

# Legal Doesn't Mean Safe



*The recreational use and sale of marijuana will begin in Illinois on January 1st, 2020. This change in law can create some confusion to youth on the safety and normalization of the drug. Make sure to have frequent conversations with your teens about the risks of marijuana use!*

## **Recreational use of marijuana under the age of 21 is illegal.**

Recreational marijuana legalization only applies to individuals aged 21 and above. Being prosecuted for marijuana use under the age of 21 could result in legal action, school disciplinary action and could affect college and job applications.

## **Marijuana can harm the teen brain.**

The teen brain is still developing, and marijuana can cause abnormal brain development in areas of the brain involved in processing emotions, learning, and forming memories.

## **Regular marijuana use in teens can lead to a mental health disorder.**

Teens who use marijuana regularly are higher at risk for developing a serious mental health disorder such as addiction, depression, or psychosis.

## **Being under the influence of marijuana impairs driving abilities.**

Driving under the influence of marijuana or riding in a car with a driver who is under the influence of marijuana is extremely dangerous and can result in serious and even fatal car accidents.

## **High potency marijuana has been linked to addiction.**

Today's marijuana has a higher percentage of THC, the chemical in marijuana that produces the "high". High rates of THC have been linked to causing dependency among users.

## **Inhaling marijuana smoke can cause lung damage.**

Smoke from marijuana irritates the lungs, and can cause a chronic cough that is similarly found in people that smoke cigarettes.

**For more information on how to talk to your kids about the risks of youth marijuana use, visit [www.dupagePLT.org](http://www.dupagePLT.org)**