

First things first: What is the law in MA?

- ☐ Pot remains illegal under federal law.
- ☐ Retail sales of marijuana products will begin on July 1, 2018.
- ☐ Possession, use, and home-growing for adults 21 and over are allowed under MA state law .
- ☐ Adults may grow up to six plants per person, maximum of 12 per household.
- ☐ Public consumption remains forbidden in MA (as is smoking pot anywhere tobacco smoking is prohibited).
- ☐ It is illegal to drive under the influence of marijuana, though there is not yet a legal equivalent in the law to the 0.08 blood-alcohol limit.



**Think marijuana's not addictive?
Think again...**

75% of 12–17 year olds who enter drug treatment programs do so **because of marijuana use**. Addiction rates increase to 17% if started using in adolescence.

Learn the **IMPACT** Facts...

★ Potency: Significant Increase

THC (mind altering ingredient) levels have **increased** as much as seven times since the 1970's while the *therapeutic ingredient CBD has fallen*.

★ Cognitive Functioning Deficits Among Active Users

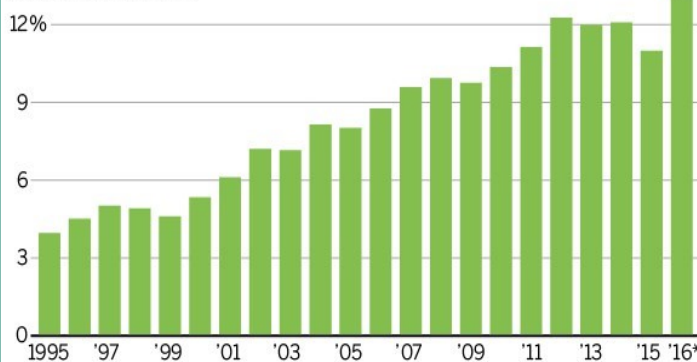
Many studies show that adolescents who use marijuana heavily tend to score worse than non-users when tested on attention, verbal learning, memory, processing speed ...**even when they are not high**.

★ Long-Term Effects of Use:

- ☐ Changes structure of brain
- ☐ Affects understanding, cognition and academic achievement
- ☐ May increase risk of anxiety, depression, attitude/personality changes
- ☐ Increased emotional volatility
- ☐ May increase risk of schizophrenia in vulnerable individuals
- ☐ Eating, sleeping problems
- ☐ Increase risk of chronic cough, bronchitis

HIGHER AND HIGHER

The chart below shows the rise in average THC content in cannabis plants seized by government authorities over the past two decades. Boutique growers are now producing strains that top 30 percent.



*Current year only reflects data sampled through Sept. 22.

Source: Potency Monitoring Program, University of Mississippi, School of Pharmacy
BAY AREA NEWS GROUP



What You Need to Know About Marijuana Edibles Dangers:

- Present a danger with regard to “normalization” and ease of use
- Slower to take effect (so may ingest too much)
- Portion Size: a portion can be as small as one bite of a candy bar or 1 oz of a full soda
- Unclear how edibles react with prescription medications
- Misleading packaging can be dangerous for children & difficult to detect



DID YOU KNOW.... A big burst of brain development occurs during adolescence which may explain the unpredictable and sometimes risky behavior typical in teens. Because the brain is not fully developed until about age 25, synaptic refinement occurs as part of brain development and is *especially rapid during adolescence* when brains are most vulnerable to reinforcement of positive/constructive behaviors or risk behaviors.

Sources: ADAI of the University of Washington; Forbes/Pharma & Healthcare , March 2015; US Surgeon General Report: 2015;

more sources at tritowncouncil.org



The Key to Prevention: Talk, Talk, Talk!

Talking to your teen about marijuana

TRI-TOWN COUNCIL

Recreational marijuana use is now legal in Massachusetts (for those aged 21 and over) and retail operations will be opening in a few short months selling a host of THC laced tinctures, creams, edibles and other products. **With youth's perceptions of risk and harm of marijuana use at an all time low,** what's the best way to keep our kids informed, safe, and empowered to make healthy choices? **TALK, TALK, TALK —EARLY and OFTEN!**



The #1 reason teens choose **NOT** to use drugs or alcohol is **PARENTS!**

"The #1 thing that teens say when they're asked 'Why are you not using drugs? What's holding you back?' is 'My parents expect me not to use them.' That's the #1 reason. It's still parental expectation."

-Janet Williams
(University of Texas Researcher)

#1 BEFORE the talk



Know the facts—get credible info. Go to tritowncouncil.org or [Partnership for Drug-Free Kids](#).

Be patient and ready to listen—avoid criticism. Remember your goal is to have a conversation, not deliver a lecture.

Set a positive example. Model good behavior.

Be clear about your message. Talk early and often about drug (and alcohol) use.

Seek support: Ask your health care provider to talk to your teen. Suggest your teen talk with other trusted adults (coaches, relatives, etc.).

#2 BE PREPARED to answer their questions

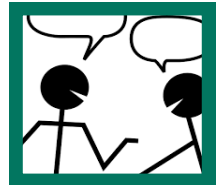
- **Why don't you want me to use marijuana?**
- **What's the big deal about THC?**
- **It's legal so it must be safe...**
- **Did you ever use marijuana?**



#3 THEN...start the conversation

Find the right moment.

Driving by a Weed Map billboard sign, after hearing or reading a story on the news, or passing by a retailer (yes it's coming!), ask your teens what **they** think about marijuana use. BTW, the car is often the perfect place to start these conversations!



Appeal to their intellects. What does the science tell us about marijuana use? Help your teen contrast marijuana use with other health choices ---even though 18 (or 21 in some cities) year olds can legally purchase and smoke cigarettes, does that mean they should?

Make your message clear. Don't treat pot lightly. State your expectations for your teen clearly and concisely.

Discuss ways to avoid uncomfortable situations. Practice comfortable refusal skills through role play.

What about Tri-Town Youth? Masco 2016 YRBS DATA:

The HOPE & the NORM

- ◆ **Most** youth are **NOT** using marijuana
- ◆ 8 out of 10 HS youth **did NOT** use marijuana in the past 30 days
- ◆ 99% of MS youth **do NOT** use marijuana

....**EVERYONE IS NOT** DOING IT!

CONCERN

- ◆ Significant misperceptions—6 out of 10 HS youth **over perceive** peer use & 4 out of 10 MS youth **over perceive** peer use
- ◆ Marijuana use increases with age and grade level
- ◆ 50% of HS youth **don't think marijuana is risky** & 50% say their **peers don't disapprove of marijuana use**

BTW, promoting positive NORMS MATTERS because it can empower kids to choose not to use.

And FINALLY...

Don't underestimate your power! Your voice matters! Believe it or not, your teen **IS** listening!

MORE RESOURCES HERE!

