

Research shows that children with more frequent and high-quality contact with non-parental adults have fewer behavior problems.[[1]](#footnote-1) As leaders who work with youth, you’re a great influence on the lives of young people. We’ve created points to keep in mind when talking to youth about marijuana.

**Cannabis[[2]](#footnote-2): Quick Facts**

* Cannabis is illegal for people under 21.
* Cannabis is stronger than it has been since the 90s— increasing its adverse effects
	+ cannabis with more than 15% THC content carries a 3x-5x increased risk of developing psychosis depending on frequency of use. Knowing Marijuana potency can be lifesaving.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Cannabis is an addictive substance. If you use marijuana when you’re young, you can develop cannabis use disorder and increase your chances of becoming addicted to any substance.

**Did you know?**

* Most teens in Vermont do NOT use cannabis. In a state-wide survey, 73 percent of high school students reported that they did not use marijuana.[[4]](#footnote-4)
* Cannabis affects brain development and can lead to memory loss and difficulty concentrating.[[5]](#footnote-5)
* Cannabis has three times the level of THC (the compound that gets you high) than it did in the 90s.
* Increased THC raises the risk of developing schizophrenia, a serious mental illness.
* Cannabis worsens anxiety. Find other ways to reduce stress, such as exercise and meditation.
* Sports are “recreational”: cannabis is not. People over 21 can “adult-use” cannabis, but your brain is still developing.
* Statistics show that using cannabis at a younger age can lead to lower earnings as an adult, and makes a person less likely to earn an advanced degree.[[6]](#footnote-6) Don’t let cannabis get in the way of your goals.

**Learn more:**

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

1. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10560-005-2546-4>, *Journal of Extension* https://www.joe.org/joe/2010october/pdf/JOE\_v48\_5tt4.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For the purpose of this document, we are referring to “cannabis” with THC that is smoked, ingested, or inhaled to get high. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Missouri medicine*, *115*(6), 482–486. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey:Marijuana use, past 30 days, https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CHS\_YRBS\_statewide\_report.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. National Institute on Drug Abuse:<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/how-does-marijuana-use-affect-school-work-social-life> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Subst Abuse*. 2013;34(3):298-305. doi:10.1080/08897077.2013.775092 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)