

**Cannabis is not harmless – it is addictive - by the Psychiatric DSM-5. One out of Six adolescent users get addicted.**

**The earlier the exposure, the more likely addiction. There is no safe limit - teen use causes structural brain changes.**

1. Hall W. What has research over the past two decades revealed about the adverse health effects of recreational cannabis use? *Addiction*. 2015;110(1):19-35. doi:10.1111/add.12703.
2. Cannabis, Driving and Implications for Youth Summary.; 2015. [http://www.ccdus.ca/Resource Library/CCSA-Cannabis-Driving-Implications-for-Youth-Summary-2015-en.pdf#search=all%28cannabis%29](http://www.ccdus.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Cannabis-Driving-Implications-for-Youth-Summary-2015-en.pdf#search=all%28cannabis%29). Accessed September 6, 2017.
3. Volkow ND, Baler RD, Compton WM, Weiss SRB. Adverse Health Effects of Marijuana Use. *N Engl J Med*. 2014;370(23):2219-2227. doi:10.1056/NEJMra1402309.
4. Turner SD, Spithoff S, Kahan M. Approach to cannabis use disorder in primary care: focus on youth and other high-risk users. *Can Fam Physician*. 2014;60(9):801-808, e423-e432. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25217674>. Accessed September 6, 2017.
5. Ries R. *Principles of Addiction Medicine*. Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; 2009
6. Office of Applied Studies S. Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings. [http://www.gmhc.org/files/editor/file/a\\_pa\\_nat\\_drug\\_use\\_survey.pdf](http://www.gmhc.org/files/editor/file/a_pa_nat_drug_use_survey.pdf). Accessed September 6, 2017.
7. Bava S, Frank LR, McQueeney T, Schweinsburg BC, Schweinsburg AD, Tapert SF. Altered white matter microstructure in adolescent substance users. *Psychiatry Res Neuroimaging*. 2009;173(3):228-237. doi:10.1016/j.pychresns.2009.04.005.

**Adolescents with cannabis use disorders have poorer life outcomes – decreased academics, loss of interest in activities.**

**Heavy adolescent users have increased drug illicit drug use, crime, depression and suicidal ideation.**

8. Greene MC, Kelly JF. The Prevalence of Cannabis Withdrawal and Its Influence on Adolescents' Treatment Response and Outcomes. *J Addict Med*. 2014;8(5):359-367. doi:10.1097/ADM.0000000000000064.
9. Li W, Gunja N. Illicit drug overdose--prevalence and acute management. *Aust Fam Physician*. 2013;42(7):481-485. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23826601>. Accessed September 6, 2017.
10. Fergusson DM, Boden JM. Cannabis use and later life outcomes. *Addiction*. 2008;103(6):969-976. doi:10.1111/j.1360-0443.2008.02221.x.
11. Lynskey M, Hall W. The effects of adolescent cannabis use on educational attainment: a review. *Addiction*. 2000;95(11):1621-1630. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11219366>. Accessed September 6, 2017.
12. Lynskey MT, Coffey C, Degenhardt L, Carlin JB, Patton G. A longitudinal study of the effects of adolescent cannabis use on high school completion. *Addiction*. 2003;98(5):685-692. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12751986>. Accessed September 6, 2017.
13. Fergusson DM, Horwood LJ, Beauvais AL. Cannabis and educational achievement. *Addiction*. 2003;98(12):1681-1692. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14651500>. Accessed September 6, 2017.

14. Ellickson PL, Martino SC, Collins RL. Marijuana Use from Adolescence to Young Adulthood: Multiple Developmental Trajectories and Their Associated Outcomes. *Heal Psychol.* 2004;23(3):299-307. doi:10.1037/0278-6133.23.3.299
15. Fergusson DM, Swain-Campbell NR, Horwood LJ. Deviant peer affiliations, crime and substance use: a fixed effects regression analysis. *J Abnorm Child Psychol.* 2002;30(4):419-430. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12108769>. Accessed September 6, 2017.

**Teens with Cannabis use once per month through high school are 4X more likely to develop psychosis/schizophrenia.**

**Adolescent cannabis use increases anxiety and depression. It reduces IQs scores and also impairs working memory, which is essential for processing complex information in college.**

16. Andréasson S, Allebeck P, Engström A, Rydberg U. Cannabis and schizophrenia. A longitudinal study of Swedish conscripts. *Lancet (London, England).* 1987;2(8574):1483-1486. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2892048>. Accessed January 7, 2016.
17. Arseneault L, Cannon M, Poulton R, Murray R, Caspi A, Moffitt TE. Cannabis use in adolescence and risk for adult psychosis: longitudinal prospective study. *BMJ.* 2002;325(7374). <http://www.bmj.com/content/325/7374/1212.short>. Accessed September 6, 2017.
18. Lev-Ran S, Roerecke M, Le Foll B, George TP, McKenzie K, Rehm J. The association between cannabis use and depression: a systematic review and meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *Psychol Med.* 2014;44(04):797-810. doi:10.1017/S0033291713001438.
19. Kedzior KK, Laeber LT. A positive association between anxiety disorders and cannabis use or cannabis use disorders in the general population--a meta-analysis of 31 studies. *BMC Psychiatry.* 2014;14:136. doi:10.1186/1471-244X-14-136.
20. Meier MH, Caspi A, Ambler A, et al. Persistent cannabis users show neuropsychological decline from childhood to midlife. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A.* 2012;109(40):E2657-E2664. doi:10.1073/pnas.1206820109.

#### IN COLORADO SINCE LEGALIZATION

**Colorado youth marijuana use rate is # 1 in the nation, 74% higher than the national average.**

**• Marijuana-related traffic deaths increased 48 percent since legalization, while all other traffic deaths decreased 11%. (Traffic deaths are already the number one killer of teens and college aged kids in Delaware).**

**Youth marijuana use increased 20% just two years after legalization, while national rates decreased 4%**

**• College-age past month marijuana use increased 17 percent since legalization vs 2% nationally - Ranked # 1 in nation.**

**Arrests of black and Latino youth for marijuana possession increased 58% and 29% respectively after legalization.**

**Retail cannabis outlets number almost as many as all Starbucks and McDonalds combined.**

**Cannabis edibles ingestions by children, infants and toddlers greatly increased.**

21. The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact.; 2016. [http://www.rmhidta.org/html/2016\\_FINAL\\_Legalization\\_of\\_Marijuana\\_in\\_Colorado\\_The\\_Impact.pdf](http://www.rmhidta.org/html/2016_FINAL_Legalization_of_Marijuana_in_Colorado_The_Impact.pdf). Accessed September 6, 2017.

22. Israel S. As edible marijuana sales soar, Colorado tries a new regulatory tactic. CBC News. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/colorado-marijuana-edibles-safety-1.3761528>. Published September 30, 2016.

23. Sevigny EL, Pacula RL, Heaton P. The effects of medical marijuana laws on potency. *Int J Drug Policy*. 2014;25(2):308-319. doi:10.1016/j.drugpo.2014.01.003.

I like to think one of the main responsibilities of pediatric caregivers is to advocate for children whenever and wherever possible. In that vein, I need to take a few minutes to talk about the movement to legalize recreational marijuana.

Now this issue is a complex one. The fact that marijuana, or cannabis, was labeled a schedule one drug like heroin by the government in the Nixon administration is beyond ridiculous.

And I am all for medical marijuana and exploring possible medical applications adults and children, as well as decriminalization of pot, all of which are being embraced in many states, including Delaware.

BUT legalizing recreational marijuana for adults is a terrible terrible terrible idea – especially for our youth

Yes is true that many high school and college age kids already use pot. But this will only get exponentially worse if it's legalized for adults.

Recreational pot with pot stores on many corners will just lead to more pot which means more pot which means, yes, more pot.

More pot in ALL high schools. More pot in all colleges. More in middle school and elementary schools – especially edibles. And more in homes with young people of all ages.

Delaware is moving to legalize pot - the major house sponsor of pot Representative Keeley gushed at a Governors public meeting earlier in the year that she hoped Delaware could become a major US East Coast Pot tourist destination. The likely winner of the governorship of New Jersey has pledged to sign a bill legalizing pot with his first 100 days of office. Pennsylvania will surely try to join this race to the bottom. Frightening

I have participated in open meetings on legalizing pot locally and in the state capitol. The pro legalize pot group is very organized with paid lobbyists and many vocal proponents. The one common denominator of almost all of them is that they have a financial stake in legalizing pot – **it is all about the money.**

Those of us opposing these forces of pot have no financial stake – addiction counselors, pastors, State Police and the Automobile Association of America AAA and a few pediatric caregivers. The silent majority of citizens are busy with their families, but their lives will be seriously worsened if pot is legalized

The overwhelming majority of my families in the office from Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania - parents, grandparents, and guardians DO NOT support legalization

Here are some FACTS about cannabis backed up by > 23 references on [podcastpediatricians.com](http://podcastpediatricians.com)

**Marijuana is an addictive, youth brain altering drug that in growing brains causes psychosis AND increases rates of depression, anxiety, commission of crimes and later illicit drug use. It actually can change the way the brain grows as seen on imaging scans.**

Adolescent marijuana use clearly causes overall poorer life outcomes due to academic under-achievement from decreased working memory, permanent loss of IQ points and overall apathy with a reduced drive to succeed.

The experiment of legalized recreational pot is well under way in our country. The longest experience is in Colorado – 5 years - and the results are ugly.

Colorado, where the legal age of marijuana use is 21 and above, **has the highest UNDER 21 rates of youth and college aged marijuana use and addiction**, PLUS a surge in traffic deaths – which is the always the number one killer of teens. The issue of driving while high is a HUGE problem in states where it is legal and hard to document, BUT known drivers high on marijuana involved in fatal crashes has doubled – that is according to pro-legalization sources

They have also had a surge in Black and Latino youth marijuana arrests since legalization. The argument that this is a social justice issue, and that minorities are being locked up due to marijuana infractions, is just untrue.

Not to mention the rising ingestion of marijuana edibles by infants and children. A HUGE issue!!

As pointed out in the Colorado Springs Gazette The streets and neighborhoods reek of pot. It really smells!! The homelessness rates have skyrocketed since legalization.

Drug violations in K thru 12 schools have risen 45% in 4 years while all other violations have fallen.

Colorado High School drug violations are up 71%.

The argument that it is safer than alcohol, so should be legalized, is a specious one. Alcohol is very harmful but legal drug for adults throughout human civilizations since biblical times. It helps no one, especially our youth, to make more drugs legal.

And comparing legalizing pot to the overturning of prohibition is silly. The lesson of prohibition to me is that once you make something legal and acceptable, once you open that Pandora's box, it is hard to undo the damage and turn back – Recreational pot will be very hard to reverse.

The mistaken notion in teens that marijuana is harmless just grows with its legalization and will be then perpetuated in the youth of our nation for generations.

We pediatric caregivers see marijuana use disorders in our offices causing shattered families and the wasting of the potentials of many bright young Delawareans. Pennsylvanian and yes New Jerseyans, and really youth in every state and territory in the USA

**AGAIN Legalization will mean more pot. And More pot means more pot means more pot.**

**Please do not let lawmakers experiment on our kids. They should Look out for their interests and do the right thing. And anyone listening who agrees – contact your representatives and speak out!**

