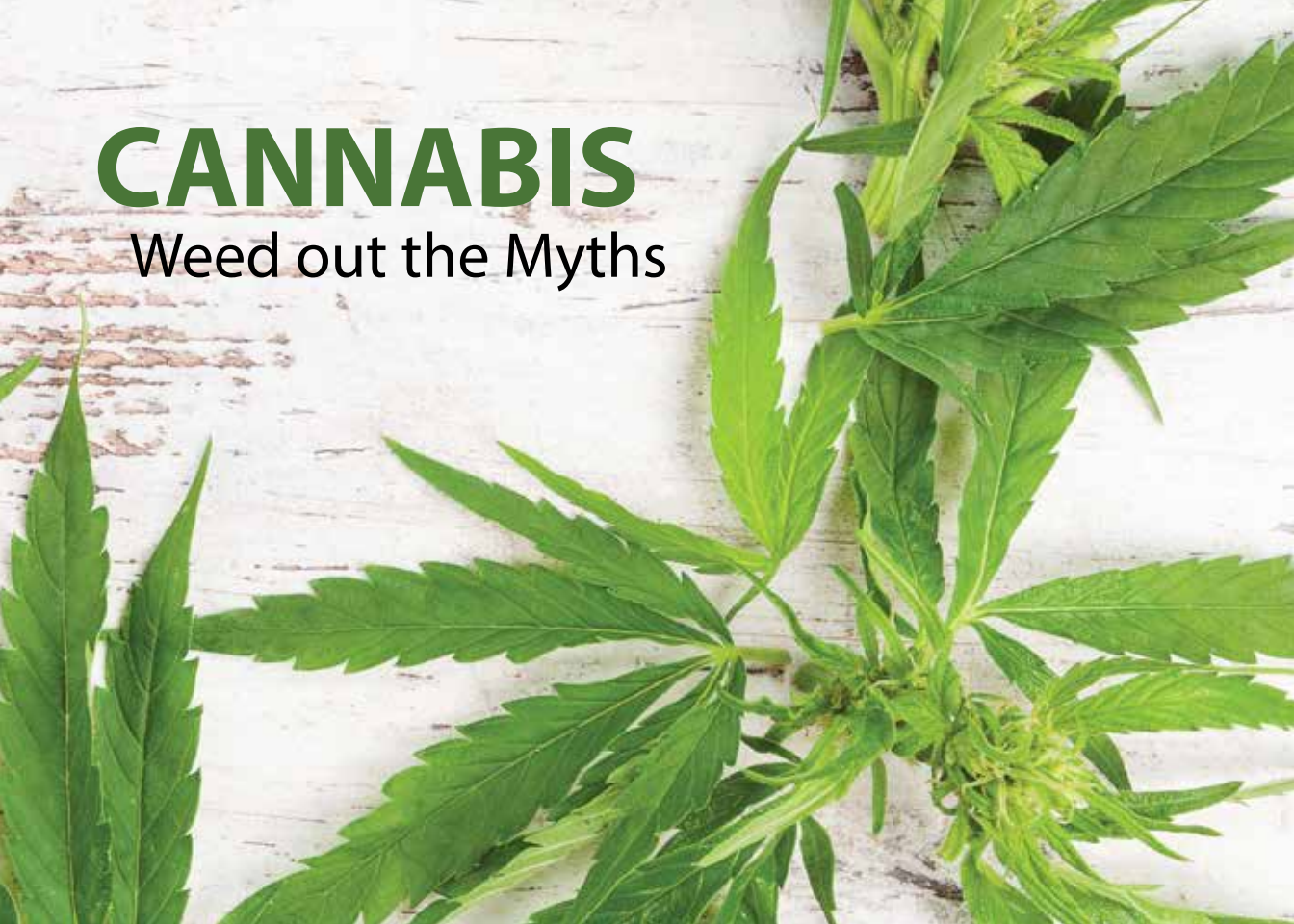


CANNABIS

Weed out the Myths





MYTH

Because weed is natural, it's harmless



FACT

- Many people think that cannabis is safe for anyone to use. This is a myth, especially for those under the age of 25.
- If you start using cannabis as a teen and you use it daily or almost daily for months or years, you are at risk for health problems, as well as problems at school.
- Research shows that your brain is not finished developing until you are 25. THC, the substance that makes you feel "high", can change parts of your brain as it develops.
- The amount of THC in dried cannabis has increased from 3% in the 1980s to around 15% today. Some strains can have as much as 30% THC. More THC means that your risk of harm is greater.





FACT

- Smoking cannabis daily or near-daily can cause breathing problems like a daily cough, bronchitis and wheezing. This can make it difficult for you to breathe and even to play your favourite sport.
- Daily or near-daily use of cannabis as a teen, can have a negative effect on your mental health. You may develop problems with depression and anxiety.
- Synthetic cannabis (e.g. K2 and Spice) has even more severe health risks including death. Avoid using these products.





MYTH

Everyone is using weed



FACT

- 60% of high school students in Durham, do **not** plan to use cannabis once it's legalized.

In Durham, 71%
of youth aged 15-
19 are not using
cannabis.





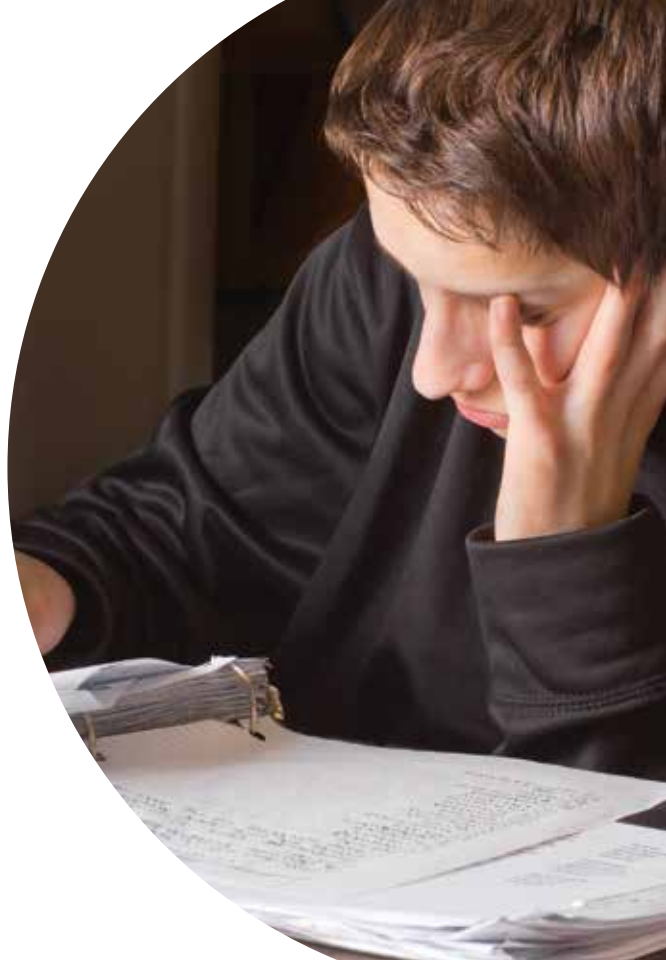
MYTH

Weed helps you focus and improves your concentration



FACT

- Teens who use cannabis regularly are more likely to have difficulty learning, memory issues, and lower grades in math and reading.
- Studies show that these effects can last for weeks after using cannabis. This can cause problems with school work and many other activities you enjoy.





MYTH

Using cannabis makes you a better driver by improving your focus



FACT

- Cannabis use impairs your depth perception, attention span, concentration and slows your reaction time. This can affect your ability to drive safely.
- Driving after using cannabis can double your risk of being seriously injured or dying in a crash. This risk increases if you use cannabis and alcohol together.
- Driving after using cannabis can be as dangerous as drunk driving and carries the same penalties.





MYTH

Weed is not addictive



FACT

- If you start using cannabis at a young age and use it daily or almost daily, you're more likely to become addicted later.
- If you suddenly stop using, you may have withdrawal symptoms like irritability, anxiety, and disturbed sleep.

1 in 6 people who start using cannabis as a teen will become addicted.



MYTH

Legalization means that everyone can use weed



FACT

- Legalization means that you will have to be 19 or older to buy, use or have recreational cannabis in Ontario.
- Cannabis use is not allowed at school, at work, or in an enclosed public space.





Cut Down Your Risk

Don't drive or get into a car with someone that is high— If you are a passenger or driver always have a way to get home safe.

If you choose to use cannabis:

- Delay using as a teen — The later in life you start using, the lower your risk of problems
- Use less often
- Talk to a parent, friend or someone you trust about how to cut down or quit
- Choose safer ways of using by checking out — **Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines@camh.ca**

Where To Get Help

If you are concerned about your cannabis use, talk to your doctor or contact:

ConnexOntario: 24-hour confidential health services information for people experiencing problems with alcohol and drugs at **1-800-565-8603**
drugandalcoholhelpline.ca

Pinewood Centre: 24-hour telephone support and crisis walk-in services to support people with alcohol, drug, concurrent mental health and gambling related concerns at: **1-888-881-8878** or **905-723-8195**

Kids Help Phone: 24-hour phone counselling, web counselling and referral service for children and youth. The service is completely anonymous, free and confidential. Phone: **1-800-668-6868**. kidshelpphone.ca

Durham Health Connection Line: To speak to a public health nurse at **905-668-2020** or **1-800-841-2729**. durham.ca

Where Can I Get More Information?

Get the facts about cannabis in Canada at canada.ca/cannabis

Get the latest on cannabis legalization at ontario.ca/cannabis

Learn about safer use of cannabis, see **Canada's Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines** at camh.ca



Durham Health Connection Line
905 668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729
durham.ca/cannabis

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



Jan 19