



# Struggles with Marijuana Policy:

How Coalitions can Address the  
Increasing Availability of Marijuana in  
Your Community



[cadca.org](http://cadca.org)

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# Introductions

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# Who is in the room?



# Objectives:

1. Articulate the current risk and protective factors associated with cannabis use
2. Navigate the CADCA, SAMHSA, and CDC pages to identify evidence informed environmental strategies and resources.
3. Understand what policies may or may not work in your community.



# Terminology

Cannabis, also called marijuana, pot, weed, and various other slang terms, is a unique plant that produces psychoactive, medicinal, and therapeutic effects.

Quick Facts

Brain  
Development

Risks of  
Addiction

Health  
Impact

Resources

Youth  
Impact

# Quick Facts:

- Marijuana, federally illegal drug in the U.S., estimated with more than 48.2 million users.
- Recent research estimated that approximately 3 in 10 people who use marijuana have marijuana use disorder. For people who begin using marijuana before age 18, the risk of developing marijuana use disorder is even greater (<https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/data-statistics.htm>)
- Marijuana Potency Levels are up to 99% compared to 5% from the 1960's (edibles, and waxes).
- 30.7% of high school seniors used cannabis (marijuana) in the past year. (source: 2022 Monitoring the Future Survey)
- Vaping marijuana leads to a more powerful punch vs smoking.

# Marijuana Risks

Higher THC levels may also mean greater risk for addiction with regular use.

## ADDICTION

1-in-6 people who start using the drug before the age of 18 can become addicted.

1-in-10 adults who use the drug can become addicted.

Marijuana has both short- and long-term effects on the brain.

Marijuana also affects brain development.



# Brain Health

- Recent marijuana use (defined as within 24 hours) in youth and adults has an immediate impact on thinking, attention, memory, coordination, movement, and time perception.
- Using marijuana before age 18 may affect how the brain builds connections for functions like attention, memory, and learning.
- Marijuana's effects on attention, memory, and learning may last a long time or even be permanent, but more research is needed to fully understand these effects. Youth who use marijuana may not do as well in school and may have trouble remembering things.

# Health Impact of Marijuana Use

- Breathing Problems
- Increased Heart Rate  
Raises for up to 3 hours after smoking
- Intense nausea and vomiting.  
Regular, long-term marijuana use can lead to some people to develop Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome.
- Linked to depression; social anxiety; and thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts, and suicide
- Temporary hallucinations
- Temporary paranoia
- Smoked marijuana, regardless of how it is smoked, can harm lung tissues and cause scarring and damage to small blood vessels

# FACTS REGARDING TEENS

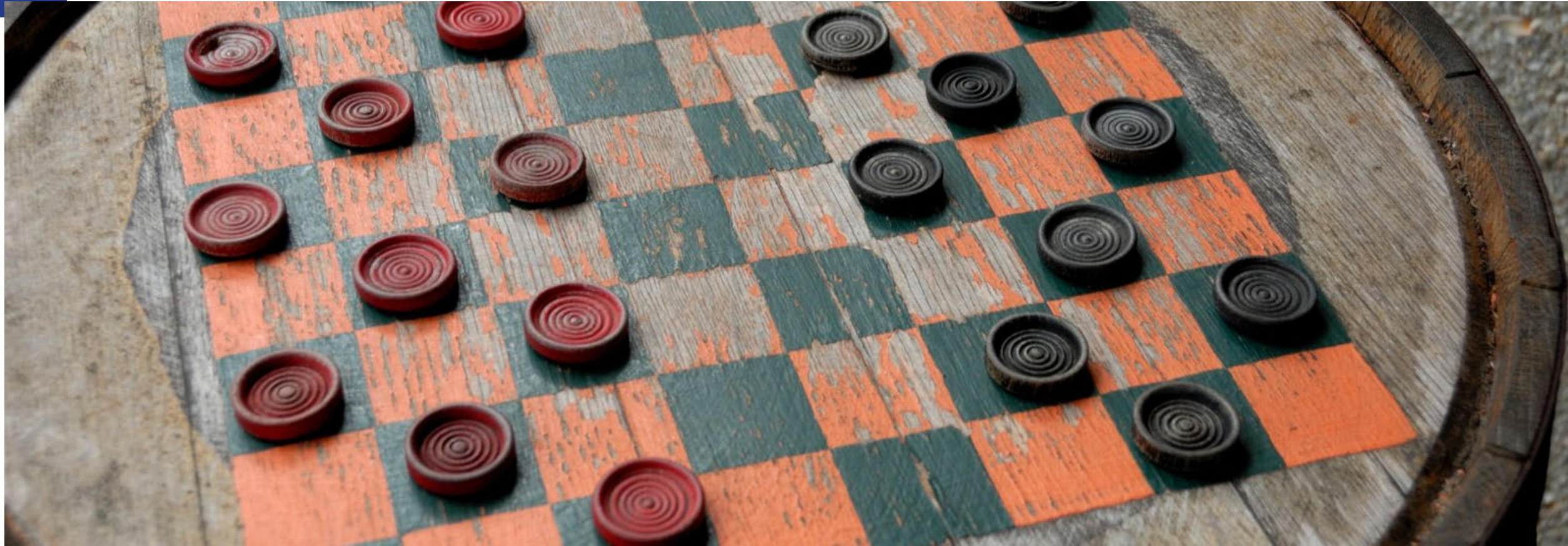
Negative effects of teen marijuana use include:

- Difficulty thinking and problem-solving
- Problems with memory and learning
- Reduced coordination
- Difficulty maintaining attention
- Problems with school and social life

# How Coalitions can Address the Increasing Availability of Marijuana in Your Community

## COALITION STRATEGIES

# What's The Move?



# Regulation of Retail Outlets

Strategy	Characteristics	Expected Outcomes
<p><b>Regulation of marijuana retail outlets</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Limiting number and locations of retailers through licensing or zoning.</li><li>› Limiting hours/days of sale.</li><li>› Banning those under the age of 21 in dispensaries.</li><li>› Regulating where marijuana and related products can be sold.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Decrease in youth marijuana use, as reported in a study that includes data from a cross-section of 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders in 35 Oregon counties.<sup>20</sup></li></ul>

# Product Manufacturing & Packaging

## Strategy

**Regulation  
of marijuana product  
manufacturing and packaging**

## Characteristics

- › Banning marijuana products with added synthetic flavors and odors.
- › Banning THC-infused edibles likely to attract children and youth, such as candies, cookies, and beverages.
- › Banning THC-infused alcohol and tobacco products.
- › Requiring plain product packaging.
- › Requiring transparency on product labels, including
- › THC and CBD content and ingredients.
- › Require prominent graphic marijuana warning labels with varied and rotating messaging.

## Expected Outcomes

- › Reduction in youth marijuana initiation.
- › Reduction in youth marijuana use and use disorder.
- › Reduction in use of flavored edibles.
- › Increased health knowledge.
- › Increased motivation to quit.
- › Reduced brand awareness and identification.
- › Reduction in product appeal.
- › Increase in understanding of the risks of marijuana.<sup>21-23</sup>

# Advertising & Marketing

## Strategy

### Limitations on marijuana advertising and marketing

## Characteristics

- › Banning marijuana advertising on television, radio, billboards, and social media.
- › If not banned, limiting advertising with youth audiences.
- › Removing marketing, promotion, and advertising dollars from admissible business expenses for state income tax calculations.
- › Funding public health media campaigns.
- › Prohibiting health and therapeutic claims.

## Expected Outcomes

- › Increase in understanding the risks of marijuana.
- › Reduction in positive perceptions of marijuana use.
- › Decrease in youth marijuana use.
- › Reduction in advertising by marijuana retailers.<sup>24-25</sup> The Davis study uses data from 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders in seven communities.<sup>25</sup>



# Regulation Of The Price Of Marijuana

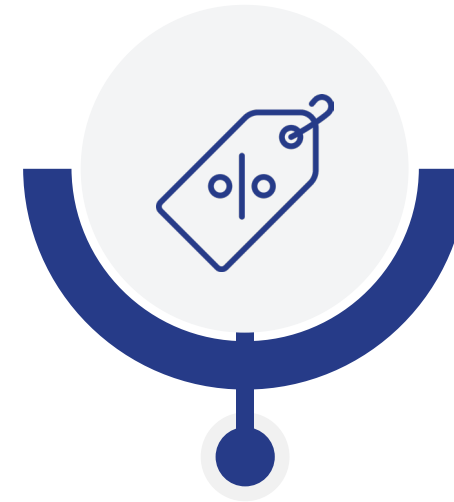
## Implementation Examples



California has established a separate tax per ounce on marijuana flowers and leaves.<sup>40</sup>



Illinois and New York tax marijuana based on level of THC content.

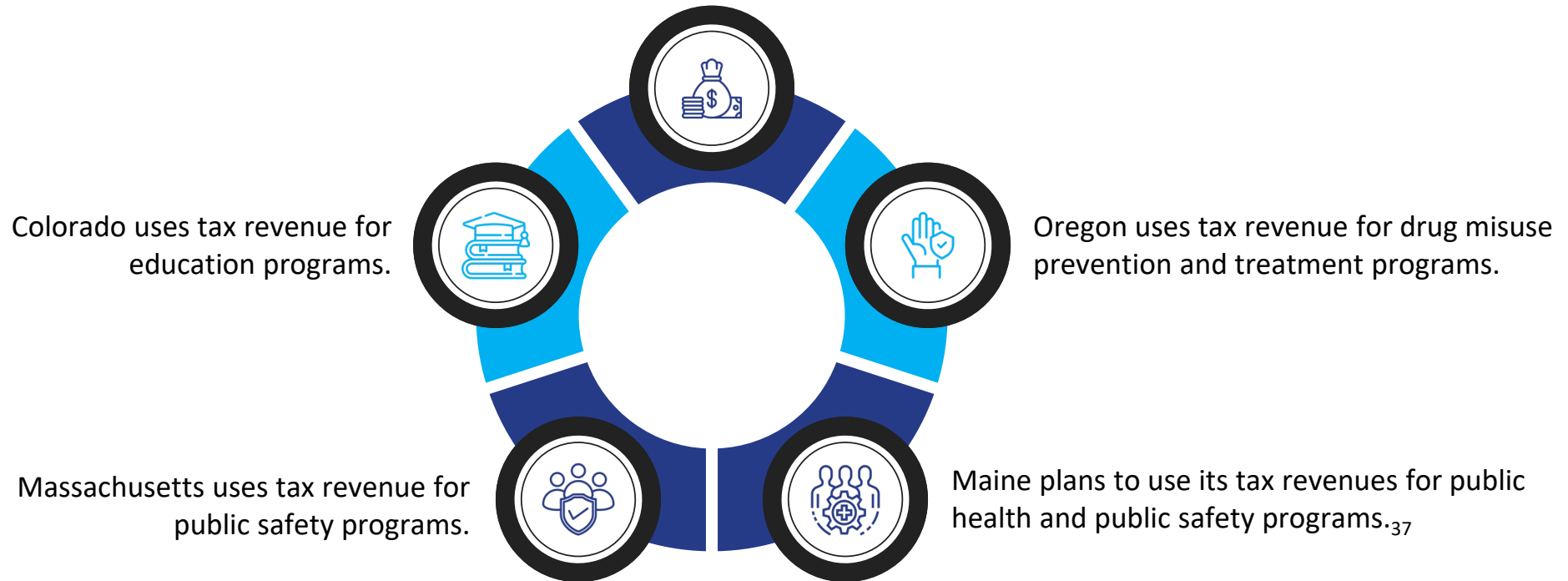


Washington has implemented a 37 percent excise tax on retail price, and bans discounts on marijuana, including coupons and sale/clearance products.

# Regulation of the Price of Marijuana

## Positive Use of Tax Collected

California uses tax revenue for a youth prevention, education, and treatment fund, as well as childcare and community reinvestment.



# Regulation of Marijuana Retail Outlets

## Implementation Examples

Washington and Oregon do not allow marijuana outlets within 1,000 feet of any school or other sensitive areas.

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Nevada limits retail licensing based on population size at the county level. For example, a county with a population between 100,000 and 699,999 may have up to 20 licensed retailers, whereas counties with 55,000 to 99,999 people may have four, and counties with populations of less than 55,000 may license two retailers.



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# Restricting Youth Access to Marijuana in Retail Establishments

## Implementation Examples



Colorado has restricted the hours that marijuana retailers can be open from 8 a.m. to midnight.



All states currently require anyone entering marijuana establishments to be at least 21 years old, except for those with a medical recommendation.



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# Banning Products and Packaging That Attract Youth

## Implementation Examples



Contra Costa County, California has prohibited flavored marijuana products for combustion or inhalation and banned vaping products to protect youth.



Michigan, Oregon, and four California cities have banned THC-infused beverages.



Connecticut limits flower potency to 30 percent THC and concentrates to 60 percent, and prohibits the addition of flavors, terpenes, and other additives to marijuana unless pre-approved.

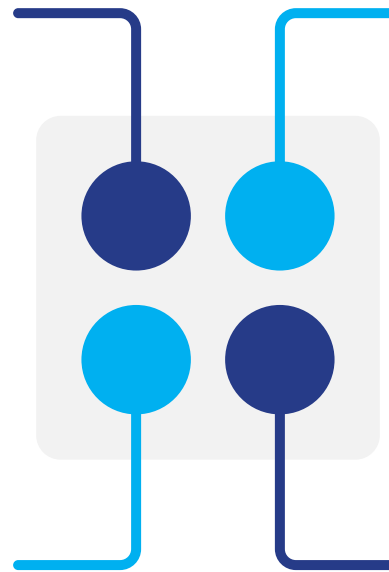
# Regulating Marijuana Packaging

## Implementation Examples

Alaska and Massachusetts have mandated opaque, plain packaging for marijuana products. Hawaii has done the same for medical marijuana.



Indiana, Utah, Texas, and Florida require a QR code that allows consumers to look up batch numbers, potency, and other ingredients.



Canada requires prominent rotating warning labels on a yellow background. For example: "WARNING: Adolescents and young adults are at greater risk of harms from cannabis. Daily or near-daily use over a prolonged period of time can harm brain development and function."



California requires that all marijuana products include a warning label. The label must read: "WARNING: This product can expose you to marijuana smoke, which is known to the state of California to cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive harm."

# Limiting Marijuana Advertising and Marketing

## Implementation Examples

Colorado has instituted a policy that retail marijuana establishments cannot advertise on television, radio, print media, or websites where more than 30 percent of the audience is under the age of 21.<sup>82</sup> Other states may consider lower thresholds, such as 10 to 15 percent.

Mono County and the city of Palm Springs in California do not allow health or therapeutic claims on marijuana products or their marketing.



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# Combat With Positive Marketing Campaigns





# Local/Organizational Policies



School Policy

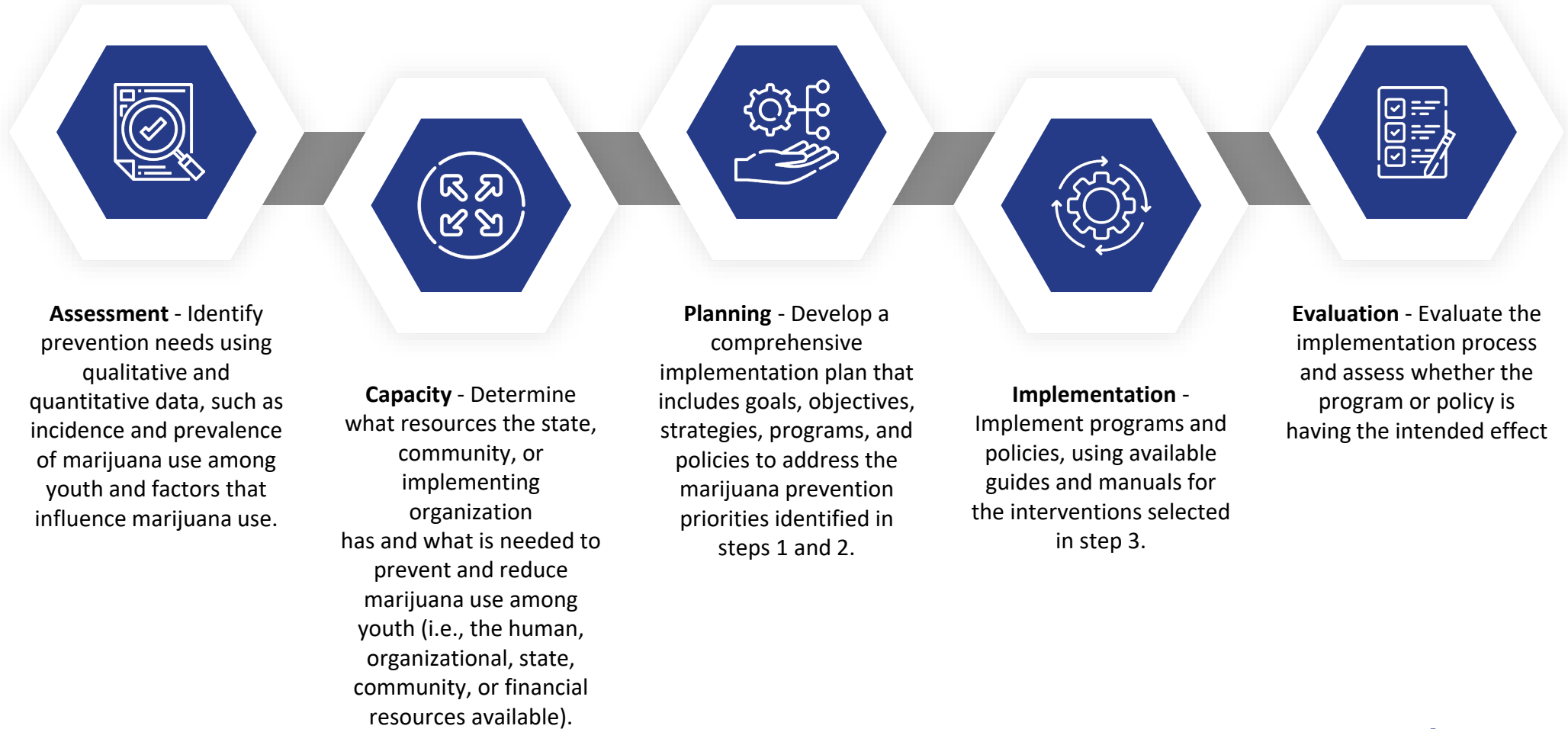


Athletic Policy



Employer Policy

# It's a Process



# Selecting Policy - Health Equity Considerations

When selecting policies – consider intended and unintended outcomes of the strategies:

**01.**

**What is the  
intended outcomes  
of the policy?**

**02.**

**Who will be harmed  
or burdened by the  
policy?**

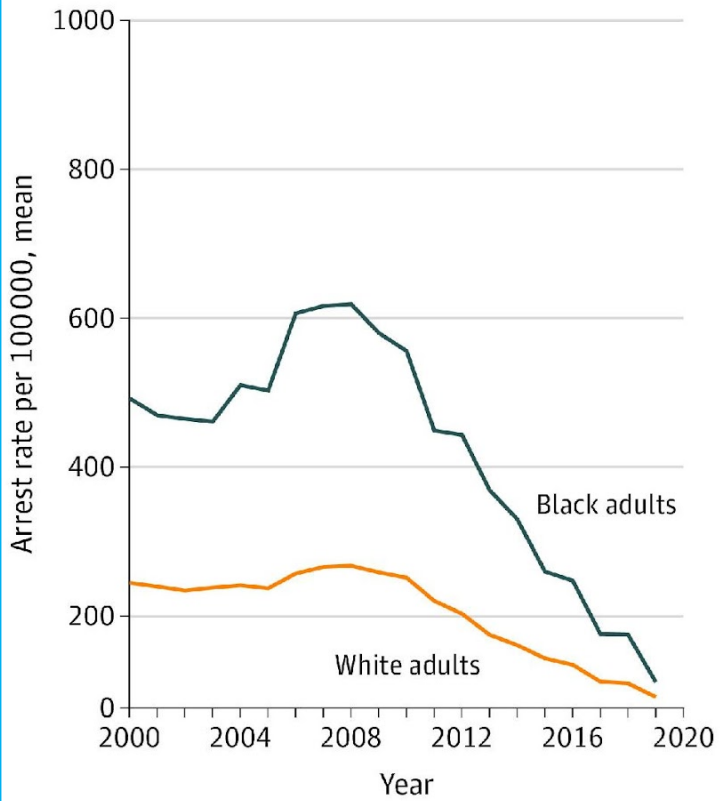
**03.**

**Who will benefit  
from the policy?**

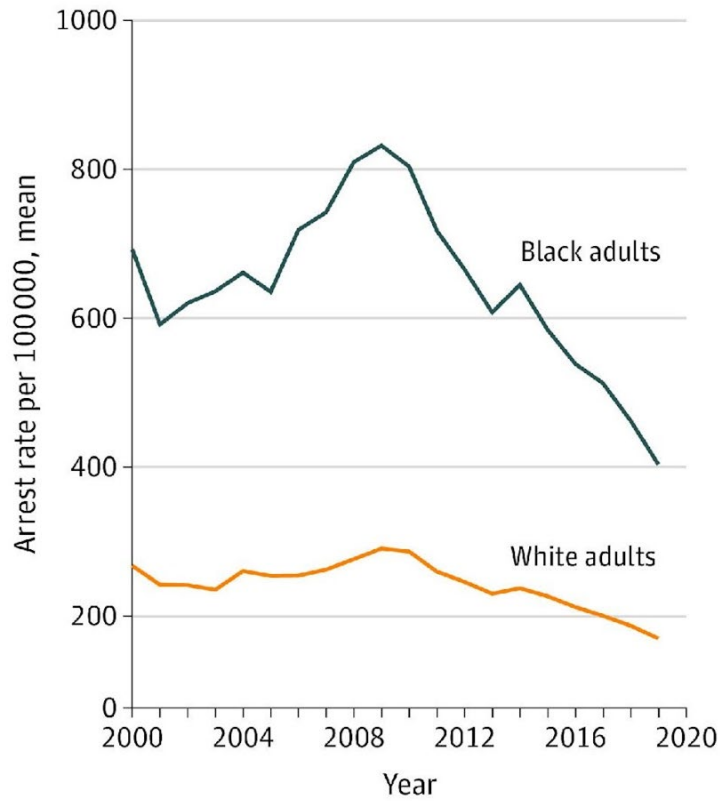
**04.**

**How can you  
modify policies to  
avoid the harms?**

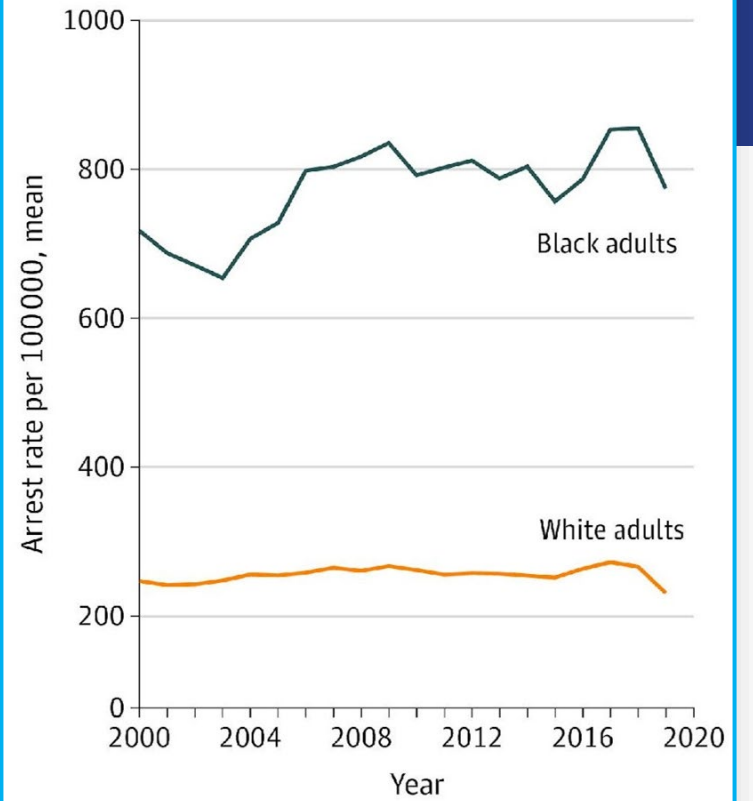
**A** Legalization states



**B** Decriminalization states



**C** States without a policy change



# What CDC is doing

<https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/about.htm>



## IMPROVE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS

- Conduct public health message testing
- Develop and implement public education materials
- Evaluate campaigns



## SUPPORT HEALTH SYSTEMS AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Disseminate and integrate the evidence on benefits and harms of cannabis
- Develop healthcare provider education and tools
- Identify healthcare screening tools and protocols



## PARTNER WITH PUBLIC SAFETY, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITY COALITIONS

- Engage with substance use prevention community-based coalitions
- Support development and implementation of evidence-based programs for schools and communities
- Identify public health and public safety data-sharing models

## Resources

### Individuals and Families

- [Know the Risks of Marijuana](#)
- [What We Know About Marijuana](#)
- [Marijuana DrugFacts](#)
- [FDA Regulation of Cannabis and Cannabis-Derived Products, including Cannabidiol \(CBD\)](#)
- [FDA and Cannabis: Research and Drug Approval Process](#)
- [CBD: What You Need to Know](#)

## Preventing Marijuana Use Among Youth



The goal of this guide is to review the literature on prevention of marijuana use among youth, distill the research into recommendations for practice, and provide examples of the ways these recommendations can be implemented.

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**Local Problems Require Local Solutions**



**Questions /  
Comments?**







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