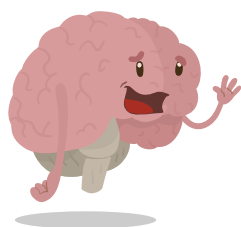


# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ASK, LISTEN, LEARN'S NEW MODULE ON THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS ON THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

## Why are you focusing on cannabis? Why don't you stick with underage drinking prevention?

- *Ask, Listen, Learn* has been around since 2003 and has reached over 150 million parents, educators and kids encouraging them to say "YES" to a healthy lifestyle and "NO" to underage drinking. That remains our core mission. As a trusted resource for science-based, evaluated, and effective health curriculum for educators across the country, our community looks to us as a trusted resource for prevention education. They asked us about cannabis content, and we are delivering it in a way that complements our underage drinking prevention assets.
- Our focus remains on alcohol; seven out of our now eight lesson plans are focused solely on underage drinking prevention. We know that kids don't live and learn in a vacuum – they're faced with tough decisions about all sorts of things. From drinking alcohol, to trying cannabis, to getting enough sleep, adults must help guide their kids and students by having conversations and providing factual information. Therefore, conversations don't happen in a vacuum either, and not every conversation is about alcohol. *Ask, Listen, Learn* addresses alcohol and cannabis in ways that are age appropriate, and we are proud to share this resource with our audience.



## For your next class...

To learn more about teaching units on the impacts of underage drinking and peer pressure, see additional lessons from *Ask, Listen, Learn*

## Why is it the school's responsibility to talk about this? Shouldn't this be on the parents?

- We know that parents are the number 1 influence on their kids decisions to drink – or not to drink – alcohol, so we are very aware of the hugely important role of parents when it comes to other risky behaviors as well. Parents absolutely should be having conversations with their kids about things like cannabis, alcohol, nutrition, and more.
- At the same time, kids spend many of their waking hours – upwards of 35+ hours a week – in school with their teachers and peers. The opportunity for learning is too great to pass by, and substance use prevention education has been shown to reduce rates of substance use in states that require it.

Source: Carpenter, C. S., Bruckner, T. A., Domina, T., Gerlinger, J., & Wakefield, S. (2018). Effects of state education requirements for substance use prevention. *Health Economics*, 28(1), 78-86. doi:10.1002/hec.3830

- The learning and conversation about substance use should be happening both in school and at home.

## How do you address medical marijuana use among kids?

- There are some extreme exceptions for youth cannabis use (virtually always a CBD preparation, and not THC) in the case of serious medical conditions. Medical marijuana is FDA approved for two select medical scenarios related to HIV and chemotherapy. When teaching this content, we direct educators to make it clear that cannabis can be used as a medicine in specific instances so as not to isolate a child who may be living with those circumstances. We stick to following the latest science, research, and regulations, while advising teachers on approaching the topic thoughtfully.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ASK, LISTEN, LEARN'S NEW MODULE ON THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS ON THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

## How do you address CBD products?

- We address the difference between CBD and THC in our teacher resources – there is not a specific age limit for use, though most retailers will not sell to persons under 18. CBD is FDA approved for two subtypes of seizures and may be prescribed to kids with this issue. CBD is non-psychoactive, not intoxicating, and not addictive, but there is still very little research on its potential benefits.

## How should parents who are past or current users of cannabis approach this topic?

- Honesty and open communication are always the best approaches when talking with your kids, even if it may feel a little uncomfortable. There are going to be states where adult use of cannabis is legal and acceptable – parents should explain to their kids that using cannabis is an adult behavior, like drinking alcohol responsibly, driving a car, or living on your own. We have more tips and information for parents at [AskListenLearn.org](http://AskListenLearn.org)

## Where are kids getting cannabis?

- In our formative research with our community of school counselors, parents, and teachers, we heard that they believe kids have easy access to cannabis. In terms of where or how kids get it, we have no way to know for sure. What parents need to be mindful of is that cannabis can look like anything – from a gummy bear, to a fruity drink, to an easily concealed vaping device, cannabis (in certain forms) can be difficult to recognize. Again, having open conversations with your kids is the best approach – make sure you're checking in with them.

## Are you also going to put out a module on tobacco use or vaping?

- As of now, no. Alcohol and cannabis have a commonality in that there are legal arguments for responsible use of each substance, unlike tobacco. Regarding vaping, we do briefly discuss cannabis vaping in our new unit.



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