

Why We Must Concentrate on Educating Adolescents about Cannabis Concentrates

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With the increasing number of states approving the use of medical and recreational marijuana, the marketing of cannabis concentrates has become increasingly common. What are cannabis concentrates? They are cannabis plant extracts with high concentrations of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the principal psychoactive component of cannabis. These concentrates raise the THC content from 12-20% to 36-69% or even higher. One of the most convenient ways to smoke cannabis concentrate is using vaping devices. Little information exists on whether teens are using cannabis concentrates and whether the risks are greater than vaping conventional cannabis THC concentrations. Meier et al. ([10.1542/peds.2019-0338](#)) decided to investigate teen use of cannabis concentrates and share the results of their cross-sectional study of 47,142 middle and high school students from 245 Arizona schools. One in three of these students reported having used cannabis at some point in the past and 24% of the 33% reported the use of concentrate. Users of cannabis concentrate were more likely than all others to use other substances and experience complications associated with using those substances (e.g. academic failure).

So what can we do about this? We asked adolescent medicine specialist Dr. Sheryl Ryan ([10.1542/peds.2019-1256](#)) to weigh in with an accompanying commentary. Dr. Ryan reminds us of the medical, cognitive, and mental health risks of cannabis use when smoked or vaped by adolescents, which are quite concerning to learn about if you haven't read about them already. She also reminds us of our role as advocates to do all we can to not just educate our patients, but to lobby our legislators for better regulation of cannabis concentrates. There is a lot to smoke out in this important study and commentary. Link to them and you'll see what we mean.

- [Unintentional Cannabis Intoxication in Toddlers](#)
- [Trends in Cannabis and Cigarette Use Among Parents With Children at Home: 2002 to 2015](#)
- [Medical Cannabinoids in Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review](#)
- [Facebook](#)
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