



# **BERRIEN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Berrien County Health Department Brings Awareness to Dangers of Underage Marijuana Use**

**Benton Harbor, Michigan, July 11, 2022** – The Berrien County Health Department Substance Use Disorder Prevention Team is bringing awareness to the dangers of underage marijuana use.

The campaign seeks to educate individuals under the age of 21 about the effects of marijuana use and discourage them from using the drug. It also provides resources for parents to talk to kids about marijuana and tips to keep it and other controlled substances they may have in their homes away from individuals who are underage.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2019 37% of high school seniors reported they had used marijuana in their lifetime, and 22% reported using marijuana in the last 30 days.

Since teen brains are still developing, underage marijuana use can have many negative impacts on children, especially those who use the drug once a week or more. This includes:

- Difficulty thinking and problem-solving
- Difficulty paying attention
- Problems with memory and learning
- Problems with school and social life
- Reduced coordination

When compared with students who did not use marijuana, teens who regularly use were found to be more likely to do poorly in school and have less motivation. Other impacts of regular marijuana use underage include greater risk of mental health issues, addiction and impaired driving.

“While Michigan allows for the recreational use of marijuana by adults who are 21 and older, it is important to keep minors from using as they face greater health risks,” said Lisa Peeples-Hurst, public health promotion and prevention supervisor. “If you decide to use marijuana as an adult, it is your responsibility to talk to your children about it and other drugs and make sure they aren’t able to access your cannabis.”

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, parents can help reduce their child’s risk by talking to them about marijuana. SAMHSA has [resources available](#) to help parents and other adults start conversations with underage people in their life about marijuana and other substances.

For more information about preventing underage marijuana use, visit [berriencounty.org/1580/Get-the-Dirt-on-Weed](http://berriencounty.org/1580/Get-the-Dirt-on-Weed) or contact Lisa Peeples-Hurst at 269.927.5690.

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