Parents: Help your teen understand what’s fact and fiction about marijuana

The following facts might be surprising

- Youth begin using marijuana around 15–16 years old
- Up to 10% of Grade 12 students reported using marijuana every day or almost every day

To help them make informed decisions, let them know that:

- Early and regular marijuana use can negatively affect their brain and is related to mental health problems
- Delaying initiation of marijuana use can help prevent these harmful effects
- If they need help, treatments are available—speak to your healthcare provider

To prepare yourself to have meaningful conversations with your teen, read the parent action pack at www.parentactionpack.ca

**TEENS SAY, “IT’S JUST WEED”**

- Weed is natural and so it’s harmless
- Everyone is using weed
- Weed helps you focus
- Weed makes you a better driver; it’s safer than driving after using alcohol
- Weed isn’t addictive and does not “consume” users

**BUT THE EVIDENCE SAYS**

- Early and regular marijuana use can affect the developing teen brain and is related to mental health problems
- About 75% of youth aged 15–24 reported not using marijuana in 2013
- Regular marijuana use impairs thinking, attention and memory
- Marijuana use can impair driving and is associated with an increased risk of collisions
- 1 in 6 adolescents who use marijuana will develop a cannabis use disorder

To learn more, read
- What Canadian Youth Think about Cannabis
- The Effects of Cannabis Use during Adolescence

Talk to your teens about marijuana use

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- Delaying initiation of marijuana use can help prevent these harmful effects
- If they need help, treatments are available—speak to your healthcare provider

To prepare yourself to have meaningful conversations with your teen, read the parent action pack at www.parentactionpack.ca

*The terms weed and marijuana are used interchangeably throughout this document. Youth used the term weed when discussing this substance.*