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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Marijuana: What Teens Think, and What Does it Mean? Wednesday, April 26, 2017

Point Edward, ON - If you want to know what teens think about marijuana, ask a teen.

Join us Thursday, May 4, during Mental Health Awareness Week, as Lambton Public Health and Lambton Drug Awareness Action Committee present ***Marijuana: What Teens Think, and What Does it Mean?***

The **FREE** event at Lambton Public Health, 160 Exmouth St., Point Edward, begins at 7 p.m. Space is limited and registration is suggested. To register visit www.lambtonhealth.on.ca or call 519-383-8331 ext. 3526, or toll free 1-800-667-1839.

Anna McKiernan, Research and Policy Analyst with Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, and lead author of the report [Canadian Youth Perceptions on Cannabis](#), will explore the findings from 20 focus groups conducted with youth in six Canadian cities.

"Canada is moving toward a change in the legal status of recreational marijuana," said Terry Easterby, Health Promoter with Lambton Public Health. "Public perception of risks, harms and dangers associated with marijuana is decreasing, however research suggests marijuana is not risk free, especially for adolescents."

Marijuana is one of the most frequently used substances among Canadian youth after alcohol (Statistics Canada, 2016). Although cannabis use among school-aged youth in Canada has steadily declined over the past decade (World Health Organization, 2014), Canadian youth have one of the highest rates of cannabis use worldwide.

The average age of initiation for cannabis use among Canadian youth is 15.4 years (Statistics Canada, 2016).

The report states "Youth are unclear on the effects and harms of cannabis, which could put them at an increased risk for use. This is concerning as brain development and mental health can be compromised if cannabis use, particularly frequent use, is initiated in early adolescence."

"To prevent harms related to cannabis among adolescents, it is valuable to understand what youth believe are the effects associated with the drug and what could influence a youth to use it or abstain from using it. Youth are best suited to inform researchers about where gaps exist in current cannabis education and awareness efforts."

For more information about marijuana and other drugs, visit www.lambtonhealth.on.ca.

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