Derived Psychoactive Cannabis Products (DPCPs):

An Overlooked Threat to Public Safety



What are Derived Psychoactive Cannabis Products (DPCPs)?

DPCPs have psychoactive properties similar to cannabis, but they are chemically derived, not grown.

Because of a loophole created by the 2018 Farm Bill (i.e., Agriculture Improvement Act), these compounds are **regulated as** "hemp" despite their psychoactive properties (because they have < $0.3\% \Delta$ -9 by weight).\(^1-^3\) This loophole also legalizes Δ -9 THC edibles, as the product weight allows for a high dose of THC.\(^1\)

One in six past-month cannabis users (17%) used Δ -8 THC, the first DPCP to enter the market.⁴







DPCPs carry risk of harm, especially to young people.^{1,5-7}

Most states do not require testing for chemical contaminants, even though DPCPs are commonly synthesized using harsh solvents known to be hazardous to human health.¹ Potency limits are rare, despite conclusive evidence that more potent products carry higher risk of harms.¹ Research supports that DPCP use is associated with acute psychiatric, lung, chest and heart disorders, as well as injuries and poisonings.⁵

DPCPs are also very new, so we don't know all the short- and long-term risks from use.1 DPCPs are consumed accidentally by children, as evidenced by the large number of calls to Poison Control Centers involving minors because of poor labeling and a lack of child-proof containers.6 These products are marketed to voung people. Some DPCP product packaging mimics well-known food brands that appeal to children, including Cap'n Crunch, Cocoa Puffs, Froot Loops, Nerds Ropes, Starbursts and Sour Patch Kids, among others.¹⁰

Availability and Access

DPCPs are available in every state, including those that have banned certain DPCPs such as Δ -8 THC.^{1,2} This is because the loophole allows for the continuous engineering of new types of DPCPs, including Δ -6 THC, Δ -10 THC, Δ -11 THC, THC-A, THC-O, THC-P, THC-V, THC-JD, PHC, HHC, HHC-P and HXC.²

Some of these new DPCPs are marketed as being far more potent than cannabis. DPCPs are easy to buy online: age verification measures are rarely used and easily circumvented.8 In many states, there are no age laws, so it is up to the retailers whether to sell DPCPs to children.1,9

DPCPs are marketed in ways that are extremely likely to attract children, such as added in candy, chips and chocolates. DPCPs are inexpensive (sometimes < \$5), and stores are disproportionately located in low-income areas.⁹

No psychoactive drug should be sold as "hemp."

The 2023 Farm Bill should close the loophole that helps kids access unregulated, psychoactive candy.

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