



FOUNDATION FOR A DRUG-FREE WORLD

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

HELLO *february* NEWSLETTER

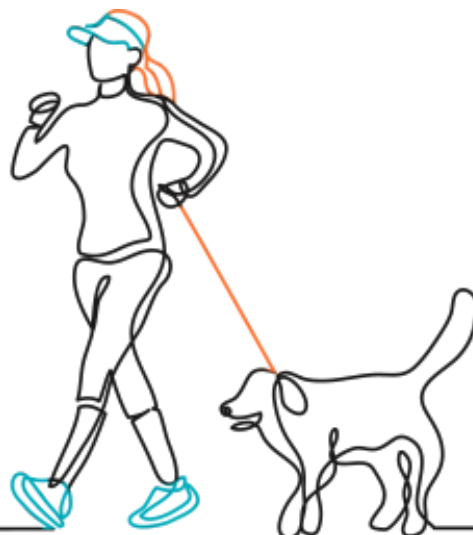


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Happy New Year! Hope you all had a safe and fun Christmas and are ready to begin the new year!

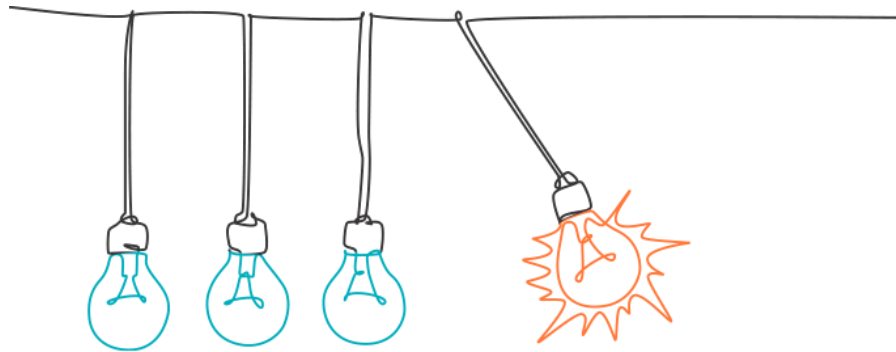
With the new year comes new year's resolutions and our decisions to make better choices and become a better version of ourselves. The most common new year's resolution is about becoming healthy or healthier.



Staying away from drugs and becoming clean is of course always a good choice and will surely make us healthier. Even weaning off of pharmaceutical drugs would be good as long as it is done under your medical doctor's supervision since all drugs have some sort of side effect even if it is not obvious today.

With almost a third of the US adults suffering from depression and anxiety and seeking drugs to help them with it and also a higher suicide rate in the last 10 years, I saw it fit to share this article I recently read with some simple and yet valuable tips on improving your mental health or that of a loved one.

We are presented with new choices and opportunities every single day and these choices have a direct impact in the quality of our life and that of others around us. These can be about taking drugs, whether to go to school or not, who to marry, what to eat or not eat, etc.



Try to make an informed decision but whatever your choice may be, be brave enough to embrace the consequences and wise enough not to blame life or others or circumstances if things don't turn out the way you had hoped.

And remember this quote:

"You are free to choose, but you are not free from the consequence of your choice." Ezra Taft Benson

Wish you all an amazing year and hope all your wishes come true!
Koko

Marijuana Edibles' Danger for Kids

ABC 10 News San Diego
NEWSTEAM 10 INVESTIGATES

'I thought I had lost her': Doctors warn of marijuana edibles' danger for kids

By: Jim Avila



SAN DIEGO (KGTV) — Californians love their legal marijuana. The highest number of cannabis users in the country live in the Golden State, nearly 7 million people, according to Statista, an internet data company.

But medical experts and a parent with a seriously impacted child whom ABC 10News spoke to agree that just because marijuana is legal doesn't necessarily mean it's safe.

"My daughter accidentally ingested marijuana, and it nearly killed her," says concerned parent Amina Serir.

Team 10 Investigative Reporter Jim Avila speaks with a concerned parent with a seriously impacted child whom ABC 10News spoke to agree that just because marijuana is legal doesn't necessarily mean it's safe.

"Marijuana is a very dangerous drug for children," says Dr. Natalie Laub, a child abuse pediatrician at Rady Children's Hospital.

When asked about the idea that marijuana is not addictive, Dr. Roneet Lev, who is an

emergency and addiction physician, adamantly dismissed that claim.

“That’s absolutely wrong. Marijuana is addictive. If you look at youth in treatment centers, the number one drug that they’re in addiction treatment for is cannabis,” the addiction expert says.

Serir is the mother of two beautiful daughters. She says she nearly lost one of them to a cereal that looks just like the harmless store shelf brand, except “jacks” is spelled with a Z. According to lab tests obtained by Team 10, the product her child ate contained THC, the active ingredient in marijuana.

“They were very attractive,” Serir says.

Serir is a swim teacher and routinely takes snacks to practice, and while she doesn’t use marijuana in any form, someone added the THC edible to the snack bag. It took only a few minutes for her daughter to complain about drowsiness and stomach pain. Serir says she still doesn’t know who added the package to the snack basket.

Soon, Serir was on the phone with the poison center, which directed her to go to the hospital immediately.

When little Maya was admitted there, she slipped into a 30-hour coma, according to the pathology report.

“That was the biggest fear of our lives. I thought I had lost her,” Serir says.

Serir says the effects of the THC the lab found in the cereal have been long-lasting for her daughter.

“It was hallucinations. My daughter had her eyes wide open, and she could see bugs and snakes and spiders and had terrifying moments through the night... Throughout the day where she didn’t know if she was in reality or in her dreams,” Serir says.

Neither the makers of the Apple Jackz THC edible nor the retail association representing legal marijuana in California have responded to Team 10’s inquiries.

The two nationally renowned San Diego doctors studying the issue say since legalized marijuana came on the market, child cannabis poisoning has skyrocketed. There were 200 hospital cases in 2023 alone.

“Every single shift, multiple times a shift, I see marijuana-associated problems,” says Dr. Lev. **“And the reason is potency. You know that ‘70s marijuana doesn’t even exist anymore, so legal doesn’t mean safe.”**

In Oct. 2023, four children at Escondido's North Broadway Elementary School were sent to the hospital after eating snacks believed to be laced with marijuana.

The school district told parents via email, "edible cannabis products are easily mistaken for regular candy or food. Cannabis food products such as gummy bears, lollipops or brownies are designed and packaged to look like popular brands of regular candy or baked goods."

In Los Angeles, paramedics were called to transport eight children to the hospital after suspected gummies were consumed on another school campus last spring.

"So it appears that it just... probably is medical marijuana, but we cannot say that for certain until the police does a complete investigation," a firefighter told KABC last spring.

Dr. Laub is a renowned expert on marijuana and how it affects children. One of her published works in the Journal of American Medicine says it can take as little as 5 milligrams of THC to hospitalize a toddler. Additionally, she says half of the kids coming to Rady Children's Hospital after ingesting marijuana are admitted, and 10% are sent to the ICU.

"We were seeing a handful of kids a year, three to five children in an entire year, having cannabis or marijuana poisoning," says Dr. Laub. **"Now we are seeing hundreds of children a year test positive for marijuana coming into the hospital very sick."**

Dr. Laub described some of the symptoms she's seen associated with marijuana poisoning.

"We start to see them having trouble breathing. We start to see them have trouble with electrolytes, so they start to vomit so much," Dr. Laub says. **"Cannabis is very, very dangerous for children. Cannabis makes children very sick. Cannabis can cause children to die even at small doses."**

"One little 5-year-old girl got into her mother's gummy bears. Her eyes were rolling in her head. She was admitted to the ICU, waiting a day or two to detox before she could get home, and her mom didn't intend that. She was mortified, appropriately embarrassed," Dr. Lev says.

Doctors who have witnessed the effects of marijuana poisoning in children are now attempting to change the narrative that marijuana is safe in an effort to fight the

marketing that leaves the impression that the drug is just candy with a kick.

“The drug is not being kept locked away. The drug is not in a childproof container. The drug is left in a kitchen junk drawer. It’s left in a bedside table. It’s kept on a windowsill. It’s left where children can get it,” says Dr. Laub.

Serir welcomes the movement to change the narrative surrounding marijuana.

Those hard lessons may change what the medical world now thinks about the safety of marijuana.

Myth Buster



Myth: You can trick a drug test.

Fact: Drug users going in for a test sometimes try to alter or mask the results (they have tried diluting it, using vinegar or even soap and apple juice). While that may have sometimes worked before, as drug tests have become more exacting, it has become more difficult to trick them. For example, today’s tests don’t just look for banned substances but also, they measure indicators like specific gravity, PH, creatine levels and temperature for irregularities.

For example, a sample diluted with water, will have an abnormally low creatine and specific gravity levels.



Pop Quiz

Question: What percentage of adults keep their resolutions all year long?

Answer: Just 9% of adults keep their resolutions all year long.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, 80% of New Year's resolutions are forgotten by mid-winter, while many adults(23%) quit the first week of the year.