

Healthy Teens

December 2018 Parent Newsletter



Let's Talk About Cannabis and Tobacco Use

With the legalization of non-medical cannabis, many parents have questions about what that means for their kids. According to a Canadian survey, Canadian youth have the second highest cannabis use rates worldwide. We know that cannabis impairs brain development of those under 25 and damage can have life-long consequences. Use prior to the age of 25 can impact memory, learning, attention, judgement and decision making, mental health and dependency.

When cannabis and tobacco are used together, there are some things to be aware of, such as:

- Teens and young adults have a higher risk of becoming addicted to nicotine.

- Stopping smoking may be more difficult for people who mix tobacco with cannabis because the combination may make nicotine withdrawal stronger.
- People are at risk of making unsafe decisions such as driving while impaired and other risky behaviours.
- People have more breathing problems than those who only use tobacco because of the increased exposure to harmful chemicals.
- There is an increase in learning and memory problems.

➤ For more information or support with quitting, visit www.albertaquits.ca or call 1-866-710-QUIT (7848)

Articles

Let's Talk About Cannabis and Tobacco Use

Cyberbullying 101: What it is and what you can do!

With the legalization of cannabis in Canada it is important to talk to your teen early and regularly about it. To learn more about the facts, risks of cannabis use and how to talk to your teen about it, access the *Cannabis Talk Kit: Know How to Talk with Your Teen*

<https://www.drugfreekidsCanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/34-17-1850-Cannabis-Talk-Kit-EN-10.pdf>



Cyberbullying 101: What it is and what you can do!

By learning what cyberbullying is, how it could affect your teen and what you can do about it, you'll be better prepared to talk with your teen and respond to their questions or concerns. Cyberbullying is a type of bullying that uses technology (smartphones, computers, tablets, etc.) to intimidate, put down or spread rumors about someone using social media or social networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, gaming sites, blogs, etc.). Sexting can become cyberbullying when pictures or videos are obtained without consent and are sent to others without permission with the intent to hurt the person and their reputation.

Cyberbullies often feel safe because they're hiding behind their computer or phone and can be more secretive about their behaviours. The only limits to what can be done are based on the bully's imagination and access to technology.

Research suggests cyberbullying may cause damaging effects to teens, such



as low self-esteem, anxiety, missing or skipping school, poor grades, anger, depression, violence against others and suicide. Cyber threats can cause more harm than face-to-face bullying, because there's no escape. It can happen any time, any place.

What you can do about cyberbullying:

- Talk to your teen about their online activities and behaviours.
- Encourage your teen to speak out against bullying of any kind.
- Teach your teen not to post or say anything that they wouldn't want the whole

world – including you – to read.

- Check in with your teen often to make sure everything's okay.
- Watch for changes in your teen's behaviour when using their phone or computer.
- Make sure your teen feels comfortable coming to you with any issue.



To learn more about cyberbullying, please visit Alberta Health Services
www.teachingsexualhealth.ca