the psychosis, but it took 9 days before he was clear. He had a flattened affect and finally started having appropriate emotions. He was released June 7, but he didn't to see a psychiatrist and weaned off the Abilify. He saw his doctor a few weeks ago and got a prescription for Ambien – he always had difficulty sleeping – even more so when using a lot of marijuana.

Shannon D. — August 19, 2021

I want to thank Laura so much for her book, it has been so relevant and helpful to me because my son has gone through a similar experience. I have been very naïve about the types of marijuana and THC levels, so Laura's book was a great help to me in terms of education on marijuana, the impacts on the young adult brain, and also an incredible help to me as a parent struggling with my 19 year old who was using marijuana at what I know realize were toxic levels of THC. I agree that more needs to be done to educate parents – I was one of the parents who thought "marijuana is not addictive," and my son just finished 28 days at a treatment center and is transitioning to another residential sober living center tomorrow. With information from Laura's book, I am much more informed about the impact of THC on mental health and on the brain development of young adults. I wish I had had this information 2 years ago. I agree that there is a great public mis-perception about marijuana

JohnnysAmbassadors.org

Laura@JohnnysAmbassadors.org • 303-471-7401

Johnny's Ambassadors, Inc. • 9948 Cottoncreek Dr., Suite 101 • Highlands Ranch, CO 80130