

Know! What's Up with Psychedelics?

While you may not be familiar with psilocybin, chances are you have heard of psychedelic mushrooms, or shrooms. Psilocybin is the active ingredient in psychedelic mushrooms. Though many of us associate psychedelics with the 60's, there has been a resurgence of interest in their use. In November, Oregon became the first state to **legalize** psilocybin, and it has America talking. The question is, are you talking to your teens about this substance? If not, let us help you get the conversation started.

Here's Some Info to Know! on Psilocybin

- Psilocybin and other psychedelic drugs were broadly banned under the 1970 Controlled Substances Act.
- It is classified as a Schedule I drug, meaning, it has no legally accepted medical use and has a high potential for abuse.
- In May 2019, Denver, Colorado became the first city to **decriminalize** psilocybin, with Ann Arbor, Michigan; Oakland and Santa Cruz, California joining shortly after.
- Washington D.C. passed a ballot initiative to decriminalize this substance earlier this month.

All the legal jargon can get confusing, so here's a brief breakdown on **decriminalization versus legalization regarding psilocybin**:

- In the United States, similar to marijuana, psilocybin remains a **federally illegal substance**, regardless of individual city or state law.
- Again, similar to the model of legalized medical marijuana, in Oregon psilocybin has been approved for adults 21 years and older to have legal access to the drug for "medicinal purposes" under the supervision of a licensed facilitator.
- By **decriminalizing** this psychedelic drug, Oregon and the cities listed above push it to the lowest level of priority among law enforcement. In other words, police resources will not generally be used in the investigation or arrest of psilocybin-related incidents.

How Does this Impact Our Kids?

Now that we've taken a general look at what these measures mean across our nation, let's take a closer look at what this may mean for our families and children.

Clearly there has been a shift in attitude toward this mind-altering substance, as shown by voters. Children are highly influenced by the adults in their lives. When adults' attitudes shift, young people's attitudes tend to follow suit. As drug laws begin to loosen on this and other psychedelic substances, perception of harm is likely to decrease. The idea that psychedelics are dangerous illegal drugs may begin to diminish or fade into a gray area. Additionally, psilocybin is being promoted as having medical benefits, which may further provide a false sense of safety around its use, in the eyes of teens.

Our children must be made clearly aware that regardless of law or potential medical uses, psilocybin—psychedelic mushrooms—are powerful, dangerous drugs. They must be told that

decriminalization does not equal safety and that legalization in any form does not equal safety, especially for children.

In the tip to follow, we will examine psilocybin, what it is, how it works, what it does to the body and brain, and what our kids need to know to steer clear of it altogether.

Sources

- [BallotPedia.org. Oregon Measure 109, Psilocybin Mushroom Services Program Initiative \(2020\).](#)
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- [Harmeet Kaur, CNN - Santa Cruz decriminalizes magic mushrooms and other natural psychedelics, making it the third US city to take such a step. Feb 2020.](#)