

## Cannabis use: the current picture

- Office National Statistics latest stats:
- Overall drug use in past year remained stable
- Although small annual increases in cannabis use amongst yps (5% increase amongst 16-24 year old in last year)
- Cannabis most commonly used drug, inc amongst young people: 18.7 % of 16-24 year olds used in last year
- Cannabis skunk most prevalent type:

Approx 94% police seizures high strength skunk, compared to 85% in 2008, and 51% in 2005.

High potency cannabis use and mental health in Adolescents. (Lindsey et al. 2020)

- Cohort study of 1087 participants
- Findings:
- Use of high-potency cannabis was associated with increased frequency of cannabis use
- Increased likelihood of anxiety disorder
- Increased likelihood of tobacco dependence
- Increased likelihood of anxiety disorder
- Small increase of likelihood of psychotic experiences

Cannabis Use in Adolescents and Risk of Depression, Anxiety, and Suicidality. (Gabriella et al. 2019).

- Meta-analysis of 11 studies and 23,317 individuals
- Findings:
- Cannabis use increased risk of developing depression
- Cannabis use increased risk of suicidal behaviour
- Cannabis use increases likelihood of developing mental health problems even in the absence of a co-morbid condition.

# Systemic complexity

- Direct link between Cannabis skunk use and mental health compounded by numerous additional factors, inc:
- Poor housing and economic deprivation
- Parental ill health, inc. mental health
- Although no significant difference between cannabis use in different ethnic groups, Black British young males more regularly stopped and searched, and more likely to be prosecuted for cannabis possession than other groups.

## Southwark CAMHS and substance use

- Will work with child/ young person if secondary/ dual-diagnosis.
- Will formulate around substance misuse and relationship to primary diagnosis.
- Can provide psycho-education and harm reduction.
- Can goal set towards reduction and abstinence.
- Work with young person's network.
- Will promote protective factors.
- Primary substance misuse presentation sign-posted to Southwark Healthy Young People.

## Risk summary

- The risk of developing a psychotic illness is higher in people who:
- Start using cannabis at a young age
- Smoke stronger types, such as skunk
- Smoke it regularly
- Use it for a long time
- Smoke cannabis and also have other risk factors for schizophrenia, such as a family history of the illness

## References:

Office of National Statistics <https://www.ons.gov.uk/>

*Black people 12 times more likely to be prosecuted for cannabis, new analysis shows.*  
Retrieved 08.03.2022 from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/black-people-cannabis-prosecutions-b1853669.html>

Gabriella G., Tobis A., Tomasz Z., (2019) *Association in Adolescence of Cannabis Use in Adolescence and Risk of Depression, Anxiety and Suicidality in Young Adulthood.*

Lindsey A. Hines, Tom P. Freeman, Suzanne H, Gage, (2020). *Association of Hig-Potency Cannabis Use with Mental Heath and Substance misuse in Adolescents.*