Central Michigan
District Health Department
Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities

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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local News Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: Marijuana and our Youth

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Marijuana is bad for Michigan youth

What do Colorado, Washington, Alaska, Oregon and Washington, D.C. all have in common? Several years ago, they all legalized recreational marijuana. Michigan now has the opportunity to learn how legalization has affected those states so that we can make better decisions.

Hopefully, most people agree that kids and teens need protection from marijuana. The parts of the brain involved in addiction are not fully formed until a person is in their early-to mid-20s. In other words, younger brains are more susceptible to addiction. At least one in six adolescents and one in 11 adults who use marijuana will become addicted.

When it comes to accessibility, most young people in states with legalized marijuana say it is "very easy" for them to get. States with legalized marijuana are seeing an increase in use by youth and teens. In areas with legalization, the number of teens who have used marijuana in the past month has continued to rise more than any other area in the United States. Colorado has the highest number of youth admitting to trying marijuana for the first time, which has increased sixty-five percent since marijuana was legalized. Even as the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and all other drugs combined has declined, more high school seniors in Colorado are using marijuana than they were a decade ago.

Marijuana use by our youth will have lifelong harm. Teens who use marijuana at least once a week are more likely to have problems with their learning, memory, math skills, and reading skills. They are also less likely to graduate from high school. Further, teens and young adults who use marijuana are more likely to have serious mental health problems such and anxiety, depression, psychosis, and Schizophrenia. Data also tells us that teens

who use marijuana are more likely to go on to use other drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, and the younger they are when they first use marijuana, the more likely they are to use other drugs.

Marijuana has become a very difficult and confusing topic. Opinion and fact can be hard to separate. For an excellent nonbiased, nonpartisan review of both sides of the argument, given by nonprofit professional researchers, visit www.procon.org. Please learn the truth about recreational marijuana before you decide what is best for the future of Michigan.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org , LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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