

# Marijuana's effects on youth and young adults

The brains of young people do not fully develop until they reach their mid-20s. Regular marijuana use during adolescence and early adulthood can lead to changes in the brain and negatively affect memory, learning, and attention. It can also impact school performance and the ability to drive.

## Talking about marijuana with your kids

### Start early. Talk often.

- Talk openly and provide guidance about the risks of using marijuana.
- Listen carefully to their questions.
- Be respectful and understanding of the thoughts they share.
- Set clear and specific rules about marijuana use. Kids are less likely to use marijuana when parents set clear expectations.

### Conversation starters

- “What do you know about marijuana? What do you know about how marijuana might affect your health? Do you know that marijuana can hurt your health and get in the way of your goals?”
- “Remember our rule against using marijuana? Let’s talk about how you can refuse drugs, including marijuana, if someone offers them to you.”
- “We want you to do well in school, so we have a rule against using drugs, including marijuana.”
- “It is important to our family that we all stay healthy and safe. One way to do this is to avoid drug use, including marijuana. This is especially important for teenagers since marijuana can harm the developing brain. That’s why we have a rule against using marijuana. If we find out you are using drugs, what do you think a fair consequence would be?”

### Stay tuned into your child

- Take an interest in your kids’ interests
- Eat dinner together
- Do family activities together
- Communicate the way your child does (texting, email, and social media)
- Note your child's efforts – as well as successes –to encourage positive behaviors and choices
- Make an effort to understand how your child feels
- Remain actively involved in your child’s life and get to know their friends
- Monitor your child’s behavior to ensure the rules are being followed

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## Recognizing if a young person is using marijuana

As kids grow and mature, changes are to be expected. However, there are some changes in your child's behavior that could be signs of possible marijuana use.

Someone high might:

- Seem dizzy or uncoordinated
- Seem silly and giggly for no reason
- Have very red, bloodshot eyes and/or use eye drops
- Have a hard time remembering things that just happened

Someone using marijuana regularly might:

- Have an odor on clothes and in the bedroom
- Use incense and other deodorizers in their living space
- Increase their use of perfume, cologne, or breath mints
- Wear clothing or jewelry or have posters that promote drug use
- Have items used with drugs such as pipes, bong, scales, rolling papers, blunt wraps, vapor pens or other devices used for vaping

\*sourced from [Mass.gov/info-details/marijuana-info-for-parents-and-caregivers](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/marijuana-info-for-parents-and-caregivers)



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