

TRUTH SPOTLIGHT

on marijuana

LEGAL ≠ SAFE

With the legalization of recreational and medical use, marijuana continues gaining societal acceptance. However, that doesn't mean its use is safe for everyone. Young people need to understand the potential health effects for them.



Marijuana use...

- impairs short-term memory and judgment
- distorts perception

Regular marijuana use by teens...

- affects maturing brain systems through age 24
- may have adverse and long-lasting effects on brain development
- can become addictive
- can increase likelihood of other substance use and addiction

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Coaches

You can have a big impact on athletes' lives.

- **Make it clear** that using marijuana and other drugs is not allowed.
- **Educate athletes** about the health risks of using marijuana and the damage it can cause to their academic and athletic performance.
- **Talk to your team.** Eighty-nine percent of student-athletes report coaches have talked to them about drinking and substance use, yet about 30% of athletes want them to talk more about these issues with the team.



Educators

- **Find the right moment.** When student discussion, news stories, or local events center around marijuana, use that time to start the conversation.
- **Discuss marijuana use in the context of personal goals.** When helping students plan and prepare for school events, the next test, or their future, talk about how their choices shape their opportunities and that underage marijuana use is not worth the risk.

Parents

- **Keep an open mind.** When a child feels judged or condemned, they will be less receptive to the message.
- **Put yourself in your kid's shoes.** How would you prefer to be addressed when speaking about a difficult topic?
- **Be clear about your goals.** Know what you want to get from the conversation.
- **Be calm and relaxed.** Coming into the conversation with anger or panic will make it harder to achieve your goals.
- **Be positive.** Approaching the situation with shame, anger, or scare tactics will be counter-productive.