



Cannabis in our Communities Environmental Scan

November 2020



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Overview

This environmental scan explores the currently available cannabis resources and supports within and outside Inuit Nunangat. The focal questions of the environmental scan are: What cannabis resources exist within and outside Inuit Nunangat and is any of this information specifically targeted to Inuit? Key stakeholder information complements the information gathered through online sources. To ensure the environmental scan is useful in informing the development of cannabis resources, we have categorized the information by audience, placement and content. The resulting scan offers a summary of available resources, target audiences, focuses and ways to use the resources to make them relevant for Inuit communities.

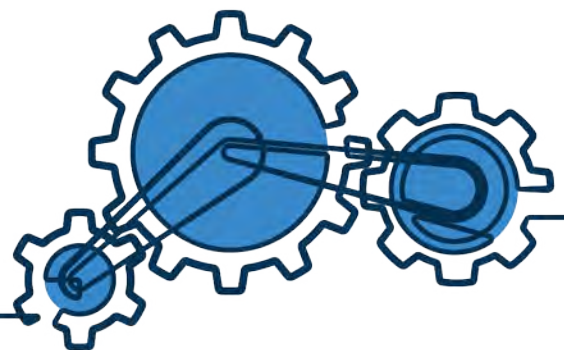
Methodology

The objective of this environmental scan was to obtain and summarize details of cannabis resources and supports that exist in and outside Inuit Nunangat. We reviewed an initial list of sources compiled by the project team at Pauktuutit. From that list we began our online search of available resources that targeted Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat. Google, Google Scholar and ResearchGate search terms included:

- Cannabis
- Canada OR Inuvialuit OR Northwest Territories OR Nunavut OR Nunavik OR Quebec OR Nunatsiavut OR Newfoundland OR Labrador
- Pregnant

Department of Education websites were accessed to pull the curricula which could be relevant for cannabis. Audiences for curricula and community-based support services have been summarized in tables for future reference.

To complement the review of documents and online sources, we contacted key stakeholders identified by the project team at Pauktuutit. The contact was done by phone and email. Six stakeholders were successfully contacted. In addition, we extracted insights from the report which was generated from Inuit Forum on Cannabis and Mental Health held October 2019 in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador. The forum represented the start of developing an Inuit-specific cannabis and substance use agenda. The event was organized by Nunatsiavut Department of Health and Social Development, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) and the Canadian Centre on Substance use and Addiction (CCSA).



Findings

The findings section of the report consists of what we heard from key stakeholders and what we discovered through our environmental scan or “e-scan.” We categorized the findings into: audience, placement and content. Tables have been used to organize large amount of details in a simple format. To keep the body of the report manageable, we have moved some content into the appendices for reference. We draw your attention to key ideas and concepts throughout the document by highlighting text.

Stakeholder Findings

We focused on the existing cannabis resources and supports within Inuit Nunangat during our conversations with key stakeholders. There were two jurisdictions—Nunavut and Inuvialuit Settlement Region—that told us about existing cannabis resources (see Table 1). Nunavut has created a variety of resources that have a **harm reduction approach that encourages safe use rather than the abstinence from cannabis**.

Table 1: Existing Cannabis Resources and Support Services Mentioned by Stakeholders

Region	Existing Cannabis Resource	Cannabis Resource Messages	Existing Support Services
Nunavut	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media campaign• Posters• Rack cards• Fact sheets• Radio scripts• Pregnancy game	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the laws• Know the facts• Harm reduction• Cannabis 101 facts• Safe use• Cannabis edibles and extracts• Helping a friend	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training for frontline staff• Mental health nurse in most communities• Hiring community-based mental health workers• Community groups (girl talk, swing groups, strengthening families program, etc.) run by outreach workers• 28-day program with an “on the land component” in Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet and Clyde River
Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information package for Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• THC transfers through the placenta to the fetus• Increase risk of asthma, chest infection and other breathing problems for the child exposed during pregnancy• Child has risk of poor verbal, memory and reasoning ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)

Audience

Most of the current resources **target the general public**, though both Nunavut and ISR have at least one resource targeting pregnant women. Nunavut has provided cannabis and addiction **training for frontline staff**. There was **no mention of cannabis resources or support services targeted at youth**.

Future Wants and Plans: There are plans in Nunavut to create an intensive treatment centre in Iqaluit to support **Inuit struggling with addictions**. These people are currently sent out of the territory for treatment. The current wait time to sign up to see a mental health worker is long and may mean that people do not get support when it is needed.

Placement

The majority of the cannabis resources are **available regionally in print form** and are **distributed through local channels**. Nunavut has had some **video content on social media (Facebook)**. It was **difficult to find online resources** even when informed of their existence by the key stakeholders.

Future Wants and Plans: The stakeholders suggested that **social media** be used more extensively to get the cannabis messages out to community members. Making **use of cannabis stores** as a location for health education and referral source was mentioned as an opportunity. Although **attention-grabbing posters and social media posts** are important, there are people who are wanting more information that may need to be in a **pamphlet or on a website**.

Content

Nunavut has created a variety of resources that have a **harm reduction** approach that **encourages safe use rather than the abstinence from cannabis**. When cannabis was first legalized in October 2018, the messages were related to **knowing the laws, how to use cannabis safely and basic information about cannabis**. Most of the messaging seemed to be based on the Lower-Risk Cannabis Guidelines (LRCG) developed by the Centre for Mental Health and Addiction (CAMH). In the following year, cannabis edibles, extracts and lotions became legal and content was developed to help people make **informed decisions about the use of these products**.

Future Wants and Plans: It was suggested that content for cannabis resources **be specific and relevant for each region**, for instance, being clear about **where and how to access support services** that can assist those struggling with cannabis dependence. One person perceived there is a disconnect between the cannabis messaging coming from territorial governments and the public awareness and understanding of cannabis. It was felt there is an appetite for educational resources that is not currently being met.

Key Stakeholder Summary

We acknowledge the conversations with key stakeholders creates a limited snapshot of what is happening within Inuit Nunangat from the perspective of a few people. The intention of the conversations was to find out what resources and support services were available and yet we received more information about the future wants and plans of each jurisdiction. It seems clear there are disparities between the various regions and there are opportunities to share, adapt and adopt Inuit-specific resources rather than starting from scratch.

E-scan Findings

As with the Stakeholder Findings, we have consolidated the E-scan Findings into three broad categories: audience, placement and content. Resources are generally created with a particular **audience** or population in mind, so that it informs and engages as intended. Pauktuutit has a particular interest in youth, young adults and pregnant women and their partners, so there was extra attention on resources created for these populations. The **placement** of cannabis resources will have an impact on the degree of reach to the intended audience. Even the best resource will have limited impact with inadequate distribution and amplification. Understanding the placement of current resources will help with decisions for future campaigns. The **content**, messaging and imagery of current cannabis resources needs to be reviewed to determine the opportunities for enhancements that will make future resources relevant for Inuit audiences in Canada. We acknowledge that resources are likely in development throughout Inuit Nunangat and therefore may not have been included in the scan.

Audience

There are **limited resources that are Inuit-specific**. Several resources were aimed at Indigenous audiences, most often for a First Nations or Métis audience. Even though Inuit are acknowledged in the resource title we did not find any Inuit-specific content. In addition, there was **a lack of readily available resources aimed at pregnant women**, though many resources address pregnancy as part of their content. The Northwest Territories (NWT) does have one resource that focuses on pregnancy and breastfeeding. NWT has developed several **innovative resources that focus on youth**. Most resources are directed at the **general public**.

Placement

Cannabis resources within Inuit Nunangat can be found through Google searches on **provincial/territorial government and health organization websites**. Many of the websites acted as a repository of other sources of information rather than original content. It required persistent digging into the navigation of the websites to find the cannabis resources and content. Videos and digital content could be found on government **Facebook and YouTube channels**.

Content

The cannabis content is primarily **basic information** rather than about harm-reduction or support services available in communities. There is liberal use of the Lower-Risk Cannabis Guidelines for the **safer use** content adapted for the Inuit-specific resources. Each provincial/territorial government has content about the **cannabis laws** in their region. There was limited specific content on the different cannabis products and practical information like dosages. Many of the government pages link to the same external resources, particularly for **parents talking to youth about cannabis**. There are some resources that use graphic story-telling to engage a youthful audience but many of the other resources could benefit from the application of a plain language lens to create more accessible content and images/graphics that resonate with a more targeted population.

E-Scan Summary

The organizations that create health education resources and support services within Inuit Nunangat have just begun their journey with the cannabis topic, even though there have been historically high rates of cannabis use within the regions. The legalization of cannabis in 2018 spurred the creation or adaptation of resources to address the perceived knowledge gaps about cannabis and the fears that legalization would harm the health and wellness of young Inuit. It is time to reflect on which populations need cannabis resources, where to put these resources—so they reach these populations—and, what content will be relevant and engaging for these audiences.

Insights & Opportunities

Insights and opportunities emerged from the key stakeholder and e-scan findings that can be useful as Pauktuutit approaches the development of cannabis resources. These are categorized by audience, placement and content.

Audience

The majority of cannabis resources are geared to a general audience. There is an opportunity to provide cannabis information directly to **Inuit youth, young adults, parents, pregnant couples and Elders**.

Placement

There is no central location for Inuit to access cannabis resources and support services. There is a rapidly growing body of resources being created across Inuit Nunangat and southern Canada, but it is difficult to keep up to date as they are in many locations. An easily **accessible website repository** of Inuit-specific and culturally relevant downloadable PDFs, infographics and links to relevant organizations—which can be found with a simple **Google** search—would benefit Inuit.

The lack of awareness of Inuit-specific resources can lead to underutilization. Active promotion and pushing out of new cannabis resources to Inuit across Canada, in a manner that is regionally relevant, is an opportunity to be considered. **Social media and local radio** are commonly used by Inuit in the north, while social media is most common in urban centres.

There are opportunities for **community-based distribution** of messaging through community groups – many of whom are not currently messaging about cannabis – such as youth groups, Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Programs, etc. Support services within Health Centres and wellness programs within communities are paramount to sustainable, meaningful support.

Content

While there is limited information on cannabis that targets Inuit, there are many resources available which could be **easily adapted to an Inuit audience**. In some cases, this may mean **updating language or imagery to be more reflective of Inuit values, principles and communities**, and in other cases it may simply mean distributing existing materials.

Many of the cannabis resources are **text-heavy and use language that is difficult to translate**. Jurisdictions had little time to prepare for the legalization of cannabis, so it is likely the development of resources was rushed. Pauktuutit can take the time to **engage the target audiences to co-create resources** that will engage and inform those who have knowledge gaps.

Although there is content that is **trauma-informed and focused on harm reduction** there is an opportunity to put greater emphasis on these approaches. The majority of resources were either abstinence-based or completely neutral, which can be interpreted as promoting abstinence.

Most resources contained general information about cannabis, so there is an opportunity to **develop content that has greater relevance for a targeted population**. Topics could include: breastfeeding and cannabis, benefits of cannabis, and the different types of cannabis and their effects.

Cannabis Resources


This section provides details about the various cannabis resources and supports that we came across during our e-scan. The resources are categorized by their relevance for an Inuit audience. The sections include: Inuit-Specific Resources; Resources Adaptable for Inuit Audiences and General Canadian Resources. The resources range from websites with lists of treatment centres to pamphlets that can be distributed to community members. Each table describes the type of resource, target audience and the goal/focus/finding of the item. We also included notes about the resources' potential relevance for an Inuit audience.

Inuit-specific Resources

These resources are most relevant for Inuit audiences including youth, parents, and pregnant or breastfeeding women. The first two sources provide information on how to access treatment centres and harm reduction supports. For more details on each source, click on the link icon to access individual websites.

Source 1	Substance use treatment centres for First Nations and Inuit Government of Canada
Resource type	List of substance use treatment centres for First Nations and Inuit peoples in Canada
Target audience	All ages, parents, youth, health care professionals, teachers, pregnant or breastfeeding women
Goal/focus/findings	Resource provides a comprehensive list of treatment centres and services funded by the Government of Canada. Content is broken down by territories/provinces, with links and contact information for centres
Notes	Targeted directly to Inuit and First Nations peoples. Tone & language is neutral – informative. Provides a breakdown of language availability (English, French and Indigenous).


Source 2	Cannabis-related resources for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Government of Canada
Resource type	List of cannabis-related resources/contacts
Target audience	All ages, parents, youth, health care professionals, teachers, pregnant or breastfeeding women
Goal/focus/findings	Focus is separated between four topics: Mental Wellness Supports and Health Services; Funding Support for Public Education; Community Economic Development Opportunities; and an Indigenous Navigator and Licensing Portal. Provides connections to resources.
Notes	Content is targeted directly to Inuit, First Nations and Métis peoples. Linked resources are primarily focused on harm reduction

Source 3	Augmented Reality Comics Government of Northwest Territories <div>  </div>
Resource type	Educational Augmented Reality (AR) Comics
Target audience	Youth, young adults, pregnant or breastfeeding women
Goal/focus/findings	Educates on various usage and health considerations for non-medical cannabis consumption
Notes	Content is harm-reduction focused and culturally sensitive, using locations and characters depicting Inuit youth and communities in the Northwest Territories. AR content features animated centre-panel of comic and multiple links to additional resources.



Source 4	Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Government of Northwest Territories (NWT) <div>  </div>
Resource type	Videos, online and pdf resources, posters, brochures, fact sheets
Target audience	Youth/younger adults, adults, expecting parents , parents, general population of NWT
Goal/focus/findings	Range of information about cannabis: Health effects of cannabis, information and resources for a variety of audiences, safer use of cannabis, pregnant and breastfeeding mothers , legalization, youth, NWT community counselling program
Notes	Some resources are from external sources (Drug Free Kids Canada, State of Colorado, Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA), etc.). Youth information includes an augmented reality experience with downloadable posters and a video. The augmented reality resources depict Inuit youth and imagery of the North .



Source 5	Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission Website Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission 
Resource type	Website with FAQs, video
Target audience	General public, residents of Nunavut
Goal/focus/findings	Information about legalization, FAQs, general information about cannabis
Notes	Inuit-specific with a responsible use focus



CANNABIS

1 How old do I have to be to consume cannabis legally?

19+ Adults 19+ of age

2 Where can I buy cannabis from?

Only from licensed agents of the NULC at www.nulc.ca

3 How much cannabis can I legally consume?

30 gr. 30 Grams is the most you can buy or carry at a time

4 Where can I smoke cannabis?

You can't smoke in most public places – Know your local laws. You CAN consume cannabis in a private residence or licensed smoke lounge

5 Can I smoke cannabis while driving?

No, driving while under the influence of cannabis is illegal

6 Can I have cannabis in my vehicle?


Cannabis cannot be within reach of anyone in a vehicle. It must be stored away from arms reach. A good rule of thumb is the trunk of the car

Source 6	Nunavut Department of Health Website Government of Nunavut	GO
Resource type	Government website	
Target audience	General public, residents of Nunavut	
Goal/focus/findings	One news release linked to a pdf with information about reducing risks of cannabis use.	GO
	There is also a FAQ sheet about cannabis that covers a number of topics.	GO
Notes	A search of "cannabis" on the site provides some links, mostly to information about legalization and legislation .	


Cannabis

How can I reduce some of the risks of cannabis use?

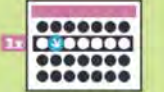
The best way to prevent the risks of cannabis use is to avoid cannabis altogether. If you do decide to use cannabis, here are a few suggestions that can help to reduce your risk.




➤ If you are under 25, avoid using cannabis since it can have long-lasting effects on the brain.




➤ Using a vaporizer may help reduce the damage to your lungs from smoking cannabis. It is best not to mix cannabis with tobacco.




➤ If you decide to use cannabis, it is best not to use more than once per week. It is safest to avoid the use of cannabis products that are high in THC.




➤ Cannabis use during pregnancy or while breast feeding may harm the developing baby. It is safest to avoid use during these times.



➤ It is best not to use cannabis while using recreational or prescription drugs, including alcohol.



➤ It is best to avoid cannabis use if you or your family members have a history of mental illness or substance use problems.



➤ After smoking cannabis, it is recommended to wait 6 hours or more before driving. This period should be longer if the cannabis was swallowed in food or drink.

THC stands for delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol. THC is the main chemical responsible for the "high" or mind-altering effects from cannabis.

Source 7	Cannabis Talk Kit Drug Free Kids Canada	CC
Resource type	Information kit and videos	
Target audience	Parents of teens, youth, young adults	
Goal/focus/findings	Drug Free Kids cannabis talk kit is available to download in Inuktitut. Online resources including how to talk with your teen, test run the cannabis talk , Facebook Live Ask a Practice Kid series General information about cannabis	
Notes	The Cannabis Talk Kit can be ordered in French and English (mailed copy) but the Inuktitut version is only available to download. Rural and remote regions with connectivity and internet bandwidth issues may struggle with downloading the Kit.	



Resources Adaptable to Inuit Audiences

Although the resources in this section are not Inuit-specific, they may be worth considering for adaptation for an Inuit audience. They stood out for several reasons including: use of plain language, compelling design, engaging medium or targeted a relevant population.

Source 8	Cannabis in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Resource type	YouTube 16-second animated videos. PDF downloads
Target audience	Youth, young adults, adults, expecting parents, parents with young people (at home). General population of NL.
Goal/focus/findings	FAQs. Range of information and resources about cannabis: Safe and Responsible Use, Prenatal Pregnancy and Breastfeeding , Parents Caregivers and Educators, Drug Impaired Driving, Cannabis and Your Health.
Notes	None of the resources depict Inuit or Inuit-specific imagery. The plain language information could be adapted to be more relevant to Inuit and the north. Video content is a medium consumed by Inuit.

SOME OF YOUR CANNABIS QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Can I get addicted?



Can weed affect my health?



Mental health.



Driving while high.



Risks interview.



Plant interview.




Kids interview.



Impairment interview.



Addiction interview.

Source 9	Yukon Department of Health and Social Services Government of Yukon 
Resource type	Website, PDF downloads
Target audience	General public, residents of Yukon
Goal/focus/findings	Range of information and resources: Cannabis 101, Cannabis quiz, legislation, retail and distribution, impaired driving, health risks Information for adults to talk with youth about cannabis Links to external sources: Yukon.ca/cannabis Cannabisyukon.org (information, retail)
Notes	A search of “cannabis” on the website brings up resources and links to government pages with information. Some of the resources are from other health organizations. Would provide good background for Pauktuutit to borrow or adapt. Use of plain language.

To keep your children and pets safe from accidental cannabis poisoning,
here's some tips on how to safely store your cannabis:



Labels on all cannabis products

- Leave labels on your legal cannabis products.
- Make clear and visible labels for containers of your personally grown cannabis.
- If you make your own edible cannabis products, be sure to properly label them as well.

Label examples





Store in child-safe containers

- All legal cannabis products must be in child-resistant packages.
- Make sure they are appropriately resealed after use.
- Consider investing in a lockbox.



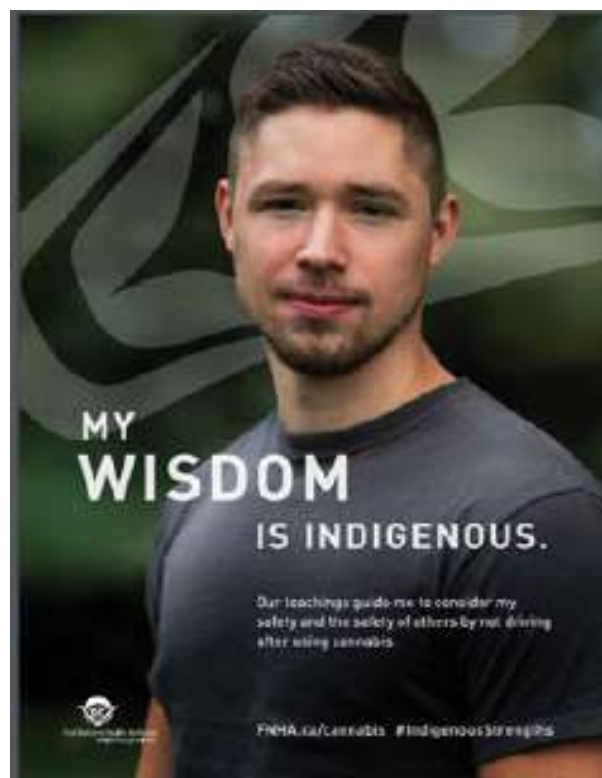
Keep out of reach of children and pets


Source 10	Alcohol or Other Drug Use During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services 
Resource type	Website
Target audience	Pregnant and breastfeeding women
Goal/focus/findings	Effects of alcohol and drugs during pregnancy and breastfeeding
Notes	Strong language and upfront list of negative health effects could be perceived as intimidating by the target audience. For instance, "There's not a single moment during pregnancy when drinking alcohol is safe." Consider messaging that is gain-framed.


Source 11	Drug Safe Cannabis Alberta Health Services 
Resource type	Website, information, quiz, downloadable PDFs, link to external resources
Target audience	General population, youth, parents, expecting parents, educators
Goal/focus/findings	Health effects of cannabis, 'What's Your High Q?' quiz , general information, targeted information for under 25 , cannabis and youth. Resources for health professionals; educators; parents, families and influencers of youth; pregnant and breastfeeding women .
Notes	Nothing Inuit-specific but good general information and links to sources. Easy to navigate the site and find information and resources.




Source 12	FNHA Cannabis Campaign Resources First Nations Health Authority <div>GO</div>
Resource type	Posters, fact sheets and print material
Target audience	Youth, younger adults, general First Nations community of BC
Goal/focus/findings	To create awareness of FNHA resources on non-medical cannabis consumption in First Nations communities in BC
Notes	Content is culturally sensitive , targeted directly and sent to First Nations health centres, friendship centres and other service sites in BC. Features posters made by First Nations talent in BC. Language is focused on harm-reduction .




Source 13	Cannabis Toolkit Thunderbird Partnership Foundation 
Resource type	Toolkit of information on cannabis laws, cannabis use economics and more
Target audience	Policy makers in First Nations communities
Goal/focus/findings	Toolkit is intended to assist First Nations communities in having conversations with community members about cannabis information, usage and regulations . Information available online and adaptable to different communities, helping to address cannabis questions and support decisions surrounding regulation.
Notes	Content is targeted to and developed by First Nations communities. Focus is on harm-reduction and education for communities

Source 14	Public Education (Cannabis) Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse 
Resource type	Web page with links to PDFs
Target audience	General public
Goal/focus/findings	Provides information about cannabis including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Guide to Cannabis for Older Adults (2020) • COVID-19 and Cannabis series (2020) • Cannabis and Your Medication (2020) • Cannabis and other Substances (2020) • However you Use it, Cannabis is Cannabis (2020) • Psychiatric Disorder and Cannabis Use (2020) • How to Safely Store Your Cannabis (2019) • The Risks of Cannabis (2019) • The Effects of Cannabis Use During Adolescence (2015) • Edible Cannabis: Always Read the Label (2019) • Know the Health Risks of Cannabis (2019) • Cannabis: Inhaling vs Ingesting (2019) • Edible Cannabis: Cannabis Extracts and Cannabis Topicals (2019) • Cost of Cannabis Collisions in Canadian Provinces (2017) • 7 Things You Need to Know about Edible Cannabis (2017) Guide to Facilitate Discussions about Youth Cannabis Use in Your Community (2016) • Provincial Patterns and Trends in Cannabis Use Among Youth (2020) • Interview: What we know about safe cannabis for pregnant women and breastfeeding moms
Notes	Not Inuit-specific, but information is useful for everyone. Could use the PDFs as-is or could request permission to use them and adapt to be more Inuit-focused or visually relevant.

Source 15	The High Way Home? Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction 
Resource type	Canadian website for youth by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA)
Target audience	Youth/young adults
Goal/focus/findings	Interactive website where youth make choices about impaired driving. Focus on getting home safely from a party. Myth or fact quiz with additional information. Information is provided related to the choices they make in the quiz.
Notes	Not specific for Inuit youth or the northern context but a very interactive and engaging resource.




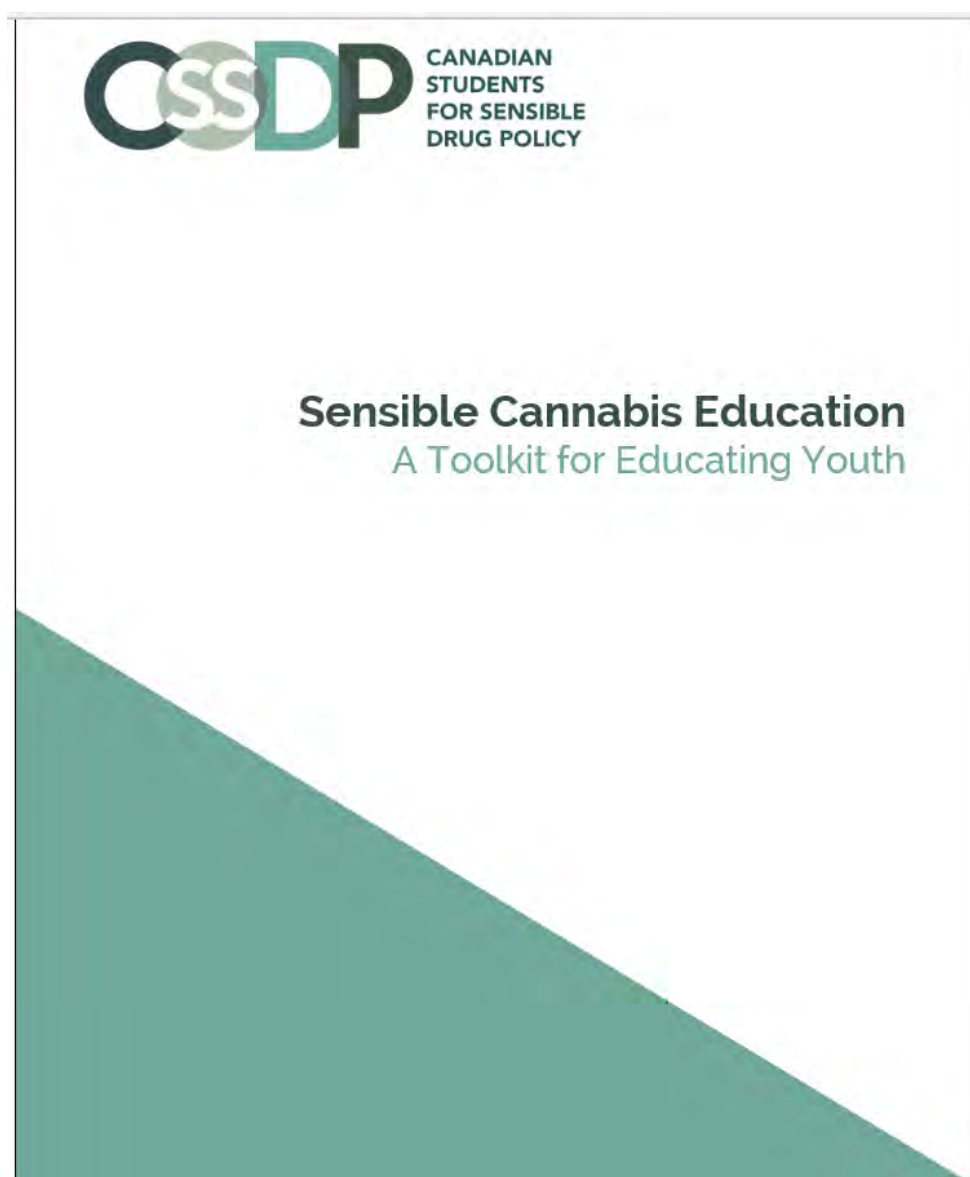
Source 16	Know the Health Effects Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction 
Resource type	Poster
Target audience	General public
Goal/focus/findings	General info poster about health effects of cannabis including mental health, cannabis and driving, cannabis and respiratory effects, cannabis use during pregnancy #ClearingtheSmoke
Notes	Not Inuit-specific, applicable to all audiences Easy language for wide audiences to get brief information about the health effects




Source 17	Help Your Teen Understand What's Fact and Fiction About Marijuana Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction and Parent Action on Drugs
Resource type	Infographic
Target audience	Parents of youth
Goal/focus/findings	Brief information to help parents/guardians talk to teens about cannabis Facts and fiction related to health effects, usage, impaired driving, addiction Tips for parents Links to additional resources
Notes	Useful quick infographic to supplement other resources for teens and cannabis.



Source 18	Sensible Cannabis Education: A Toolkit for Educating Youth Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy 
Resource type	Toolkit (2018)
Target audience	Practitioners
Goal/focus/findings	The toolkit is broken into two part with the first section highlighting the ten guiding principles for providing cannabis education to youth . The second section focuses on content which should be included in a comprehensive cannabis education curriculum.
Notes	Downloadable resource



Source 19	Cannabis, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada <div>  </div>
Resource type	Website and print resources
Target audience	Pre- and postnatal couples
Goal/focus/findings	PregnancyInfo.ca is an initiative of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC), Canada's leading authority on sexual and reproductive health. The focus of these resources is basic cannabis information related to pregnancy and breastfeeding.
Notes	Print material can be ordered in Inuit languages. The information on cannabis is written in plain language with a harm-reduction and trauma-informed perspective. Content is evidence-based and could easily be adapted for Inuit.



8 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CANNABIS, PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING

Research shows that cannabis use by pregnant and breastfeeding women can negatively impact their health and that of their developing baby. Here's the most up-to-date evidence about the effects of cannabis during pregnancy and breastfeeding on you and your developing baby:

- It is safest **not to use cannabis** during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- There is **no safe time** to consume cannabis, since the baby's brain develops throughout pregnancy. In fact, brain development continues from infancy, through the teenage years until about age 25; cannabis can affect the brain at all stages of development.
- No matter how it is used (e.g., smoked, vaped, eaten), the developing baby may be **affected by all forms of cannabis** taken by pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- Smoking cannabis may increase carbon monoxide levels in blood, which, like smoking cigarettes, can **decrease the amount of oxygen** the developing baby receives.
- Studies have indicated that the use of cannabis during pregnancy may be associated with increased risk for **low birth weight, preterm labour, and stillbirth**.
- Cannabis compounds are stored in body fat and can be **passed to the baby through breastmilk**. These chemicals are slowly released over time (up to 30 days), which means that "pumping and dumping" breastmilk does not work the same way it does with alcohol. Some research reports that babies exposed to cannabis through breastmilk have slower motor development, reduced muscular tone and poor sucking.
- Maternal cannabis use has been linked to adverse effects on children's brain development, memory function, ability to pay attention, reasoning and problem-solving skills, and is associated with more hyperactive behaviour, an increased risk of depression or anxiety and increased risk for future substance use. Therefore, the **effects of cannabis exposure during pregnancy may last a lifetime**.
- Using cannabis during pregnancy may affect your DNA and genes, which can be **passed on to future generations**, impacting their health.

Given what we now know about the short- and long-term effects of cannabis on pregnancy, fetuses, and babies, it is safest for women to avoid using cannabis while pregnant and while breastfeeding. If you have any questions about cannabis use during pregnancy or breastfeeding, please speak to your healthcare provider.

Information about cannabis and pregnancy and breastfeeding can be found at www.pregnancyinfo.ca/learn-more/. SOGC



What you need to know: Cannabis, Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

It's safest for you not to use cannabis during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Cannabis may negatively affect brain development.

SMOKING CANNABIS MAY INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF CARBON MONOXIDE IN YOUR BLOOD.

The effects of cannabis exposure during pregnancy may last a lifetime.

Cannabis use during pregnancy may be associated with:

- LOW BIRTH WEIGHT
- PRETERM LABOUR
- STILLBIRTH

A developing baby may be affected by all forms of cannabis.

CANNABIS MAY ALTER YOUR DNA AND GENES.

Cannabis compounds may be passed to your baby through breast milk. This may lead to:

- LOW MOTOR DEVELOPMENT
- REDUCED MUSCLE TONE
- POOR SUCKLING


CHILDHOOD: Poor memory function, poor problem-solving skills, poor attention and hyperactivity.

ADOLESCENCE: Increased risk of depression, anxiety, and drug use.


ADULTHOOD: Increased risk of substance use.

To learn more about cannabis, pregnancy and breastfeeding visit pregnancyinfo.ca/learn-more

General Cannabis Resources

Source 20	Government of Canada Cannabis Resources Government of Canada 
Resource type	Multiple resources available; some are online content only and some provide PDF downloads
Target audience	All ages, parents, youth, health care professionals, educators, pregnant or breastfeeding women
Goal/focus/findings	Inform people about health effects of cannabis, guidelines for how much is safe, why youth should avoid using
Notes	<p>There are many resources available including effect of cannabis use on breastfeeding mothers, tips about edible cannabis</p> <p>Information on amount and dose include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines and FAQs on the LRCUG • Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines for Youth • 10 ways to reduce risks to your health when using cannabis



Source 21	Government of Canada Cannabis Resources for Indigenous Communities Government of Canada 
Resource type	Multiple resources available; some are online content only and PDF downloads
Target audience	All ages, parents, youth, health care professionals, educators, pregnant or breastfeeding women. Connects to resources for Indigenous people
Goal/focus/findings	Inform people about health effects of cannabis, guidelines for how much is safe, why youth should avoid using
Notes	There are many resources available related to legal considerations. Any resources identified as available for First Nations, Métis and Inuit did not specifically mention Inuit. Programs were all listed for southern provinces.


Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

Search Canada.ca

MENU

Canada.ca > Health > Drug and health products > Drugs and medication > Cannabis

Talk about cannabis



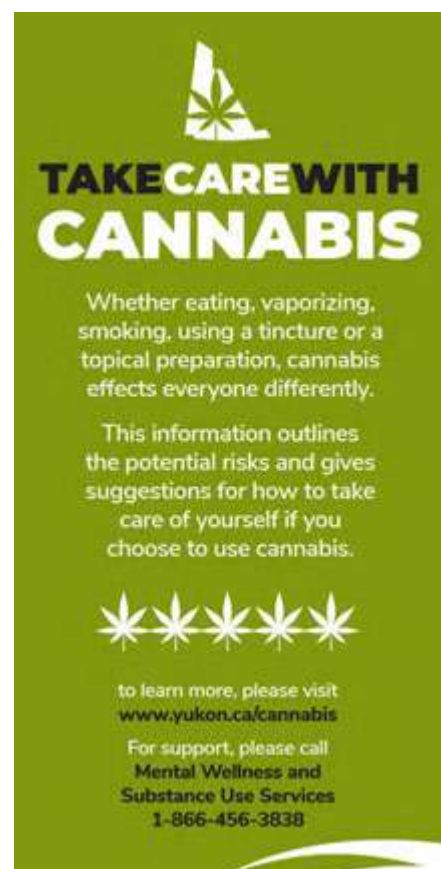
CANNABIS IN CANADA

Get the facts

Resources to help you better understand the new Canadian cannabis legal system, what it means for you, and the health facts related to cannabis use.

i Displaying only resources for Indigenous peoples and communities. [Show all resources](#)

Source 23	Cannabis Social Responsibility Resources Yukon Liquor Corporation	GO
Resource type	Website, PDF downloads	
Target audience	General public, residents of Yukon	
Goal/focus/findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannabis social responsibility tools • Information for residents and businesses • Licensing, sales 	
Notes	There is no information that is specific for pregnant women	



Source 24	Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services Website Government of Quebec	GO
Resource Type	Website	
Target audience	General public, residents of Quebec	
Goal/focus/findings	Information about legislation, health risks, lower-risk use. Advice for parents of teenagers and young adults , general cannabis information, risks of driving under the influence. General information is available about alcohol and drug use.	
Notes	Limited English resources available.	

Source 25	Regulation of Cannabis in Quebec Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services	GO
Resource type	Website	
Target audience	General public, residents of Quebec	
Goal/focus/findings	Do you speak cannabis? PDF download. Regulation of cannabis in Quebec consultation document with information about safety, marketing, prevention, health . Information about legislation, health risks, lower-risk use. Advice for parents of teenagers and young adults , general cannabis information, risks of driving under the influence. General information is available about alcohol and drug use.	
Notes	Limited English resources available. Trauma-informed language in developing dependence vs addiction and statistics	

DO YOU SPEAK CANNABIS?

Information and talking points to allow **parents** to broach the subject of cannabis and other drugs with their child

Cannabis is a drug derived from a plant with the same name.
Even though cannabis is a natural product, it is not harmless. Using it may have many negative health effects.

It comes in different forms, including:

- DRYED PLANT**
buds, grass, marijuana, pot, weed
- SOLID CONCENTRATED EXTRACTS**
hashish, resin, slabs (beas, shamas)
- LIQUID CONCENTRATED EXTRACTS**
resin oil, cartridges for e-cigarettes, oil for oral administration
- EDIBLES**
brownies, cookies, chocolate infusions, etc.

MOST TEENS DON'T USE

According to the data from the Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students, fewer and fewer teens are using substances.

2000	2013
71% had not used tobacco products	88% had not used tobacco products
29% had not drunk alcohol	43% had not drunk alcohol
60% had not used cannabis	77% had not used cannabis

The high school students who had used cannabis did so mainly as an experiment (once to try it out) and use it only occasionally (less than or around once a month).

AND WHAT ABOUT LEGALIZATION?

The primary aim of legalizing cannabis is to protect people's health. This legislative framework aims to better control the risks associated with use, which the current model of prohibition has not done successfully. However, legalizing cannabis is not an incentive to use it.

Cannabis possession continues to be illegal for people younger than 18 years.

Some ideas and tips on talking about cannabis

Curricula

Youth are a target population for the Cannabis in Our Communities project, therefore it is important for us to reflect on the health and wellness curricula they are exposed to in their educational institutions. We accessed the provincial and territorial education websites to discover what is taught to Inuit youth between grade one and 12 within Inuit Nunangat.

[Northwest Territories curriculum](#) (based off of Alberta's curriculum) was the basis for Nunavut's school curriculum, so it's not surprising to see the similarities between the two. According to the [Nunavut Approved Curriculum and Resources Database](#), alcohol and other drugs appear on the health curriculum beginning in grade three. Cannabis appears as a specific outcome on the grade seven curriculum.

Since 1978, [Kativik Ilisarniliriniq](#) has been the exclusive provider of academic services to the population of Nunavik. The education programs developed by the school board are offered in all schools of the 14 Nunavik communities, in Inuktitut as first language and in French and English as second languages. In 2016, as the regional health board for Nunavik, Kativik created a [strategic plan](#) which included four strategic directions including the success and well-being of students. They are currently working on the Health and Wellness curriculum which will include tobacco and cannabis. It will take a holistic approach to health with five units of key concepts including 'harmony and balance,' touching on substance use.

The curriculum for [Newfoundland and Labrador](#) had a large focus on peer pressure throughout much of the primary years up to grade nine. And while cannabis was not specifically mentioned, there was a focus on illegal and non-prescription drugs and their effects. Pregnancy was not specifically mentioned in the context of drugs. The following table provides a summary of the topics covered by age and region.

	ISR NWT curriculum	Nunavut Nunavut curriculum	Nunavik Kativik Ilisarniliriniq Curriculum (in development)	Nunatsiavut Newfoundland and Labrador curriculum
Medicine	Grade 1, 2, 3	Grade 3		Grade 1
Tobacco – introduction	Grade 3	Grade 3		Grade 4
Peer pressure – introduction	Grade 3	Grade 5		Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Alcohol – introduction	Grade 4	Grade 5		Grade 5
Non-prescription drugs – introduction				Grades 4, 5
Non-prescription drugs – effects				Grade 6
Cannabis – introduction	Grade 7	Grade 7		
Cannabis – effects	Grade 8	Grade 8, 9		
Cannabis – pregnancy	Grade 8	Grade 8		
Cannabis – side effects	Grade 9			
Cannabis – effect on lifestyle				
Drugs and the law	Grade 9			Grade 5

Support Services

Community-Based Support Services

The following support services were identified in the course of interviews with informants as well as the online searches.

Resource	Isuarsivik Regional Recovery Centre
Resource type	Recovery centre
Communities served	Kuuujuaq, Nunavik
Contact information	https://isuarsivik.ca
Description	Provides culturally sensitive healing programs through a holistic approach in the field of addiction and trauma. The centre uses a blend of traditional Inuit values and modern practices. The program's goal is to foster well-being through abstinence although it is recognized and respected that, for many clients, their objective might be to reduce the negative impacts of their problematic use of substances.

Resource	Cambridge Bay Wellness Centre
Resource type	Community organization
Communities served	Cambridge Bay, Nunavut
Contact information	(867) 983-4670
Description	Educational programs and counselling services that promote freedom from addiction and violence and encourage positive life style choices.

Resource	28-day Addiction Program
Resource type	Treatment program with on-the-land component
Communities served	Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet and Clyde River, Nunavut
Contact information	Not available yet
Description	Culturally relevant treatment Self-referrals

Resource	Ilisaqsivik
Resource type	Land-based programming
Communities served	Clyde River, Nunavut
Contact information	https://ilisaqsivik.ca/programs-and-services/land-based-programming
Description	Currently offers land-based programs. In development to have one in Clyde River similar to Cambridge Bay program specific for addictions.

Urban-Based Support Services

The following support services were identified in the course of interviews with informants as well as the online searches.

Resource	Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI)
Resource type	Community organization
Communities served	Ontario
Contact information	https://www.tungasuvvingatinuit.ca Administration, Finance, Employment and Learning Centre 613-565-5885 Counselling (Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm): 613-565-5885 ext. 201 Mamisarvik Healing Centre 613-792-8132 ext. 226 Community Support: 613-747-0629 613-749-4500
Description	Tungasuvvingat Inuit is an Inuit-specific, provincial service provider offering more than twenty highly integrated front-line programs and services. Their one-stop resource centre continues to grow to meet the complex and evolving needs of Inuit in Ontario. The agency is the only Inuit-specific service organization of its kind in urban Canada offering support through the entire life cycle. No mention of cannabis specifically.

Resource	Akausivik Inuit Family Health Team
Resource type	Medical centre
Communities served	Ottawa and area
Contact information	Phone: (613) 740-0999 Fax: (613) 740-0991
Description	Free primary care dedicated to Inuit and focuses on identified Inuit population health priorities. Includes counselling services.

Resource	Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CNCP)
Resource type	Program
Communities served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitehorse • Aboriginal/Métis/Inuit • Immigrant/Newcomers • Isolated • Low Income • Rural/Remote • Single Parents • Teen Pregnancy/Parent • Urban
Contact information	Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre 503 Hanson Street

	<p>Whitehorse, YUKON Y1A 1Y9</p> <p>For more information please contact the following individual: Emilie Dory Telephone: (867) 667-4134 Fax: (867) 667-7004 Email: cpnp@vfwomenscentre.com</p>
Description	<p>Wide variety of topics covered in this program from nutrition, to safety, to mental health and substance use.</p> <p>This was the only program that showed up on the CPNP website when we searched for programs that addressed substance abuse/addiction by province though we are aware that it is also available in Nunavut, Nunavik and Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR).</p>

Helplines and Other Support Services

The following support services were identified in the course of interviews with informants as well as the online searches.

Resource	Hope for Wellness Help Line
Resource type	Telephone help line
Communities served	Canada
Contact information	<p>Toll free: (855) 242-3310 Online chat at hopeforwellness.ca Available 24/7 English and French Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut available on request</p>
Description	<p>Free crisis intervention and counselling support for First Nations and Inuit.</p> <p>Link to posters in English, Ojibway, Plains Cree, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut Nunavik dialect and Inuktitut Nunavut dialect: https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1576092599338/1576092641234</p>

Resource	Kids Help Phone
Resource type	Telephone help line
Communities served	Canada
Contact information	<p>https://kidshelpphone.ca 1-800-668-6868 Available 24/7 Text, call, live chat</p>
Description	<p>National help line for youth. Cannabis: Important things to know has some basic information about cannabis (what it is, how people use it, effects, etc.). It's written in plain language and is accessible. The website also has a search option for resources near you on a variety of topics, including drugs.</p>

Resource	National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP)
Resource type	Alcohol and drug abuse prevention, intervention, and aftercare programs
Communities served	First Nations and Inuit in Canada
Contact information	https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1576089851792/15760899910366 Toll-Free: 1-866-225-0709
Description	Program funded by the Government of Canada for First Nations and Inuit communities looking for help with problematic substance use. NNADAP supports a national network of 55 residential treatment centres.

Resource	National Youth Solvent Abuse Program (NYSAP)
Resource type	National program
Communities served	First Nations and Inuit Youth in Canada, ages 12-25
Contact information	https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/canadian-drugs-substances-strategy/funding/national-youth-solvent-abuse-program.html
Description	Program funded by the Government of Canada for First Nations and Inuit communities looking for help with problematic substance use.

Resource	Kamatsiaqtut Help Line
Resource type	Telephone help line
Communities served	Nunavut
Contact information	http://nunavuthelpline.ca 1-800-265-3333 (867) 979-3333 (local Nunavut number) Available 24/7
Description	Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Helpline provides anonymous and confidential telephone counselling for Nunavummiut in crisis.

Resource	ConnexOntario
Resource type	Telephone help line
Communities served	Ontario
Contact information	https://www.connexontario.ca 1-866-531-2600 Call and chat available Services in French and English. Additional languages available through a translator.
Description	ConnexOntario assists individuals with access to addiction, mental health, and problem gambling services.

Resource	The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
Resource type	Community organization
Communities served	Toronto, Ontario
Contact information	http://www.camh.ca (416) 535-8501 1-800-463-2338
Description	<p>From assessment to brief interventions, inpatient programs, day hospital services, continuing care, outpatient services and family support, CAMH provides a wide range of clinical care services.</p> <p>Resources targeted to a variety of audiences are available on the website for cannabis: http://www.camh.ca/en/search?query=cannabis</p> <p>Resources are not specific to Inuit. Some are directed more for service providers, but they also include useful plain language resources like infographic posters.</p>

Acknowledgement of Key Stakeholders

We are thankful for the contributions of the following key stakeholders who provided insight into the current cannabis landscape for Inuit Nunangat:

- Opal McInnis, Addiction Treatment Specialist, Department of Health, Government of Nunavut
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- Jakob Gearhead, Executive Director, Nunavut Recovery Centre
- Simon Forget, Education Consultant in Health, Wellness & Physical Education, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, Nunavik
- Alecia Lennie, Health Promotion Coordinator, Health and Wellness Division, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Inuvialuit Settlement Region
- Participants in the Inuit Forum on Cannabis and Mental Health in October 2019

