

Draft Recommendations to prevent cannabis use among youth

ADPC Prevention Subcommittee | Cannabis Workgroup

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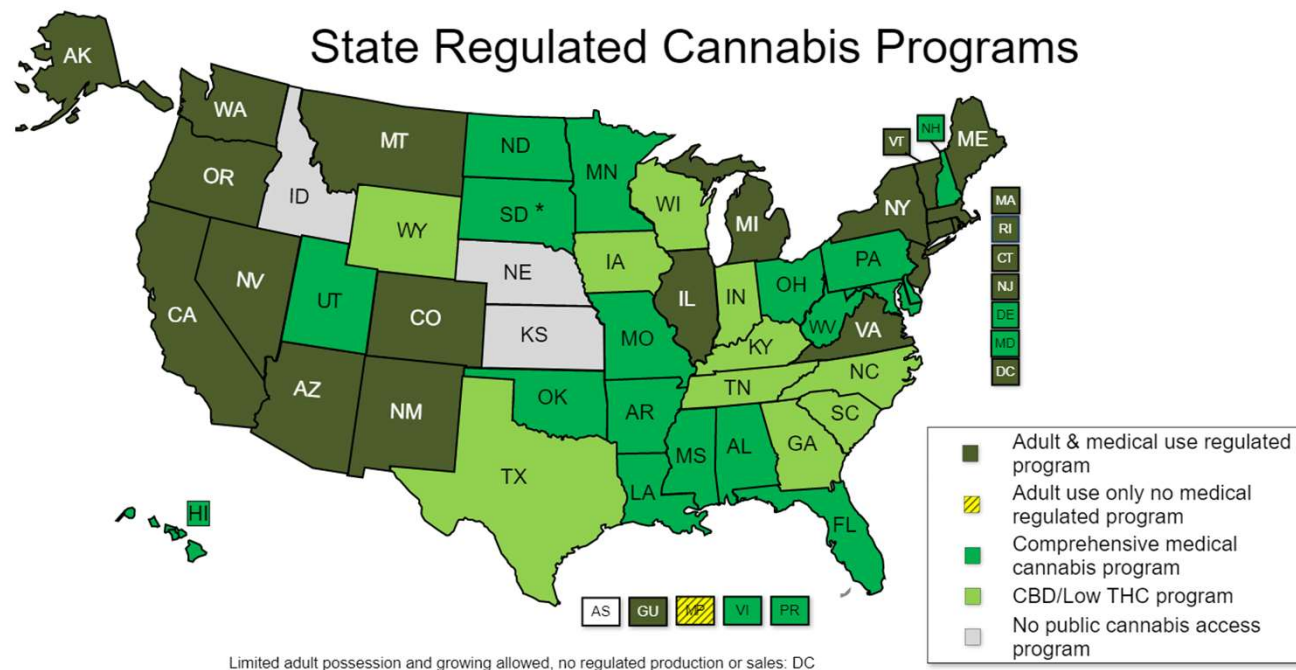


Legislative Requirement

Not later than January 1, 2023, the Alcohol and Drug Policy Council, jointly with the Departments of Public Health, Mental Health and Addiction Services and Children and Families, shall make recommendations to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public health, the judiciary and finance, revenue and bonding regarding

- 1) efforts to promote public health, science-based harm reduction, mitigate misuse and the risk of addiction to cannabis and the effective treatment of addiction to cannabis with a particular focus on individuals under twenty-one years of age;
- 2) the collection and reporting of data to allow for epidemiological surveillance and review of cannabis consumption and the impacts thereof in the state;
- 3) impacts of cannabis legalization on the education, mental health and social and emotional health of individuals under twenty-one years of age; and
- 4) any further measures the state should take to prevent usage of cannabis by individuals under twenty-one years of age, including, but not limited to, product restrictions and prevention campaigns

State Regulated Cannabis Program



May 2022

<https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/state-medical-marijuana-laws.aspx>

Cannabis Workgroup



Formed under the Prevention Subcommittee of the Alcohol & Drug Policy Council to:

1. Advise the Statewide Public Education Campaign focused on reaching youth, young adults, parents and trusted adults, pregnant and breastfeeding people, as well as other specific populations
2. Inform the Policy and Program Recommendations to prevent cannabis usage by individuals under 21.

Cannabis Workgroup



Stakeholders

- State Agencies
 - Children & Families
 - Consumer Protection
 - Education
 - Mental Health & Addiction Services
 - Public Health
 - Transportation
- Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations
- Substance Use Treatment Providers
- Research/ Evaluation / Academic
- Harm Reduction Providers

Workgroup Process

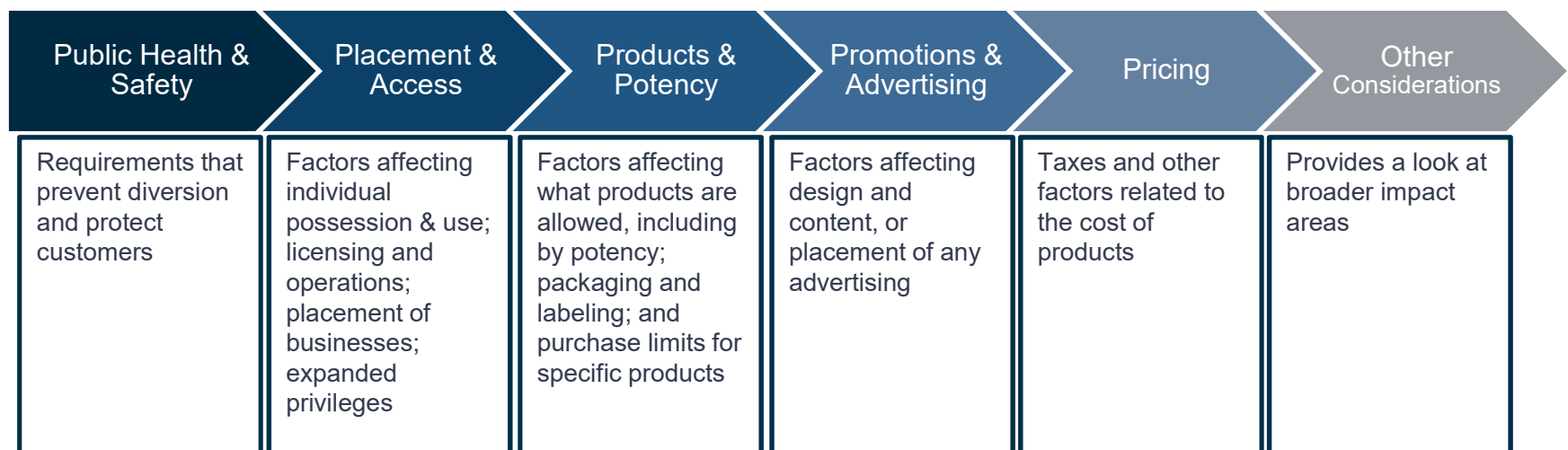


Workgroup met over twelve meetings from September 2021 to September 2022.

- **2** meetings – establish membership, & common understanding of goals, objectives, and relevant information
- **3** meetings – rapid deployment short-term high-traffic billboard campaign, and development & selection of vendor for the statewide public education and awareness campaign
- **7** meetings – informed of public awareness campaign and members presented on the 6 domains of the policy analysis worksheet. Last meeting to review and begin to formalize recommendations to the ADPC

Policy Analysis

Policy Analysis Process





Public Health and Safety

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

Create a distinct program modeled after the DMHAS SYNAR Tobacco Prevention and Enforcement Program to: (1) Increase retailer awareness in preventing youth access to cannabis products through a “responsible vendor” training for retailers and their employees. (2) Conduct compliance inspections. (3) Create a secret shopper program.



Placement and Access

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

** Recommend cannabis establishment hours limit hours of operation similar to alcohol establishments. (Monday through Saturday is 8 a.m. until 10 p.m.; 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Sundays.)

Recommend signage to inform individuals in shared living facilities such as apartment complexes, condominiums, and other lodging on updates to Clean Indoor Act on smoking or vaping of tobacco, cannabis, hemp.

Recommend education and information dissemination regarding around public use of tobacco, cannabis, hemp to reduce youth access.

Recommend supporting school districts to revise tobacco free policies to update and/or strengthen their drugs/ cannabis policies to reflect current laws.

Recommend DCP to update its policies and procedures under Policies and Procedures Section 21a-421j-33(a)(2)(H) to include a warning on the dangers of exposure to second hand smoke, aerosol and passive consumption required for adult-use cannabis product labels.



Products and Potency

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

Reevaluate potency limits **should more data become available.



Promotions and Advertising

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

Amend Public Act 21-01 to exclude “treatment and services related to treating cannabis disorder” from cannabis services advertisement regulation.

Current law identifies facilities which requires a buffer zone for advertising including schools, daycares, places of worship, etc. Recommendation is to extend distance requirements to substance use disorder treatment centers as well.



Other Considerations

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

Recommend DMHAS to lead and support the following activities to support general education and prevention:

- (1) Include retailers on the importance of preventing youth access
- (2) Support regional trainings for local prevention programs implementing positive youth development strategies
- (3) Coordinate to align key messaging across state agencies and integration of information and campaign and website.

Evaluate awareness and education campaign to understand targeted short-term outcomes (e.g., reach and recognition), intermediate outcomes (e.g., knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, behavioral intentions), and ultimate desired outcomes (e.g., cannabis use patterns)



Other Considerations – Data & Evaluation

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

Recommend monitoring patterns of use, methods of consumption, source of purchase, number and types of cannabis offenses, and general perceptions of cannabis and its related risk among adolescents and young adult populations.

Fund to participate in International Cannabis Policy Study to supplement population-based data sources since it is more frequent and data is available sooner. This survey is solely focused on cannabis and largely of cannabis consumers.

Recommend utilizing the State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) as a **means to facilitate** and connect with data surveillance bodies across the state that monitor changes in drug use patterns, monitoring hospitalizations and use of health care services related to cannabis, as well as diagnosis of admissions to treatment for cannabis use disorder. Additionally, monitoring of penalties, arrests, prosecutions, distributions or trafficking of cannabis products, including age, race, gender, country or origin, state geographic region and average sanctions of the persons charged.



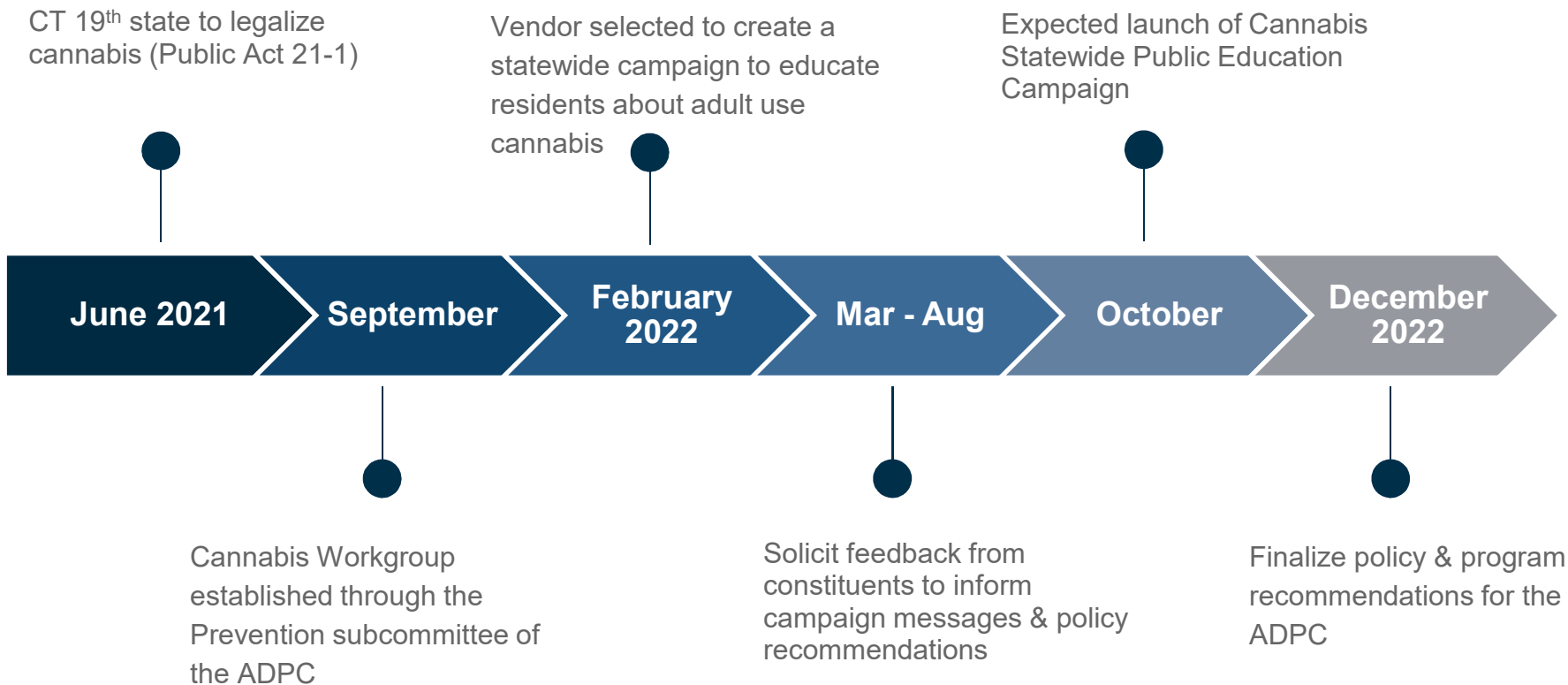
Other Considerations – Data & Evaluation

Suggested Recommendation / Policy / Best Practices

Commission a study to examine the association between density of cannabis establishments with cannabis use over time by youth and young adults.

- Proximity of outlets to one another should be examined.

Public Education Campaign



Initial High Traffic Prevention Campaign –The Laws

Securely Store Cannabis.
Keep kids and pets safe.



Driving High is a DUI.
Keep yourself and others safe.



You must be 21+
to purchase, possess,
and use cannabis.

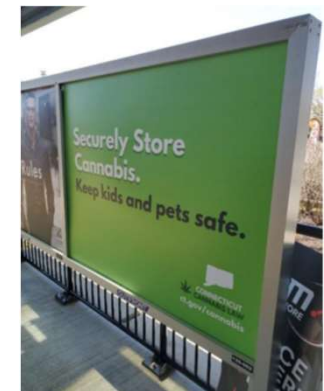


It's Against the Law
to carry cannabis across
state lines.



1/24/22 – 09/04/22

- 25 bulletins, digital bulletins, posters and digital posters
- 320 on-car rail cards
- 35 on-platform rail posters
- Initial campaign 156M+ total impressions

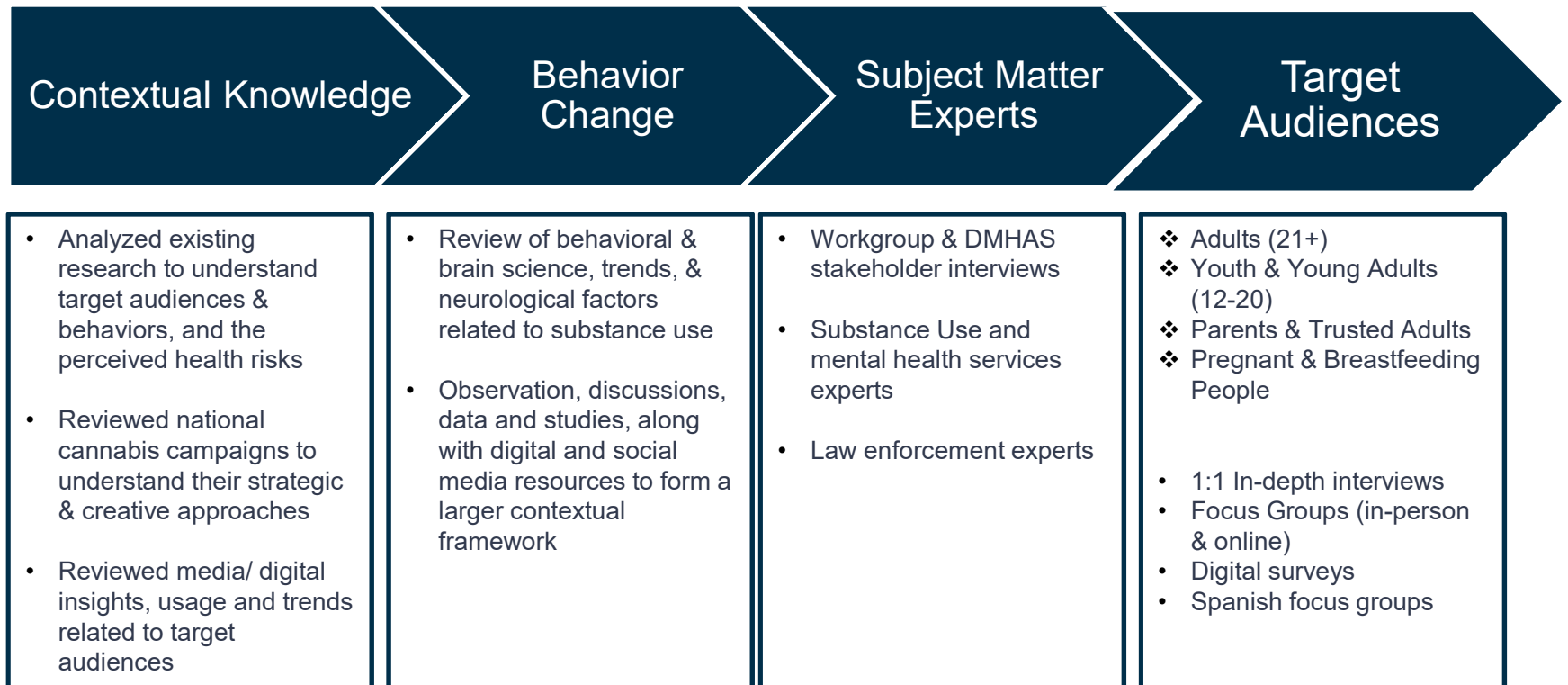


Statewide Public Education Campaign

Campaign Objective

- Develop a science-based public awareness campaign that focuses on reaching youth, young adults, parents and trusted adults, pregnant and breast/chestfeeding individuals and other specific populations on educating populations about the new laws, the effects of cannabis and ways to mitigate potential harmful effects
- To increase knowledge of laws related to possession and use of cannabis in CT
- To increase knowledge of impacts of cannabis use among target populations and deliver prevention messages and strategies, services and support related to cannabis misuse

Research Methodology



Subject Matter Expert Interviews

Methodology

- 18** 1:1 In-depth interviews
- 17** Subject matter expert interviews
- 08** Focus groups (60 respondents)
- 04** Separate digital surveys (~800 respondents)

Interviews

- Cannabis Workgroup members
- DMHAS Stakeholders
- Substance Use and Mental Health Services Experts
- Law Enforcement Experts
- Adults (6), Youth (5), Parents (7)

Focus Groups

- 4 Youth Focus Groups
- 4 Latino Focus Groups
 - 2 groups in English
 - 2 groups in Spanish

Messaging Approach



Campaign built from a neutral, objective messaging foundation

- Informed by research
- Using equitable and inclusive language
- Educating audiences to understand CT's laws
- Create belonging with audience-specific messages without judgement and shame
- Share benefits to being informed, address areas of concern, offer pathways to resources



Adult/General

legal

Adult use cannabis is now legal for people 21+

use/carry

Adults may carry a max of 1.5 oz. of cannabis in CT

safety

Store it locked!
Cannabis is toxic for kids and pets

driving

Driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal

risks

Cannabis use can lead to dependency & problem use

support

Learn the warning signs of problem cannabis use

Youth/Young Adults

learn

Cannabis can trigger anxiety and depression

empower

Protect your mental health

choose

Protect your future

think

Cannabis use can change your brain, learn how

seek

Know the signs of problem use



Key Messages

Parents/ Trusted Adults

learn

Talk to your kids about cannabis; It makes all the difference

empower

The biggest influence on your kids' choices about cannabis is you

safety

Legal for adults doesn't mean safe for teens; cannabis is for 21+

talk more

It's never too early or too late to talk to your kids about drugs

risks

High potency; Cannabis can have long term effects on the brain when teens use

support

Learn the warning signs of problem cannabis use

Pregnant/Breastfeeding

learn

There is no safe amount of cannabis during pregnancy or lactation

empower

Cannabis use during pregnancy can be harmful to your baby's development

risks

Using cannabis while breastfeeding or pumping is not recommended

safety

Cannabis products are toxic to children and pets

support

If you are dealing with anxiety, depression, or nausea during pregnancy, talk with your doctor about medicines that can help



Creative Concepts

Creatives



Connecticut has new laws for buying, carrying, and using marijuana. Learn more at [BeInTheKnowCT.org](https://www.beintheknowct.org)



Cannabis use can hurt the teen brain development. [BeInTheKnowCT.org](https://www.beintheknowct.org)

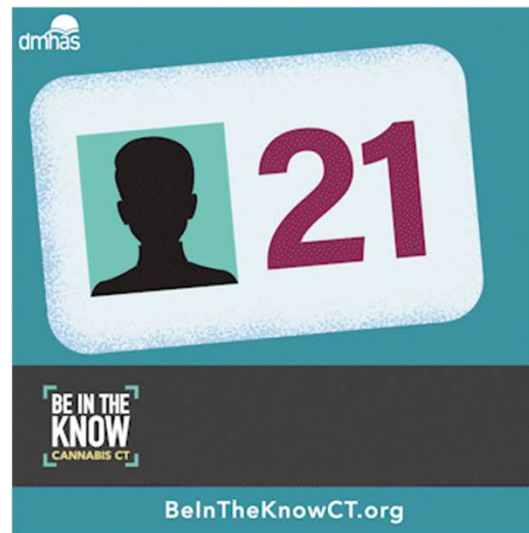


Keep children and pets safe from accidentally consuming cannabis. Learn how to store cannabis safely and legally. [BeInTheKnowCT.org](https://www.beintheknowct.org)



Get tips for starting the conversation. [BeInTheKnowCT.org](https://www.beintheknowct.org)

Creatives



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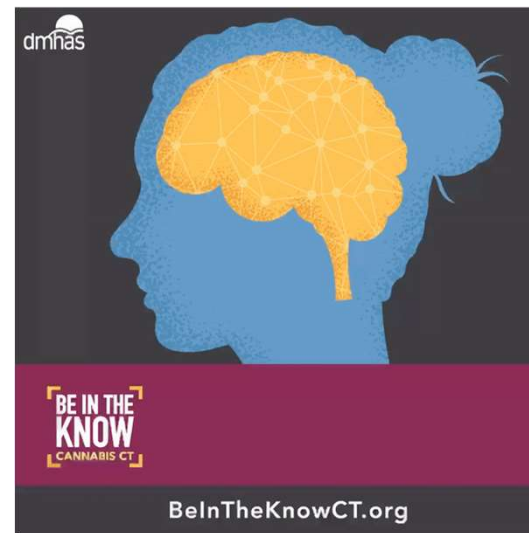


Get tips for starting the conversation. BeInTheKnowCT.org

Creatives



Using weed in any form can actually trigger anxiety, depression and psychosis. Learn the facts to protect your mental health. **BeInTheKnowCT.org**



Avoid cannabis use if you're under 25. Learn more about marijuana's impact on your brain. **BeInTheKnowCT.org**

Contact

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