

1.10 Adolescent Marijuana Use Prevention

Resolution passed 2014; amended 2014; amended 2019

Whereas, in Washington state, the Healthy Youth Survey results for 2018 found that state-wide, high school students who used marijuana were more likely to get lower grades (Cs, Ds, or Fs) compared to those who do not use; and

Whereas, since legalization in 2012, the perception of harm of marijuana use among high school students in Washington state has decreased significantly; and

Whereas, in 2018, about one in five 10th graders and one in four 12th graders in Washington state used marijuana in the past month; and

Whereas, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, up to thirty percent of those who use marijuana may have some degree of marijuana use disorder, and youth who begin using marijuana are four to seven times more likely to develop a marijuana use disorder than adults; and

Whereas, marijuana dependence accounts for more than half of the youth admissions to Washington state treatment programs; and

Whereas, use of marijuana has a variety of adverse health effects: youth who use marijuana are more likely to have lifetime asthma than youth who do not; and the psychoactive chemical, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), responsible for marijuana's psychological effects, has been linked with depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, psychosis and the incidence of suicidal thoughts in adolescents. The nearly five-fold increase in marijuana THC levels since 1995 means that daily use today can have stronger effects on a developing teen brain than it did 10-20 years ago; and


Whereas, unintentional marijuana ingestions by young children has emerged after modification of Washington state's drug enforcement laws for marijuana possession. Marijuana should be treated like any other medication, keeping it stored out of reach of children.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support legislation and policies that protect children and youth from being exploited by advertising and marketing campaigns and commercial industries that sell addictive drugs and stimulants, including marijuana products; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall support legislation that regulates the proper growing, packaging, handling, labeling, and sale of marijuana products, especially near schools; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA shall encourage its local PTAs and councils to sponsor presentations and workshops aimed at the prevention, intervention, and control of marijuana use by youth; and be it further



Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for school staff training for early identification, intervention, and follow-up care for students exhibiting symptoms of marijuana use; for school districts to incorporate the most current evidence-based research regarding the impacts of marijuana use by youth into their curricula and related substance use programs; for school districts to review their policies and procedures around disciplinary consequences of marijuana use by students; and for expansion of alternatives to suspension, expulsion or incarceration, including alternative discipline and restorative justice programs, for students with substance use disorders.