

To parents, grandparents, and all who care about young people,
The “medical marijuana” issue is headed for the Ohio ballot this fall.

We can provide your group with speakers and programs to help interested adults understand this important issue.

For more information, please call:
Janis McLaughlin
Prevention Supervisor, M.Ed., OCPS II
Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers
(440) 285-9119



Know! The Facts & Make Clear Your Stance on Marijuana

A recent national survey revealed that marijuana’s perceived risk of harm among middle and high school students has decreased, while daily marijuana use for this age group has increased. Sadly, one in 16 high school seniors report using this drug daily or near daily. But why and what potential impact does this have on our youth?

Some experts say these softening attitudes come from exposure to the idea of marijuana being used as medicine. Because this drug has been labeled a medicine, the perception among many youth is, “It’s a medicine and therefore it’s safe.” Another common misconception heard among youth is, “There are two kinds of marijuana; There’s the good kind that is used as medicine and then there’s the street kind used only to get high.” Not true: It is all one in the same.

While the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this drug for medicinal purposes, some states have accepted the use of marijuana as medicine legally, and many others are debating it. No matter your location, marijuana as medicine is being talked about. And you can bet our nation’s youth are discussing it too. Despite the myths they are hearing, marijuana does not cure cancer, restore sight, nor has it been proven safe or beneficial to anyone’s health.

Here’s what we do know and what your child should too: Marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug among youth. It is highly accessible and available.

Today's marijuana is much more potent and addictive than marijuana of the 70's or 80's. Marijuana negatively impacts judgment, memory, concentration, coordination and reaction time. It increases blood pressure, heart rate and the risk for additional drug use. Marijuana is associated with increased accidents and crime and contrary to popular belief, marijuana use is linked to anxiety and depression.

Worried this conversation will stir up uncomfortable questions from your children about your experience, or lack of, with marijuana? The best response is an honest one, even if you have used it in the past. While there is no need to reveal every detail, admitting your mistakes can serve as a teachable moment and can go a long way in opening the lines of communication and trust with your child.

Not sure where you stand on the issue of marijuana as medicine? Know! encourages you to learn more so that you can provide a firm foundation of belief for your children. If you are unsure where you stand on this subject, more than likely, your children will be too. If you are not providing your children with the answers they seek, they will figure it out from someone else, potentially opening the door to adolescent experimentation.

Use this conversation as another opportunity to reinforce your expectations for your children to not use marijuana, regardless of what they may be hearing in the media or from friends.

Talk honestly and openly. Provide the facts. Dispel the myths. Make clear your stance.

Check out these resources to learn more!

[National Institute on Drug Abuse: Research Report Series on Marijuana Abuse.](#)

[Know! Parent Workbook: Talking to your child about your past marijuana use.](#)

[Drug-Free Action Alliance's \(DFAA\) position on *Marijuana as Medicine*.](#)