

Potential impacts of medical marijuana on children and young adults.

1. Children can get the message that marijuana is safe, and they assume that it is just another type of medicine, even though it is not regulated through the medical industry or the FDA.[1]
2. It has a powerful effect on young brains that continue to develop until about the age of 25. Research shows that cannabis use in adolescence can cause: [1]
 - a. Difficulty thinking and problem-solving due to the decline in brain activity associated with working memory, which is the ability to retain and use information to perform tasks such as solving math problems.[2], [5]
 - b. Poor physical coordination and reaction time.[1],[7]
 - c. Up to an 8-point decrease in IQ that is irreversible.[4]
 - d. Teens have an increased rise of mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Those who use cannabis are more likely to develop temporary psychosis (not knowing what is real, hallucinations, and paranoia) and long-lasting mental disorders, including schizophrenia (a type of mental illness where people might see or hear things that aren't there). The association between cannabis and schizophrenia is stronger in people who start using cannabis at an earlier age and use cannabis more frequently.[1],[3],[6]
 - e. Evidence shows there is a higher risk of suicidal thinking and actions.[1]
 - f. Rates of addiction rise to 17% when cannabis is consumed as a teen. [1]
 - g. Substance use disorder happens when a child can't stop using even when experiencing negative consequences or even want to quit cannabis. More than 55% of kids between 12 to 17 who seek treatment for substance use disorder are addicted to cannabis.[1]
3. Toxic levels of pesticides can be found in marijuana due to growers wanting to protect their high-profit crops from outside influences without regard for human or wildlife safety.
 - a. In California, where marijuana is legal and regulated, it was found that 25 of 42 marijuana products that were purchased and tested in private labs had concentrations of pesticides were above either state or federal levels allowed for tobacco.[5]
 - b. The contaminants include chemicals tied to cancer, liver failure, thyroid disease and genetic and neurologic harm to users and unborn children.[5]

Research sources

1. Is Cannabis Harmful for Children & Teens? AAP Policy Explained - [Is Cannabis Harmful for Children & Teens? AAP Policy Explained - HealthyChildren.org](#)
2. Largest Study Ever Done on Cannabis and Brain Function Finds Impact on Working Memory – Colorado University Anschutz Medical Center - [Largest Study Ever Done on Cannabis and Brain Function Finds Impact on Working Memory](#)
3. Unforeseen Consequences of Rising THC Levels in Marijuana – SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana) - [2024-updated-Marijuana-Potency-Handout.pdf](#)
4. Discussing harms of marijuana – SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana) AM - [7-Sept-2018-General-TPs-v3.pdf](#)
5. Pesticide levels in marijuana - [How dirty is your weed? Joint investigation finds toxic pesticides - Los Angeles Times](#)
6. Negative effects of Teen Cannabis Use - [Cannabis and Teens | Cannabis and Public Health | CDC](#)