



# Little Talks Can Have a BIG Impact. Cannabis and Your Teens

Chatting with your kids about cannabis doesn't require one long formal discussion. In fact, multiple little chats about cannabis with your teen can also have a positive impact on their decision making.

With our busy lives it can sometimes feel difficult to find the time for a chat about cannabis or alcohol. However, opportunities for a quick chat actually occur more often than we think. Look for a few free minutes when you are driving home from a sporting event or team practice, when you are at the dinner table or maybe you are watching a TV show in which cannabis is used; these are all great times to break the ice and let your teen know it is okay to talk about cannabis use.

Don't hesitate or feel awkward about this chat; chances are good that your teenager is looking to talk too but might be afraid to ask you questions. By making this a comfortable topic to discuss, your teen might be more likely to ask you the questions that are really on their mind.

It never hurts to be prepared for these little chats. There are many great resources available to help educate parents about cannabis use and teens. We have selected just a few of these sources to help you get started.

## Check out the following resources:



PARENT ACTION PACK.ca

Parent Action Pack  
[www.parentactionpack.ca](http://www.parentactionpack.ca)



The Effects of Cannabis Use During Adolescence  
[www.ccsa.ca/Eng/topics/Marijuana](http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/topics/Marijuana)



What Canadian Youth Think about Cannabis  
[www.ccsa.ca/Eng/topics/Marijuana](http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/topics/Marijuana)



Cannabis Talk Kit  
<https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org/drug-info/cannabis/>



MANITOBA  
LIQUOR & LOTTERIES

Remember, peer pressure can be a powerful influence on your teen. There is a good chance that they are looking for your support to fight the peer pressure.

When you chat with your kids about cannabis, let them know that:

- Early and regular cannabis use can negatively affect their brain and behaviour.
- Delaying initiation of cannabis use can help prevent some of the harmful effects associated with cannabis use.
- Despite what your friends tell you, most teens are not using cannabis.

## Youth Cannabis Facts

- Youth typically begin using cannabis around 15 – 16 years old. Chatting about cannabis prior to this can help them make informed choices.
- Your teen’s friends might make them believe that everyone uses cannabis; however, the facts show that only about 23% of youth ages 15-24 years used cannabis in 2013. That means over 75% of youth in this age group did not use it. Your teen might be comforted to know that non-users make up the majority of youth.

### Facts vs Fiction

**Fiction** Weed is natural and so it’s harmless.

**Evidence** Early and regular marijuana (cannabis) use can affect the developing teen brain and is related to mental health problems.

**Fiction:** Weed helps you focus.

**Evidence** Regular marijuana (cannabis) use impairs thinking, attention and memory.

**Fiction** Weed isn’t addictive and does not “consume” users.

**Evidence** 1 in 6 adolescents who use marijuana (cannabis) may develop a cannabis use disorder.

Stay informed: visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) and <https://makeconnections.ca/links/cannabis-information-resources/> for more information.

Source: Help your teen understand what’s fact and fiction about marijuana.  
<http://ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Marijuana-Fact-and-Fiction-Infographic-2016-en.pdf>



MANITOBA  
LIQUOR & LOTTERIES