Parents! Saying “NO” to cannabis means a lot!

A folder for those who have a teenager at home
Cannabis is the collective name used for hash and marijuana. Most teenagers never try cannabis, but there is a significantly higher percentage of adolescents that use cannabis in the city of Stockholm than elsewhere in Sweden. This is especially true amongst students in higher secondary schools.

Your teenager is influenced by your opinions. An important factor that helps teenagers steer clear of cannabis is that they feel their parents expect them not to use drugs. A clear position on your part coupled with a good relationship between you and your teenager, helps your teenager make intelligent choices.

**Number of adolescents who have ever tried narcotics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 9 (Lower Secondary School)</th>
<th>Year 2 (Higher Secondary School)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys 12%</td>
<td>Boys 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls 9%</td>
<td>Girls 25%</td>
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</tbody>
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SOURCE: 2018 STOCKHOLM SURVEY

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**Facts about young people and cannabis**

- Cannabis is the most common illegal drug amongst young people.
- Most young people who smoke cannabis start by smoking regular cigarettes.
- Many are under the influence of alcohol the first time they try cannabis.
- The most common way that young people obtain cannabis is through their friends.
- The cannabis that is sold and used today has a much higher concentration of THC* than the cannabis that was used 30–40 years ago.

* THC (delta-9 Tetrahydrocannabinol) is the major substance in cannabis that produces a high
**Effects of cannabis**

Cannabis affects many of the brain’s functions. As the brains of teenagers are still developing, they are extra sensitive. Cannabis use, for example, can lead to impairments of concentration, learning ability, memory and the ability to take responsibility.

Regular use can produce serious consequences, such as anxiety and feelings of panic, as well as an increased risk of schizophrenia, psychosis and depression.

Social development can also be affected. Young people who use cannabis can encounter problems in school, finds themselves in fights or other conflicts, and risk getting involved in criminal behaviour. A person who is the subject of a police report of possession or use of narcotics may have trouble getting a driver learner’s permit, apply for various jobs, and travel to some countries.

**When should I get worried?**

It is not so easy to see whether a person uses cannabis, but some of the signs can be fatigue, apathy, redness of the eyes, and mood swings. Also be aware of sudden changes in behaviour, such replacing one’s circle of friends with a new group, or increased absenteeism at school and impaired educational results. As a parent, you often have a feeling that something is wrong, so rely on your intuition.

**What can I do as a parent?**

Learn about cannabis so you can speak with your teenager and refute arguments that may come from friends, movies or the Internet. At the back of this folder, you’ll finds ideas and links to additional information, advice and assistance, for both you and your teenager.

> “Every child has the right to be protected from drugs”.

ARTICLE 33 OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Some ideas and suggestions

- Talk to your teenager about cannabis, ask questions and listen.
- Make it clear that cannabis is illegal and harmful.
- Take a clear, restrictive position with regard to tobacco and alcohol, as well, since these substances are often associated with the use of cannabis.
- Take notice of the Internet sites your teenagers visits. There are many sites that sell drugs, spread misinformation or present attractive people who favour drugs.
- Talk to other parents to gain support.
- Contact Mini Maria Stockholm, Framtid Stockholm, or your District Office if you are worried and want to ask questions or seek help.

If you’re worried or have questions, feel free to contact

Mini Maria Stockholm, Framtid Stockholm
O8-508 43 710
Counselling and scheduling appointments during office hours. You can ask questions anonymously and no record of your conversation will be made or kept.

Maria ungdoms akutmottagning
O8-123 47 410
(emergency department for young people)
Emergency situations, 24 hours a day.

Chat with Social Services
etjanster.stockholm.se/SocPaNatet
You can choose to remain anonymous.

Read more at
cannabishjalpen.se
droghjalpen.se
drugsmart.se
stockholm.se/nejtillcannabis
stockholm.se/stockholmsenkaten
tonarsparloren.se