

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Edible Cannabis and Youth

Recently the news reported that several Middle School children from Long Island were taken to the emergency room after ingesting cannabis edibles.

Edibles come in many shapes and sizes, from savory chips to seltzer drinks to candies and snacks. Packaging of some THC edibles and food products often resembles brands and foods children are familiar with and find appealing. The packaging may be nearly identical, with the name slightly changed (think "KeefKat" or "Pot Tart"). Some states, including Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Alaska, have passed laws to try to prevent THC poisoning. Products that contain marijuana may be required to have clear labeling with standardized serving sizes and THC content. Some states require child-proof packaging. The CDC maintains since adult cannabis use has been legalized in some states, unintentional cannabis poisonings in children have increased, sometimes requiring visits to the emergency room or hospitalization.

Youth obtain access to consume Cannabis in different methods which include joints or bongs (smoking), dabbing (smoking of concentrated extract), vaping (use of electronic vaporizer), edibles (cooked into food and eaten), topicals (lotions, sprays, oils, and creams), tinctures (alcoholic solution). Characteristic symptoms of marijuana use are likely to be experienced regardless of how THC enters the bloodstream.

Additionally, cannabis products have become more accessible in homes as the number of states with legal medicinal and/or recreational cannabis continues to grow. Edible cannabis products are easily mistaken for regular food, candy or beverages making accidental ingestion common. The CDC recommends that people keep all cannabis products out of the reach of children in childproof containers.

America's Poison Centers maintains the National Poison Data System (NPDS), the national database of information logged by the country's Regional Poison Centers serving all 50 United States, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and territories. Case records in this database are from self-reported calls: they reflect only information provided when the public or healthcare

professionals report an actual or potential exposure to a substance, request information, or request educational materials.

From 2019 to 2025, Poison Centers managed 37,601 cannabis edible exposure cases in patients that were 0-19 years of age. As of January 31, 2025, Poison Centers have managed 662 cannabis edible exposure cases in patients that were 0-19 years of age.

Despite their ordinary appearance there are negative effects that edible cannabis can have on children and teens. Just one cannabis cookie or candy bar can contain several times the recommended adult dose of THC. Anyone who eats an entire THC edible—especially a child—can experience overdose effects such as intoxication, altered perception, panic, paranoia, dizziness, weakness, slurred speech, poor coordination, excessive sleep, Apnea (not breathing for 10 seconds or longer) and Heart problems. For teens, regular cannabis use can impair memory and concentration and may interfere with learning. It's also associated with lower odds of completing high school or getting a college degree.

Regular use of cannabis is also linked to psychological problems, poorer lung health and a higher chance of substance use disorder in adulthood. Even using cannabis at one time can alter motor control, coordination and judgment. This can contribute to unintentional deaths and injuries. Research indicates that delayed effects of edible cannabis are linked to overdosing. Edible THC products take longer than smoked cannabis to have an effect. Smoking takes just seconds to minutes. But a THC edible typically takes 30 to 60 minutes after being eaten and digested. The peak effect happens 3 to 4 hours after ingesting.

While edible cannabis does not typically result in serious problems for adults, children have more severe reactions and are more likely to require medical attention. Symptoms of a cannabis edible overdose include vomiting, confusion, drowsiness and loss of coordination/unsteady on feet. Severe symptoms of overdose can cause slowed breathing, seizure and coma.

The most important factor for parents to remember is that THC is present with both methods of cannabis intake—carrying with it the same psychoactive adverse consequences regardless of the method of ingestion and a danger for all youth. Additionally, the prevalence of smoke shops and tobacco retailers located in areas where families shop daily compound the issue by exposing youth to these appealing edibles and drug paraphernalia as many have been cited for selling laced items with THC that are most tempting to youngsters, mirroring candy and packaged as such.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is concerned about cannabis use and its consequences on the health and development of youth. In 2023, 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 young people from deadly addiction by reducing access to edibles, 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 www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about cannabis use at www.safeglencove.org.