

# Cannabis Workbook



## Learning outcomes

By the end of this workbook participants will know:

- ❖ What cannabis is
- ❖ The different names cannabis is known by
- ❖ The uses of cannabis
- ❖ The most common reasons why young people smoke cannabis
- ❖ What the effects of cannabis are
- ❖ What synthetic cannabis is
- ❖ The laws around cannabis
- ❖ How to reduce cannabis use
- ❖ Where to get help and support

## Pre-completion questionnaire

Please complete this part of the questionnaire **before** you start the workbook by placing a tick (✓) in the box

1. Please rate your knowledge of Cannabis

Very poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very good
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2. Please rate your knowledge of the health services available to young people

Very poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very good
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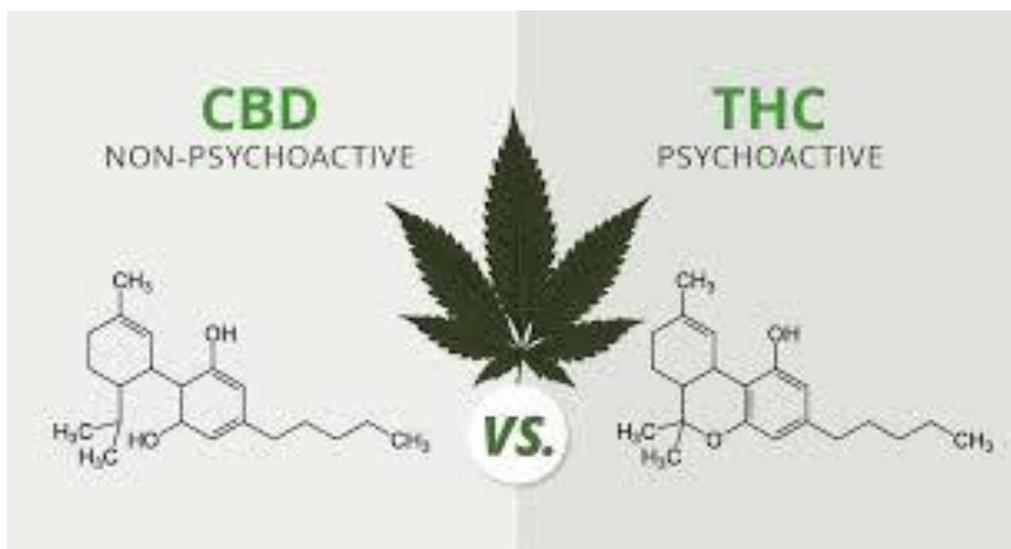
3. How confident would you feel accessing services for young people?

Not confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very confident
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## Introduction

### What is cannabis?

Cannabis comes from the cannabis plant and is a natural substance. The two main ingredients in cannabis are **THC** (delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol) and **CBD** (cannabidiol). These chemicals are in all cannabis plants but the amount of THC and CBD varies widely. **THC** is the psychoactive substance in cannabis that gives you a high, sometimes with hallucinations. **CBD** is the substance in cannabis that gives a downer effect, it gives a calming effect. Cannabis is categorised as a depressant drug that has hallucinogenic properties.



### Different names for cannabis

**Cannabis** is known by many names such as:-

- Weed
- Resin
- Pot
- Wacky-backy
- Draw
- Skunk
- Puff
- Marijuana
- Grass
- Dope
- Sinsemilla
- Pollen
- Herb
- Hash
- Bud
- Sensi
- Ganja
- Hashish
- Bhang

### Uses of cannabis

Cannabis is mostly used recreationally or as a medicinal drug, although it may also be used for spiritual purposes. Cannabis can be used by [smoking](#), [vaporizing](#), [within food](#), or [as an extract](#). It is prescribed for children and adults with rare, severe forms of [epilepsy](#), adults with vomiting or nausea caused by [chemotherapy](#) and people with muscle stiffness and spasms caused by [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#). Different religions use [cannabis](#) as a sacrament or to induce alterations in behaviour.

**The most common reasons why young people smoke cannabis include:**

**Peer pressure** – Some young people may be pressured into using cannabis but the normalization of drug use within their social group also makes it more likely that they will use it as well. Witnessing older members of their family using cannabis can also have a big influence. Depictions of cannabis in the music industry, movies, television, and social media also contribute to the normalization of cannabis use.

**Belief that it is harmless** - some people perceive marijuana as "harmless" which makes it more appealing than tobacco or other illicit drugs. There are both psychological and physical health effects of using cannabis. Although there are few studies have looked at the detrimental effects of long-term cannabis use, the short term and long term effects of cannabis use are well known. There are concerns of the role of cannabis as a "gateway drug," which makes subsequent use of more potent and disabling substances more likely.

**Relief from certain mental health conditions** - self treating anxiety, mood disorder. However there is a higher likelihood of being diagnosed at a later stage with these conditions as a result of using cannabis from a young age.

**Availability and opportunity** - cannabis is more widely available to young people nowadays. When older young people have less adult supervision and more privacy e.g. when they go off to college or university.

**Other reasons** include to feel good, ease boredom, relieve tension or frustration, seek deeper insights, escape problems, or to increase (or decrease) the effects of other drugs.

Gaining knowledge about young peoples motivations to use cannabis is the first step to developing effective strategies for preventing cannabis use in the first place, and reducing or stopping use if a person has already begun.

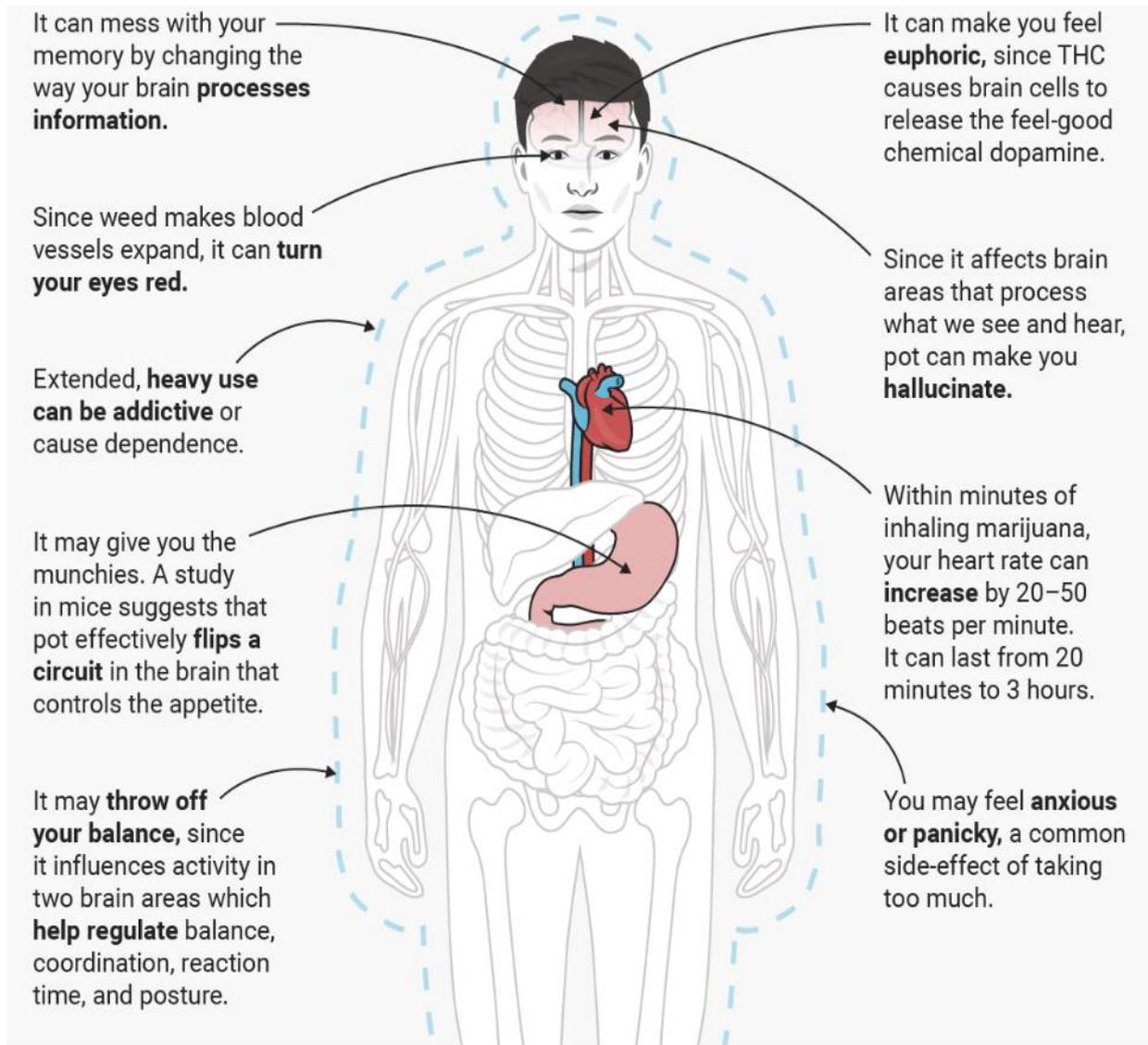
**Synthetic cannabis**

Synthetic cannabis is marketed under different brand names. **Spice** was the earliest synthetic cannabis product sold in many European countries. Since then, similar products such as Kronic, Northern Lights, Mojo, Lightning Gold, Blue Lotus and Godfather have followed. It is also sold as aphrodisiac tea, herbal incense and potpourri. It has been reported to have similar effects to [cannabis](#) along with some additional negative and potentially more harmful ones including:

- fast and irregular heartbeat
- racing thoughts
- agitation, anxiety and paranoia
- psychosis
- aggressive and violent behaviour
- chest pain
- vomiting
- acute kidney injury
- seizures
- stroke
- death.

**How does cannabis affect us?**

Cannabis has mental and physical effects. It causes a "high", or stoned feeling and other effects, including a general change in thought and perception, difficulty concentrating, impaired short-term memory, altered sense of time, impaired body movement, relaxation, and an increase in appetite, otherwise known as "munchies".



Onset of effects is felt within minutes when smoked, and about 30 to 60 minutes when cooked and eaten. The effects last for two to six hours, depending on the amount of consumption. At high doses, mental effects sometimes include psychosis, delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, and ideas of reference, sometimes with anxiety and panic. Its physical effects include increased heart rate, difficulty breathing, nausea, and behavioural problems in children whose mothers used cannabis during pregnancy. Short-term side effects may include a dry mouth, red eyes, memory and thinking problems loss of coordination, increased heart rate, anxiety, and altered senses and feelings of paranoia or anxiety.

Regular cannabis use has been linked to mental health issues such as anxiety and paranoia. There is an increased risk to developing a psychotic illness in which you would experience hallucinations and delusions. The risk is higher if you start using cannabis in your teenage years and if you have a family history of mental illness. Using cannabis could also make those with symptoms of schizophrenia worse. It has also been found to increase heart rate, risk for lung infections and weaken the immune system. Other long term [adverse effects](#) may include addiction, chronic [coughing](#), and susceptibility to [respiratory infections](#).

## Laws around cannabis

Cannabis is a **class B drug** after being reclassified in 2009. This means it's illegal to have for yourself, give away or sell. You can get a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both for possession and up to 14 years for supplying and producing cannabis, an unlimited fine or both.

If you're caught driving whilst "high" from being under the influence of cannabis is dangerous and illegal so you may receive a heavy fine, driving ban, or prison sentence.

Anyone caught by the police supplying illegal drugs in regardless of the premises a home, club, bar or hostel, the landlord, club owner or any other person concerned in the management of the premises can potentially be prosecuted.



## Additional details

Cannabis differs from other Class B drugs as it comes under the discretionary warning scheme. This means that a police officer can choose to issue you with a street warning only (which would be recorded but doesn't form a criminal record) if:

- the amount of cannabis is small and for your personal use
- it's the first time you've been caught with an illicit drug and have no previous record of offence
- you are compliant, non-aggressive and admit that the cannabis is for your personal use only

The police can issue with a fixed-term fee notice, which is an on-the-spot fine for £80 if you are caught with cannabis a **second** time. There is no criminal record if you pay the fine within 21 days. You will be arrested and taken to the police station if caught a third time.

## Activity 1

### Cannabis word search

C P R K D D D Y T M U M S H S  
W A R E O E R R U O E S U A E  
E R N P E O X N U N P H O L S  
E A E N M F C A T G A P I L N  
D N F E A H E A L P Z L X U E  
L O M M I B L R P E D A N C S  
Z I W E N H I Y G E R N A I R  
V D S D E P P S S K W T H N E  
E E T A N I C U L L A H B O T  
A M L X H J Y H U N G R Y G L  
T T C H I L L E D O U T S E A  
H N T N E K N U K S G K S N H  
E R I D L A G E L L I X A I S  
N D I O H M T H C H T P R C I  
C W R L J G A N G A D R G I O

ALTER SENSES  
CANNABIS  
DOPE  
GANGA  
HALLUCINATE  
HAPPY  
ILLEGAL  
MEMORY  
MUNCHIES  
PLANT  
REEFER  
SKUNK  
WEED

ANXIOUS  
CHILLED OUT  
DRUG  
GRASS  
HALLUCINOGENIC  
HUNGRY  
JOINT  
MENTAL HEALTH  
PARANOID  
POT  
RELAXED  
THC  
WIDELY USED



## Activity 2

### Cannabis quiz

Please answer **True** or **False** by placing an **X** in the boxes below

1. Cannabis is not addictive  
 True     False
2. Ganja, weed and grass are street names for cannabis.  
 True     False
3. Cannabis smoke contains cancer-causing substances and hundreds of other chemicals.  
 True     False
4. Far more young people use cannabis today than they did in the past  
 True     False
5. Cannabis is not as strong today as it was in the 1970s.  
 True     False
6. Short-term effects of cannabis may include s "high" feeling and changes in sensation, thinking, and mood.  
 True     False
7. Cannabis is a natural plant, so it is safe to smoke  
 True     False
8. People who drive whilst under the influence of cannabis may have an increased risk of getting into a car accident because of slowed reaction time and impaired judgment  
 True     False
9. When you use cannabis it takes about 1-2 days for the drug to leave your system  
 True     False
10. Cannabis can be used for medical reasons  
 True     False
11. If you have a family history of mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia, bi-polar) you should avoid using Cannabis  
 True     False
12. In the UK, it is legal to grow cannabis  
 True     False



## Handy Tips to help you cut down and or stop if you are using cannabis

- ❖ Have a plan
- ❖ Stop and think before smoking
- ❖ Avoid places, events, people that remind you of weed.
- ❖ Be aware of triggers (e.g. seeing people smoke) and high-risk situations (e.g. going to parties where people will be smoking).
- ❖ Have people around you that will support you to cut down.
- ❖ Do other enjoyable activities instead.
- ❖ Spend more time with people who don't smoke.
- ❖ Think about how you will cope if you are offered weed – practise saying no and think up reasons to refuse weed. Be assertive!!
- ❖ Use less often; if you smoke weed every day, try and skip a couple of days now and then.
- ❖ Buy less weed.
- ❖ Put less weed in spliffs.
- ❖ Try to use less or smaller Rizzla.
- ❖ Let more time pass between smokes.
- ❖ Reward yourself for cutting down.
- ❖ Remind yourself of the reasons why you are cutting down – stay positive!
- ❖ See a drugs worker for advice and support.
- ❖ Remind yourself of the benefits of not smoking.
- ❖ Monitor the amount of money you save by not buying weed.
- ❖ Write a list of all of the reasons why you should cut down and keep it with you when you feel you may relapse.

## Managing cannabis use

### Cannabis diary

Cannabis use	How much did you use?	How did you feel before using?	How did you feel after using?
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

### Things to think about?

- Where were you?
- Were you craving?
- Who were you with?
- What were you doing?
- Were you safe?

## Post-completion questionnaire

1. Please rate your knowledge of cannabis now

Very poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very good
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2. Please rate your knowledge of the health services available to young people now

Very poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very good
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3. How confident would you feel accessing services for young people now?

Not confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very confident
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4. Overall, how useful did you find the workbook?

Very poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very good
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5. The information was easy to understand and at the right level

Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly disagree
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6. The workbook has a good mix of theory and practical activities

Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly disagree
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7. The activities helped to increase my learning and understanding

Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly disagree
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8. I would recommend the workbook to others

Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly disagree
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9. What other health topics would you like to see covered?

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10. Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve the workbook?

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## Further information and support

If you are worried about yourself, a friend who is aged 10-19 or a family member, Switch Bucks can help. Switch bucks provides free, confidential, friendly advice and information to young people in a variety of settings including schools, colleges, youth clubs, community venues .

We deliver targeted and specialist interventions including: Age appropriate information and advice, holistic assessment, structured care planning, harm reduction health promotion and prevention, early intervention, hidden harm (affected by another's use), one to one support, group work in schools, colleges and youth clubs and workforce training.

If you would like further information about Cannabis or would like to find out more about Safe East, you can contact us on:

T: 01494 527 000

W: [cranstoun.org/switch-bucks](http://cranstoun.org/switch-bucks)

## Useful websites

### Lifebytes

[www.lifebytes.gov.uk](http://www.lifebytes.gov.uk)

Health information and advice for young people aged 11-14 (Key Stage 3). 

### Kooth

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

Online mental wellbeing community. Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people.

### MindBodySoul

[www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk](http://www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk)

Health information and advice for young people aged 14-16 (Key Stage 4). 

### TalktoFrank

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

Drug information for young people and handy advice for parents. 

### Re-solv

[www.re-solv.org](http://www.re-solv.org)

A UK charity dedicated to the prevention of volatile substance abuse. 