



Minnesota Psychiatric Society

Improving Minnesota's mental health care through education, advocacy, sound psychiatric practice and health equity.

MPS Position and 2026 Legislative Update

Cannabis Legalization: Public Health Safeguards

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MPS Position

Cannabis is now legal in Minnesota. The focus now must be on public health safeguards. The Minnesota Psychiatric Society supports evidence-based protections to reduce preventable harm, especially for youth and young adults.

As psychiatrists, including child and adolescent psychiatrists, we are particularly concerned about the impact of high-potency cannabis on the developing brain.

Youth and Brain Development

The brain continues developing into the mid-20s. High-potency and frequent cannabis use during this period is associated with:

- Increased risk of psychosis and serious mental illness
- Greater likelihood of cannabis use disorder
- Increased anxiety and depression
- Measurable effects on attention, memory, and learning

Higher THC concentration increases risk. Legal status does not change brain vulnerability.

2026 Legislative Priorities

MPS supports the following safeguards reflected in current legislative proposals

1. THC Potency Caps. Potency caps are a practical harm-reduction strategy.
 - a. Limit flower to 15 percent THC
 - b. Limit concentrates to 30 percent THC
 - c. Limit topical or transdermal products to 500 mg THC per package
 - d. Prohibit infused flower, infused pre-rolls, and products that imitate items marketed to children
2. Clear Warnings at Retail and on Packaging. Consumers deserve clear risk information in a legal market. Require visible warnings about:
 - a. Brain development risks under 25
 - b. Increased risk of psychosis and dependence
 - c. Delayed effects of edibles

- d. Pregnancy and breastfeeding risks
 - e. Driving impairment
 - f. Child poisoning risk
3. Ongoing Monitoring and Public Education
- a. Track youth use and psychiatric outcomes
 - b. Invest in public education for parents and youth
 - c. Ensure strong enforcement authority

Why This Matters

States with legalized cannabis have seen increases in high-potency product availability and cannabis-related emergency visits. A legal market should prioritize public health, not potency escalation.

Bottom Line

Legalization has occurred. Minnesota now has the responsibility to regulate cannabis in a way that protects youth brain development and reduces preventable psychiatric harm.

Science-based safeguards are not about reversing legalization. They are about doing it responsibly.