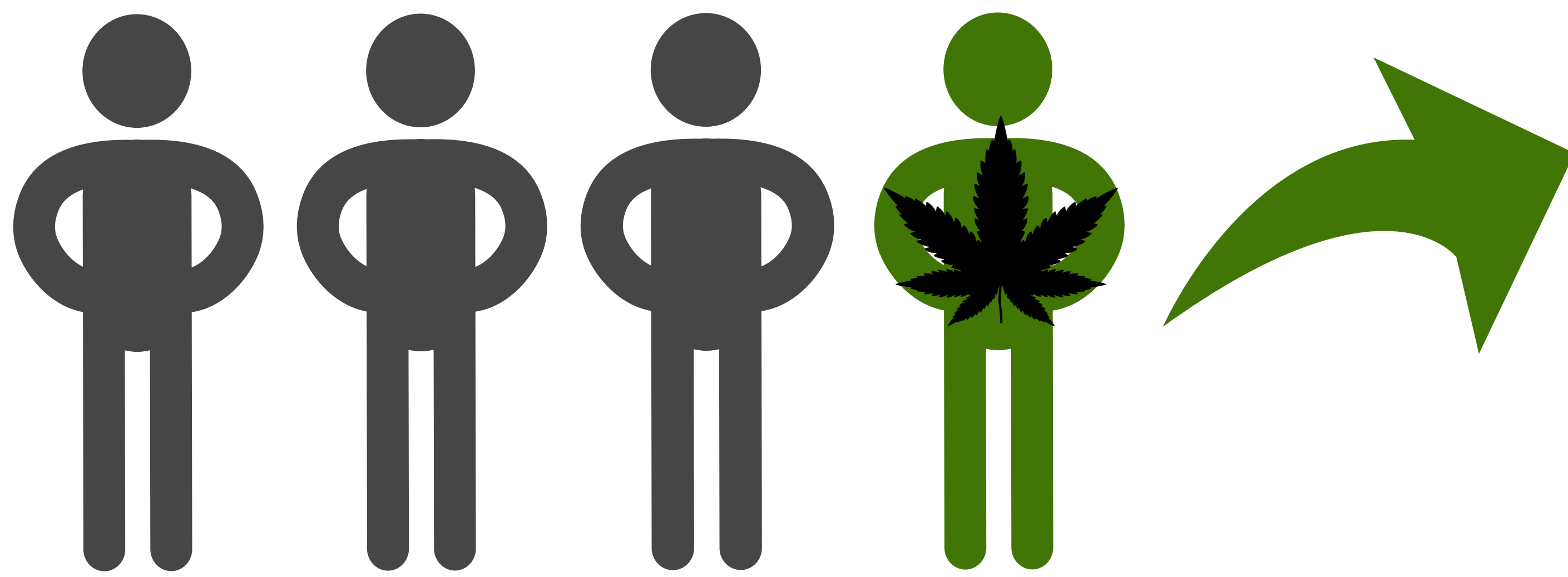


# Harmful Effects of Early Cannabis Use



**25 %**

of Canadians age  
15 to 24 years old  
use **Cannabis**  
each year

Some risks apply  
to users of all ages, but few are aware of the  
**UNIQUE** risks for people **UNDER**  
**AGE 25**

**Young people should try to delay cannabis use as long as possible.**

Here are 5 reasons why.

## **1 | EFFECTS ON THE BRAIN**

Our brains are not fully developed until around age 25. Early and regular cannabis use can impair the development of an area of the brain known as the prefrontal cortex. This can **impair memory, decision making, and problem solving**. We don't know if these effects are permanent and can't predict who will be affected.



## **2 | MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY**

Cannabis increases the risk of a motor vehicle accidents by impairing the drivers' reaction time, coordination, and concentration. In Canada, **adolescents between 15 to 19 years old** are the most likely to drive after using cannabis.

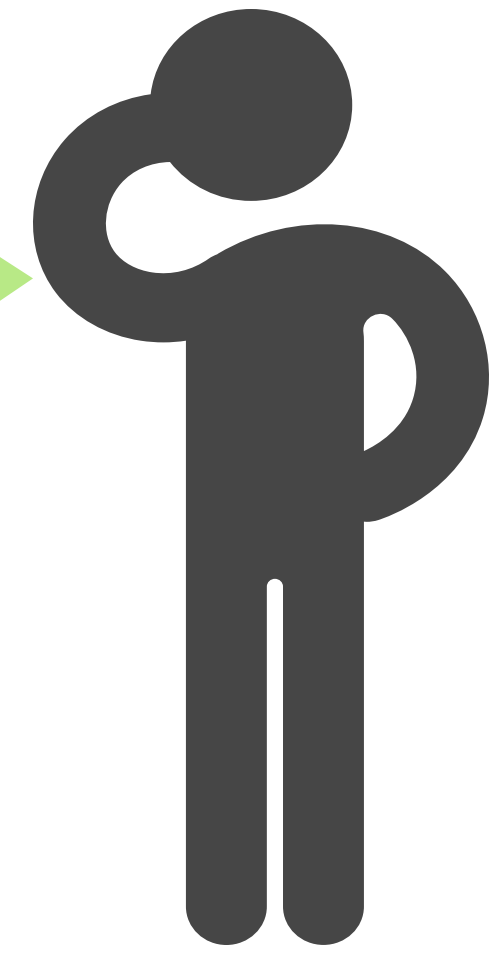


# 3 | LINKS TO MENTAL ILLNESS

Cannabis use is linked to psychosis, particularly in young people and especially those who have a parent or sibling who have experienced psychosis.

## SYMPTOMS OF PSYCHOSIS

- anxiety
- paranoia
- hallucinations
- delusions
- mood changes



Cannabis use may also be linked with depression and anxiety.

# 4 | POTENTIAL FOR ADDICTION

**1 in 6 individuals** who use cannabis during adolescence will experience problematic use, physical dependence and/or cannabis withdrawal symptoms. In young people, daily use of cannabis can develop into a substance use disorder even faster than nicotine or alcohol.



# 5 | EFFECTS ON BEHAVIOR

Cannabis use **before age 16** is associated with using other drugs later in life. Cannabis use can lower motivation in young people and is associated with poorer grades and school attendance.



FOR PEOPLE UNDER THE AGE OF 25, REMEMBER:

Don't use, Delay use, Decrease use, and Don't use and Drive,  
Don't smoke it, Don't over-dose