



More than 90 per cent of those who have used drugs have used cannabis.

Source: *Drug habits in Västra Götaland 2016*, CAN

## Contact details

Police 114 14

## More info

[www.drugsmart.com](http://www.drugsmart.com)

[www.can.se](http://www.can.se)

[www.tonårsparlören.se](http://www.tonårsparlören.se)

[www.cannabishjalpen.se](http://www.cannabishjalpen.se)

[www.umo.se](http://www.umo.se)

[www.lansstyrelsen.se/vastragotaland/cannabis](http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vastragotaland/cannabis)



LÄNSSTYRELSEN  
VÄSTRA GÖTALANDS LÄN  
County Administrative Board

# For parents of teenagers

## About cannabis



# Facts

- Cannabis is by far the most commonly used illegal drug among young people.
- All handling of cannabis is illegal – growing, selling, buying, using and storing.
- The cannabis being sold and used today is several times stronger than the cannabis that was around in the 1970s.
- Spice, which has become increasingly common, consists of dried herbs that have been sprayed with synthetic cannabis.
- Spice is stronger than cannabis and is more difficult to detect with a drug test.
- Most young people who smoke cannabis begin by smoking ordinary cigarettes.
- Many are under the influence of alcohol when they first try cannabis.
- The most common way to get hold of cannabis is either from friends or from friends of friends – this often happens at private parties.



Cannabis is a collective term that can mean marijuana, hash/hashish and hash oil.

# Keep your eyes open

It can be difficult for parents to notice if their children are using cannabis. Tiredness, indifference, red eyes, sugar cravings and mood swings can all be signs that your child is using drugs – but they can also mean that your child is just a normal teenager! It is perhaps easier to discover some of the “accessories”. You might start to wonder if they have cigarette papers, as it is unusual for young people to roll their own tobacco cigarettes. How they are getting on at school can also be an important indicator. It is difficult to keep up with school work when smoking cannabis on a regular basis. Poorer performance at school and more truancy may be telling signals.



Parents can often just sense that something is wrong!

# The effects of cannabis

Many young people who smoke cannabis say that they think it makes them feel good and happy – sometimes it makes them giggly and then they feel more calm and relaxed. But not everybody has the same experiences.

Cannabis also has undesirable effects that can be long-lasting. The brain is affected and this can result in being easily distracted and responding in an absent-minded manner. It can become difficult to remember things that have just happened, as well as finding it difficult to learn new things. Other serious consequences can include anxiety, panic attacks and depression.

Furthermore, cannabis smoke contains more carcinogenic substances than tobacco smoke.

Cannabis use can lead to a range of social consequences: problems at school, different groups of friends and conflicts at home. If your child uses drugs and this is reported to the police, it can lead to difficulties in, for example, obtaining a driving licence or travelling to countries such as the USA. It can also be problematic when applying for certain types of work.



# As a parent, what can I do?

- Trust your instincts. If you sense that something is wrong, you are probably right.
- Take a stand and talk to your child – do some background reading and dare to raise the subject!
- Talk with other parents. It can be reassuring to support and discuss things with each other.
- Pay extra attention if your child is smoking tobacco, and refrain from allowing them to drink alcohol. The use of cannabis is often directly linked to the use of tobacco and alcohol.
- Contact some of the organisations listed on the back of this leaflet if you are concerned or have any questions. They provide information, support and advice.

