

Drug & Alcohol Education Newsletter

CDC Health Advisory: Increases in Availability of Cannabis Products Containing Delta-8 THC and Reported Cases of Adverse Event

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol, also known as delta-8 THC, is a psychoactive substance found in the Cannabis sativa plant, of which marijuana and hemp are two varieties. Delta-8 THC is one of over 100 cannabinoids produced naturally by the cannabis plant but is not found in significant amounts in the cannabis plant. As a result, concentrated amounts of delta-8 THC are typically manufactured from hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD).

Recommendations for the Public and Consumers

- Consumers should be aware of possible limitations in the labeling of products containing THC and CBD even from approved marijuana and hemp retailers. Products reporting only delta-9 THC concentration, but not total THC may underestimate the psychoactive potential for consumers.
- Consumers should be aware that products labeled as hemp or CBD may contain delta-8 THC, and that products containing delta-8 THC can result in psychoactive effects. Delta-8 THC products are currently being sold in many states, territories, and tribal nations where non-medical adult cannabis use is not permitted by law. In addition, retailers may sell products outside of regulated dispensaries in states, territories, and tribal nations where cannabis use is permitted by law. This may provide consumers with a false sense of safety, as delta-8 THC products may be labeled as hemp or CBD, which consumers may not associate with psychoactive ingredients.
- Parents who consume edibles and other products that contain THC and CBD should store them safely away from children. Children may mistake some

edibles that contain THC and CBD (e.g., fruit-flavored gummies containing delta-8 THC) as candy.

- If consumers experience adverse effects of THC- or CBD-containing products that are an immediate danger to their health, they should call their local or regional poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 or 911 or seek medical attention at their local emergency room and report the ingredients of ingested products to healthcare providers.
- Consumers should be aware that the cannabis marketplace continues to evolve. Other cannabis-derived products of potential concern have emerged recently, such as those containing delta-10 THC and THC-O acetate. More research is needed to understand the health effects of products containing these compounds.

Preparing for an Intervention

[Partnership for Drug-Free Kids](#)

An intervention can be as simple as a conversation in which you express your concern to someone about his or her drug use – it is not an attack on that person, and it doesn't always need to be followed by rehab. The point of having an intervention with your teen is to address his drug or alcohol problem and lead him to help if he needs it. A simple intervention can take place between you and your child in your own home – and it can be very successful, even if it only tackles small goals at first. Just making it clear to your teen that you don't want him drinking or using drugs is an accomplishment. Confronting your child about his drug use will probably be uncomfortable for both of you, and you may even think it's unnecessary. But you can never be too safe or intervene too early. Casual or experimental drug use can quickly turn into drug abuse, dependence or addiction and can lead to accidents, legal trouble, and serious health issues. That's why it's imperative that you have an intervention as soon as your instinct tells you that something is wrong. If you are at all concerned about your child's drug or alcohol use – or even just

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have a bad feeling – you can and should start the conversation.

Delay the conversation if:

- Your child is drunk or high. Your intervention won't be productive – or remembered – if your child is under the influence. Wait until he or she is sober, then talk.
- You're angry. Yelling isn't going to get you anywhere. Have the conversation when you're feeling calm and level-headed.
- You aren't prepared. This tough conversation will be even harder if you can't answer your teen's questions or back up your claims. Before you initiate the intervention, read the rest of this guide, talk with someone you trust, and breathe.

How to prepare:

- **Talk with your spouse/partner.** If your teen's other parent or caregiver does not share the same beliefs and values that you do when it comes to drugs, you will certainly hear about it from your kid. So get on the same page as your spouse or partner before you intervene with your child. "Getting on the same page" doesn't necessarily mean agreeing – it means committing to present a united front, even if the two of you disagree on the issue. "As it hard as it may be to go along with something your husband or wife is saying, especially if you totally think they don't know what they're talking about, you really want to give your child the message that there's teamwork," advises family therapist Dr. Jane Greer. Remember: This is a stressful situation for both you and your spouse, and you will need one another's support. Do not blame your partner for your teen's drug or alcohol use, or allow him/her to blame you. Your teen's problem is no one's fault, but you and partner do need to work together to deal with it.
- **Recognize the significance of addiction in your family.** For some, trying drugs or alcohol once or twice is just part of the teen experience. But if there is a history of addiction in your family, your child is

much more likely than other kids to become addicted. Understand this serious risk and think about how you are going to explain this to your child in a way that will make him listen. Remember: Don't deny addiction in your family. There's no reason to be embarrassed, and you can actually use your family's history of addiction as a tool to keep your own child away from drugs. You can say, "As you know, Aunt Sue is an alcoholic. You've seen how much she hurts herself and the people around her when she drinks. Since alcoholism runs in the family, you need to be especially careful to avoid drinking so that you don't develop the same problems."

- **Set a desired outcome for your intervention.** The "drug talk" is actually not one talk – it's a series of conversations. Chances are, your first intervention will not resolve all problems – and that's okay. But if you set a goal (even a small one) before you start talking, you will know where you want your conversation to ultimately lead. Would you like your teen to see a therapist? Stop binge drinking at parties? Obey curfew? Come up with a specific purpose for your intervention, and then work toward achieving it. Remember: Don't set your expectations too high. Your teen may not even admit to drug use the first time you intervene, let alone pledge to stop using or get help. Set reasonable goals, and realize that just expressing to your teen that you don't want him using drugs or drinking is a small triumph.
- **Prepare yourself for your teen's reaction.** Your teen will not be happy that you're approaching him about his drug or alcohol use. That's to be expected. What you might not expect is to be called a liar, hypocrite or snoop. Think about how you will handle these accusations if they come up.

[Learn more tips by reading the intervention e-book here.](#)

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What is Spice or K2?

[National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

Spice is a mix of herbs (shredded plant material) and laboratory-made chemicals with mind-altering effects. It is sometimes misleadingly called “synthetic marijuana” or “fake weed” because some of the chemicals in it are similar to ones in marijuana. But, its effects are sometimes very different from marijuana, and often much stronger. Usually, the chemicals are sprayed onto plant materials to make them look like marijuana.

Spice is most often labeled “not for human consumption” and disguised as incense. Sellers of the drug try to lead people to believe it is “natural” and therefore harmless, but it is neither. In fact, the actual effects of spice can be unpredictable and, in some cases, severe or cause death.

How Spice is Used

Most people smoke Spice by rolling it in papers (like with marijuana or handmade tobacco cigarettes); sometimes, it is mixed with marijuana. Some people also make it as an herbal tea for drinking. Others buy Spice products as liquids to use in e-cigarettes.

SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS (K2/SPICE)
UNPREDICTABLE DANGER

K2 /SPICE IS **NOT** MARIJUANA

It's often called *synthetic marijuana* or *fake weed* because some of its chemicals are like those in marijuana. The effects can be unpredictable and in some cases, severe or even life-threatening.



Shredded, dried
plant material



Man-made
chemicals



A “natural” drug?
Not even close.

Meet Molly: The Truth About MDMA (Ecstasy or “E”)

[National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)



Molly is a nickname for MDMA, a human-made drug that has similarities to both stimulants (like methamphetamine) and hallucinogens. MDMA (also known as Ecstasy or “E”) is sometimes used at dance clubs and concerts. It can make people feel more energetic and more sociable.

Molly is billed as being “pure” MDMA, but that’s usually not true. It’s often loaded with fillers and other illegal drugs. In some recent cases, tests found that drugs sold as Molly didn’t contain any MDMA at all.

Molly/MDMA/Ecstasy can also have serious side effects—and the side effects don’t stop once it leaves a person’s system. Here are some other facts about Molly.

Molly is often mixed up.

MDMA is a synthetic drug, meaning it’s made in a lab with chemicals. Molly comes in colorful pills, tablets, or capsules that sometimes have cartoon-like images on them.

Each pill can have different combinations of substances in it. A lot of the Molly seized by the police contains one or more added substances like:

- [Cocaine](#)
- [PCP](#)
- [Meth](#)

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- [Over-the-counter cough medicines](#)
- [Synthetic cathinones \("bath salts"\)](#)

Each substance in that list has its own health risks, and those risks can increase when it's combined with MDMA. Combining this mixture with *other* substances, like marijuana and alcohol, can increase the risks even more.

Molly can make you hyper—at a cost.

People who use Molly might feel very alert, or "hyper." But MDMA can also cause muscle cramping, nausea, and blurred vision, and increase your heart rate and blood pressure. It can also cause a very high temperature and even death—especially in crowded hot places that are already raising your body temperature.

Molly can be depressing.

Studies suggest that Molly can disrupt the body's serotonin system. [Serotonin](#) is a mood-enhancing chemical, and low levels of serotonin are associated with poor memory and depressed mood. Some people who use Molly regularly experience depression and memory impairment, as well as anxiety, paranoia, and confusion.

The bottom line is: You never know what you're getting with Molly, but it probably won't be good.

What is DXM?

[Stop Medicine Abuse](#)

Dextromethorphan (DXM) is the active ingredient in most over-the-counter cough medicines. Approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in the 1950s, DXM is the most widely used cough suppressant ingredient in the United States. When taken according to labeling instructions, medicines that contain DXM are

safe and effective. However, when taken in excessive amounts higher than recommended doses, DXM can produce dangerous [side effects](#).



Slang Terms

- **Dex or Drex** Street terms for cold and cough medicines with dextromethorphan.
- **Lean** Also known as purple drank, purple lean, sizzurp, dirty sprite, and lean drink—is a combination of prescription cough syrup containing codeine, soda, and sometimes hard candy.
- **Orange crush** A term for cough medicines with dextromethorphan or codeine. It may stem from the orange-colored syrup of certain brands.
- **Poor man's PCP, or Poor man's X** Products with dextromethorphan, since they are inexpensive, but can cause effects similar to those of other drugs of abuse (PCP or ecstasy) at high doses.

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- **Red devils / Red hots** Another term for cough medicine tablets which may be small and red.
- **Robo / Tussin** Derived from the brand name Robitussin, it is common slang for any cough syrup.
- **Rojo** "Rojo" is Spanish for "red" and refers to the color of some syrups and pills.
- **Skittles** Spilled to Coricidin tablets with DXM since they have a size and shape similar to the candy.
- **Syrup head** Someone who uses cough syrups or other products with dextromethorphan, codeine, or promethazine to get high.
- **Triple C's or CCCs** A term for Coricidin tablets with dextromethorphan (slang from "Coricidin Cold and Cough").
- **Velvet or velvet syrup** Cough syrup with DXM.
- **Vitamin D** Another term for medicines with DXM.

Which medicines contain DXM?

More than 100 OTC medicines containing DXM are on the market today. These medicines come in the form of liquids, capsules, gels, lozenges and tablets. Common DXM-containing cough medicines include forms of Alka Seltzer Plus™, Comtrex™, Coricidin™, Delsym™, Dimetapp™, Mucinex DM™, Pediacare™, Robitussin™, Theraflu™, Triaminic™, Tylenol Cough & Cold™, Vicks DayQuil™/NyQuil™, Vicks Formula 44™ and more, including store brand versions of these products. For a full list of DXM-containing cough medicines, [click here](#).

Prevent Cough Medicine Abuse

- **Educate yourself** about cough medicine abuse and share this information with others who are in contact with your teen, such as school administrators, coaches, and counselors.
- **Talk to Your Teens** Be clear that you do not want your teen taking medicine without your knowledge. Teach your teens and younger children to respect medicines. Medicines are important tools in healthcare, but they must be used according to directions. Make sure your teen understands that abusing cough medicine—just as abusing illegal drugs — can be very dangerous.

- **Safeguard Medications** Know what medicines are in your home and take notice if they go missing. If your child needs medicines during school hours, speak with school officials about medicine policies.

How to Monitor Your Children's Phone

[Parental Control Now](#)



Your children are vulnerable online, thanks to a range of threats that continue to evolve as technology does.

But, it's not all doom and gloom: you can keep your kids safe online (and maintain your own peace of mind) by monitoring your child's devices.

It's incredibly simple and unobtrusive: you can easily stay in the loop as to their online activities, be aware of their whereabouts, and be alerted if or when something potentially worrying could be in the works. Whether it is their current location, the last conversations they had, text

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messages sent, social network posts or even the most recent photos on their phone, **you can be in complete control while maintaining your children's privacy.** You can choose to block certain websites, as well as unauthorized online payments, gaming apps, content and anything else you deem as inappropriate for your children to be accessing.

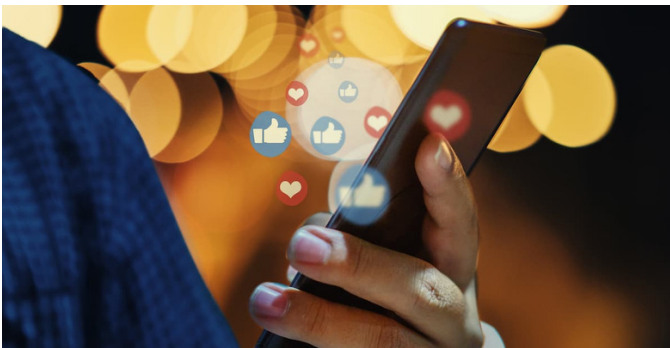
Of course, your children have their own privacy needs, and will almost certainly be resistant to the idea of you monitoring and 'spying' on them! That's why a parental control app is a perfect idea: they get their privacy, and you get to safeguard your children, only when it's necessary. It's a win-win situation.

Here are our top picks for parental control apps:

1. [mSpy](#) – **Discreet 24/7 live tracking** of all incoming, outgoing, or deleted text messages, calls and GPS location.
2. [bark](#) – **Best value for money**, monitors 30+ different social platforms, text messages, YouTube, emails.
3. [Qustodio](#) – **User-friendly**, limits screen time, games, social media activities, blocks inappropriate content.
4. [Norton](#) – **Full online security suite**, limits screen time, blocks and filters inappropriate content.

The Influence of Social Media On Teen Drug Use

[Addiction Center](#)



Young people experimenting with drugs and alcohol is nothing new; however, social networking sites are offering new and dangerous opportunities for adolescents to be

exposed to drugs. Teens are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of what they see on social media, as this age group is highly susceptible to peer influences and pressure. Sites like Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat provide an environment where kids are exposed to famous and normal people alike engaging in risky behaviors involving drugs and alcohol.

A study conducted by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that teenagers who regularly use popular social media outlets were more likely to drink, use drugs, and buy tobacco than adolescents who either did not use social media or used it less frequently. The survey asked 2,000 adolescents about their drug use and social media habits and 70% said that they use social media on any given day. Researchers found that, compared to nonusers or infrequent users of social media, this group was:

- 5 times more likely to buy cigarettes.
- 3 times more likely to drink.
- 2 times as likely to use marijuana.

Social Media Ads And #FOMO Can Lead To Drug Use

For young, impressionable people, seeing their friends and family in Facebook posts or Instagram pictures having fun while partying can tempt them to make risky choices in an effort to fit in. For others, it can depress them to the point that they turn to drugs or alcohol for solace.

Recent studies show that 75% of teenagers seeing photos on social networking sites of other young people smoking weed or drinking alcohol encourages them to experiment in the same way.

Although drinking and smoking amongst teens has been an age-old issue, social media has begun to desensitize children to these activities at a younger age — 90% of the kids surveyed saw these types of photos of their peers online before they were even 16 years old. Nearly half of all teens who have seen such pictures perceived that the kids in the photos “are having a good time.” Teens who have come across these kinds of photos are 4 times more likely to have used marijuana and 3 times more likely to have consumed alcohol compared to kids who had not viewed this type of picture.

In addition to being exposed to these acts by their peers, the ads found on social media can also encourage underage drinking and drug use. Tobacco, electronic cigarettes

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(especially those marketed by Juul), and alcohol manufacturers have widely integrated social media platforms into marketing strategies that are fully accessible to teens. Through the use of social media advertising, these industries are able to market to youth, despite the fact that direct marketing to minors is against the law.

Talk to Your Kids And Monitor Social Media Use

Social media is providing increased opportunities for both the marketing and display of risky behaviors regarding drugs and alcohol for young people. With social media increasingly integrated into the lives of today's teens, what they view on these sites is more important than ever.

The best way to protect your children from these influences is by having open communication and educating them on the risks of substance abuse. However, if your child is struggling with excessive alcohol or drug use, simply talking to them might not be enough and may require professional help. If you're worried about the path that your teen is headed down, contact treatment provider and learn about treatment options today.

How to Talk to Your Kids about Alcohol

[Ask. Listen. Learn.](#)



When conversations about alcohol between parents and kids go up, underage drinking goes down. In fact, since 2003, those conversations have increased by 73%, and underage drinking has decreased by 50%. Start the conversation and

help your kids say “YES” to a healthy lifestyle and “NO” to underage drinking.

Here are five tips to guide you in talking to your kids about alcohol:

1. **Conversations count; start talking early.** Starting the conversation as early as age nine can help kids feel prepared to make healthy decisions. Younger kids might ask why their parents drink an alcoholic beverage at dinner. Explain that drinking alcohol responsibly is an adult behavior, like living alone or driving a car. Older kids are going to need different support as they face new social situations. This is a time to clearly outline what risks kids face and the expectations for your household.
2. **Be a resource for your child.** As your kids come to you with questions, remember not to shut them out, no matter how sticky the topic! If you're willing to answer all of their questions, they will be more likely to come to you when they are going through a difficult time. If you feel like you don't have the answers, you can consult doctors and educators, and visit trusted resources, such as [asklistenlearn.org](#), [kidshealth.org](#), and [samhsa.gov](#).
3. **Model responsible behavior – and keep talking.** Between eyerolls and blank stares, it can feel like kids don't hear you – but they do. In fact, parents are the number one influence on their kid's decisions to drink, or not to drink, alcohol. Kids are always watching what you do. Be responsible with your own drinking behaviors – be sure to plan a safe ride home and have conversations about your responsible alcohol choices in front of them.
4. **Learn the science.** Kids always want to know WHY, and it's important to go beyond, “drinking underage is bad for you!” Let them know that alcohol is a chemical that can affect their developing brains. Don't fear – check out these videos together as a family to learn the science behind how alcohol affects the developing brain.
5. **Become a partner in education.** Underage drinking is a community issue – you don't have to tackle it alone! Many adults have a role to play, including teachers, school nurses and counselors. The conversation about alcohol may start in school, and your kids may come home with questions. Educators should always be in touch with parents, but if you have a concern or question, bring it up! They may be helpful navigating tough questions.