



# Denver Drug Agent: Our Problems 'Have Exploded' With Pot Legalization

## Experts Have New Concerns About Pot & Children

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THORNTON, Colo. (CBS4) – No matter how regulated marijuana is, now that pot is legal in Colorado it will be hard to keep away from curious and unknowing kids, according to a member of a Denver-area drug task force.

“There’s plenty of evidence that this a harmful thing for kids. I can’t even believe I have to say that,” Sgt. Jim Gerhardt with the North Metro Drug Task Force told CBS4. “We’ve seen children infant age that have been getting into this stuff and hospitalized, and this has been under medical marijuana. I can’t imagine how bad it’s going to get with full blown legalization.”

At Arapahoe House, a drug and alcohol counseling center in Thornton, Angela Bornemann said marijuana use is already the most common addiction in teens they see. She says they are now expecting to see more and more problem dependance cases with the passage of Amendment 64.

“Children are more likely to become dependant when they start use early. Even if it’s an advertant use,” she said.

Bornemann says many kids might be more willing to try something that’s perceived as less harmless, such as a pot brownie. Whether they know what they’re eating or not, the THC in such an item laced with marijuana can have serious side effects.

“In children in particular the brain is still developing. It’s actually developing up until age 25. So we’re not sure how the substances impact the developing of the brain.”

This week two different cases of pot brownies being sprung on people in schools have emerged on the Front Range.

A teenage girl at Air Academy High School in Colorado Springs was hospitalized after eating a pot brownie a 14-year-old boy gave her. The suspect now faces a felony drug charge. ■

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