ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

SORTED

Substance Use and Misuse Team

Cannabis Edibles Information Sheet

Introduction

There has been an increase in young people using edible cannabis products and experiencing effects of overdosing due to a lack of knowledge surrounding edibles. The latest reports show young people consuming edibles in sweet forms such as Haridos (see images below). This sheet will cover, what are edibles, the signs of edible use, the dangers and what to do if edibles have been consumed.

What are edibles?

Edibles are food products that contain drugs, typically this is high concentration cannabis. It can be added to food through cannabis oil or infused into butter or oil used to make the food items.

What do edibles look like?

Edibles can come in a wide variety of forms such as cakes, cookies, brownies, sweets, lollipops, yoghurt or tea among others. They can look very similar to branded products such as Haribo's, Smarties and chocolate bars. They often have a THC (psychoactive component of cannabis) marking on the packaging like in the images. This is to highlight the fact they contain cannabis and will give the psychoactive effects of cannabis when consumed.

How do I know my child has used edibles?

Your child will present with similar effects to that of smoking cannabis which include; the giggles; the munchies; dry mouth; blood shot eyes; dazed/dreamy experience; short term memory loss; faint/sick; paranoia; anxiety.

What are the dangers of using edibles?

The concern surrounding the use of edibles, is the increased chance of overdosing on the drug, which can cause hospitalisation. This is because consuming cannabis as oppose to smoking it takes longer to feel the effects of the drug. It can usually take between 1–3 hrs for the drug to take effect when consumed, often causing users to consume more, believing the drug is not working. As an illegal drug, the amount of THC in the cannabis product also goes unregulated so it is hard to know how much is being consumed in these edible products. They are also easily available and can be bought over the internet. They can be laced with other drugs such as MDMA, this is part of the unknown danger. Any product containing THC is illegal and classed as a Class B drug. Read more here to understand the legalities - Drugs penalties - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

What can I do to help my child?

If you are concerned your child has used edibles, phone 101 in non-emergencies, and 999 in emergency situations. Please report any social media accounts selling these products to the school, police or crime stoppers. You can use the information support below to have a conversation with your child about cannabis use and their safety, or if you want further resources and support.

Local

Adolescent Development Team - SORTED, sorted@hillingdon.gov.uk, 01895 250 721

ARCH Hillingdon - 01895 207 777, arch.hillingdon@nhs.net

National

Crime Stoppers - Crimestoppers (crimestoppers-uk.org), 0800 555 111

Frank - 0300 123 6600, frank@talktofrank.com, text - 82111