

# Clarity on Cannabis

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

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- students will become more familiar with effects of using cannabis
- students will examine and discard myths they may have held about cannabis

## CONTENT AND TIME: 40-80 MINUTES (DEPENDING ON NUMBER OF STUDENTS)

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8.1 Introduction: Clarity on Cannabis (20 minutes)

8.2 Activity (20 minutes)

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES

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HANDOUT 8.1: Suggested Resources

## 8.1 Introduction: Clarity on Cannabis

(20 minutes)

Cannabis (also called marijuana) is a legally available drug in Canada. It is a mood-altering drug that comes from the cannabis plant. Cannabis comes in several forms: as marijuana (the dried flowering buds and leaves of the plant); as oils, waxes and resins (cannabis extracts); as food or beverages (edible cannabis); and as products applied to external surfaces of the body (topical cannabis). The “high” caused by cannabis comes from THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), a chemical found within the plant. Some slang names for cannabis include weed, pot, grass, Mary Jane and chronic.

People use cannabis in three basic ways: inhalation (smoked or vapourized), ingestion (eating or drinking) and absorption (through the external surfaces of the body).

Some of the most common myths associated with cannabis are:

- Cannabis is not harmful because it is natural.
- “Everyone smokes weed”.
- Driving under the influence of cannabis is not impaired driving.

Provide students with HANDOUT 8.1, Suggested Resources, for ideas on where to find accurate information

## 8.2 Activity

(10 minutes)

Ask students to form pairs or small groups and have them choose one (or more) of the following questions to answer:

- What is cannabis?
- What is THC? What is CBD?
- Why might someone choose to use cannabis?
- What are the short-term effects of cannabis use?
- What are the long-term effects of cannabis use?
- How many Canadians use cannabis?
- What are some of the risks of cannabis use for young people under 25?

- What is cannabis poisoning?
- What are the potential impacts of cannabis use on a person's mental health?
- How does cannabis use affect your ability to drive?
- What are some things to consider when using edible cannabis products?
- What is synthetic cannabis and why should it be avoided?
- What are some ways to reduce the risk of harm when using cannabis?
- What are the effects of cannabis use for pregnant and breastfeeding women?
- How can cannabis be used for medical purposes?

Provide students with the handout, Suggested Resources, for ideas on where to find accurate information. Use this opportunity to discuss how to determine where to find accurate, reliable health information online.

Let students know that once they have completed their research, they must provide a 3-5 minute presentation of their findings to the entire class. Encourage students to use creative mediums to present their information including poster or chart paper, a PowerPoint slide, or other medium of their choice.

Note: Depending on the total number of students participating, it may be necessary to complete this lesson over two periods.

# Suggested Resources

**Government of Canada**

**Alberta Health Services**

**Don't Drive High (Government of Canada)**

**Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS)**

**Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines**

**The Blunt Truth: Useful Tips about Safer Ways to Use Cannabis**