

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: NIH 2023 Research Study Shows Delta-8-THC Use Reported by 11% of 12th Graders**

Approximately 11% of 12th-grade students across the United States reported past-year use of delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol (delta-8-THC, or delta-8 for short), according to an analysis from the 2023 Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey, which is funded by the National Institutes of Health and given annually to students in classrooms in eighth, 10th, and 12th grades who self-report their substance use behaviors over various time periods, such as past 30 days, past 12 months, and lifetime. In 2023, the survey included questions on delta-8 for the first time, and they were administered to a randomly selected one-third of 12th grade students, resulting in 2,186 12th graders in 27 states. Given the prevalence of use found in the 2023 survey, questions on delta-8 have been added to future surveys for all age groups.

.Delta-8 is a psychoactive substance that is typically derived from hemp, a variety of the Cannabis sativa plant. Delta-8 has intoxicating similar effects to Delta -9 the primary THC component responsible for the “high” people may experience from using cannabis.

The researchers measured delta-8 use for the first time in 2023 to investigate the drug’s popularity among teens as more hemp-derived THC products enter the market and become more accessible. Studies show an association between cannabis use and negative health impacts for teens, underlining the importance of monitoring use of delta-8 and other cannabis products among younger people.

Among those who reported delta-8 use, close to 91% also reported marijuana use, contributing to the approximately 30% of 12th graders overall who reported past-year marijuana use. The survey also showed delta-8 use was more common in the South and Midwest regions and in states without cannabis legalization or delta-8 regulations. In contrast, levels of marijuana use did not differ by state-level cannabis policies.

Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse maintains 11% is a lot of people – that’s at least one or two students in every average-sized high school class who may be using delta-8. We don’t know enough about these drugs, but we see that they are already extremely accessible to teens. Cannabis use in general has been associated with negative impacts on the adolescent brain. Attention needs to be paid to

the kinds of cannabis products teens are using, educating young people about potential risks, and ensuring that treatment for cannabis use disorder and adequate mental health care is provided to those who need it. The national trends documented by the MTF survey provide critical information for research and policy to keep pace with new developments in the market for cannabis products, which has seen considerable change in recent years.

Delta-8 is one of over 100 cannabinoids in the Cannabis sativa plant. There is no federal minimum age requirement to purchase delta-8 products, which may be sold online or in gas stations and convenience stores. In 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a consumer update warning of the serious health risks associated with use of delta-8 THC, including reports of adverse events involving use of delta-8 products and risks of exposure to toxic byproducts. Numerous studies have found that adolescent cannabis use is associated with adverse effects on learning, memory, and attention; changes in brain development; and the development of cannabis use disorder and other psychiatric disorders, such as depression, psychosis and suicidality. There are no existing medications to treat cannabis use disorder, and current treatments are primarily through psychosocial interventions, such as cognitive behavioral therapy. More research is needed to understand how delta-8, specifically, impacts these and other health outcomes.

In addition, the MTF survey results also found that approximately 14% of 12th graders in the South and 15% in the Midwest reported delta-8 use, compared to 10% in the Northeast and 5% in the West. Around 14% of those in states without cannabis legalization reported delta-8 use, compared to 8% in states with legalization. In states without existing delta-8 regulations, 14% reported use compared to 6% in states with delta-8 legislation.

Because the survey is taken in school settings, students who were absent, not enrolled, or with less engagement in school – a known risk factor for drug use – may have been less likely to participate in the survey, the investigators note. This exclusion may have potentially led to an underestimation of adolescent use of delta-8. Future work will need to assess delta-8 use in younger teens; include a larger survey sample across a wider range of states; and examine the use of other hemp-derived products, including delta-9 and delta-10.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH): NIH, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov).

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about tobacco use and vaping, seeking to educate and update the community regarding its negative

consequences in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager- Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island.

Last year, the Coalition's Community Committee embarked on an effort to draft and propose a new law restricting incoming stores to B2 District areas as strong and effective laws and regulations were needed to protect youth from deadly addiction by reducing access to tobacco, vaping products and other drug paraphernalia. With the assistance of the City Attorney, Tip Henderson, that effort came to successful fruition at the City Council meeting whereby the proposed law was passed unanimously.

To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [ww.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).