

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Dr. Sharon Harris

516- 676-2008 safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition- Prenatal Cannabis Exposure Associated With Mental Disorder In Children

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), research supported by the organization demonstrates prenatal cannabis exposure following the middle of the first trimester—generally after five to six weeks of fetal development—is associated with attention, social, and behavioral problems that persist as the affected children progress into early adolescence (11 and 12 years of age). These conditions may put these children at a greater risk of mental health disorders and substance use in late adolescence, when youth are typically most vulnerable to these disorders and behaviors.

The study analyzed data from the ongoing [Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development \(ABCD\) Study](#), the largest long-term study of brain development and health in children and teens in the United States, which is supported by NIDA and nine other Institutes, Centers, and Offices of the NIH. The study was conducted by scientists at Washington University in St. Louis. The ABCD Study tracks nearly 12,000 youth as they grow into young adults. Investigators regularly measure participants' brain structure and activity using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and collect psychological, environmental, and cognitive information, as well as biological samples. ABCD Study seeks to understand the factors that influence brain, cognitive, and social-emotional development, with the ultimate goal of providing actionable information to help educators, health professionals, and policymakers improve the lives of all children, today and for generations to come.

These findings add to an expanding body of research on the effects of cannabis use during pregnancy. A [previous analysis](#) using baseline data from the ABCD Study found an association between prenatal cannabis exposure and behavioral problems in these children at 9 to 10 years of age. Preclinical studies have shown that delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main psychoactive substance in cannabis, can cross the placenta and potentially affect brain development. Cannabis use among pregnant women [increased](#) from 3% in 2002 to 7% in 2017. In 2018, 4.7% of pregnant women reported cannabis use and 5.4% did in 2019, according to the [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#). The results of this new analysis further support caution against using cannabis during pregnancy.

NIDA is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and supports most of the world's research on the health aspects of drug use and addiction. For more information about NIDA and its programs, visit www.nida.nih.gov.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is concerned about marijuana use and its negative consequences on the health and development of youth and provides evidence-based alcohol and substance use prevention,

intervention and education for youth and adults. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about marijuana use at www.safeglencove.org.