



**Purposeful, Preventative Parenting**

**Delta 8: What Parents need to know!**

## Purposeful, Preventative Parenting

Hey parents! Your teens do hear you! “Right”, you say, as your daughter or son roll their eyes after asking how their day went and return laser focused on their cell phone or game system. We know it may not always seem like they are listening, but research shows that parents play a major role in their teen’s decisions regarding drug and alcohol use. You are the most important influence on your teen’s decision to use or not use drugs. Teens are 50% less likely to use drugs when their parents talk to them. Get this.... two-thirds, **yes two-thirds**, of teens say that losing their parents’ respect and pride is one of the main reasons they choose to not drink or use drugs. That is more important than any new Tik Tok challenge or social media influencer. Never has there been a more crucial time for parents to remain important influences on their teens.

Ongoing conversations with your teens about Delta-8 and THC products and the importance of prevention may save their life.



## Cannabinoid and Delta 8 Facts

Let's learn the facts about common types of Cannabinoids. Delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol, also known as delta-8 THC, is a psychoactive substance found in the *Cannabis sativa* plant, of which marijuana and hemp are two varieties.



Delta-8 THC is one of over 100 cannabinoids produced naturally by the cannabis plant but is not found in significant amounts in the cannabis plant. As a result of this low concentration in plants, concentrated amounts of delta-8 THC are typically manufactured from hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD).

**It is important for parents and teens to be aware that delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use in any context.**

Here are 5 things you should know about delta-8 THC to keep you and those you care for safe from products that may pose serious health risks:



**1. Delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use and may be marketed in ways that put the public health at risk.**

The FDA is aware of the growing concerns surrounding delta-8 THC products currently being sold online and in a variety of stores. These products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use in any context. Concerns are primarily related to variability in product formulations and product labeling. Additionally, some of these products may be labeled simply as "hemp products," which may mislead consumers who associate "hemp" with "non-psychoactive."



## ADVERSE EVENT

### 2. The FDA has received adverse event reports involving delta-8 THC-containing products.

The FDA received over 100 reports of adverse events in patients who consumed delta-8 THC products between December 1, 2020, and February 28, 2022. Of these adverse event reports:

- 77% involved adults, **8% involved pediatric patients less than 18 years of age**, and 15% did not report age.
- 55% required emergency medical services or hospital admission.
- 66% described adverse events after ingestion of delta-8 THC-containing food products (e.g., brownies, gummies).
- Adverse events included hallucinations, vomiting, tremor, anxiety, dizziness, confusion, and loss of consciousness.

National poison control centers received 2,362 exposure cases of delta-8 THC products between January 1, 2021 (i.e., date that delta-8 THC product code was added to database), and February 28, 2022. Of the 2,362 exposure cases:

- 58% involved adults, **41% involved pediatric patients less than 18 years of age**, and 1% did not report age.
- 40% involved unintentional exposure to delta-8 THC and **82% of these unintentional exposures affected pediatric patients.**
- 70% required health care facility evaluation, of which 8% resulted in admission to a critical care unit; **45% of patients requiring health care facility evaluation were pediatric patients.**
- **One pediatric case was coded with a medical outcome of death.**



### 3. Delta-8 THC has psychoactive and intoxicating effects.

Delta-8 THC has psychoactive and intoxicating effects, similar to delta-9 THC (i.e., the component responsible for the “high” people may experience from using cannabis). a level of safety for these products in humans.



**4. Delta-8 THC products often involve use of potentially harmful chemicals to create the concentrations of delta-8 THC claimed in the marketplace.**

The natural amount of delta-8 THC in hemp is very low, and thus additional chemicals are needed to convert other cannabinoids in hemp, like CBD, into delta-8 THC (i.e., synthetic conversion). Concerns with this process include:

- Some manufacturers may use potentially unsafe household chemicals to make delta-8 THC through this chemical synthesis process.
- Manufacturing of delta-8 THC products may occur in uncontrolled or unsanitary settings, which may lead to the presence of unsafe contaminants or other potentially harmful substances.





## **5. Delta-8 THC products should be kept out of the reach of children, including teens.**

Manufacturers are packaging and labeling these products in ways that may appeal to children (gummies, chocolates, cookies, candies, etc.). These products may be purchased online, as well as at a variety of retailers, including convenience stores and gas stations, where there may not be age limits on who can purchase these products.



## It's time to have the conversations!

We acknowledge that we just provided you a lot of heavy information. You are the #1 influences in your teen's decisions regarding drugs and alcohol and that influence is strengthened through having positive conversations with your teens. Whether you are the teen whisperer or have no idea how to say good morning without receiving attitude, it is never too late to start having great conversations with your teens.



## Talking With Your Teen: Key Talking Points



When discussing Delta-8 THC with teens, it's essential to focus on key talking points that address both the potential benefits and risks associated with its use. These discussions should include the legal status and safety of Delta-8 THC, its effects on the developing teenage brain, and the potential for addiction and negative health impacts. By covering these crucial aspects, parents can help their teens make informed decisions while maintaining an open and supportive dialogue. See below for important myths and facts to help guide your conversations.

# MYTH FACT

Myth	Fact
<b>Delta-8 THC is Safe for Teens to Use</b>	The adolescent brain is still developing, and introducing psychoactive substances like Delta-8 THC can interfere with this development. It can impact memory, learning, and emotional regulation. The long-term effects on teenagers are not well-studied, but early exposure to cannabinoids can potentially have lasting consequences.
<b>Delta-8 THC is Completely Safe and Non-Addictive</b>	Delta-8 THC is a cannabinoid found in cannabis, and while it is often marketed as a milder or safer alternative to Delta-9 THC (the primary psychoactive compound in cannabis), it still affects the brain and body. It can be addictive and may have side effects such as impaired cognitive and motor function.

**Delta-8 THC Products are Carefully Regulated and Safe**

The regulation of Delta-8 THC products can be inconsistent and varies widely. Unlike FDA-regulated medications, Delta-8 products may not always be tested for purity, potency, or contaminants. This lack of regulation can lead to products with misleading labels or harmful additives.

**Delta-8 THC Won't Show Up on Drug Tests**

Delta-8 THC can indeed show up on drug tests. Most standard drug tests look for THC metabolites, which are not specific to Delta-9 or Delta-8. This means that consuming Delta-8 THC could result in a positive drug test, which could have legal or employment consequences.

**All Delta-8 THC Products Are the Same**

Delta-8 THC products can vary significantly in quality, potency, and ingredients. Differences in extraction methods, manufacturing processes, and product formulations can lead to variations in effects and safety. Not all products are created equal, and some may contain contaminants or inaccurate labeling

**Delta-8 THC Is Just a Fad and Won't Have Long-Term Effects**

Even though Delta-8 THC might seem like a new trend, it still has real effects on the body and brain. The long-term consequences of using Delta-8 THC, particularly for teens, are not fully understood, but any substance that affects brain chemistry has the potential to impact future health and well-being.

**It's Safe to Use Delta-8 THC Because It's Legal in Some Areas**

Legal status does not equate to safety. Just because Delta-8 THC may be legal in certain areas does not mean it is safe or advisable for teenagers to use. Legal regulations often lag behind scientific understanding, and just because something is legal doesn't mean it is appropriate for all age groups, especially young people.



Navigating conversations about substances like Delta-8 THC with teenagers can be challenging, especially given the varying perceptions and peer influences they encounter. It's crucial for parents to approach these discussions with empathy and understanding. Below, we've outlined some common responses teens might have when parents bring up Delta-8 THC, along with non-judgmental replies that can help keep the conversation open and constructive. By addressing concerns and questions in a supportive manner, parents can foster better communication and ensure their teens have the information they need to make informed decisions.

Teen Reaction	Parent Reply
Everyone at school is talking about Delta-8 THC, and it seems like no big deal.	I understand that it feels like everyone is discussing it, and it might seem common or harmless. My goal isn't to judge

	<p>you but to make sure you have all the information you need. If you ever want to talk more about it or have questions, I'm here to help."</p>
<p>I just want to try it once to see what it's like. It's not a big deal.</p>	<p>I get that trying new things can be tempting, and it might seem like a small experiment. It's important to think about how even a single use could affect you, especially since your brain is still developing. How about we explore the potential risks together and look at some safer alternatives for new experiences?</p>
<p>You don't understand what it's like; you didn't grow up with this stuff around."</p>	<p>I can see how it might feel like I don't fully understand your experiences. My goal is to support you and help you make informed choices. I'd love to hear more about your perspective and share what I've learned, so we can have a good discussion together.</p>
<p>I don't see why this is such a big deal. I've seen people using it without any problems.</p>	<p>Sometimes, people may not openly share any negative experiences they have, or they might handle things differently. My concern is about making sure you're fully informed about how it might affect you personally. If</p>



	you're open to it, I'd like to go over some of the less visible risks and effects with you.
I've heard it's better than alcohol or other substances, so why shouldn't I try it?	Comparing substances can be tricky because they each have their own risks and effects. It's good to consider all the possible impacts and make choices based on the full picture. Let's talk about how Delta-8 THC compares to other substances and why it's important to be cautious.

### **Delta 8/Vaping Consequences:**

Student code of conduct in the vast majority of Independent School Districts restricts students from possessing any prohibited substances, which would Delta 8. Many Delta 8 products, when tested, are discovered to have above the 0.3 THC level permitted by the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill and, as a result, results in criminal charges being filed. Possession of a product that tests above the 0.3% THC level can lead to your child being charged with a state jail felony. Because of this violation of student code of conduct, and possible criminal charges, there are potential consequences that you and your student may be unaware of, that include:

- **Educational Consequences:**
  - suspension or expulsion from school
  - mandatory removal to an alternative school setting

- denial of admission to colleges and universities due to criminal record
  - Denial of financial aid
- **Employment & Financial Challenges:**
  - employee background checks affect employment prospects and career advancement
  - certain occupations may also be off-limits to individuals with felony convictions
  - securing a loan
- **Housing Difficulties:**
  - tenant criminal background checks affect housing opportunities
- **Loss of Rights:**
  - Potential loss of certain civil rights including the ability to vote and own a firearm.
- **Social Stigma:**
  - social stigma associated with personal relationships and social opportunities.
  - young person could have a permanent criminal record.



## **Get Ready**

Conversations are like relationships. It takes time, effort, and a genuine desire to connect with one another. It's not a one and done thing. It is a continually evolving process that gets stronger over time. It has been proven that 60 1-minute conversations are better received than a single lengthy conversation.



### **Get Set:**

A few things that can set the stage for a good conversation: 1) timing and 2) setting. The mood of teens right after school can be like ours after a full day of adulting. Being hungry, stressed from work/school, and in need of downtime are a few factors to consider. General conversation starters you may want to try could be “tell me about your day” or “what was the best part of your day?” instead of “Did you have a good day?” Research (and probably your own experience) show us that questions that can be answered with a yes or no tend to be conversation stoppers. Try to think about how you can ask questions in a way that will allow you to learn the most about your teen’s world and remember they are the expert in their world and report the desire to share more

about their world with you and for you to value their unique experiences.



**Go:**

So how do we start a more difficult conversations about topics such as drugs including cannabis and THC, and prevention? Timing, setting, respect for teen's expertise in his/her world, and a genuine concern for your teen's health and safety are the best bets for getting started off on the right foot. Some examples of conversation starters would include: 1) "I am curious what you have heard and what you know about Delta 8 or Delta 9?" or 2)" If you were offered some Delta 8 at a party what would you do?" Once you start a conversation, be mindful of allowing for the conversation to be organic instead of preplanned with expectations and to actively listen with your full attention, no distractions, and no interruptions. Remember, the goal is to

prepare your teen to make wise choices. This may be done by sharing information and encouraging your teen to keep talking to you, and then preparing for ongoing conversations. Some topics you may want to cover are sharing stories about cannabis and THC-related issues in the community and practicing refusal skills together so that if offered any, they are prepared, and practiced in saying no.



For additional information on these crucial conversations, download the *Talk, They Hear* APP available on the App Store, Google Play, and the Microsoft Store.



You

## Contemplate/Evaluate



So, the conversation went south. Take heart, this will happen. Parenting is not for the weak of heart. All of the next steps start with a realistic evaluation of the conversation. What went well and what didn't? We have lived experiences and knowledge our teens do not have, but the same can be said for them. We know that experimentation, any first-time use of many of the drugs that teens and young adults have historically experimented with, can be fatal due to the prevalence of Fentanyl.

Our fear of the consequences of teen substance use can fuel the urgency for them to hear us. Fear, disappointment, and/or anger will stop your teen from hearing your words as this and risks turning into a lecture and not a conversation. If you feel the conversation has turned down a road that will not be productive, feel free to stop and self-check. If you don't think you can stay calm, it may not be the best time to start a conversation or to try to force one



to continue. It's completely ok to call a time out to reconvene at a specific time.

Be real...apologize if you handled the situation poorly. We suggest doing your best to remember that you are modeling to your teen that you make mistakes and hold yourself accountable for your actions. In essence, you are teaching them they can trust you and that you respect them by asking for their forgiveness.



Once you are ready to have a conversation again, you may consider beginning by saying "this is hard to talk about, but we need to discuss it" "I would rather us (you and your teen are a team) be uncomfortable for a few seconds rather than endure the loss of someone for the rest of your life."

One of the most important things you can do during these conversations is to value their position of expert of their world. We cannot filter their experiences through ours and it's important that you meet your teen where they are.

If there is a time-out taken, make specific plans to continue the conversation. Remember, this is not a one and done. You should try to continue to build rapport with your teen by connecting every day. The connection will develop communication skills and relationship building skills that transcend into all areas of life.

Remember, you are the #1 influence on your teen's decision to use or not use drugs as research shows that teens are 50% less likely to use drugs when their parents talk to them.



Additional resources in Tarrant County:

Recovery Resource Council: 817-332-6329

Tarrant Cares: <https://www.tarrantcares.org/>

MADD: Power of Parents: <https://madd.org/power-of-parents/>

SAMHSA Treatment Locator: 1-800-662-HELP

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222 or text POISON to 797979 to add Poison Control to as a contact in your mobile phone.

The "Talk. They Hear You." campaign mobile app: Available on the App Store, Google Play, and the Microsoft Store.

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/5-things-know-about-delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol-delta-8-thc>