



PROTECTING YOUTH FROM MARIJUANA

Prom/Graduation/Year-End Celebration Season

MAY is finally here--an exciting time for Colorado teenagers and families with prom, graduation, parties, and end-of-year celebrations. These upcoming spring festivities provide an opportunity for you to have a conversation with your teen about marijuana.

Marijuana is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to use recreationally, but unfortunately marijuana and marijuana products are readily available to Colorado teens in various forms, potencies and methods of intake. Marijuana might be part of these festivities so NOW is the time for talking with your kids!

Research shows anger or scare tactics won't work, but a calm discussion of facts may. Remember that you remain a strong influence on your teen. What you say matters.

A few talking points to consider when discussing with your teen:

- Marijuana use affects the brain. A developing brain, like yours, is especially vulnerable.
- Marijuana use can keep you from reaching your full potential. Teen use can impair learning, memory, and math and reading achievement.
- Marijuana use can affect your emotions later in life. Teen users are more likely to be depressed or have suicidal thoughts in adulthood.
- If you have a family history of addiction or mental health risks, now might be the time to share this information with your teen. You could note that family history may make your child more likely to become addicted to marijuana or develop negative symptoms.
- Marijuana affects reaction time, judgment and depth perception, which makes it more dangerous to get behind the wheel of a car.

Conclude the conversation with a clear statement of your expectations and encourage your teen to steer clear of marijuana.

Here are a few additional thoughts for you to consider:

- Encourage your child to attend school-sponsored, adult-supervised after-prom and graduation events that give students a safe, drug-free environment throughout the night.
- If your child's activities include a hired limousine or bus, ask for more details. Are drivers screened for substance use?
- Will parents and trusted adults be present, and actively monitoring events?



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Get educated:

- www.colorado.gov/marijuana
- www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/hkcs (Healthy Kids Colorado Survey Data)
- www.colorado.gov/marijuanahealthinfo (Marijuana Health Facts)
- www.responsibilitygrowshere.com/marijuana-talking-tips-for-adults (Tips for parents)
- www.codot.gov/safety/alcohol-and-impaired-driving/druggeddriving
- www.safe2tell.org
- www.speakknowcolorado.org (age appropriate talking points)
- www.betheinfluence.us

Additional websites to learn about today's marijuana:

- Thcphotos.org
- Notthesamepot.org

Sign up and follow Smart CO on social media:

- www.smartcolorado.org
- Facebook: Smart Colorado
- Twitter: @smartcolorado
- YouTube: smartcolorado

Smart Colorado, a non-profit, non-partisan organization, formed in 2013 after Colorado voters approved recreational marijuana for adults 21 and over. Smart's mission is to protect the public health and safety of Colorado youth as marijuana is commercialized and increasingly available. Smart advocates for Colorado youth, raises awareness about health impacts and acts as a "go-to" source for the media both local, nationally and internationally.

Smart CO is a project of the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center (CNDC).