

## **Cannabis and Kids: Be Safe!**

Cannabis became legal for sale in October 2018. Since that time there has been an increase in the number of reports of children being exposed or having access to it. Edible forms of cannabis are also now legal in Canada. Edibles can now be purchased or can be homemade from the oil or parts of the cannabis plant.

Young children can be at risk for cannabis poisoning because of their curiosity. When stored in containers, food or drink made at home with cannabis can be mistaken by children as being safe. It is important to be aware of steps to prevent access and harm to children.

- Store cannabis safely, in a locked cupboard, that children cannot reach.
- Store cannabis in the original packaging, so it cannot be mistaken for something else.
- Safely discard cannabis products out of the reach of children.
- Be aware that visitors may have cannabis with them. Ask them to keep it stored safely while they are visiting.
- Older siblings or babysitters may bring cannabis into your home. Make sure that they understand the danger to younger children and the need to keep it stored safely.

**If you concerned that your child has eaten a cannabis product, call 911 immediately.**

While teens are not able to use cannabis legally, they may have questions. This is an opportunity for discussion that will help your child make informed decisions about cannabis use later in life.

- Talk to your teen openly. Spend time with them and their friends to keep a connection with them.
- Use positive messages to let them know you are listening. Avoid scare tactics when talking about cannabis.
- Encourage your teen to make safe choices. Example: avoid getting into a car with a driver that is under the influence of cannabis.
- Stay informed about cannabis and other substances so you can answer your child's questions.
- Support your teen to find healthy coping strategies when they are feeling stressed or trying to fit into a peer group.
- Be conscience of your personal substance use around children. Model positive coping such as: going for a walk, talking to a counsellor or a family member when experiencing stress.

*Adapted from:*

<https://childsafetylink.ca/safety-at-home/poison-prevention/cannabis-poisoning-prevention/#>

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/workbook/cannabis-use-and-youth-a-parents-guide#you>

<http://www.parachutecanada.org/news-releases/item/as-cannabis-becomes-a-legal-drug-in-canada-remember-it-can-be-poisonous-to>

<https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/cannabis-parent-infosheet-pdf.pdf>

Healthy Learners in School Program

Anglophone West School District