

Clear Heads, Bright Futures

COPING WITHOUT CANNABIS

Get Moving!

You may not be able to run away from your problems, but you can run (or hike) off some of those bad feelings. Exercise is a proven stress reliever that pumps endorphins—your brain’s feel-good transmitters—through your body. It can also help improve your sleep, something that’s often disrupted by stress. Los Angeles has several free and discounted sports programs and youth activities to get you moving, such as:



PlayLA

Check out the programs offered by your local recreation center



YMCA Los Angeles

Take advantage of the YMCA of Los Angeles’ free teen summer membership! Enjoy free access to your local Y from June 1- August 18.



Earn Learn Play Los Angeles

Find free and low-cost summer programs in Los Angeles near you



Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA) Youth Programs

Learn about HOLA’s free academic, sports, and arts programs

Get Inspired!

If sports aren’t your thing, try channeling your emotions into another medium. Whether creating your own art, visiting a museum, reading, writing, or watching movies, there are tons of things to do this summer.



Write a book review:

If you like to read or write, consider reviewing a book for the Los Angeles County Library! If you’re in grades 7-12, they want to hear from you.



Discover & Go

Individuals that have a Los Angeles Public Library card can participate in the Discover & Go program, an initiative that offers free and low-cost passes for museums, science centers, zoos, theaters, and other cultural destinations.



NexGenLA

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art offers a free membership for individuals 17 and under who live in Los Angeles County. Members can also receive discounts on studio classes and art camps.




—Explore all of these programs and more here

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YOUR BRAIN MATTERS

Did you know your brain continues to develop until the age of 25? It's true, which is why it's so important to wait to use mind-altering drugs like cannabis until you're an adult. Cannabis affects the areas of our brains that control judgment, memory, and emotions. Early use can have severe consequences. Concentrate on your short term and long term goals.



Students who smoke cannabis tend to earn lower grades and are more likely to drop out of high school. One study published in *Current Pharmaceutical Design* showed adolescent cannabis users also perform tasks with less accuracy.

It may be tempting to turn to cannabis to deal with boredom, feelings of anxiety or depression, but long-term use has been linked to a range of mental health issues. Aside from worsening anxiety and depression, cannabis users are more likely to experience hallucinations, paranoia, and even schizophrenia, according to the DEA. The connection between cannabis and schizophrenia is also stronger in individuals who began using at an early age.



Acute cannabis consumption is associated with an increased risk of a motor vehicle crash, especially for fatal collisions, according to the *British Medical Journal*.

There's a reason for age restrictions for cannabis, and even though it's legal for those ages 21 and older, it doesn't mean you should rush to use it. Experience your youth to the fullest – don't let cannabis get in the way of major milestones, like getting your driver's license, participating in sports and clubs, going to prom, or graduating high school.