

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on the Impact of Cannabis on Children and Adolescents

Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 2025

Approved by the Assembly, November 2025

© Copyright 2025, American Psychiatric Association. All rights, including for text and data mining (TDM), Artificial Intelligence (AI) training, and similar technologies, are reserved.

"Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . ." – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

The availability and use of cannabis has increased greatly in the US following recent legalization efforts, necessitating careful review of the impact on children and adolescents. Risk perception around the harms of cannabis is decreasing among youth. Vaping culture blurs the lines between the use of legal and illegal drugs. Accidental ingestion is also a concern and growing problem. Children and adolescents are vulnerable to neuropsychiatric symptoms linked to cannabis. Recreational cannabis use often co-occurs with treatable psychiatric conditions. The use of cannabis by anyone under the age of 25 is associated with neurodevelopmental and serious psychiatric consequences. Risk for psychosis is a paramount concern given the onset of symptoms coinciding with late adolescence. Without established potency standards or exposure limits, safe use of recreational cannabis products cannot currently be advised for children, adolescents and young adults. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) defines safe exposure by the level of contact with a substance or hazard that doesn't pose a significant risk of adverse health effects.

It is the position of APA that:

- **There are no established safe exposure limits of cannabis for children and adolescents.**
- **Epidemiological and longitudinal research into cannabis exposure in individuals aged 25 and younger is critical to informing public health interventions.**
- **More funding for evidence-based education for children and adolescents about the risks of cannabis is needed.**
- **Cannabis products should not be marketed to children, and universal packaging regulations for all recreational cannabis products are necessary.**