



Grades
K-5

begin the conversation

Where do you start? What do you say? Between legalization, increased normalization in pop culture and new ways of using (edibles, vaporizers, concentrates), it is becoming more and more

complicated to know how to address marijuana use with your kids. Here are some helpful tips to consider:

1. **Take advantage of teachable moments** to help begin the conversation
2. **Point out marijuana advertising** you see when you are in the car together, and start a conversation
3. **Ask your child** what they know and/or think about marijuana; what do their friends think?
4. **Talk about the effects of marijuana use** (eg. how it makes a person feel, and the long-term damage it can have on adolescent brain development)
5. **As a parent, always practice safe use.** If you use marijuana products, make sure to lock them up in a secure location

Grades
6-8

By this age, your pre-teen may be exposed to, or even offered, marijuana. Continue to engage in conversation

continue the conversation

with your child about marijuana use. Here are some effective tools to

set the stage for a conversation about marijuana:

1. **Try asking open-ended questions**, such as "Tell me more about..."
2. **Be positive and encourage open discussion** (e.g. "Thank you for your honesty. I really appreciate it.")
3. **Let your pre-teen know that you hear them** (e.g. "I'm hearing that you feel overwhelmed, and that smoking pot relaxes you. Is that right?")
4. **Sum up and ask questions**, such as "Did I hear everything? Do you have more to add?"
5. **Offer empathy and compassion** (e.g. "I hear that smoking pot helps your anxiety. I'm sorry you're feeling anxious. I know that's a really difficult feeling. Can we think of some other activities that can help you relax?")



Grades
9+

Whether your teen is starting high school, or heading off to college or their own apartment, it is important to continue talking with them about marijuana use.

- 1. Encourage involvement in healthy activities** (such as sports, theater, music, etc)
- 2. Talk about the effects marijuana can have on their mental and physical health,** safety, and ability to make good decisions
- 3. Ask your child what might happen if they use marijuana,** and **encourage them to think** about how marijuana use could impact their future
- 4. Discuss the legalities of marijuana use if under 21.** Clearly communicate that you do not want your teen using drugs
- 5. Be supportive and judgment-free** (e.g. "I know that pretty soon you will be off to start your own life, but please know that I'm always here for you. I respect that you're old enough to make your own choices, but if you ever want another perspective on things, please reach out to me.")

own the conversation



For more information about this campaign, please contact Skagit County Public Health at (360) 416-1500. Funding provided by Skagit County Public Health and the Washington State Health Care Authority.

