

MARIJUANA! TALK ABOUT IT

Adolescence is “the age of experimentation”. Sometimes the experimentation includes tobacco, alcohol and other drug use. Normal adolescent behaviour includes exploring the world and taking risks. The adolescent brain hasn’t fully developed, making it difficult to foresee the consequences of their actions. Parents can make a difference in their teen’s decision to experiment with drugs. The most important thing parents can do is talk with their children about the issues facing youth today.

In our region, more teens are using marijuana than are smoking cigarettes. Most start experimenting with marijuana around 13 years of age. Pot, grass, weed, joint, bud, mary jane, hashish, hash and hash oil - marijuana has many names. Marijuana is the dried leaves and buds of *Cannabis Sativa* (a form of hemp). Marijuana is grayish-green to greenish brown in colour and looks similar to dried and crushed oregano. Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the active ingredient in marijuana that gives users the desired “high”. Hashish is a tar-like substance made from the female plant and is more potent than marijuana. Hash oil is the purest form of the drug and has the highest content of THC.

Marijuana increases the user’s perception of taste, colour, sound and sensations. Some of the most common physical effects of marijuana include red eyes, increased appetite, drowsiness, impaired coordination, dry mouth and throat, impaired concentration and occasionally hallucinations.

For more information contact:

- ◆ HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 (a free call) or www.healthlinkbc.ca
- ◆ www.carbc.ca/Portals/0/community/saferue/cannabisuseyouthparentsguide.pdf
- ◆ The McCreary Centre Society www.mcs.bc.ca
- ◆ Kelty Mental Health keltymentalhealth.ca/substance-use/addiction-3

Health Units:

Esquimalt	250-519-5311	Salt Spring Island	250-538-4880
Outer Gulf Islands	250-539-3099	Sooke	250-642-5464
Peninsula	250-544-2400	Victoria	250-388-2200
Saanich	250-519-5100	West Shore	250-519-3490