



Shaping the Narrative: Statewide Cannabis Prevention Messaging

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Rosemary Ugboajah | CEO, Neka Creative

Agenda

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 12:45 – 1:00 p.m. | Introductions and small group activity |
| 1:00 – 1:15 p.m. | Background: Youth cannabis use in Minnesota and recent legislation |
| 1:15 – 2:00 p.m. | Be Cannabis Aware campaign overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Our approach■ Creative strategy and audiences■ Early media results■ Q&A |
| 2:00 – 2:10 p.m. | Small group activity |
| 2:10 – 2:15 p.m. | Thank you and close |

Introductions



Rosemary Ugboajah
CEO

Neka Creative



Jade Hipp, MPH
Communications
Specialist

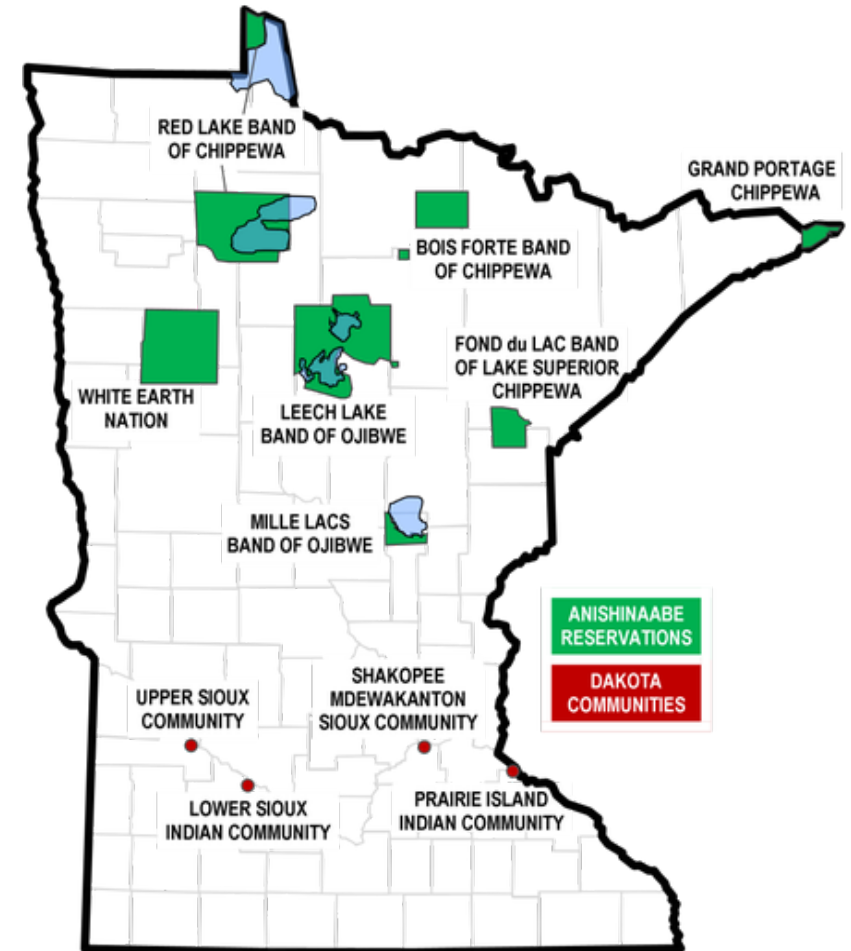
Injury Prevention and
Mental Health Division,
Minnesota Dept. of Health

Tribal-State Relations Statement

There are **11 federally recognized Tribal Nations** within the geographical boundaries of the state of Minnesota. Tribal Nations and their members have **inherent rights** and a **political relationship with federal and state governments**. The U.S. Constitution provides the foundation for recognizing the inherent sovereignty of Tribal Nations. **The U.S. Supreme Court has confirmed that Tribal sovereignty predates the constitution and survives the establishment of the United States.**

The State of Minnesota acknowledges and supports the unique **political status** of Tribal Nations across Minnesota and their **absolute right to existence, self-governance, and self-determination**. The State of Minnesota and Tribal governments across Minnesota significantly benefit from working together, learning from one another, and partnering where possible.

Minnesota's cannabis law is among the strongest in the nation to **honor and recognize Tribal sovereignty** and the authority of Tribal Nations to make decisions about cannabis sales on Tribal land. As **sovereign nations**, Tribes determine **how they want to regulate and oversee businesses**—including cannabis businesses—on their land and determine if they wish to participate in the state's legal cannabis market off Tribally regulated lands.



Commitment to Tribal-State Relations

- MDH demonstrates our commitment to Tribal-State relations in the following ways:
 - Required attendance for Tribal State Relations Training.
 - Non-competitive, direct allocation grants to Tribal Nations for substance use prevention, education, and recovery.
 - Evaluating our grant-making processes and making changes to reduce unnecessary bureaucratic barriers for grants to Tribal Nations.

Cannabis Basics

- Cannabis (marijuana, weed, or pot) comes from the cannabis plant. It includes dried flowers, leaves, stems, and seeds.
- The cannabis plant contains more than 100 compounds or cannabinoids. CBD (Cannabidiol) and THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol) are two of the most well-known compounds found in cannabis plants:
 - THC is the part of cannabis that makes a person feel “high.” THC can also be addictive.
 - CBD does not make a person feel “high” and is not addictive.
- Cannabis (high THC) vs hemp (low THC).

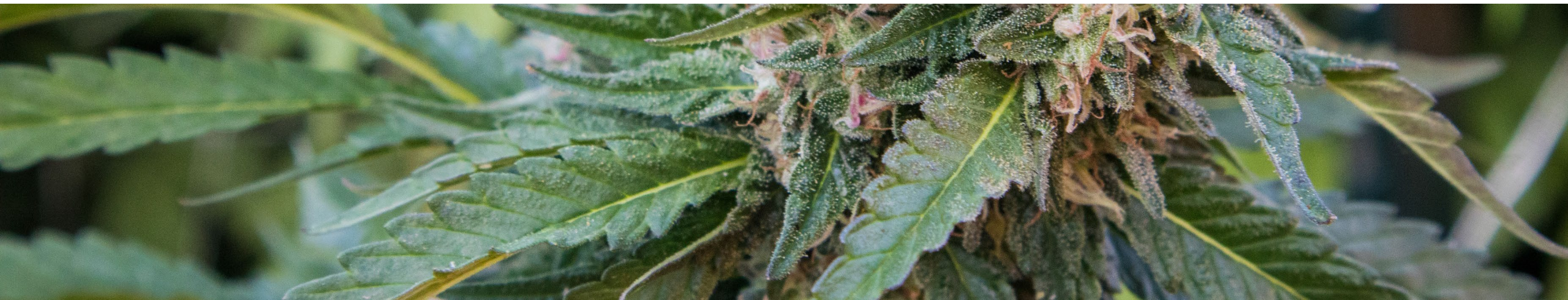


UCLA Health

Small Group Activity

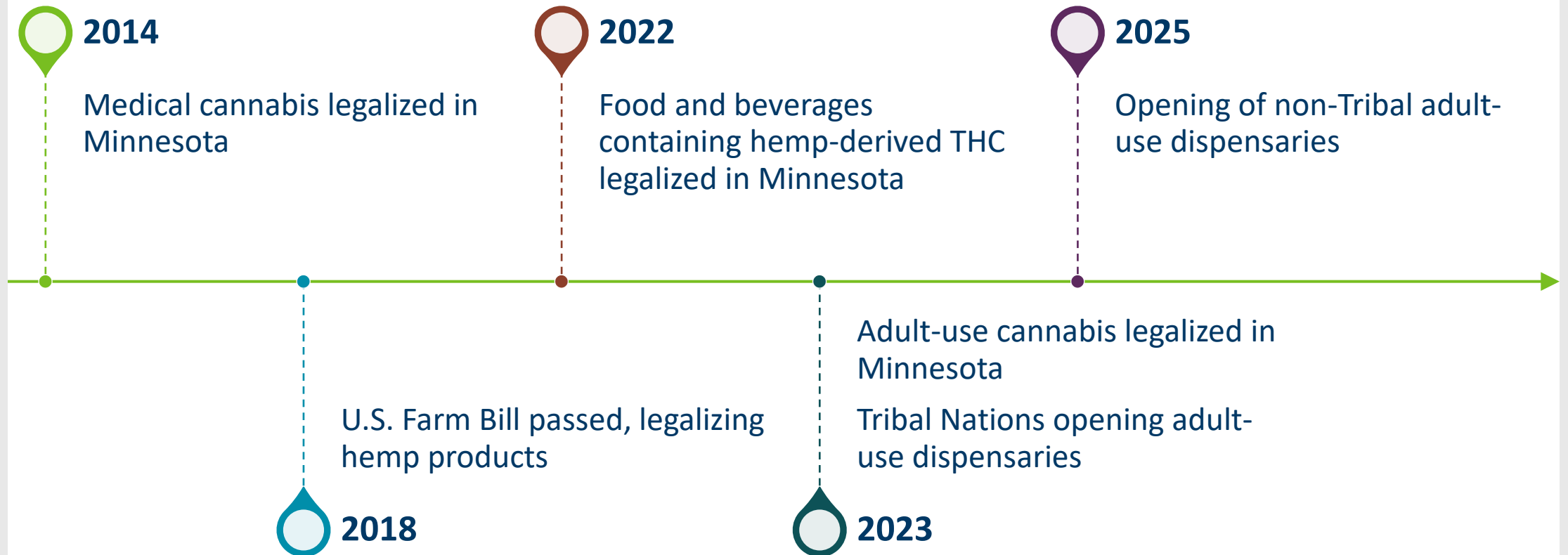
1. Introduce yourself to your tablemates
2. Share why you chose this session
3. Discuss your feelings about the legalization of cannabis in MN
4. Ask a table mate to be willing to share your takeaways with the larger group

Table volunteer to share key takeaways from their table discussion.

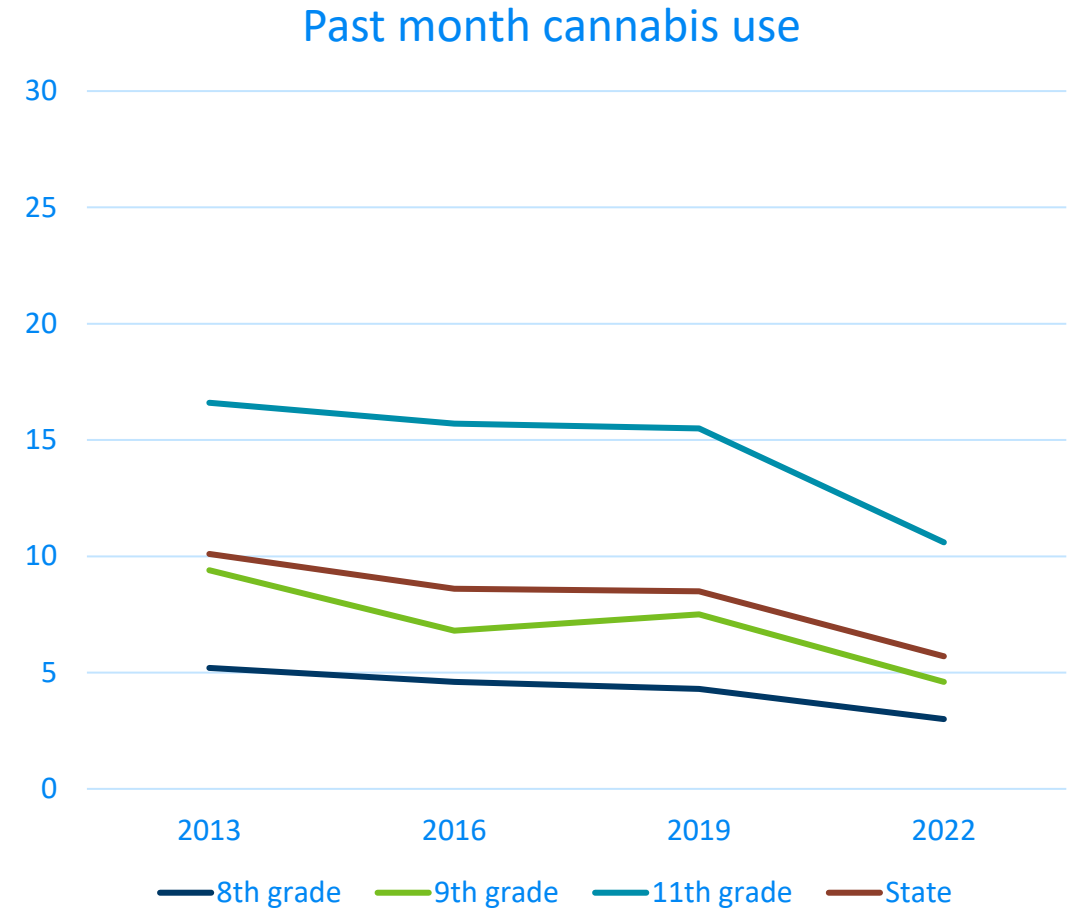
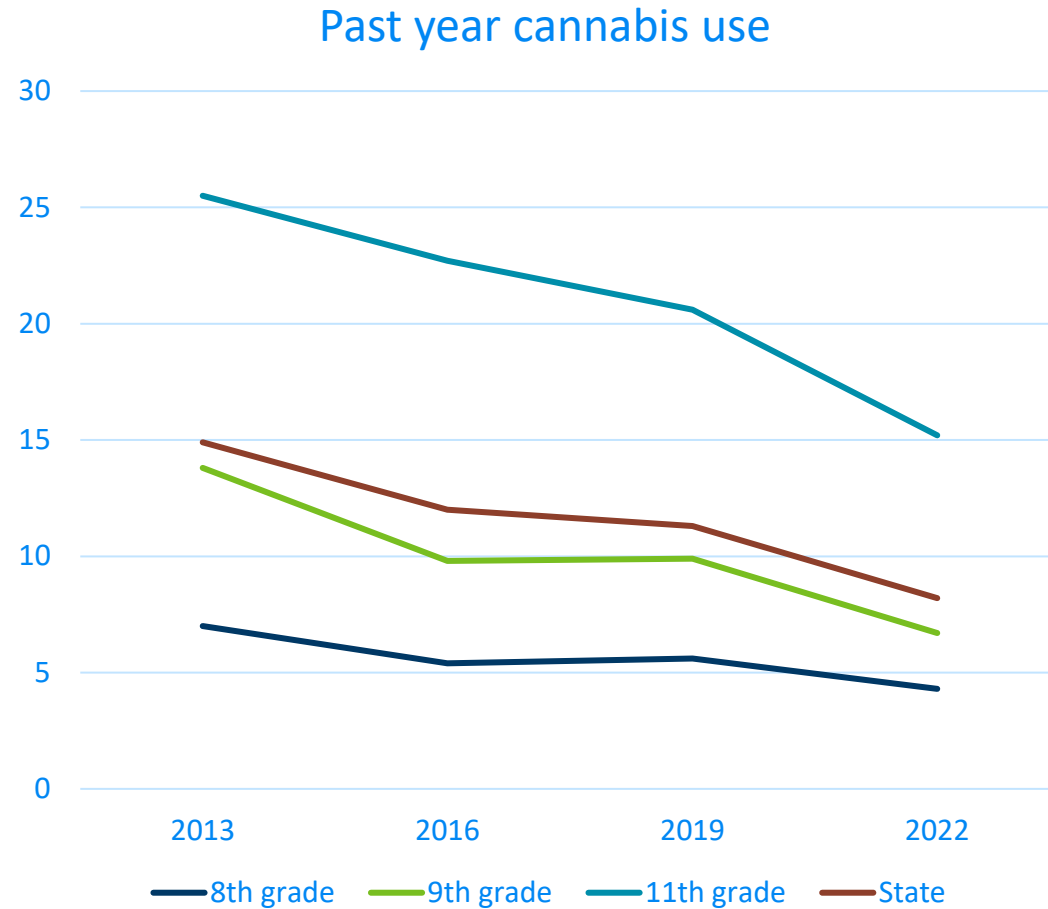


Background: Youth Cannabis Use in Minnesota and Recent Legislation

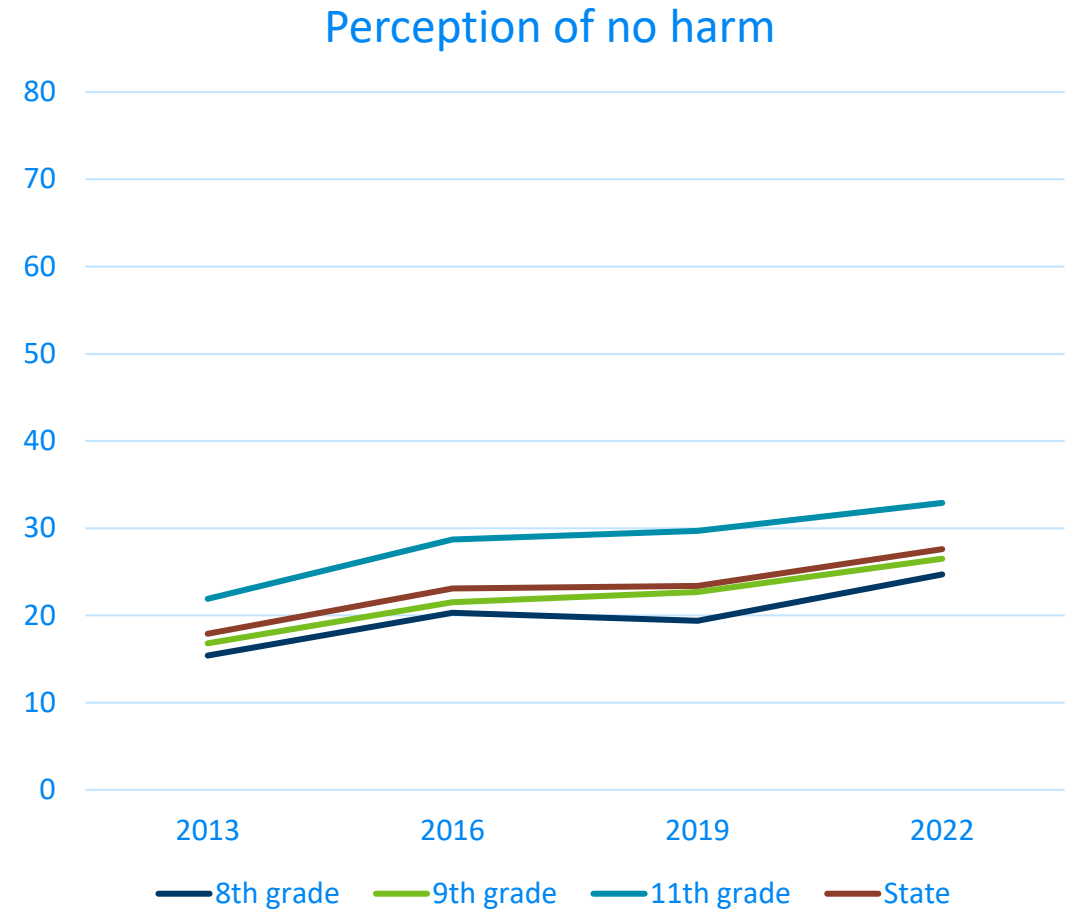
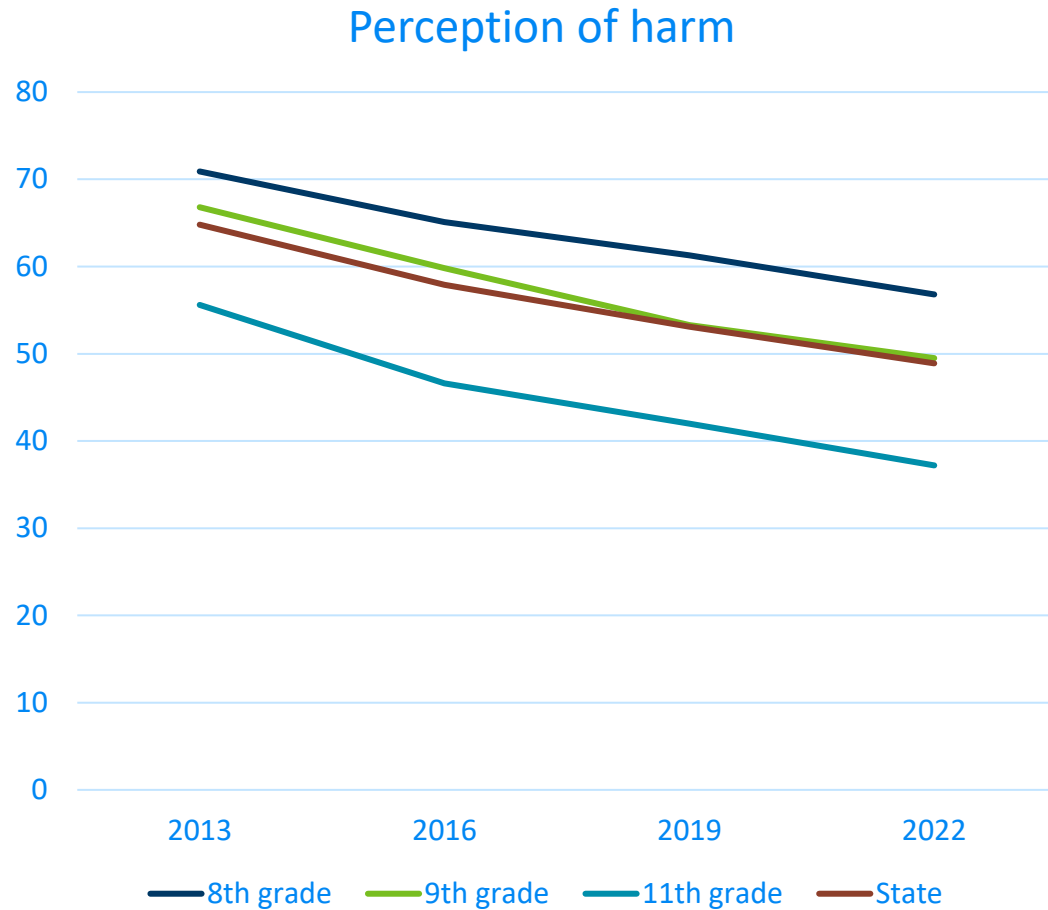
Recent Cannabis Timeline



Self-reported Cannabis Use, Minnesota Study Survey

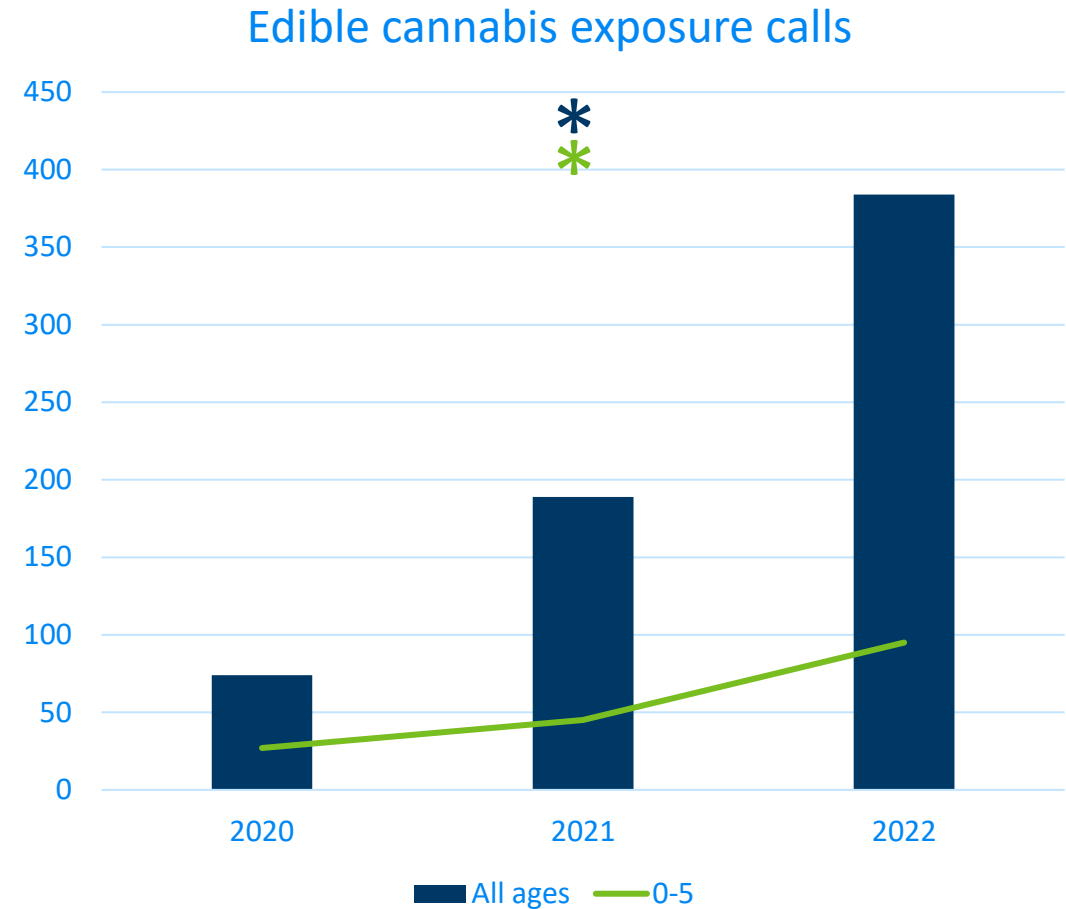


Perceived risk of harm using cannabis 1x-2x per week

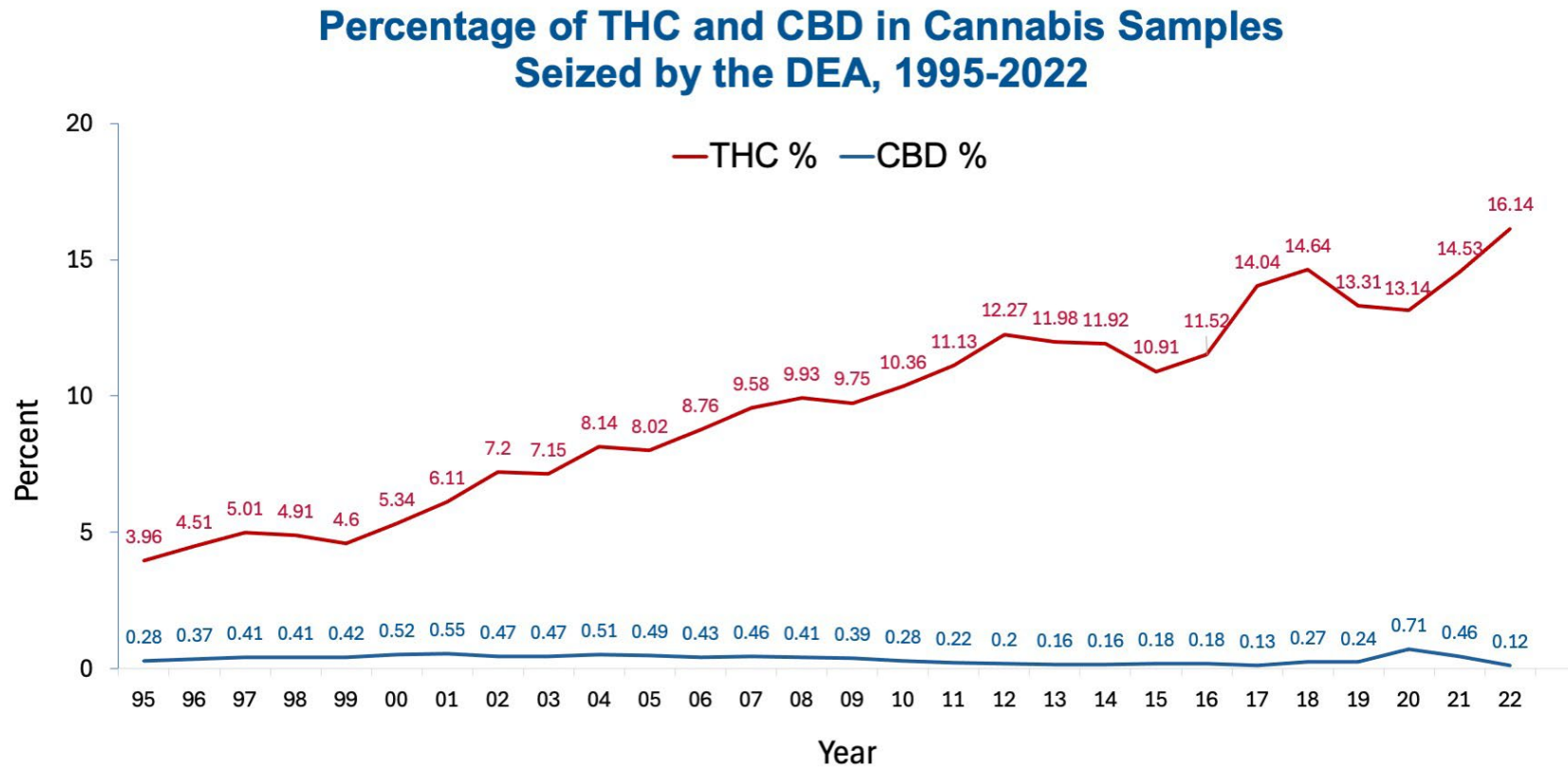


Calls to Poison Control Center

- Total calls regarding edible exposures doubled year-over-year
- Similar trend for youth between 0-5 years of age



Cannabis potency



SOURCE: U Miss, Potency Monitoring Project

<https://nida.nih.gov/research/research-data-measures-resources/cannabis-potency-data>

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Risks of High-Potency THC for Youth

- Increased risk of anxiety, depression, psychosis
- Impact on brain development and mental health outcomes
- Increased risk of cannabis use disorder, other substance use disorders
- Cannabis hyperemesis syndrome

What Led to This Work

- **Legalization:** Adult-use cannabis legalized in Minnesota for ages 21+
- **Recent legislation:** Per [Sec. 144.197 MN Statutes](#), subdivision 1, MDH was directed to lead a long-term coordinated effort to raise public awareness around substance misuse prevention, treatment, and recovery.
- **Immediate need for youth cannabis education messaging:** While a broader plan is underway—including an audience research, message development/testing , and community engagement—there is an immediate need for trusted messaging targeting youth (under 25) and influential adults. To fill this gap, MDH chose to launch a short-term campaign focused on cannabis use prevention and education.
 - To expedite the process, MDH leveraged the state-approved vendor list through Management and Budget (MMB) – Management Analysis and Development, allowing for a streamlined contracting process and rapid project initiation.



Neka Creative

Rosemary Ugboajah | CEO, Neka Creative



Neka
creative

The Cannabis Awareness Campaign

Youth & Influential Adults

October 15, 2025



We had a complex job ahead of us

- Encourage youth in Minnesota (up to 25) to choose not to use cannabis recreationally
- Help influential adults have productive conversations with the kids in their lives
- Focus on “why not” vs “don’t do it”
- Don’t shame, blame or judge
- Leave no one left behind
- Manage a consortium of diverse creative agencies



We did our homework before putting pen to paper

- What does success look like?
- What have other states done?
- What do youth think about cannabis?
- What would create breakthrough?
- What would drive great outcomes?
- What's the best way to manage 5 partner agencies?



Our input workshop with MDH was a critical beginning

- Avoid shame, scare tactics and “trying too hard” adult slang
- Ensure empathetic, accessible and motivating messaging
- Embed mental health resources and coping tools in messaging
- Address cannabis confusion: legalization, different product forms, misinformation
- Different groups have different motivations, e.g. spiritual use, trauma history, lived experience
- Stick to the facts...and the science



So was the in-depth research

- Secondary research—other similar campaigns
- A conversation with Washington State
- Focus groups with youth



Not the “ditch weed” of yesterday

- Cannabis is much stronger today
- Confusion over the different use forms
- Legalization can equate to harmlessness
- Peer pressure is powerful



Lessons learned from other state campaigns

- Effective messaging should be:
 - Science-based, neutral, factual
 - Credible from near-peer sources
 - Open, honest and empowering
 - Relevant to teens, including the consequences of use
 - Empathetic, acknowledging the challenges youth face





THE BRIEF

Our marching orders were clear

- Empower non use by...
 - Reflecting real people-real motivations
 - Avoiding shame and judgement
 - Inspiring curiosity about the short and long-term effects of cannabis
 - Being aspirational backed by science



Target youth (25 and younger) & influential adults

- Black/African Americans
- White
- American Indians
- Asian Americans
- Spanish speaking
- Rural



Our creative approach was guided by a few key principles

- It can be easy to feel shut down when life gets difficult, especially for young people
- We want people to BE OPEN about the opportunities ahead for them as well as open to facts about cannabis
- Once we created different campaigns, we tested them—youth and community organizations

New Ideas

Healthy Choices

Brave Pursuits

Real Conversation



We held focus group with North Hennepin Community College

- They saw themselves in the concepts
- Felt a sense of individuality and empowerment
- Informational without being judgmental
- The bright hopeful look was appealing
- Inspired interest to go the website



Khoo Consulting met with Southeast Asian youth and young adults

- Participants emphasized the value of positive, conversational messaging
- They appreciated information about cannabis's impact on stress and mental health
- They understood the need for education to address misconceptions
- TikTok and Instagram were noted as key platforms for reaching young people



Together, we brought the campaign to life

- **Neka Creative**—lead agency, general audience
- **Nemer Fieger**—Outstate audience
- **Khoo Consulting**—Asian American audience
- **Grace Multicultural**—Spanish speaking audience
- **NATIV3**—Native American audience
- **2110 Designs**—African American/Black





THE CREATIVE – OVERARCHING DIRECTION

BE OPEN
TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS



BE —
CANNABIS
— AWARE.ORG



BE OPEN
TO HEALTHY CHOICES



BE OPEN TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS

BE
CANNABIS
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BE OPEN
TO OTHER PERSPECTIVES



BE OPEN TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS

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BE OPEN
TO UNDERSTANDING
YOUR POWER

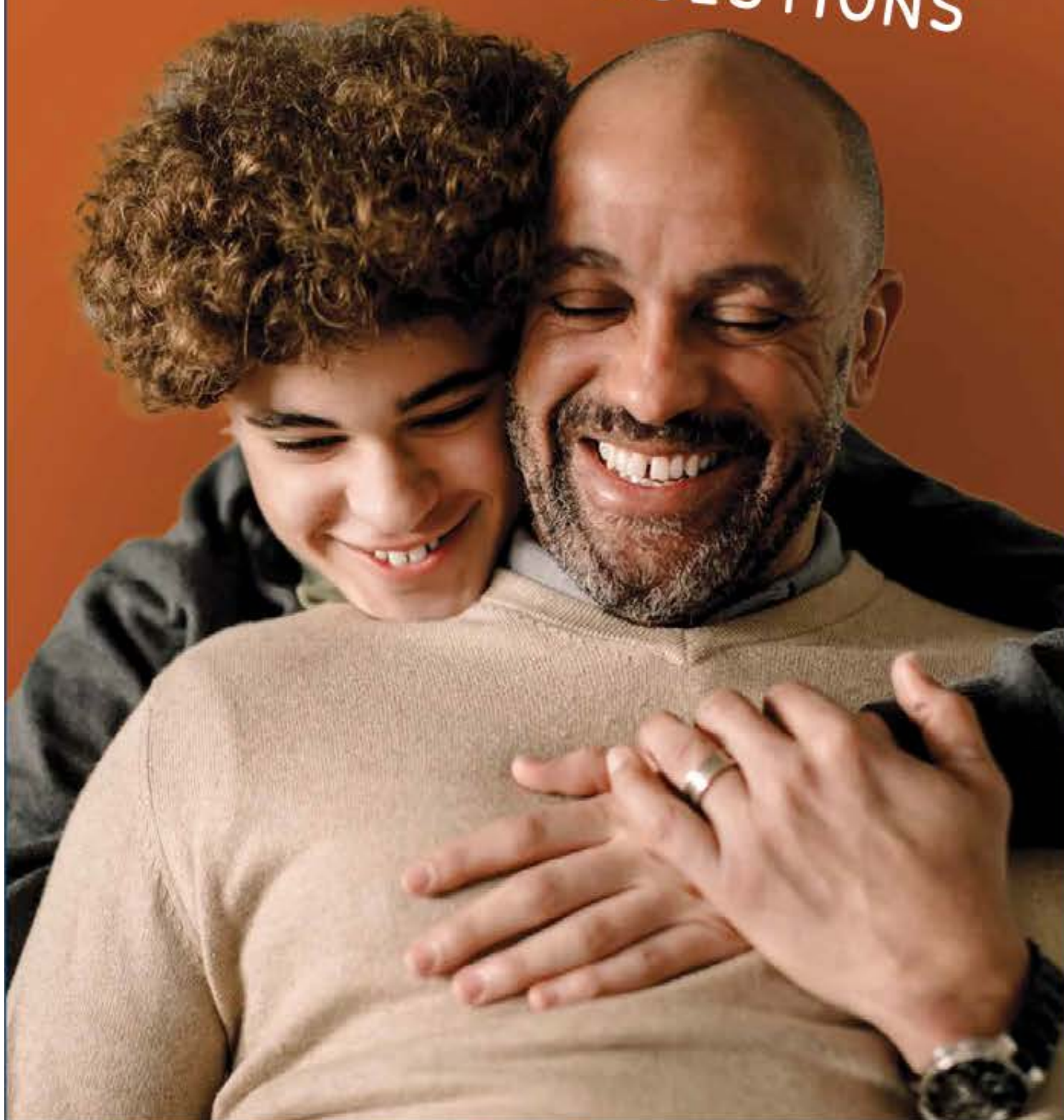


BE OPEN TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS

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BE OPEN
TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS



BE OPEN TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS

BE
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BE OPEN
TO GENTLE ENCOURAGEMENT



BE OPEN TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS

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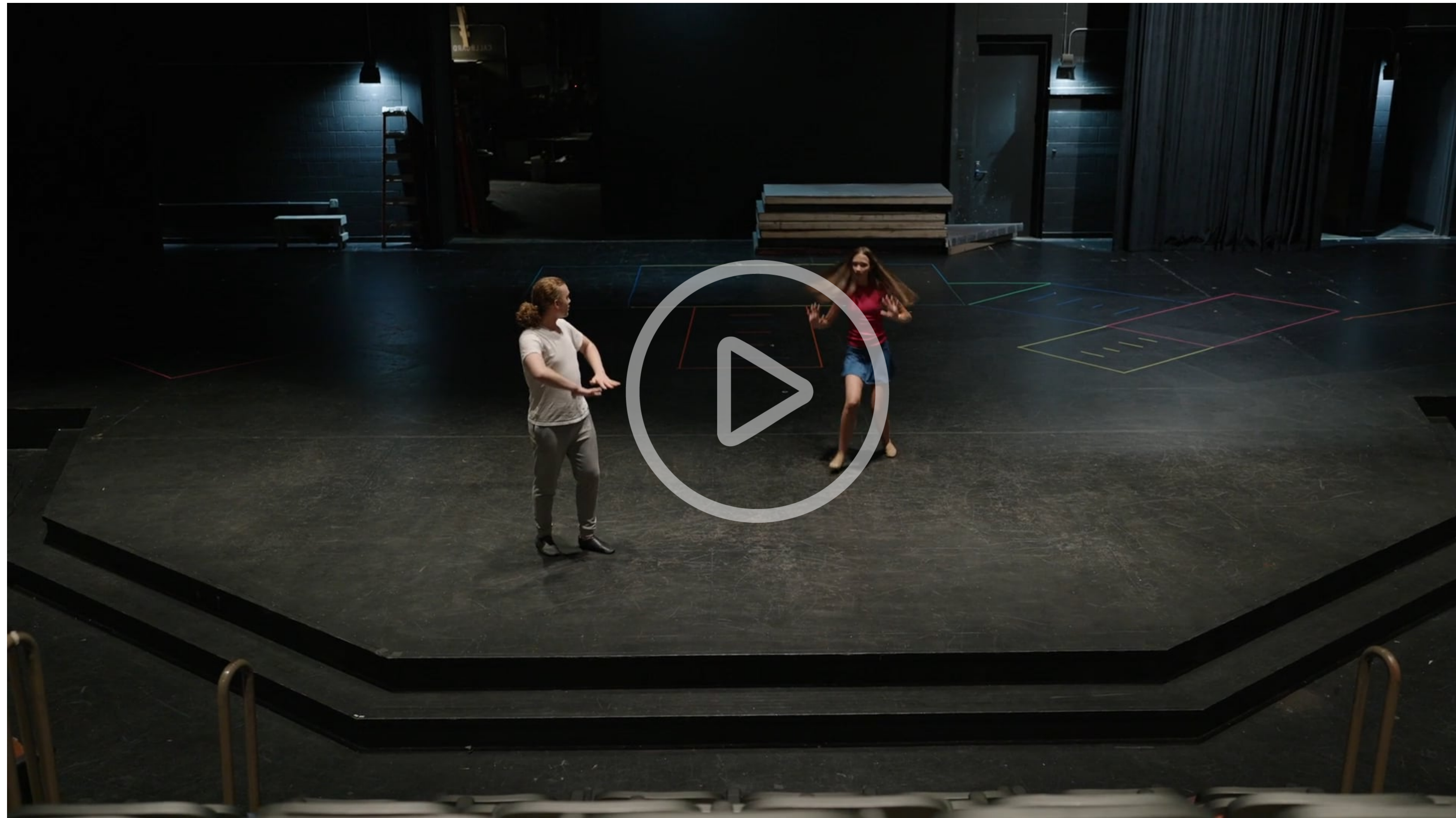
THE CREATIVE – VIDEOS













THE CREATIVE – SOCIAL MEDIA

BE OPEN
TO DIFFERENT FRIENDSHIPS

MUSIC

BE OPEN TO THE FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

BE OPEN TO THE FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO LOVE, LIFE AND WELLNESS

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO TRADITIONAL HEALING

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO THE FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO SCIENCE

$E=mc^2$

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG

BE OPEN
TO HEALTHY CHOICES

BE CANNABIS AWARE.ORG



*YO ELIJO
DECISIONES
SALUDABLES*



INFÓRMATE SOBRE
EL CANNABIS

**BE —
CANNABIS
— AWARE.ORG**

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INFÓRMATE SOBRE EL CANNABIS

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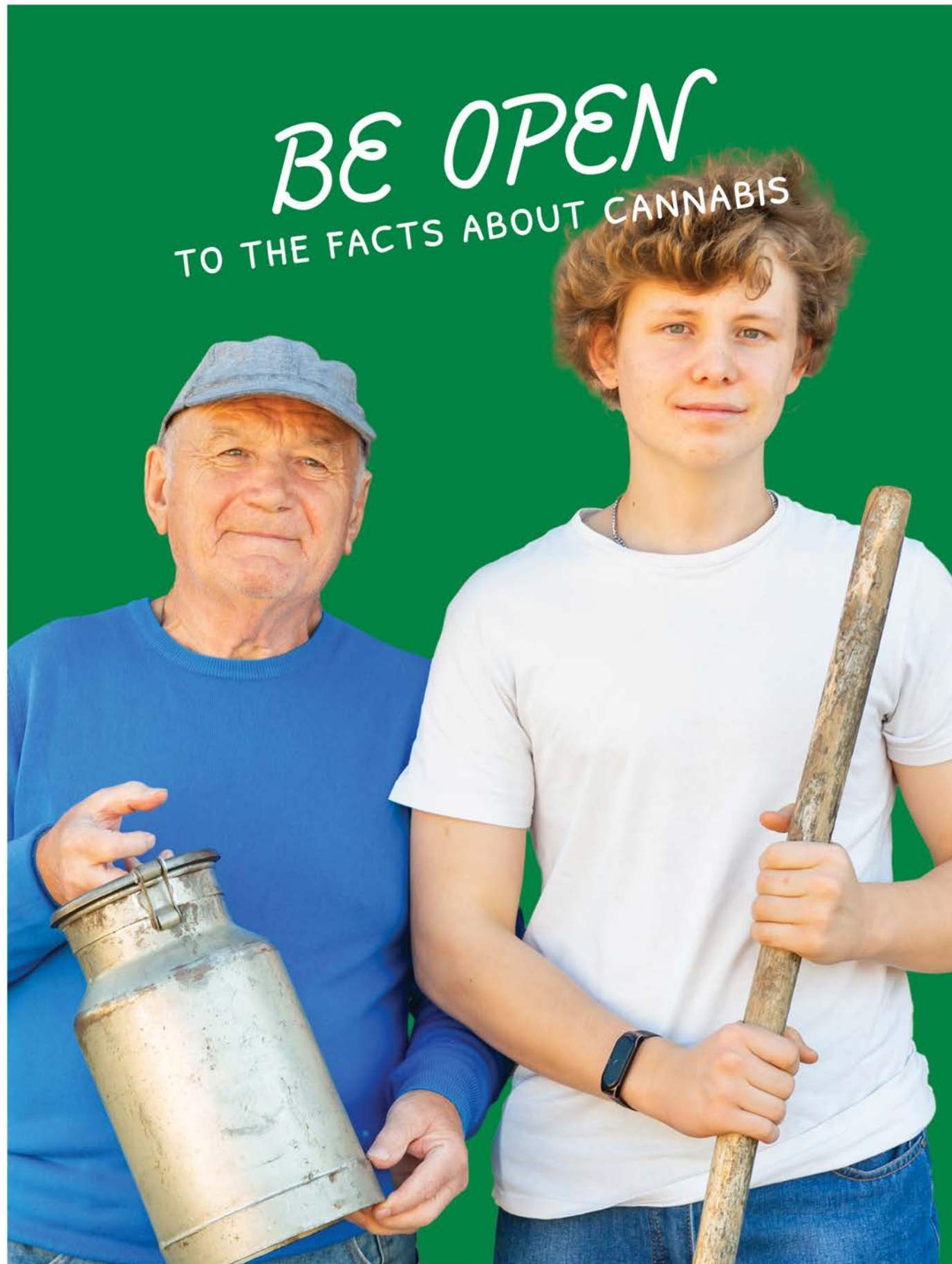




THE CREATIVE – FLYERS

BE OPEN

TO THE FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS



BE OPEN

TO BEING PREPARED

You have more influence over young people than you may realize.
They look up to you. They need your perspective, especially when it comes to the short- and long-term effects of cannabis. So go ahead and have brave conversations with the kids in your life. It'll open things up for them.



BE OPEN TO THE FACTS

- Regular cannabis use during adolescence and early adulthood may have lasting effects on cognitive functions like memory, learning, and decision-making.
- Cannabis can reshape a growing brain.
- High-THC products can trigger mental health struggles.
- Vaping or dabber isn't safer. Concentrates like wax or oils can have two to four times more THC than regular cannabis.

The truth is, cannabis is stronger than you may realize.
Learn the facts at: BeCannabisAware.org



*“Knowing the facts
help youth make
better life choices.”*

BE OPEN TO BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

1. **Lead with curiosity, not judgment**
Start by asking questions to understand their perspective. Young people open up more when they feel heard, not judged.
2. **Make it a conversation, not a lecture**
Talk with them, not at them. Use real stories and ask what they think. Your goal is to help them think critically and make informed choices.
3. **Share facts, not fear**
Be real about both the risks and reasons why people use cannabis. Say something like: “Some people use it to cope, but it can also mess with sleep or mental health—especially if your brain's still developing.”
4. **Acknowledge their independence**
Let them know: “You're in charge of your choices—I just want you to have the full picture.”
5. **Keep the door open**
Say something like: “If you ever want to talk about this—or anything else—I'm here, no pressure.”



BE OPEN TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS

BE — CANNABIS
— AWARE.ORG



BE OPEN TO GENTLE ENCOURAGEMENT



BE OPEN TO GENTLE ENCOURAGEMENT

Knowing where to turn for help can make all the difference. Whether you're looking for information about cannabis, dealing with peer pressure, need someone to talk to, or want to learn more about health and wellness, there are people and resources ready to support you without judgment.

WHY NEW INFORMATION MATTERS

Learning builds new neural pathways in your brain (teens are especially wired for this! New information helps you:

- Stay current and contribute meaningfully to conversations
- Improve decision-making with accurate facts
- Fight misinformation and spot truth from fiction

Cannabis Information

- Trusted Health Care Providers
- School Counselors and Health Educators
- National Alliance on Mental Health Minnesota (namimn.org)

“Remember: Admitting you don’t know something is a strength, not a weakness.”



BE OPEN TO THE
FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS



CRITICAL THINKING TOOLS

Understanding how to check sources helps you spot the difference between truth and fiction—and helps others do the same. We're living in the age of social media and AI, and false information spreads quickly. Always ask: Who said this? Why? What's the evidence?

Here are some tips for boosting your critical thinking skills.

- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Think with your head AND heart
- Listen to understand, not just respond
- Challenge your own beliefs—growth lives in discomfort

CRISIS AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Minnesota Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255
Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988

BE
CANNABIS
AWARE.ORG



BE OPEN TO COURAGEOUS MOMENTS



BE OPEN TO COURAGEOUS MOMENTS

Being brave doesn't always mean doing something risky—sometimes it means having the courage to say no when everyone else is saying yes. Good friends will understand that you're making the best choice for yourself. Critical thinking starts with curiosity, not assumptions, and it's okay to feel strongly about your choices—just make sure your facts are strong too.



SAYING NO WITH CONFIDENCE: READY RESPONSES YOU CAN USE.

1. *I'm prioritizing my mental health* "I learned that using cannabis can increase the risk of anxiety and depression. I'm all about keeping my mind clear and feeling good."
2. *Cannabis doesn't help me achieve my goals* "I have goals (school, sports, a future career, etc.) and cannabis can mess with memory, focus, and motivation. I don't want to risk that."
3. *I don't want to get in trouble* "Even if it's legal in Minnesota for adults now, it's not legal for us. I want to avoid getting in trouble and impacting my ability to play sports or get into college."
4. *Not using feels right for me* "I've made a personal choice not to use cannabis. It feels like the industry markets to young people, and I don't like feeling targeted."
5. *I'm trying to do what's right for my body* "I don't want to mess up my sleep or damage my breathing."

Critical Thinking Against Peer Pressure

- Ask questions: Who said this? Why? What's the evidence?
- Get information from multiple sources
- Remember: Most teens and young adults aren't regular cannabis users



BE OPEN TO THE
FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS

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— AWARE.ORG





BE OPEN TO BRAVE CONVERSATIONS



BE OPEN TO BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

Talking to young people about cannabis doesn't have to be intimidating. The goal isn't to control them—it's to help them think critically and make informed choices.



CONVERSATION APPROACH

Lead with Curiosity, Not Judgment Start by asking questions: "What do you hear people saying about cannabis?" Young people open up more when they feel heard, not judged.

Make it a Conversation, Not a Lecture Talk WITH them, not AT them. Use real stories, ask what they think, and avoid scare tactics.

Share Facts, Not Fear Be real about both risks and reasons people use cannabis: "Some people use it to cope, but it can also mess with sleep or mental health—especially if your brain's still developing."

Acknowledge Their Independence "You're in charge of your choices—I just want you to have the full picture." Respect their growing autonomy to build trust.

Keep the Door Open "If you ever want to talk about this—or anything else—I'm here, no pressure."



BE OPEN TO THE
FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS

BE OPEN TO BEING PREPARED

Get Informed First Learn facts about cannabis effects on developing brains, mental health, and high-potency THC products. Being informed builds credibility.

Know Your Why Ask yourself: "Why do I want this conversation?" Whether it's safety, health, or open communication, clarity helps you stay grounded.

Practice Makes Possible Rehearse what you'll say. This helps you avoid feeling tripped up in the moment.

Check Tone and Timing Pick relaxed moments, not during conflict. Aim for calm, respectful tone.

Be Ready to Listen Sometimes just hearing them out builds more trust than any fact you could share.

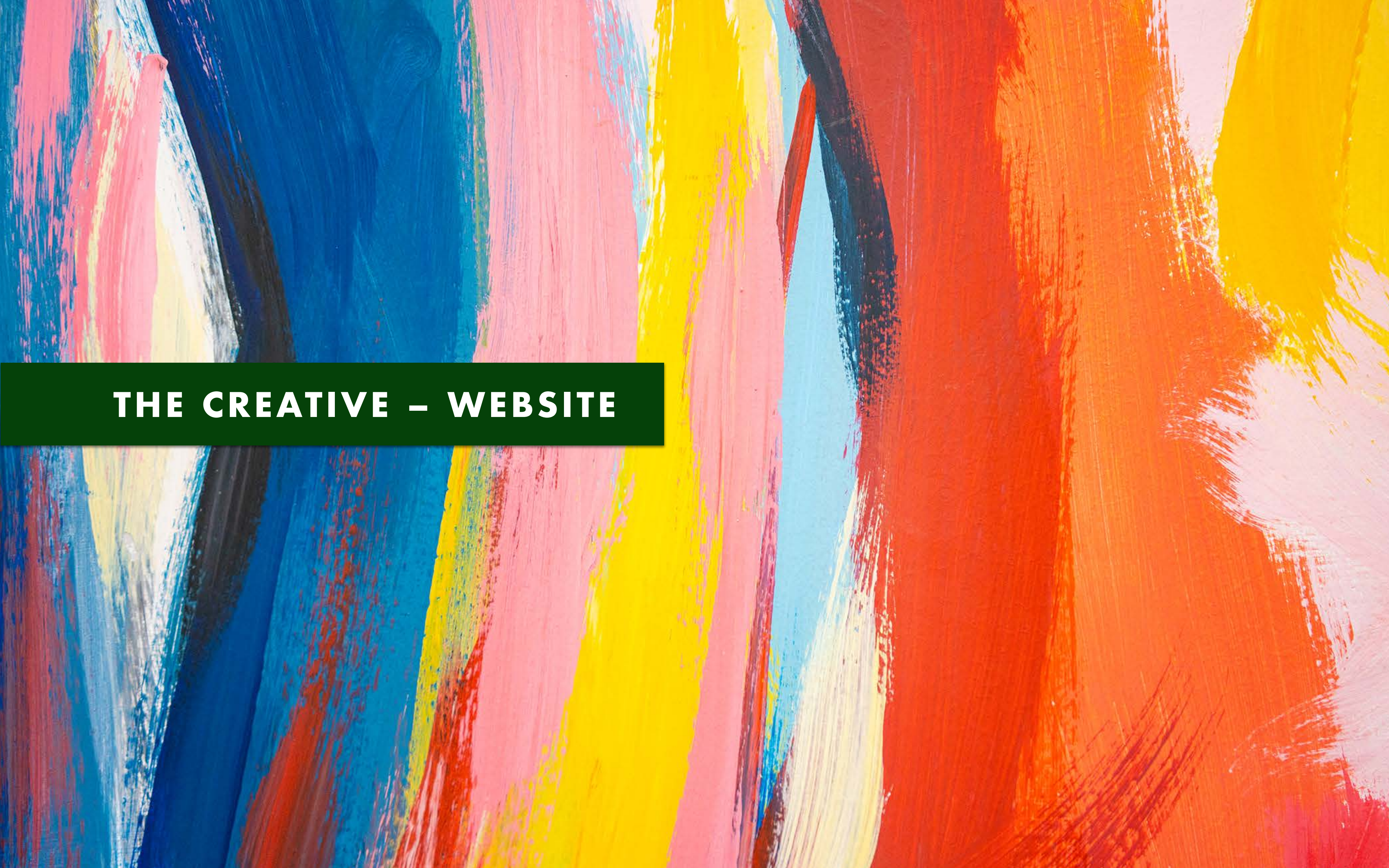


BE — CANNABIS
AWARE.ORG



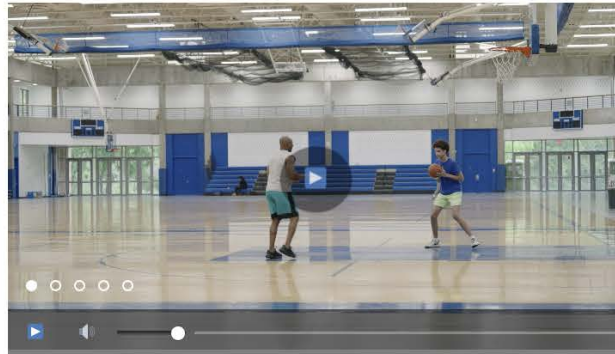
THE CREATIVE – POSTERS





THE CREATIVE – WEBSITE

BE OPEN
TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS



BE OPEN TO BEING BRAVE

***It's okay to say no...** Choosing not to use cannabis is a personal decision, and you never have to explain your reasons for saying no. Good friends will understand that you're making the best choice for yourself. But, if you'd need a few reasons, we have some you can use.*

I learned that using cannabis can increase the risk of anxiety and depression. I'm all about keeping my mind clear and feeling good.

I have goals (school, sports, a future career, etc.) and cannabis can mess with memory, focus, and motivation. I don't want to risk that.

I've made a personal choice not to use cannabis. It feels like the industry markets to young people, and I don't like feeling targeted.

Even if it's legal in Minnesota now, it's not for me. I want to avoid getting in trouble and impacting my ability to play sports or get into college.



[Privacy Policy](#)

Accessibility Statement

Visit [HEALTH.MN.GOV/CANNABIS](https://www.health.mn.gov/cannabis) to learn more about cannabis use in Minnesota.

**BE —
CANNABIS
— AWARE**

FIVE FACTS

1. DEPENDENCE

Did you know that people who use cannabis regularly can experience withdrawal symptoms?

2. BRAIN CHEMISTRY

2. BRAIN CHEMISTRY
Your brain continues to develop into your 20s, and cannabis can alter brain chemistry.

3. DECISION MAKING

Cannabis can impair your judgment making it difficult to think clearly.

4. MEMORY

Paying attention, learning, or just remembering things can be harder when you use cannabis.

5. MENTAL HEALTH

3. MENTAL HEALTH
From increased anxiety to decreased motivation, cannabis can impact your mental health.

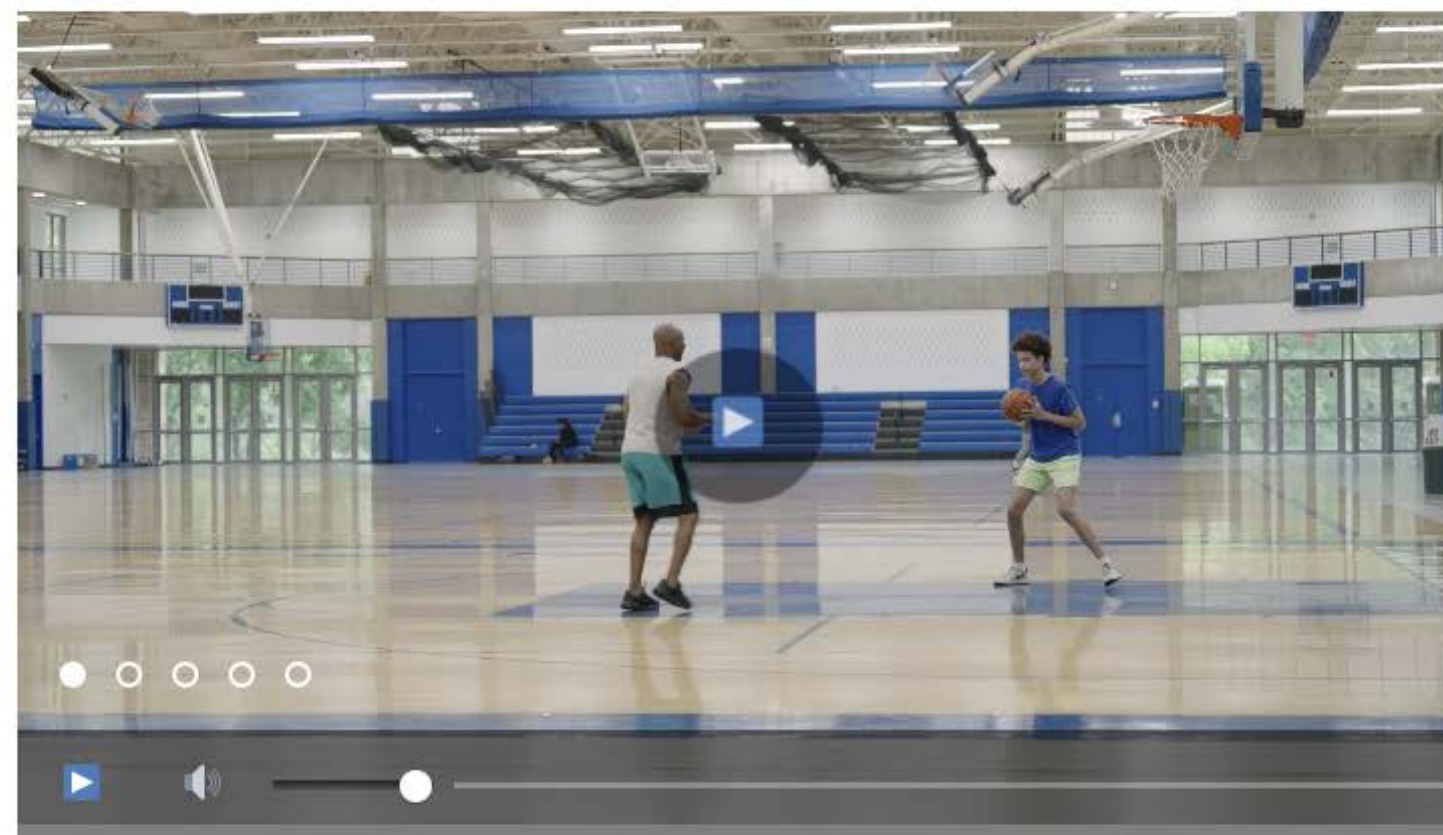
CANNABIS DANGER

THE FACTS ABOUT VAPING AND DABBING

Both of these products can create serious and harmful effects, and it's common to confuse the two because of their similar shape and style. Knowing their differences and harms is important. Vapes are electronic delivery devices for various substances—including cannabis (THC) and nicotine—and while some people think they're inhaling and exhaling a vapor, they're not. It's actually an aerosol, like spray paint. That aerosol contains tiny, harmful particles. With vape pens, it takes 5-10 seconds for the THC to reach the brain and for the effects to be felt.

KEEP READING ABOUT CANNABIS FACTS 

BE OPEN
TO THE FACTS
ABOUT CANNABIS



FIVE FACTS

1. DEPENDENCE

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BE
CANNABIS
AWARE

CANNABIS FACTS HELPFUL RESOURCES SELF-CARE CANNABIS CONVERSATIONS FOR MENTORS  



BE OPEN
TO CANNABIS
EDUCATION

THE SCIENCE
AROUND THC
& CANNABIS

THC AFFECTS BRAIN
DEVELOPMENT

Your brain keeps developing until around age 25. THC (the main compound in cannabis that makes you feel high), can mess with this process.

CANNABIS CAN IMPACT MENTAL
HEALTH

Cannabis can increase the risks of anxiety and depression—especially in people who start using at a young age or who have a history of mental health disorders.

IT'S HABIT-FORMING

Although cannabis isn't thought to be physically addictive like nicotine, addiction is possible. If you use cannabis on a regular basis and as a way to cope with different life challenges, you're more likely to develop a dependence. Withdrawal symptoms may include irritability, sleep issues, or cravings that make it hard to stop.

TODAY'S CANNABIS IS MUCH
STRONGER

THC levels in cannabis today are much higher than in past decades, especially in highly concentrated oils, vapes, and dab pens—products that aren't always regulated. This increases the risks of negative experiences like paranoia and anxiety.

IT AFFECTS DRIVING AND OTHER
DAILY ACTIVITIES, JUST LIKE
ALCOHOL

Because THC slows reaction time, impairs coordination, and reduces your attention span, using cannabis affects performance and increases the risk of accidents.



CANNABIS DANGER: THE FACTS
ABOUT VAPING AND DABBING

Both of these products can create serious and harmful effects, and it's common to confuse the two because of their similar shape and style. Knowing their differences and harms is important. Vapes are electronic delivery devices for various substances—including cannabis (THC) and nicotine—and while some people think they're inhaling and exhaling a vapor, they're not. It's actually an aerosol, like spray paint.

That aerosol contains tiny, harmful particles. With vape pens, it takes 5-10 seconds for the THC to reach the brain and for the effects to be felt. The potency of the THC depends on the concentration of the liquid used and the accuracy of the labeling. Because of these variables, the high from vaping can last anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours. Despite what some people think, vaping isn't harmless and it's not a safe alternative to smoking. Vaping produces formaldehyde—a cancer-causing substance—that's also linked to breathing problems, skin irritation, sleep disturbance, menstrual disorders, and infertility.

And the news about those "fun" flavors vape makers use isn't any better. Recent studies show that the chemicals in those flavored liquids are harmful to lung tissue and increase the risk of respiratory issues and lung cancer. Dab pens use highly concentrated THC wax which has to be heated in order to be inhaled. Like vape pens, dabbing requires the user to inhale an aerosol—not a vapor. The THC concentration in a dab pen is even higher than vapes, and that potency can make it harder to quit if used frequently. With dab pens, it takes 5-10 seconds for the THC to reach the brain and for the effects to be felt. Again, the high can be relatively short (about half an hour) or last several hours.

Everyone's body reacts differently to these products. Dabbing produces the same cancer-causing formaldehyde that vaping does, which increases mucus production, cell damage, chronic cough, and respiratory infections. In both vaping and dabbing, many users experience heart rate increases of 20-50 beats per minute. Because of its high THC levels, dabbing is one of the most prevalent reasons young people show up in the emergency room. Understanding these facts is one way you can be cannabis aware. Share them with your friends and stay in the know.

MYTH BUSTING

Cannabis isn't addictive

Cannabis can be addictive for some people who use it, and it's frequently habit-forming. About 1 in 6 cannabis users who start young may develop cannabis dependence. That means they may experience cravings, withdrawal, and difficulty quitting.

It's natural, so it must be safe

Just because something is natural, doesn't mean it's safe. Cannabis can affect mental health, especially in younger people or those with a family history of mental health conditions—and today's high-potency products carry higher risks than cannabis once did.

Cannabis makes me a more cautious driver

When we're on the road, being able to make quick decisions can be the difference between life and death. People on bikes, animals crossing the road, and other cars changing lanes are normal parts of driving. Cannabis slows reaction time, coordination, and attention span.

Everyone's using it

In reality, most teenagers and young adults aren't regular cannabis users. National and Minnesota-specific surveys show that the majority of high school students and people aged 18-25 don't use cannabis.

You can't overdose on cannabis

While a fatal overdose of cannabis is rare, it is easy to consume too much. Overconsumption can lead to unwanted or unintended effects like panic attacks, vomiting, hallucinations, or paranoia.

CANNABIS FACTS

Even though it might seem like everyone's using it, 2022 Minnesota Student survey results show that **92%** of Minnesota high school students reported not using cannabis in the previous month. Using cannabis in combination with other substances (like alcohol or nicotine) can cause dangerous and unintended reactions. These can be physical (like nausea and vomiting) or psychological (like panic, anxiety, or paranoia).

Regular cannabis use during adolescence and early adulthood may have lasting effects on cognitive functions like memory, learning, and decision-making. As of August 1, 2023, cannabis is only legal in Minnesota for adults 21 and older.

Privacy Policy

Accessibility Statement

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BE
CANNABIS
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CANNABIS
AWARE

CANNABIS FACTS HELPFUL RESOURCES SELF-CARE CANNABIS CONVERSATIONS FOR MENTORS  



BE OPEN
TO CANNABIS
EDUCATION

THE SCIENCE AROUND THC & CANNABIS

THC AFFECTS BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Your brain keeps developing until around age 25. THC (the main compound in cannabis that makes you feel high), can mess with this process.

CANNABIS CAN IMPACT MENTAL HEALTH

Cannabis can increase the risks of anxiety and depression—especially in people who start using at a young age or who have a history of mental health disorders.

IT'S HABIT-FORMING

Although cannabis isn't thought to be physically addictive like nicotine, addiction

CANNABIS DANGER: THE FACTS ABOUT VAPING AND DABBING

Both of these products can create serious and harmful effects, and it's common to confuse the two because of their similar shape and style. Knowing their differences and harms is important. Vapes are electronic delivery devices for various substances—including cannabis (THC) and nicotine—and while some people think they're inhaling and exhaling a vapor, they're not. It's actually an aerosol, like spray paint.

That aerosol contains tiny, harmful particles. With vape pens, it takes 5-10 seconds for the THC to reach the brain and for the effects to be felt. The potency of the THC depends on the concentration of the liquid used and the accuracy of the labeling. Because of these variables, the high from vaping can last anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours. Despite what some people think, vaping isn't harmless and it's not a safe alternative to smoking. Vaping produces formaldehyde—a cancer-causing substance—that's also linked to breathing problems, skin irritation, sleep disturbance, menstrual disorders, and infertility.

And the news about those "fun" flavors vape makers use isn't any better. Recent studies show that the chemicals in those flavored liquids are harmful to lung tissue and increase the risk of respiratory issues and lung cancer. Dab pens use highly concentrated THC wax which has to be heated in order to be inhaled. Like vape pens, dabbing requires the user to inhale an aerosol—not a vapor. The THC concentration in a dab pen is even higher than vapes, and that potency can make it harder to quit if used frequently. With dab pens, it takes 5-10 seconds for the THC to reach the brain and for the effects to be felt. Again, the high can be relatively short (about half an hour) or last several hours.

Mid-campaign media results – two weeks

- Outstate impressions – 2,325,931
- Metro impressions – 1,805,578
- Website engagement – 51,000+ users driven to site

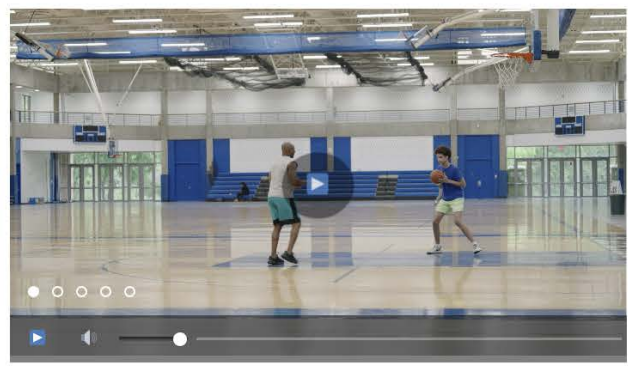


BE CANNABIS AWARE

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BE OPEN TO THE FACTS ABOUT CANNABIS





BE OPEN TO BEING BRAVE

It's okay to say no... Choosing not to use cannabis is a personal decision, and you never have to explain your reasons for saying no. Good friends will understand that you're making the best choice for yourself. But, if you'd need a few reasons, we have some you can use.

1. I'm prioritizing my mental health

I learned that using cannabis can increase the risk of anxiety and depression. I'm all about keeping my mind clear and feeling good.

2. Cannabis doesn't help me achieve my goals

I have goals (school, sports, a future career, etc.) and cannabis can mess with memory, focus, and motivation. I don't want to risk that.

3. Not using feels right for me

I've made a personal choice not to use cannabis. It feels like the industry markets to young people, and I don't like feeling targeted.

4. I don't want to get in trouble

Even if it's legal in Minnesota now, it's not for me. I want to avoid getting in trouble and impacting my ability to play sports or get into college.

5. I'm trying to do what's right for my body

I don't want to mess up my sleep or damage my breathing.



FIVE FACTS

1. DEPENDENCE

Did you know that people who use cannabis regularly can experience withdrawal symptoms?

2. BRAIN CHEMISTRY

Your brain continues to develop into your 20s, and cannabis can alter brain chemistry.

3. DECISION MAKING

Cannabis can impair your judgment, making it difficult to think clearly.

4. MEMORY

Paying attention, learning, or just remembering things can be harder when you use cannabis.

5. MENTAL HEALTH

From increased anxiety to decreased motivation, cannabis can impact your mental health.

CANNABIS DANGER

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KEEP READING ABOUT CANNABIS FACTS



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Visit [HEALTH.MN.GOV/CANNABIS](https://health.mn.gov/cannabis) to learn more about cannabis use in Minnesota.

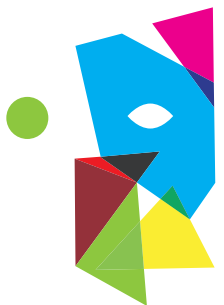
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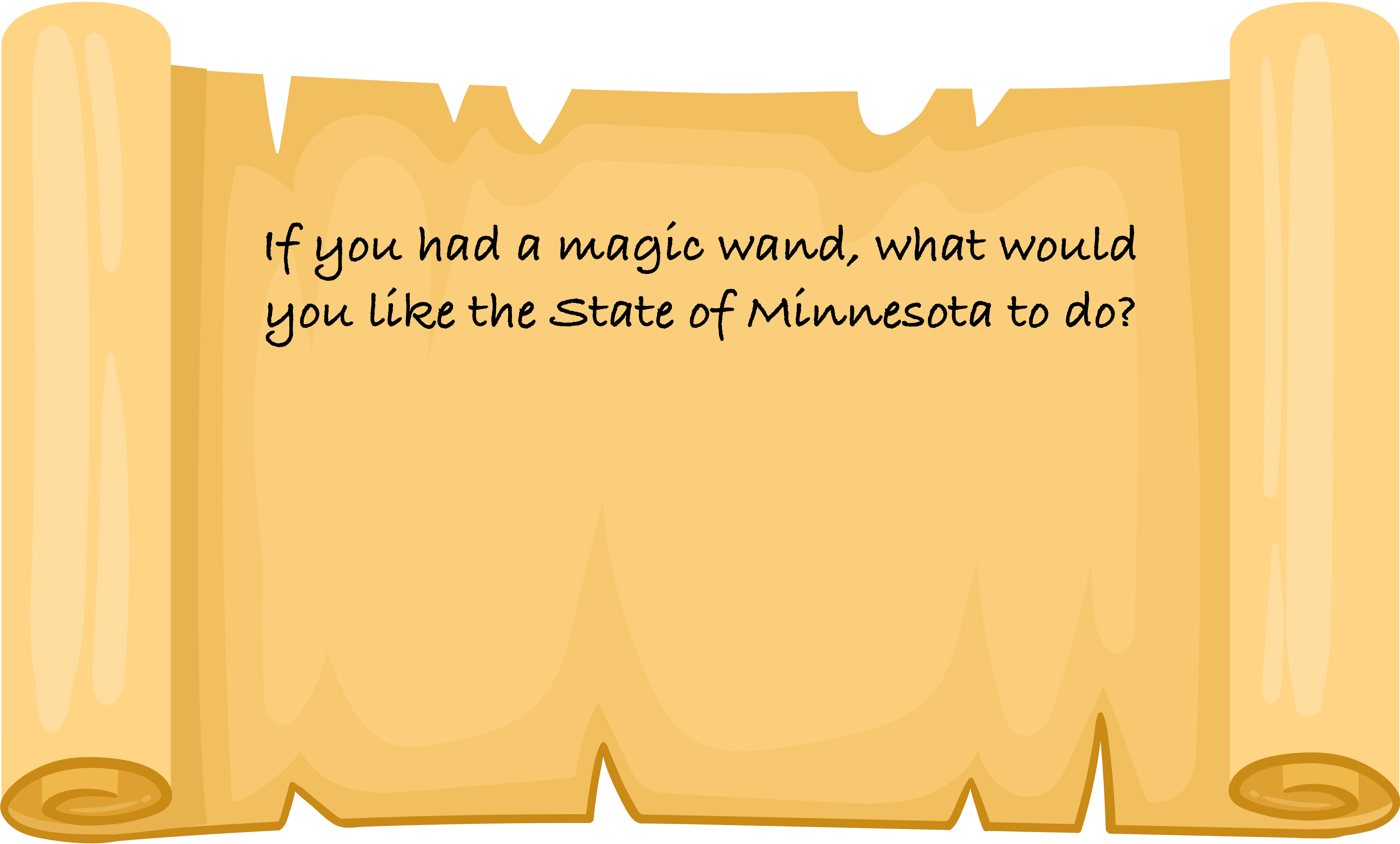
Q & A



Small Group Activity

1. How do you see using these materials?
2. What other materials would be helpful?





If you had a magic wand, what would
you like the State of Minnesota to do?



Neka
creative

Wild Brand Promise



MDH Cannabis Education and Prevention Timeline



CANNABIS EDUCATION & PREVENTION

Project timelines are subject to change

Quarter 3 | 2025

- Soft launch releases for youth and pregnant and breastfeeding/chestfeeding audiences
- Media plan for *Be Cannabis Aware* campaign begins
- Cannabis communications project launches: research, message testing, and capacity building

Quarter 4 | 2025

- Media Plan for *Be Cannabis Aware* ends
- Research and message testing begins
- Initial engagement with local public health, Tribal health, and other community partners

Quarter 1 | 2026

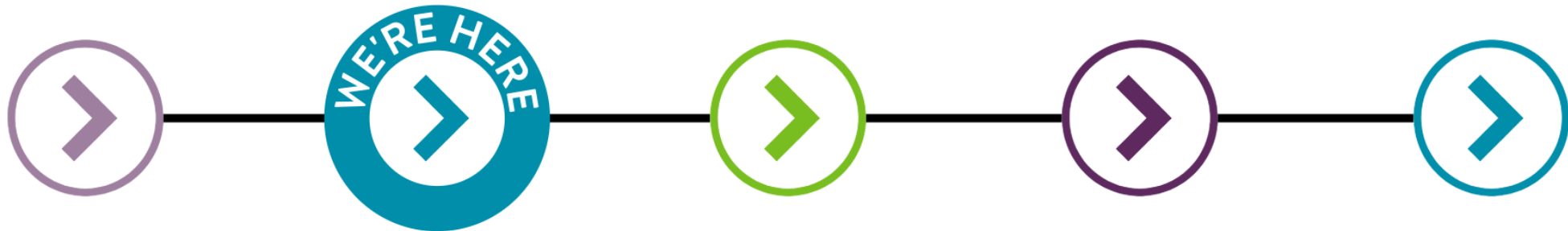
- Research and message testing ends
- Capacity building begins with involvement from local public health, Tribal health, and other community partners

Quarter 2 | 2026

- Capacity building and partner engagement ends
- Final report and engagement recommendations shared

Quarter 3 | 2026

- Communications and outreach implementation begins



Thank You

Substance Use Prevention, Education, and Recovery Unit

Contact us: health.super.mdh@state.mn.us