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## Use of Marijuana as a Therapy Policy Statement Committee on Public Policy and Advocacy // AUG 2017

### **SUBJECT: The Use of Marijuana as a Therapy in Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

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The AADMD's Committee on Public Policy and Advocacy has evaluated the existing research literature on the efficacy of cannabis in the treatment of developmental or behavioral disorders. At this time The Committee endorses the conclusion provided in the journal article.

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Medical Marijuana: Review of the Science and Implications for Developmental-Behavioral Pediatric Practice  
Hadland, Scott E. MD, MPH\*,†; Knight, John R. MD\*,‡; Harris, Sion K. PhD\*,†,‡

Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: February/March 2015 - Volume 36 - Issue 2 - p 115–123 doi:  
10.1097/DBP.000000000000129

Given the current scarcity of data, cannabis cannot be safely recommended for the treatment of developmental or behavioral disorders at this time. At best, some might consider its use as a last-line therapy when all other conventional therapies have failed.<sup>90,91</sup> As marijuana policy evolves and as the drug becomes more readily available, it is important that practicing clinicians recognize the long-term health and neuropsychiatric consequences of regular use. Although a decades-long public health campaign has showcased the harms of cigarette smoking, similar movements to illustrate the hazards of cannabis use have not been as rigorous or successful. As a result, accurate information on regular cannabis use remains poorly disseminated to patients, families, and physicians. Furthermore, there are especially few studies examining neurocognitive and psychiatric outcomes among children and adolescents with developmental or behavioral concerns who are exposed to cannabis, and this remains a critical area for future study. In coming to the decision to use marijuana for medicinal purposes, all parties should be fully aware of the long-term hazards of regular cannabis use, recognize the lack of evidence on its efficacy in developmental and behavioral conditions, and incorporate this information into a careful risk-benefit analysis.