



WASHINGTON STATE  
Department of  
Children, Youth, and Families



## PREGNANCY & BREASTFEEDING OUTREACH

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# Agenda

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- Current research
- Resources available
- Effective partnership
- Questions

# CURRENT RESEARCH

# Why This Matters

1 in 20

women in the U.S. report  
using marijuana while  
pregnant.

*Source: CDC*

- Likely under-reported:
  - Guilt/shame
  - Fear of repercussions
  - Child Protective Services
- Misinformation about the benefits of marijuana.

# What We Know

- Marijuana use puts mom and baby in harm's way.
- THC can pass to a child through the placenta and in breastmilk.
- Marijuana use during pregnancy may:
  - Harm a baby's development.
  - Cause low birth weight.
  - Impact learning, and paying attention.



*Sources: CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, University of Washington ADAI.*

# What We Know

- THC can stay in a mother's body for many days.
- Exposure to marijuana smoke can temporarily harm lung health.
- Marijuana can impair judgment, alertness and reaction times, potentially impacting one's ability to properly care for their child.

Know this  
about  
**Cannabis**

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**In 2017, calls to the Washington Poison Center involving cannabis and kids 0-5 increased from the previous year by 57.7%.**

\*Washington Poison Center Toxic Trends Report, 2017



More research needs to be done – and is currently underway – to better understand the short- and long-term impacts.

# Official statement from the Washington State Department of Health

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DOH advises women to avoid cannabis while pregnant or breastfeeding. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics and based on what we know, this is the safest option for their child. If a woman is struggling to reduce her cannabis use, she can contact the Washington Recovery Helpline at 1-866-789-1511 or <https://www.warecoveryhelpline.org/>

# RESOURCES

# What We're Doing

## *KnowThisAboutCannabis.org*

- Provides education on retail cannabis' rules, risks and responsibilities.
- Adult consumers, 21+, retail/non-medical use.
- Available in English and Spanish.

## Partner toolkit

- Includes talking points, social media posts, a poster, and other resources.
- Available at [thesocialpresskit.com/know-this-about-cannabis](https://thesocialpresskit.com/know-this-about-cannabis)
- Password:  
ConsumerEducation



# What We're Doing

## "5 Things to Know" flyer

- Informed by consultation with WIC and internal breastfeeding workgroup.
- Available in 7 languages: Chinese, English, Korean, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Vietnamese.
- Downloadable at [KnowThisAboutCannabis.org/more-resources/#flyer](http://KnowThisAboutCannabis.org/more-resources/#flyer).
- Printed copies can be ordered from the ADAI clearinghouse.

**5 Things to Know**  
**about marijuana use while pregnant or breastfeeding**

Pregnancy and breastfeeding can be exciting and full of learning experiences for new moms. No two women have the same experience. Here are five things new moms should know about using marijuana.  
To learn more, visit [LearnAboutMarijuanaWA.org](http://LearnAboutMarijuanaWA.org)

- 1** There are safer ways to manage pregnancy discomforts. Morning sickness, stress, pain, and nausea can cause discomfort. If you have any of these symptoms, there are ways to manage them that don't harm your baby. Talk to your primary care provider for safer alternatives.
- 2** The chemical in marijuana that makes you feel "high" can transfer to your baby. The active ingredient in marijuana, THC, can pass to your baby during pregnancy and breastfeeding. This can happen no matter how you use marijuana. Babies exposed to THC can have problems with feeding, paying attention, and learning. You may not see some effects until your child is older.
- 3** Smoking and storing marijuana in the home has risks. Protect your children from secondhand smoke by only smoking outside, washing your hands, and changing clothes afterwards because smoke can linger. If you have marijuana products in your home, be sure to keep them locked up and out of reach of your children.
- 4** Marijuana can affect your ability to protect your baby. Marijuana can impair your judgment, alertness, and reaction time. You need these skills to drive safely and tend to your baby's needs.
- 5** "Natural" does not mean safe. Marijuana has health risks for you and your baby, just because it is a plant, does not mean it is safe to use while pregnant or breastfeeding.

For help quitting marijuana, call  
**Washington Recovery Helpline: (866) 789-1511**  
For people with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats.  
To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD) or TTY call 711.

**Washington State Department of Health**  
140-NorDOH March 2018

# What We're Doing

## For My Baby material

- Features content about second hand smoke, e-cigarettes/vape devices, marijuana, and cigarettes.
- English and Spanish.

## For a healthier baby and a healthier you! Choose a pregnancy free from Tobacco, E-cigarettes, Marijuana, and Smoke.

### Marijuana (medical and recreational)

- Any kind of smoke is a health risk.
- The active ingredient in marijuana (THC) passes from mother to baby during pregnancy and through breast milk.
- Babies exposed to THC can have problems with feeding and may develop slower mentally and physically.

### Marijuana-Free will help your baby's body:

- Have less risk of developmental problems.
- Be healthier.

To learn more: [www.KnowThisAboutCannabis.org](http://www.KnowThisAboutCannabis.org)

### E-cigarettes (vapor products)

- E-cigarettes come in several shapes and sizes, and most contain liquid nicotine and other harmful chemicals. Long-term health effects are unknown.
- Liquid nicotine is toxic, and just a few drops on the skin or taken by mouth may be fatal to children.
- E-cigarettes are not safe for pregnant women who do not currently use tobacco products.

### E-cigarette-Free will help your baby:

- Have a better chance of full-term delivery and a healthy weight at birth.
- Avoid coming in contact with liquid nicotine.
- Be healthier.

### Tobacco

Cigarettes and other forms of tobacco are dangerous to everyone's health. Nicotine from tobacco passes from mother to baby during pregnancy and through breast milk. It can cause:

- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Premature birth, low birth weight, and stillbirth.
- Poor feeding and irritability.

Smoking tobacco in a hookah has the same health risks as cigarette smoking. One hookah session can be the same as smoking 100 cigarettes.

### Tobacco-Free will help your baby:

- Have less risk of asthma.
- Have fewer coughs, colds, and ear infections.
- Have a healthier birth weight and start in life.

### Secondhand and Thirdhand Smoke

Smoking while breastfeeding exposes your baby to nicotine and secondhand smoke, which contains other harmful chemicals.

Thirdhand smoke is secondhand smoke that sticks to floors, walls, clothing, carpeting, furniture, and skin.

**Keep smoke outside of the home and car.**

### Smoke-Free will help your baby have:

- Have less risk of dying from SIDS.
- Have less risk of asthma, cough colds, and other breathing problems.
- Have fewer ear infections.
- Have fewer trips to the doctor.
- Be healthier.

### If you are ready to quit tobacco:

Call the Washington State Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)  
Download the 2Morrow Health smartphone app by visiting [doh.wa.gov/quit](http://doh.wa.gov/quit)  
Ask your health care provider if tobacco cessation is covered by your insurance plan.

### If you need help quitting marijuana:

Call the Washington Recovery Helpline at 1-866-789-1511



For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY 711).

# What We're Doing

Permanent, required retailer signage

- Warning pregnant and breastfeeding women to avoid cannabis.
- Created by DOH & LCB and informed by partners working in maternal child health, substance abuse prevention, WIC and breastfeeding.



**Keep your baby as healthy as possible by avoiding cannabis while pregnant and breastfeeding.**

The American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine all advise against cannabis use while pregnant or breastfeeding.

Learn more at [KnowThisAboutCannabis.org](https://www.knowthisaboutcannabis.org).



 Washington State Department of Health

 Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

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# What's Next

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- Talking points for practitioners.
- Collaborating with Child Profile.
- Adapting campaign materials and planning a tailored digital ad buy.
- Partnering with the Medical Marijuana Program to update certification curriculum.

# EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

# How to talk to parents about marijuana

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Reminders for talking with someone about marijuana, pregnancy and breastfeeding:

- Members of the medical community recommend avoiding all cannabis products.
- THC may harm your baby's development and impact learning and paying attention.
- Suggest speaking to a healthcare practitioner about managing discomforts.
- THC stays in the body for many days and can transfer to a baby.
- Ask if they want to stop using – and recommend the Washington Recovery Helpline.

And keep an eye out for our healthcare provider talking points!

# How you can help raise awareness

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- Help disseminate materials and information.
- Help us find parent volunteers to review and disseminate materials.
- Stay tuned for additional requests in the future.



QUESTIONS?

# Contact

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THANK YOU!

