



## Cannabis Talking Kit: Grades 6-8

### Conversation Goals

- To maintain open lines of communication at a time when acceptance by friends and peers is becoming important, and to strengthen your child's healthy coping strategies.
- Explain the difference between medicinal and recreational cannabis, why cannabis products are misused, and how cannabis can change the way you act, think, and feel.
- Now is the time to warn of the risks of cannabis, and to express your disapproval of cannabis use, while setting and reinforcing consequences.

### Conversation Starters

- Middle school can be difficult, and you may be offered cannabis products like edibles and THC vapes. Even though we've already talked about why those things are unhealthy, I want you to know that you can always talk to me if you have any questions or if you're ever made to feel uncomfortable.
- Tell me about your friends and their families. What are they like?
- Have you heard of people using cannabis (or marijuana, pot, weed, dab pen)? Why do they use it?
- What happened to them/any side effects?
- How would you handle it if your friends wanted you to experiment with cannabis products?
- In that [movie/show] we watched, what consequences did the person who used cannabis experience because of their decision? If you were that person's friend, what advice would you give them?



### Talking Tips

- 1** Make your questions open-ended (e.g., What did you think of that movie? What do you usually do with your friends when you hang out?). These types of questions can help spark conversations, and can help you better engage with your teen.
- 2** Listen to what your teens are saying with an open mind. out of boredom, curiosity, or as a way to fit-in.
- 3** Talk with your teen, not at them.
- 4** Collaboratively develop expectations and consistently reinforce them. It's important to communicate the consequences if he/she were to break one of your rules, and it's also important that these consequences are realistic.
- 5** Encourage teens to take healthy risks (e.g., meeting new people, joining a new club).
- 6** Develop a "code word/phrase" for your child to use if they find themselves in an uncomfortable situation.