

# LET'S TALK

## ABOUT

# Cannabis

Cannabis is often one of the first drugs that youth are offered. Not only is it still illegal for youth under age 19, it can harm their still-developing brain.

That's why it's important for you to understand the risks associated with cannabis and provide young people with balanced information to help them make informed decisions.

## What IS CANNABIS?

Cannabis comes from the cannabis plant and contains roughly 400 chemicals, including THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) and CBD (cannabidiol).

THC causes both psychoactive and physical reactions; it is responsible for the "high" or feelings of euphoria and relaxation.

## Names YOU MIGHT HEAR FOR CANNABIS

Pot, weed, marijuana, hash, mary jane, grass, dope, \*shatter.

\*Shatter is a term used to describe an extremely potent type of cannabis concentrate, known as butane hash oil (BHO).

## How IS CANNABIS USED?



Smoking



Dabbing



Vaping



Edibles

## Who IS USING IT?



One in five youth in grades 7 - 12 reported using cannabis in the past year in PEI in 2016-17.

## Why IS CANNABIS RISKY FOR YOUTH?

Youth are especially vulnerable to the effects of cannabis since brain development is not complete until about the age of 25.

For youth who use cannabis often and over time, the health and social risks are greater:

- Disruption of normal brain development.
- Poor performance in school and increased risk of dropping out.
- Increased risk of mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and psychosis.
- Increased chance of addiction and dependence.

For those under age 25, the best way to avoid the risks is by not using cannabis.

Even occasional use has risks, such as accidents related to impairment, feelings of panic, anxiety or psychotic episodes.

**JUST THE  
FACTS** ✨

The information you  
need to make the  
right call on cannabis.

## *How do I know* IF THE YOUNG PERSON IS USING?

### Signs to watch for:

- Declining school work and grades.
- Deteriorating relationships with family.
- Abrupt changes in friends.
- Less openness and honesty.
- Abnormal health issues or sleeping habits.

Some signs of a cannabis problem can look like typical youth behaviour. Talk to the young person to find out if there's a problem.

## *Effective* CONVERSATION TOOLS



### For more information:

For more information on how to talk to teens about cannabis, see the Drug Free Kids Cannabis Talk Kit or the CAMH What Parents/Guardians and Caregivers Need to Know, both available at [justthefactspei.ca/talkingtoyouth](http://justthefactspei.ca/talkingtoyouth)

### For more assistance:

If you are concerned about a young person's cannabis use, there are a number of people who you could reach out to:

- school-based student services staff such as a counsellor, youth worker, or a Student Well-being Team member,
- your family health service provider, and/or,
- call Addiction Services - Health PEI, toll free 1-888-299-8399