

Debra E. Koss, MD,
FAACAP, DFAPA

APA Area 3 Legislative
Institute

September 7, 2019

Medical and Recreational Marijuana

State Marijuana Laws – Medical Use

- 43 States have passed legislation authorizing medical use
- States that have NOT passed laws include
 - Alabama
 - Idaho
 - Iowa
 - Kansas
 - Kentucky
 - Nebraska
 - South Dakota
 - Tennessee (research only)

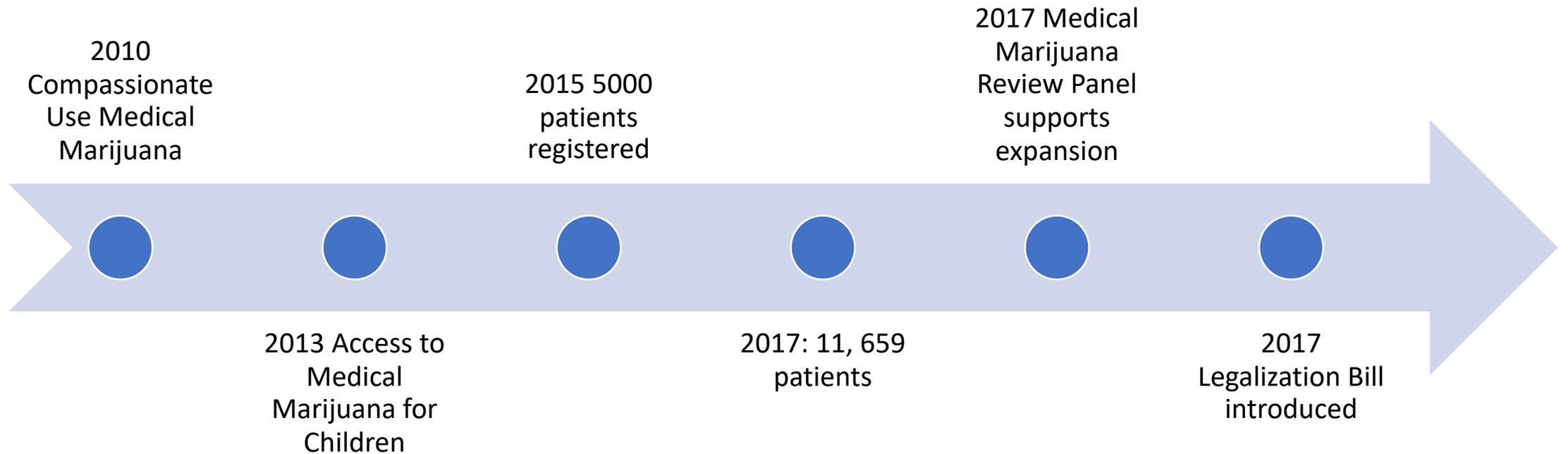
State Marijuana Laws-Recreational Use

- The following states have passed laws allowing for adult recreational use:
 - Alaska
 - California
 - Colorado
 - District of Columbia
 - Illinois
 - Maine
 - Massachusetts
 - Nevada
 - Oregon
 - Washington
- Oklahoma's legislation is pending

Area 3 States Marijuana Laws

	State authorizes medical use	Qualifying conditions	State allows adult recreational use	Specific law authorizing CBD or THC
DELAWARE	Yes	Yes	No	No
MARYLAND	Yes	Yes	No	No
NEW JERSEY	Yes	Yes	No	No
PENNSYLVANIA	Yes, not operational	Yes	No	No
VIRGINIA	Yes	No	No	Yes, CBD and THC (5%)

NJ Timeline



NJ Recreational Marijuana Bill

- “The criminalization of marijuana has only served to clog our courts and cloud people’s future, so we will legalize marijuana.....And while there are financial benefits, this is overwhelmingly about doing what is right and just.”
 - Governor-elect Phil Murphy (November 11, 2017)
- A 1348 / S 830 would legalize possession and personal use of a small amount of marijuana for individuals over 21
 - Introduced January 2018
 - NO FURTHER ACTION

NJ August 2019

- Medical Marijuana serving almost 54,000 patients (DOH)
- Top 5 conditions include
 - Chronic pain due to musculoskeletal disorder (28.9%)
 - Anxiety (23.8%)
 - Intractable skeletal spasticity (15.3%)
 - PTSD (7.9%)
 - Severe or chronic pain due to cancer or HIV (5.6%)
- Expansion of medical marijuana continues
 - Opioid addiction
 - Tourette Syndrome
- Jake Honig Compassionate Use Medical Cannabis Act
 - Physicians can authorize up to 3 ounces
 - Patients authorized to receive up to 12 month supply
 - No purchase limits for terminal patients

Elements of an Effective Advocacy Campaign

- Define the Issue
- Develop an Advocacy Toolkit
- Identify Allies and Opponents
- Identify Legislative “Champions”
- Identify the Best Time to Communicate Your Message
- Remain Steadfast in Your Efforts

Define the Issue

- *“Marijuana legalization has been promoted as a public health measure to decrease drug-related crime, as a solution to the harms caused by marijuana criminalization, including incarceration, and as a significant source of revenue. These claims have not been validated and must be weighed against the potential negative consequences.”*
- *“NJPA opposes proposals to legalize marijuana.”*
- *“There is no current scientific evidence that marijuana is in any way beneficial for the treatment of any psychiatric disorder. In contrast, there is an association between cannabis use and psychiatric disorders, and adolescents are particularly vulnerable.”*
 - Excerpts from NJPA Position Statement 2016

Develop an Advocacy Toolkit

- APA Policy Statement on Marijuana as Medicine (2013)
- APA Policy Statement on the Use of Medical Marijuana for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (2013)
- APA Position Statement on Need to Monitor and Assess the Public Health and Safety Consequences of Legalizing Marijuana (2014)
- AACAP Policy Statement Marijuana Legalization (2015)
- AACAP Policy Statement Use of Medical Marijuana in Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (2019)

Marijuana and Youth: Utilizing Science to Inform Policy



Brain development continues until the age of 25

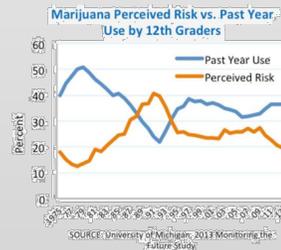
Cannabis use in youth is associated with decreased brain connections and volumes in areas involved with memory, decision-making, self-control, and motor functions.¹

Effects of cannabis use in adolescence

- Decreased academic performance, increased drop-out rates, and decreased college enrollment and educational achievement.
- Decreased occupational performance and increased unemployment later in life.
- Increased rates of and worsening of psychotic disorders (including 2-5x increase in schizophrenia), mood, and anxiety disorders.
- Decreased IQ by 8 points on average.

Rates of Use²

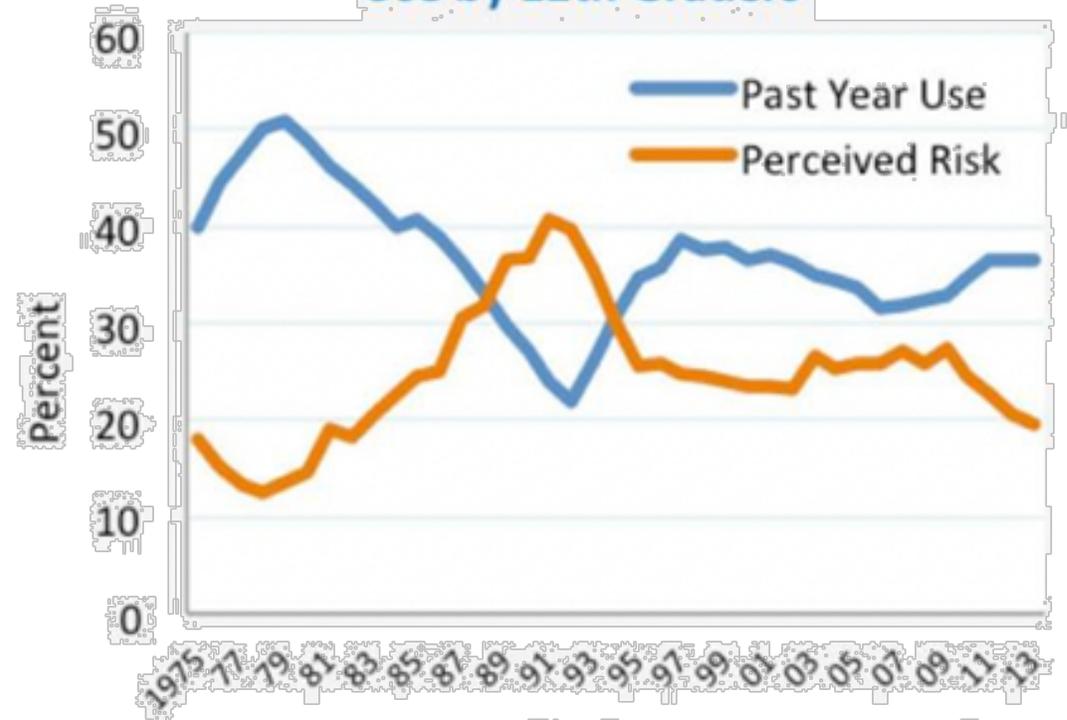
- 45% of US high school seniors have used cannabis
- 23% of US high school seniors use currently
- 6% of US high school seniors use daily
- Decreased perceived risk is associated with increased use in youth.



Cannabis Use and Addiction³

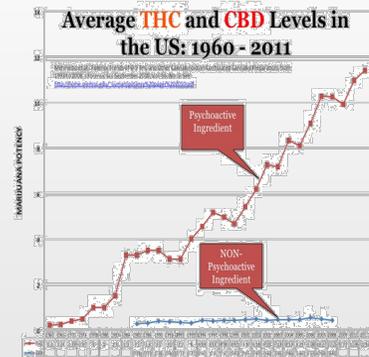
- Earlier use predicts greater risk of developing addiction to cannabis.
- People who begin using marijuana before the age of 18 are 4-7 times more likely than adults to develop a marijuana use disorder.⁴
- Youth who use cannabis are at greater risk for developing addictions to other substances including opioids.

Marijuana Perceived Risk vs. Past Year Use by 12th Graders



SOURCE: University of Michigan, 2013 Monitoring the Future Study

Marijuana and Youth: Utilizing Science to Inform Policy



Marijuana Potency and Youth⁵

- Currently marijuana has higher potency (12% THC) vs. marijuana in 1990's (3%) and edibles and concentrates are even higher (62%).
- Increased potency cannabis use associated with dangerous effects including unrelenting vomiting, difficulty breathing, increased heart rate, and severe psychotic symptoms.
- Increased potency has been associated with increases in adolescent detox/rehab admissions and calls to poison control due to child marijuana ingestion and exposures 2-fold increased rate of accidental exposure in children <6 in states with legalized marijuana.

Recommendations

NJCCAP, NJPA and NAMI oppose any legislation that will increase access of marijuana to adolescents. We recommend the following steps be taken:

- Increased funding of educational programs for youth and their families about the effects of marijuana on youth.
- Increased funding of research into the effects of marijuana on youth and treatment strategies for marijuana addiction.
- Increased access to substance treatment programs for youth.
- Implementation of steps to prevent the distribution of marijuana and cannabis products to children and adolescents.

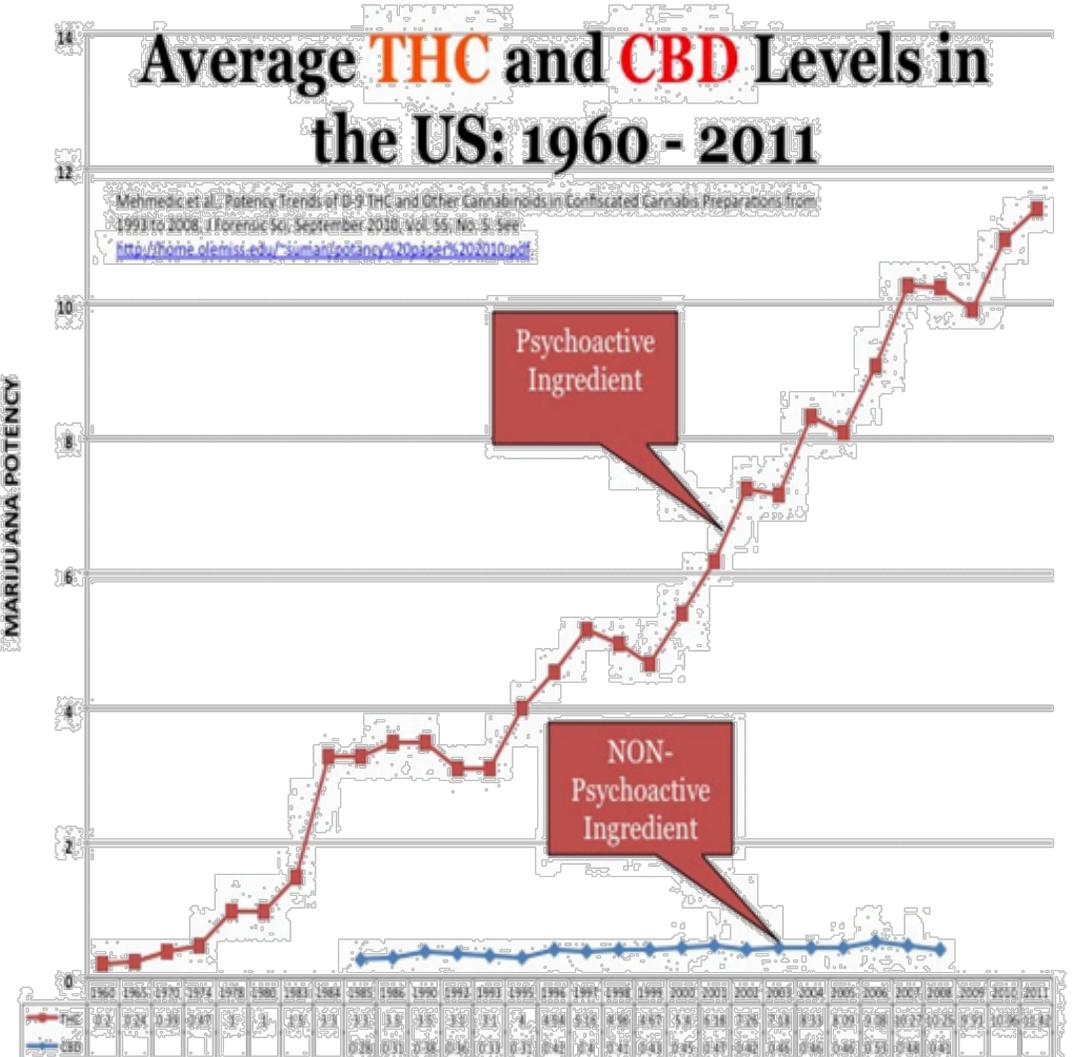
¹Volkow, ND, et al. Adverse health effects of marijuana use. *N Engl J Med.* 2014 June 5; 370 (23): 2219-2227.

²Johnston, LD, et al. (2014). *Monitoring the Future national results on drug use: 1975-2013: Overview, Key Findings on Adolescent Drug Use.* Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan.

³Hall, W, Degenhardt L. Adverse health effects of non-medical cannabis use. *Lancet.* 2009 Oct 17; 374(9698): 1383-91.

⁴Winters KC, Lee C-YS. Likelihood of developing an alcohol and cannabis use disorder during youth: association with recent use and age. *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2008;92(1-3):239-247.

⁵ElSohly MA, et al. Changes in cannabis potency over the last 2 decades (1995-2014): Analysis of current data in the United States. *Biol Psychiatry.* 2016 Apr 1; 79(7):613-9.



Identify Allies and Opponents

Allies

- NJ Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- NAMI NJ
- Smart Approached to Marijuana/ NJ Responsible Approaches to Marijuana Policy
- NJ Legislative Black Caucus
- Medical Society of NJ

Opponents

- Governor Murphy
- Senate President and Speaker of the Assembly
- Industry supporting Alternate Treatment Centers

Identify Legislative Champions

- “We know there are negative factors that we will need to safeguard against, from children’s access to marijuana-infused edibles to motor vehicle accidents caused by impaired driving to the effect of marijuana on babies and the impact of legalizations on communities of color.”
 - Senator Ronald Rice (D-Chairman NJ Legislative Black Caucus)

Identify the Best Time to Communicate

- Count down: the first 100 days
 - March 2018: Advocacy Day State Capitol (NJPA, NJCCAP, NAMI-NJ)
 - Public Forums hosted by Black Caucus and Smart Approaches to Marijuana
- *APA Engage* Action Alert and *AACAP Voter Voice* Action Alert
- Op-eds
- Presentations to other medical organizations

Remain Steadfast in Your Efforts

- Governor Murphy wants “*one more shot*” in 2019
- Senate President Sweeney wants “*one more pass*” in 2019
- US Surgeon General Advisory: Marijuana Use and the Developing Brain “*No amount of marijuana use during pregnancy or adolescence is known to be safe...Science-based messaging campaigns and targeted prevention programming are urgently needed to ensure that risks are clearly communicated and amplified by local, state and national organizations.*”

Call to Action

- *“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

• *Margaret Mead*