



WHAT'S AT STAKE: THE HEALTH RISKS FOR CHILDREN FROM LEGALIZING RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

Other States Have Seen More Children Rushed to the Emergency Room for Accidental Marijuana Poisonings and More Young People Start Using

A Big Push for Big Profits by a Few Rich Investors: The \$30 billion commercial marijuana industry has written a law to legalize recreational use and retail sales of marijuana in Ohio and also paid to get it on the November 7 statewide ballot.

- **It's Driven By Big Corporate Investors:** This plan was bought and paid for by the “*Pot Profiteers*,” a handful of large marijuana companies and their investors who want to change Ohio's law for their personal gain—regardless of the damage it causes Ohioans.
- **It's Anti-Competitive:** The law would give a handful of companies the first right to sell marijuana for recreational use and try to keep out their competitors.
- **It Rewards Convicted Drug Criminals:** Anyone previously convicted of a drug crime—regardless of its severity—is considered “disadvantaged” and given preferential treatment for getting a license to start a marijuana farm or shop and cash assistance for start-up costs.

It's About Big Money: With up to \$4 billion in sales potentially up for grabs, according to an Ohio State University study, these investors see big dollar signs and want to corner the market. The 10% tax rate they want to set for themselves would be one of the lowest in the nation and they would steer up to 36% of that revenue back to themselves to set up more marijuana farms and shops.

Legalizing Recreational Marijuana Will Hurt Ohio's Children and Young People: Marijuana impairs brain function in children and young people and can cause permanent damage. States that have legalized recreational marijuana have seen increases in accidental poisonings among children and emergency room visits and increases in marijuana use among young people.

Marijuana Causes Permanent Damage to Young People's Developing Brains: Regular marijuana use during adolescence can change the way the brain functions in adulthood, [risking impacts](#) to academic performance, IQ, and behavior.

More Young People Will Suffer Mental Health Problems: Marijuana use in adolescence [increases](#) risks of psychosis, a severe mental disorder characterized by distorted thinking and a loss of touch with reality, as well as [depression](#) and suicidality.

More Young People Will Suffer Accidental Marijuana Poisoning: Legalizing recreational marijuana is [linked](#) to an alarming increase in emergency room visits for children due to marijuana ingestion, particularly in the youngest of children.

More Young People Will Start Using Marijuana: States that have legalized recreational marijuana have seen increases in its use by young people. Colorado—the first state to legalize marijuana for recreational use—leads the nation in first-time marijuana use by young people and has experienced an increase in emergency room visits by teens for marijuana-related health emergencies.

Bottom Line: Marijuana is a powerful drug that is dangerous to children and their developing brains, as well as their mental health. As other states' experiences shows, increased access to marijuana leads to increased marijuana poisonings among children and teens and increased visits by them to the emergency room. As we have seen with alcohol, just saying it's only for people over 21 will not keep young people from accessing it. The best way to keep Ohio's children and young people safe from recreational marijuana is to say no to Issue 2. It's a bad deal for Ohio's kids and a deal for Ohio.

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