Protecting Our Children’s Future
October 5, 2016
About Smart Colorado

• Citizen led non-profit organization that formed after the passage of Amendment 64, which amended Colorado’s constitution to allow anyone 21 and older to use marijuana.

• Sole focus is protecting kids by minimizing unintended consequences from increased marijuana availability and commercialization.

• Supporters include those who voted for and against marijuana legalization.

• Our nonpartisan efforts have been endorsed by Colorado’s four living ex-Governors. Core leadership team has drawn on the engagement and involvement of many youth, parents and leaders from education, healthcare, law, youth services, business and government.
Why Smart Colorado formed

• Formed when protecting kids ranked last during initial policy making process
• Thought our efforts would only be needed temporarily
• Supporters continue to grow as citizens begin to see firsthand:
  • Overwhelming & daunting task state faced and continues to face in creating, implementing and enforcing marijuana regulations and oversight structures
  • Complexity of the legal, health, and safety issues involved
  • How far reaching decisions were made in highly compressed timetable & research vacuum
  • Policy making guided and dominated by commercialized marijuana interests who serve as go to experts
  • More Coloradans begin to experience negative impacts personally
• At first few seemed to be paying attention (assumption all marijuana was rather benign and/or healthy) or some thought federal government would step in
• Issues involved were complicated, unpleasant and continue to remain controversial
• Instead of addressing issues of existing commercialized medical market (state audit deemed woefully under-regulated) new regulatory system for recreational marijuana was built beside it
• Those who did speak up were too often silenced, marginalized or bullied/ threatened uncomfortably.
2013 Successes

2013: Initial Protections

- Enacting testing, labeling, warnings
- Passing child-proof packaging
- Placing restrictions on advertising
- Initial limits on allowable THC in packages of edibles
- Data collection and reporting requirements
- Supporting governor and attorney general in establishing DUID impairment level
2014 Successes

2014: Edibles and Concentrates

• Marking edibles so easily recognized
• Defining individual serving size
• Requiring THC potency study
• Securing education funding
• Public Awareness campaign around dangers of today’s edibles
Smart Colorado’s Education Campaign

CAN YOU SPOT THE POT?

MARIJUANA CANDY. TRICK OR TREAT?

SMARTCOLORADO.ORG
2015 Successes

2015: Protecting Gains

• Defeating edibles-marking repeal effort
• Banning store bought candies from being infused & resold
• Preserving statewide youth survey
• Improving data collection in schools
• Funding for youth prevention programs
• Required marking determined with Universal Symbol
2016 Successes

2016:

• Funding for education, prevention, and research
• Limits on advertising for medical marijuana
• First few limits on marijuana candy
• Protections for kids on homegrown pot
• Interim Committee - cost/benefit analysis
• Information source for policymakers, media, key stakeholders, and youth serving organization on highlighting danger’s of today’s high THC pot
2016 Successes

2016: First limits on marijuana candy to not allow shapes of humans, animals or fruits.

STILL ALLOWED
Advocating for Standardization & Education

Importance of clarifying differences of low to zero potency marijuana treatments associated with helping kids with seizures and used by adults and athletes for pains versus high THC marijuana that has become the norm on Colorado’s commercial markets.
What We’ve Learned

BIG DIFFERENCES BETWEEN

Decriminalization/Legalization vs Full-blown profit-driven Commercialization
Marijuana For Profit Commercialization: A New Colorado Reality

January 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Licensed Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McDonald's</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbucks</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Marijuana Dispensaries</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Marijuana Dispensaries</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,845 State Licensed Marijuana Businesses

(including manufacturing and cultivation facilities)
Importance of thoughtful local decision making

Approximately 70% Colorado municipalities have opted out of marijuana commercialization for recreational purposes. Local leaders need recognition and support.

Source: MintPressNews.com
Currently, five marijuana markets exist in Colorado. There has yet to be one uniform and transparent “legal” regulatory structure in place which makes enforcement of marijuana laws and capturing tax revenues extremely difficult.
Promised Marijuana Revenues?

Most revenues have gone to addressing costs and challenges of marijuana commercialization

- $135 million in tax revenue for 2015
- Represents 1% - 1.3% of total taxes
- Drop in the bucket compared to the $10-13 billion tax revenues state brings in

The tax dollars brought in largely go toward the ‘cost of legalization’…
You do not legalize for taxation. It is a myth…The big red herring is the whole thing that the tax revenue will solve a bunch of crises. But it won’t.”

Andrew Freedman, Colorado Governor’s Office of Marijuana Coordination
“So far, the only thing that the legalization of marijuana has brought to our schools has been marijuana.”

- Dr. Harry Bull
Cherry Creek Schools Superintendent
“Drugs are the number 1 problem at our school…. No, we don’t have a bullying problem here, we have a drug problem.”

- Andy Mendelsberg, Principal of East High School

“Marijuana has compromised the success of schools at every grade level. The legalization of marijuana has had a direct impact on the work we do. Students no longer see marijuana as harmful due to its legalization, and it is destroying their chances for success. It is ironic we have linked the sale of marijuana to the funding of public schools. We will need the extra money to combat the effects this drug has on so many of our students, especially those that are historically underserved.”

- Scott Lessard, Principal of George Washington High School
“...pot.. identified by Colorado educators as the No. 1 issue they face.”
Years of Confusing & False Messages

Colorado youth have been bombarded with messages that glorify, celebrate and normalize marijuana use.

• Marijuana is an all-natural wellness product; an herb that is not harmful to youth [FALSE]
• Marijuana is a a cure-all for any discomfort [FALSE]
• Getting high is an acceptable recreational activity for youth [FALSE]
• All Colorado’s pot is now “safe”, “tightly regulated” and can be used “responsibly” [FALSE]
Continued Confusion of Medical Marijuana Commercialization
Let’s not repeat hard earned lessons...

With tobacco, alcohol, non medical opioids, overprescribing of prescription drugs, binge drinking and experiences with hard drugs. Marijuana industry compares marijuana to alcohol, yet many say few if any products are like having a beer or glass of wine.
Youth Perception of Risk Declining
Youth Perception of Risk Declining
In 2015, 48% view marijuana less risky versus 54% in 2013.
CO’s high-tech pot is a harder drug.

AVERAGE THC CONCENTRATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>THC Concentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-early 90's</td>
<td>3.9%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Pot Leaf</td>
<td>17.1%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrates</td>
<td>62.1%**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*National Institute on Drug Abuse
**Marijuana Equivalency Report
Many Forms of CO Marijuana
Potent Marijuana can be deceptive
THC Potency

Serving size of 10 milligrams can legally contain up to 100% THC

Required marking **THC!** as of October 1, 2016, but there are exemptions. Medical products have additional red M.
Hash Oil, Wax, and Shatter, etc

- Average potency for concentrates is 62.1%.
- Potency rates of 95% have been reported by state.
- 1oz of concentrate equal to about 2,800 servings
- No current limits on purchasing multiple amounts at different stores
Hidden Pot, Discrete Consumption
Dabbing: A growing and disturbing trend

“Marijuana dabbing is exploding onto the drug-use scene.” - Live Science June 15, 2015

Reported side effects include: rapid heartbeat, loss of consciousness, paranoia and hallucinations
CO Ranks #1 for Youth (12+) Marijuana Use In Nation
Youth Impacts Include

- In school year 2015/2016, 62% of all drug expulsions and suspensions were for marijuana violations.

- In school year 2015/2016, 73% of all referrals to law enforcement were for marijuana violations.
Why It Matters

Studies on lower potency pot conclude:

- **Substantial evidence** for associations between adolescent and young adult use and future addiction to illicit drugs in adulthood;

- **Substantial evidence** that adolescents who regularly use marijuana are less likely than adolescent non-users to graduate from high school;

- An increased likelihood of developing psychotic symptoms and possibly psychotic disorders in adulthood among adolescent and young adult users.

- Conclusions made by Public Health Officials & Medical experts after evaluating over 168 studies on smoked marijuana primarily at 2-8 % THC potencies.
Studies on lower potency pot conclude:

- Marijuana is the No. 1 reason why adolescents seek substance-abuse treatment.

- Studies showing associations with depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts and tendencies.

- Adolescents have a 1 in 6 chance of becoming addicted.

- New Zealand Study: Early and persistent marijuana users showed a significant drop in IQ, up to 8 points from adolescence to midlife.
Colorado Kids Repeatedly Plea for Adult Leadership
(Can view videos on website)

2016 Interim Study Committee on Cost-benefit Analysis of Legalized Marijuana in Colorado: 8/17/2016
Governor Warns About Permanent Impacts

While it may take years or decades to collect all the data and do the necessary research to fully assess impacts, there are reported disturbing trends.
Colorado stands out as the only state which is a top consumer of all four substances…. Marijuana, cocaine, non-medical opioids, and alcohol.
Dramatic Increases in Youth Homelessness

Statewide number of homeless students doubles from 2007-2008 high levels

2013/14 to 2014/15 school year:

- 41% increase in Denver County: an unprecedented jump
- 68% increase in Mesa County
- Adams, Pueblo & Jefferson counties experienced large jumps as well
Denver & Pueblo: Pot Epicenters

With commercialization, has come:

• Over saturation of marijuana businesses
• Most vulnerable neighborhoods most negatively impacted
• Challenges from: crime, homelessness, odor issues, public complaints & nuisances, open and public consumption, impaired driving, energy utilization & environmental land use issues, mental health challenges, increased concerns around suicide and suspicious deaths and injuries
With commercialization, has come:

• Lack of infrastructure/resources to meet demands/needs

• Costly legal challenges and threats of legal action

• Concerns/needs of kids, schools, communities and citizens often dismissed, ignored, or overpowered by commercial marijuana financial interests
High THC Potency Coincides With

• 70% increase in teen admissions at Colorado’s largest substance treatment and detox facility.

• “Meanwhile, substance use disorders are Colorado’s most prevalent, complex, costly and untreated public health challenge.” - Aleah Horstman, PhD, CEO, Arapahoe House

• More severe side effects reported by doctors, including: unrelenting vomiting, dangerous hallucinations, extended psychotic behavior, panic attacks, seizures, difficulty breathing

• Increases in deaths and injuries associated with marijuana.
Increase in Hospitalizations

Hospitalizations Related to Marijuana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Hospitalizations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3,396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>3,887</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4,144</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4,376</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>3,896</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>4,694</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>6,419</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>6,306</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>6,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>8,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>11,439</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Colorado Hospital Association, Hospital Discharge Dataset. Statistics prepared by the Health Statistics and Evaluation Branch, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.
High THC Pot Coincides With

- Spikes in calls to poison control
- Spikes in accidental child ingestions and marijuana related exposures
Increased Drugged Driving Fatalities

- 32% increase in marijuana-related traffic deaths 2013-14
- MJ traffic deaths went up 92% from 2010-2014
- DUID’s involving marijuana increased 100% from 2013-2014 in Denver

* NHTSA (FARS) 2006-13 and CDOT 2014, Denver Police Department
Existing Enforcement Challenges

Conflicting and inconsistent laws and regulations continue to make enforcement difficult. Law enforcement officials, school student resource officers, and organizations throughout the state have repeatedly expressed concerns about the challenges involved.

According to recent state report, Colorado’s illegal markets have grown significantly to include **new and dangerous criminal activities and organized drug cartel involvement.**
## Expectations vs. Reality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Colorado Was Told</th>
<th>What Colorado <em>Wasn’t</em> Told</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tightly Regulated &amp; Controlled</td>
<td>Mass Commercialization (more pot shops than Starbucks and McDonalds combined)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of Kids’ Hands</td>
<td>300+ Types of Edibles, Marijuana-Infused Candies, Foods, and Sodas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get Rid of Black Market</td>
<td>Colorado Becomes a Global Source of Black Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Windfall</td>
<td>Tremendous costs and resources necessary to create and implement marijuana regulatory structure with enforcement remaining extremely difficult and little money left for youth education, prevention, substance treatment and other important state priorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Marijuana Enforcement Division, Colorado Department of Revenue, November 2014.
3. Ibid.
Colorado has an important responsibility. Why your involvement matters!

Smart Colorado’s Priorities

1. Limit Commercialization
2. Limit Potency
3. Limit Harms
Action Steps: Limit Commercialization

- Empower citizens to protect their communities and kids by urging cities and counties to opt out of marijuana commercialization, or strictly limit it (Pueblo Citizen Initiative)
- Prohibit public on-site social use of marijuana (Denver Initiative)
- Transition medical market toward prescription drug model
- Hold marijuana industry accountable for its marketing, advertising, and claims
Support & Recognize leadership of local leaders

Source: MintPressNews.com
Action Steps: Limit Potency

• Establish potency limits on all forms of marijuana

• Limiting THC potency is a pragmatic way to minimize unacceptable risks until uncertainties can be adequately researched.

• Potencies of THC, the psychoactive ingredient linked to harms to the brain, have reached unprecedented heights, with averages exceeding 15% potency…a level Dutch health experts concluded should be considered a hard drug.

• Educate public and youth about today’s THC potencies and intake methods and why they matter.
Action Steps: Limit Harms

Urge State Policy Makers and Public Health Experts to determine:
(Demand Answers from Commercialized Marijuana Interests)

What products @ what potencies & intake methods constitutes “safe” “legal” “responsible use.”
So consumers, the public, and youth can be better protected.
Ensure comprehensive data on impacts continue to be collected and shared with public. Additional data needed:

- Address challenges around enforcing drugged driving and public intoxication
- Suspicious deaths and injuries including youth suicides
- Child endangerment and neglect
- Violations & citizen complaints
Action Steps: Limit Harms

• Ensure the public has access to truthful information including what we know and don’t know about today’s marijuana.

• Fund education and prevention efforts to counteract marijuana industry marketing.

• Fund research to better understand risks associated with highly potent THC concentrates.

• Enforce laws when it comes to protecting the public and Colorado youth.
Courage & Collective Action

Public health and safety and protecting our kids and communities should be #1 priority.
What You Can Do
Take Action & Have An Impact

• Talk with your elected officials and voice your concerns. Your participation makes a difference.

• Encourage local policy makers to opt out of marijuana commercialization or strictly limit it.

• Encourage state policy makers to do more to protect kids and Colorado citizens.

• Share what you know about today’s marijuana with others and better support kids in your community.
Take Action & Have An Impact

• Support our efforts so collectively we can have stronger impact in statewide policy making and education efforts.

• Sign up to receive timely action alerts and newsletters at www.smartcolorado.org.

• Follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@smartcolorado). Share important developments with others.

• Make tax-exempt donation to Smart Colorado to further our education and public awareness efforts.
Why? Because we all matter.

We’re all interconnected.

Everyone should have the chance to reach their potential and to live in thriving, healthy, safe and supportive communities and environments.

Let’s keep Colorado the vibrant wonderful state it is!

How we proceed on this issue will not only impact Colorado youth but youth worldwide.
Helpful Resources

http://www.SmartColorado.org - Sign up for notices and opportunities to influence policy issues
Contact: gina@smartcolorado.org

http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/resources
“Understanding the Big Deal: How Marijuana Harms Youth”,
“Marijuana Facts for Teens”,
“Laws and Penalties for Marijuana Under 21

Legal Consequences of Underage Retail Marijuana Use

CDPHE - Youth and Marijuana

https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/marijuana

*The Teenage Brain: A Neuroscientist’s Survival Guide to Raising Adolescents and Young Adults* by Frances Jensen, MD

Marijuana Grey Market, August 16, 2016, Office of the Governor of Colorado