

# K.N.O.W. 2 PREVENT

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK  
OF WESTCHESTER

You can't PREVENT  
what you don't know!

## A WESTCHESTER VIRTUAL SPEAKER SERIES

### YOUTH MARIJUANA USE: WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

#### “TIP” JAR

TAKE-AWAYS - INFORMATION - PROMPTS

#### What We Know

- Substance use almost always starts in adolescence
- Adolescence is a time of intense brain development that continues into the mid-20's, making teens more likely to develop substance-related problems
- Marijuana potency has increased drastically in the past 25 years and coincided with an increase in treatment admissions for Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD)
- Despite perceptions, most kids don't use marijuana (69% of HS seniors DID NOT USE marijuana in the past year - Monitoring the Future, 2022)

#### Cannabis Effects

- Risks during childhood/adolescence
  - 2x rate of CUD
  - Adverse academic & occupational outcomes
  - Increased incidence of psychotic, mood & anxiety disorders including suicide
- Scarce evidence for treatment of mental health issues such as depression, anxiety or ADHD
- Driving performance & decision making are negatively affected (slower response times, motor skill impairment)
- Adverse effects on airways for both smoked and vaped marijuana/THC
- CUD affects 1/5 lifetime users (50% of those with severe CUD not functioning in any role)
- Danger during pregnancy – negative effects on fetus
- Evidence of therapeutic roles of specific pharmaceutical cannabinoids in adults (appetite loss in HIV/AIDS/Chemotherapy, seizures in specific conditions)

HOW TO  
CONNECT  
WITH YOUR  
TEEN

#### What We Should Do

- Discuss this topic – well informed kids make better decisions
- Be honest – do not minimize or exaggerate risks
- Keep it simple & allow for discussion
- Discuss the risk of addiction & if there is increased risk in your family
- Be clear about youth specific risks (brain development, mental health & cognitive ability)
- Establish clear expectations of non-use as the healthy choice for youth

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