# Edible Cannabinoid Confectionery (Edibles)

# What are Edibles?

- Food products that contain cannabis.
- Huge variety of Edibles – sweets, gummies and lollipops.
- Popular and becoming widely available online across the country
- Packaging is often deliberately targeted to attract young people and look similar to well-known sweets such as Haribo, Smarties, Nerds and chocolate bars
- Risk of accidental overdose
- Reports of young people being hospitalised in London and the South East.
- Risk of young people becoming involved in the criminal justice system

# The Risks

- Research outlined the most prominent risks associated with cannabis edibles for different users and found that young people are among the most at-risk when it comes to over-consumption and accidental ingestion.
- Despite looking like sweets – cannabis edibles can be infused with THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol) and can be harmful.
- Unlike inhaled cannabis, when you eat it, cannabis must be digested before it is absorbed into your blood stream.
- This can lead to people who are not used to eating it to use too much because they might not feel the effects straight away.  This increases the chances of overdose.
- The effects from edibles lasts longer than smoking cannabis and are unpredictable.
- Any Cannabidiol (CBD) product containing THC is illegal in the UK.
- The amount of cannabis in these products can vary greatly.

# Health risks and side effects

- Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Uncontrollable vomiting
- Dry mouth
- Bloodshot eyes
- Confusion and poor coordination
- Paranoia
- Hallucinations
- Panic attacks
- Impaired brain development
- Poor mental health
- Psychosis

# Edibles Packaging Examples

# Main messages you may wish to raise with primary school age children and parents:

- Edibles look like normal sweets and imitate popular brands you may buy such as Haribo, Nerds and Sourpatch.
- To spot them, look at the packaging for images of cannabis leaves
- Don’t take sweets from people that you do not know well – if you think they may be edibles speak to an adult

# Main messages you may wish to raise with to secondary school age young people

- Edibles look like normal sweets and imitate popular brands you may buy such as Haribo, Nerds and Sourpatch. To spot them, look at the packaging
- If you come across edibles, speak to an adult
- If used regularly it can have a significant impact on your mental health, education and future employment
- Cannabinoid confectionery is a class B drug. Possession can get you up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- Supplying someone else, even your friends, can get you up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- If you are convicted of possession of an illicit drug many countries in the world such as the USA, Australia and New Zealand will not allow you a visa to visit.

# What you can do - adults

- Speak to young people about edibles so they are aware of these and the dangers of consuming them.
- Monitor food packaging/wrappers, looking for images of cannabis leaves or wording such as CBD or THC suggesting the items are cannabis oil infused.
- If you are made aware of any social media accounts advertising these items, please report this information to the police or crime stoppers.
- Distribute information letter to parents and carers and raise awareness amongst staff
- Build a trusting relationship with young people that you are worried about. Has there been a sudden change in behaviour? Have they changed friendship groups or become less bothered about their appearance.
- For further advice, speak to the local Drug and Alcohol Service, New Hope.
- If you believe that a young person may have consumed Cannabinoid confectionery and is experiencing a reaction to them call an ambulance

# Who to contact if you are concerned

- New Hope is a substance misuse service for young people and adults. They can support young people to understand the risks and harm of taking drugs or drinking alcohol. They also offer advice and information to parents and carers and hold a Family and Friends Group which they can access.

  E-mail: New.hope@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

  Phone: 01344 312360
- Talk to Frank – the government's drug advice website/helpline including information and advice for parents on how to talk about drugs with their children
- Bracknell Youth Support Services – provide teaching and support service to enhance the substance misuse curriculum already delivered in schools.
- Thrive! – website supporting children and young people's health and wellbeing across Bracknell. Includes information, links and lesson plans to support PSHE curriculum.
- Young Minds – supporting young people and their parents if they are experiencing mental ill health due to substance misuse
- Rethink Mental Illness – information and advice for young people and their parents/carers about how drugs can affect your mental health
- Text Us service – all questions answered around substances and sexual health, a local confidential and anonymous service 07860020030