

Below is a message for parents and guardians about cannabis legalization. It is from the Government of Nova Scotia.



Message to Parents/Guardians about Cannabis Legalization

Cannabis will become legal in Canada on October 17, 2018.

As parents and guardians, you may have questions or want advice about how to talk with your children about cannabis, including any health effects for teenagers and young adults. Your children may also ask you questions.

Talking to your children about cannabis

You can find reliable information on the province's cannabis website, www.novascotia.ca/cannabis.

Drug Free Kids Canada "Cannabis Talk Kit" was developed to help parents talk to their children about cannabis and can be found on the website. Ads from the provincial government informing Nova Scotians about cannabis are now running.

Health education curriculum

Age-appropriate lessons on the risks and effects of using substances such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other drugs are taught within the health education curriculum that begins in primary and continues until grade 9. There is a focus on nurturing and fostering skills that lead to not using substances as well as making healthy, informed decisions. Information on the new rules will be sent to teachers and administrators.

Legal age and other rules once legalized

The legal age to use, buy, grow and possess cannabis in Nova Scotia will be 19 – the same as the legal age for alcohol. Cannabis use by Nova Scotians under 19 will not be allowed.

There will also be restrictions on where cannabis can be used, as part of the Smoke-free Places Act. Cannabis will not be able to be used on or near school

grounds or playgrounds. Municipalities can also decide to create stronger rules regarding the public use of cannabis. The advertising of cannabis will be restricted so that using cannabis is not promoted, specifically to children and teens.

Information on cannabis, including the health effects, advice on talking to children and teens, what the rules will be in Nova Scotia, driving while impaired, and other related topics, is available at www.novascotia.ca/cannabis . This website will continue to be updated with new information.

novascotia.ca/cannabis

ALCOHOL, CANNABIS, AND OTHER DRUGS

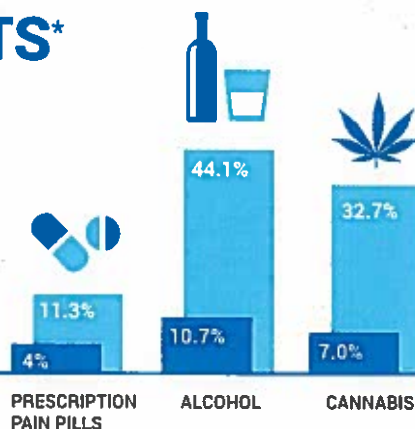
KNOW THE FACTS. KNOW HOW TO HELP.

The teenage years are a time of many firsts. As youth move through the school grades, they are going to experience new challenges and face different pressures. Working together, caregivers and the school can teach youth the skills they need to help protect themselves from harmful alcohol and drug use.

FAST FACTS*

Alcohol and drug use is very low among students in grade 7, but its use climbs by grade.

Grade 7 Grade 9



*2012 Nova Scotia Drug Use Survey

When is "normal" harmful?

Advertising, movies, and TV shows, and the example set by adults can all make alcohol, cannabis, or prescription drug misuse seem normal. **Look at your home, your community, and beyond. What can you do to keep the misuse of alcohol, cannabis, and prescription drugs from seeming normal to your child?**

THINK before letting them use

Some parents think that letting youth use at home teaches them how to use responsibly, or keeps them safe. **Think again! Studies show this actually increases teen substance use by normalizing substance use and, if used earlier during the teenage years when the brain is still growing, there is a strong association with lifetime dependency and mental health issues, including psychosis (PS: It's also illegal.)**

Keep risk out of reach

The easiest place for youth to get alcohol, cannabis, and prescription drugs is at home. Separately, they can be harmful. Mixed together, they can be deadly. **Keep yours locked up and out of reach. Return unused prescription drugs to your pharmacy.**

"Who are your Villains?"

Villains are pressures or challenges that can influence youth into using alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs.

Some villains are

- Stress
- Anger
- Relationship challenges
- Difficult situations or disappointments

Ask your child "do you know any villains?"

"What are your Super Powers?"

Super Powers are strengths and support that help protect youth from using alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs.

Some Super Powers are

- Having close ties to caregivers, family, and friends
- Knowing they can talk to someone at school
- Understanding the risks and harms of drug and alcohol use
- Knowing where to go for support
- Developing decision-making skills

Ask your child "what are your Super Powers?"

Share your own with your child. Or tell your child the Super Powers you wish you had when you were their age.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Ask your child about what pressures and concerns they have
- Listen to their answers
- Ask them what they're learning in Healthy Living class
- Talk to your child's teachers at school
- Know your child's friends



Get Help

We can work together to help protect our youth. For more information, talk to the Guidance Counsellor at your child's school.

NOVA SCOTIA