

CANNABIS
HONESTLY

Community
Engagement
Toolkit



Office of Cannabis
Management

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Campaign Overview

Let's talk
about it.



What we heard across New York:

Through **23** Listen + Learn sessions, more than **450** New Yorkers—including over **300** youth—told OCM how cannabis is showing up in their lives and communities.

- Cannabis is visible across NY. Education often arrives later.
- Young people have questions. Parents want help answering them.
- Information is everywhere...but trusted information is harder to find.
- Communities want facts, not fear.



CANNABIS HONESTLY
WAS BUILT TO
RESPOND TO
THOSE NEEDS.

For more information
or to read the report visit:
cannabis.ny.gov/listen-learn-series



Listen & Learn report

Each conversation explored themes like:

Exploration

What participants already know, see, or believe about cannabis.

Curiosity

What questions or uncertainties they have about cannabis use, laws, and health.

Connection

How they prefer to learn new information and who they trust as messengers.

Context

What role cannabis plays in their community's daily life and culture.

450 Participants Across 23 Sessions Statewide

Youth ages ranged from

9-21

years old

Most participants were about 15 years old.

Most adults were

60-69

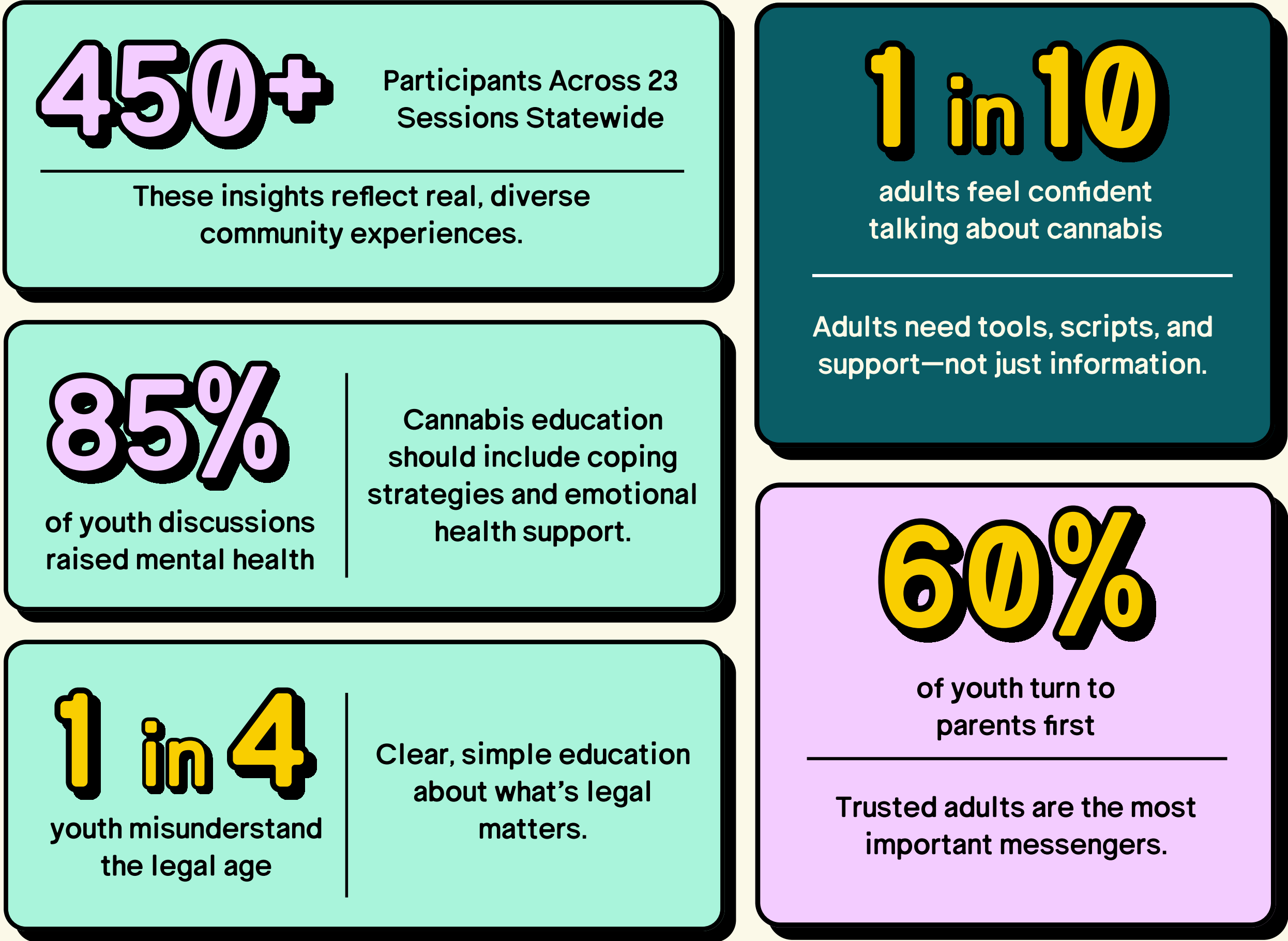
years old

Followed by those 30-39 years old.

For more information or to read the report visit:
cannabis.ny.gov/listen-learn-series



Key Stats From the Listen and Learn Report:



Turning insight into action.

OCM heard some of the best practices for talking about cannabis include:

- Start with curiosity
- Stay calm and open
- Keep the conversation open
- Focus on facts rather than fear or judgement

So... what is **CANNABIS HONESTLY**

Built through community input, youth feedback, and expert guidance, the campaign provides trusted information, practical tools, and educational resources designed to support real-life situations and everyday conversations. Whether someone is looking for facts, preparing for a conversation, or trying to make sense of information they've seen online, **Cannabis Honestly** offers a place to start.

Cannabis Honestly is a statewide education campaign developed by the New York State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) to help young people ages 11–17, parents, caregivers, family members, and other trusted adults navigate conversations about cannabis.

CAMPAIGN GOALS

- Increase access to trusted cannabis information
- Support informed, honest conversations
- Address common myths and misinformation
- Provide practical tools and resources for real-life situations

Get Involved



Let's figure it out.

Bringing Cannabis Honestly to your community.

Community-based organizations and trusted local partners play an important role in connecting young people and families to information and support.

Together, we can expand access to information, support informed conversations, and connect communities to practical resources.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS HELP

- Reach youth and families through trusted relationships
- Expand access to evidence-informed cannabis education
- Support honest, judgment-free conversations
- Reduce confusion and misinformation
- Connect communities to practical resources and tools

How Partners Are Using These Resources

You know your community best! Use these resources in ways that reflect the needs, culture, and strengths of the people you serve.

SHARE THROUGH EXISTING COMMUNICATIONS

Add resources to newsletters

Feature content on your website

Share social media posts and videos

Include campaign information in email communications

INCORPORATE INTO PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Parent and caregiver workshops

Youth programming

Community events and resource fairs

Health education activities

MAKE RESOURCES EASY TO ACCESS

Order and display materials in waiting rooms and community spaces

Add QR codes to bulletin boards and resource hubs

Include educational materials in welcome packets and take-home resources

START CONVERSATIONS

Use conversation guides with families and caregivers

Share tools with staff, volunteers, and community partners

Connect youth and trusted adults to additional resources

Toolkit Resources

Let's figure it out.



What's in the toolkit?

WHAT'S INCLUDED

01

SOCIAL AND DIGITAL DESIGN AND WRITING GUIDELINES

02

VIDEO AND PSAS

03

NEWSLETTER TEMPLATES

04

HOW TO USE THE WEB RESOURCES

05

CONVERSATION AND WELLNESS GUIDES

06

PRINT RESOURCES & LIBRARY



SCAN HERE

Order free campaign materials and more delivered to your door. Visit <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8386957/CELPOF> or scan the QR code above to browse the full Cannabis Education Library including 35+ additional resources available in multiple languages.



Office of Cannabis Management

Cannabis Honestly Social Media Samples

We invite you to share posts directly from our **Cannabis Honestly** campaign social media channels, which can be found on Instagram and Facebook. You can also use the wide variety of social assets we've created and post them on your own channels. Please tag us **@cannabishonestly** if using Meta platforms so we can help amplify your messages!

This toolkit includes social media posts that can be used across Meta (Instagram and Facebook), Reddit, Snapchat, and TikTok, each with audience and language variants. The following pages give you examples, by message theme, of how the posts can be used and possible caption copy.

GET THE FACTS

START THE CONVERSATION

VAPING IMPACTS

SAFE STORAGE & QUESTIONS

Applying Captions

THEME 1: GET THE FACTS



Sample creative — Final assets available for download

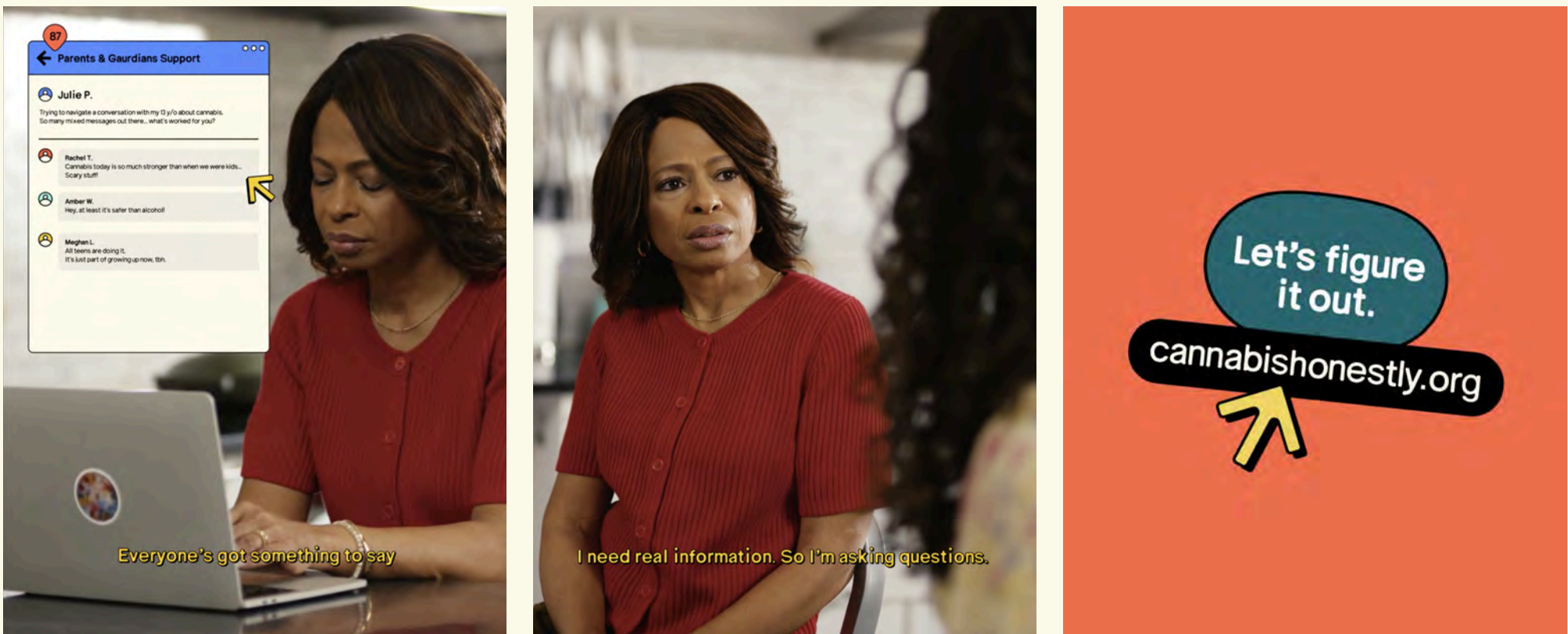
SAMPLE CAPTION COPY OPTIONS

1. Questions about weed? You're not alone. Let's Figure it Out. Visit cannabishonestly.org.
2. All that noise about weed? Get the facts. Let's talk about it. Visit cannabishonestly.org.
3. Tired of hearing things about weed that don't add up? We've got the facts. Let's talk about it. Visit cannabishonestly.org.

ALSO ADAPTS TO:

In-Feed Video, Story Image, Story Video, Reddit Image Ad, TikTok Story Video

THEME 2: START THE CONVERSATION



Sample creative — Final assets available for download

SAMPLE CAPTION COPY OPTIONS

1. Everyone's got something to say about cannabis. You can be ready for the conversations that actually matter. Let's figure it out. To get the convo started, visit cannabishonestly.org.
2. Talking about cannabis starts with trusted information. Get prepared before the conversation begins. To get the convo started, visit cannabishonestly.org.
3. When they're ready to talk, I want to be ready too. Let's figure it out. To get the convo started, visit cannabishonestly.org.

ALSO ADAPTS TO:

In-Feed Video, Story Image, Story Video, Reddit Image Ad, TikTok Story Video

THEME 3: VAPING IMPACTS



Sample creative — Final assets available for download

SAMPLE CAPTION COPY OPTIONS

- 1. Get the facts, understand the risks, and make informed choices. Visit cannabishonestly.org.
- 2. Cut through the noise around cannabis and vaping. Get the facts today. Visit cannabishonestly.org.

ALSO ADAPTS TO:

Story Image — Facebook/Instagram, Story Image — Snapchat



Sample creative (post) — Final assets available for download

THEME 4: SAFE STORAGE & QUESTIONS



SAMPLE CAPTION COPY OPTIONS

- 1. Questions about weed? You're not alone. Let's Figure it Out. Visit cannabishonestly.org.
- 2. Cut through the noise about weed. Get the facts. Make informed decisions. Visit cannabishonestly.org.

ALSO ADAPTS TO:

Story Image — Facebook/Instagram (Adult version)



SAMPLE CAPTION COPY OPTIONS

- 1. Keep young people and pets safe by safely storing your cannabis. Learn More at cannabishonestly.org. Keep your family safe by always storing cannabis locked, out of reach, and out of sight. Learn More at cannabishonestly.org.

ALSO ADAPTS TO:

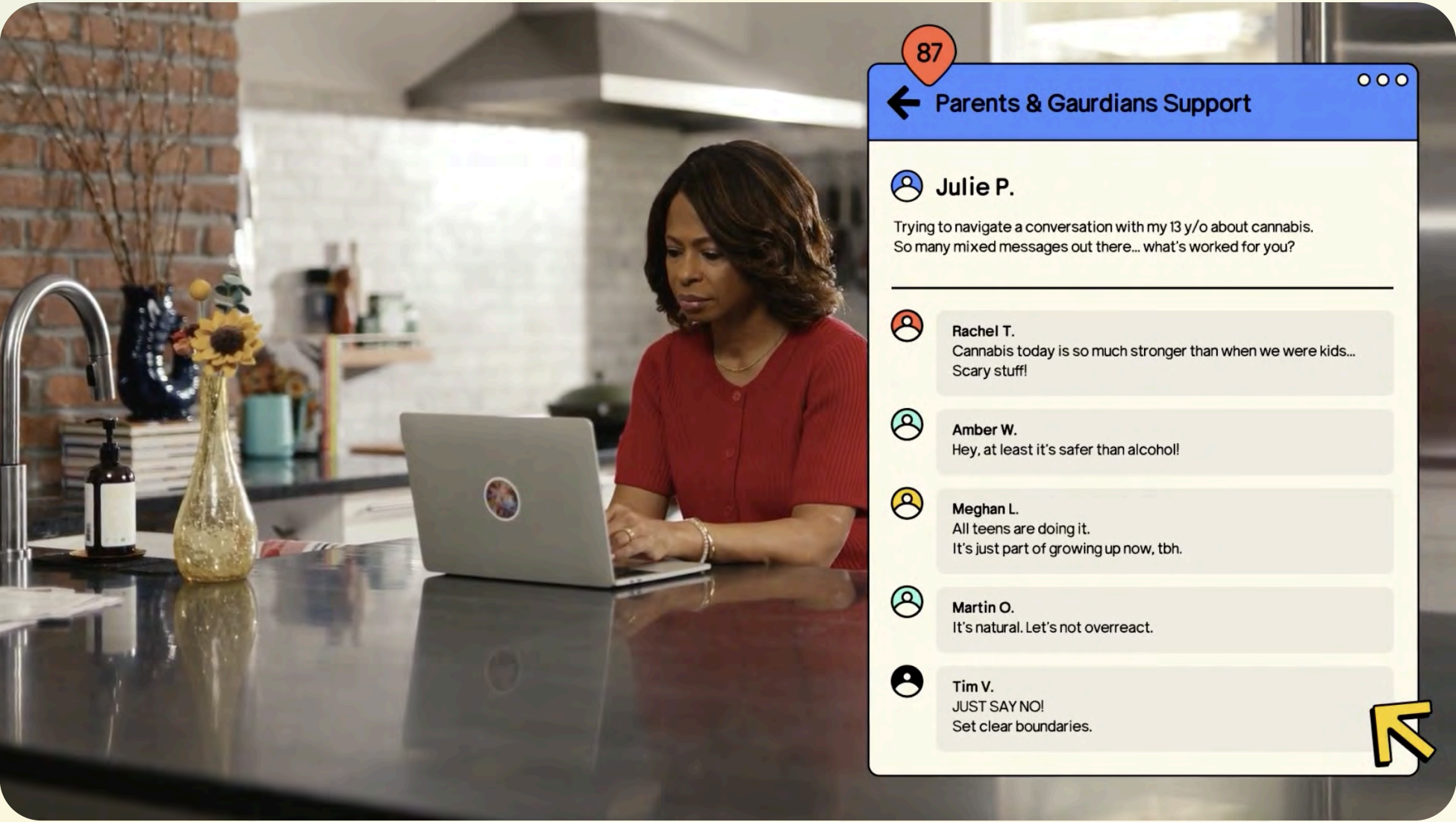
In-Feed Image Facebook/Instagram

PSAs

YOUTH



ADULT



Newsletters

CANNABIS HONESTLY — NEWSLETTER BLURB

Young people have questions about cannabis. Parents and trusted adults want to help, but often don't know where to start.

Cannabis Honestly is a new statewide campaign from the NYS Office of Cannabis Management, grounded in extensive research and conversations with more than 450 New Yorkers, including over 300 youth, about how cannabis is showing up in their lives.

From questions about mental health to gaps in trusted information, the research identified where young people and families need support most. To close those gaps, Cannabis Honestly offers factual information and practical tools that help young people, parents, and caregivers move from uncertainty to honest, judgment-free conversations about cannabis.

This Cannabis Honestly Community Engagement Toolkit translates those insights into free resources — conversation guides, educational materials, social media posts, and more — that are ready to share with the families and communities you serve.

🔗 Explore the campaign, download resources, and learn more at cannabishonestly.org

cannabishonestly.org highlights

The website has been developed from what we heard in the OCM Listen and Learns. Young people and trusted adults wanted a resource where they can get up-to-date and accurate information.

This includes:

- An interactive, personalized **Online Cannabis Convo**
Starter interactive, personalized, fact-based tool to help adults begin conversations with the young people in their lives
- A glossary of common cannabis-related terms
- Digital and print friendly resources available in English and Spanish
- FAQs



Office of Cannabis
Management



Cannabis 101 for parents & trusted adults

HELPING YOUTH
NAVIGATE CANNABIS

Helps parents and trusted adults understand cannabis and reduce risks for young people with practical safety guidance. Covers cannabis basics, potency, safe storage, impaired driving, and how to identify regulated vs. unregulated products and retailers.

**CANNABIS
HONESTLY**  **Office of Cannabis
Management**

Cannabis 101 for Parents & Trusted Adults



The Basics

Cannabis (aka weed, marijuana, pot, etc.) is a plant containing natural compounds called **cannabinoids**. The two most common are:

- **THC (delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol)** — the main compound that causes a “high.”
- **CBD (cannabidiol)** — a compound that does not cause a “high,” and is typically used for relaxation or other reasons.

Potency is the strength of a cannabis product, based on how much THC, CBD, and other cannabinoids are in it. There are many types of products available today, more than there used to be. Some have higher amounts of THC.

Brains are still developing until about age 25. Using **cannabis** can impact that development. Conversations with a trusted adult can help young people make safer choices.

Store Cannabis Safely

If cannabis is in your home, how you store it matters, especially if you have teens or young children:

- Keep cannabis products **locked**, out of sight and out of reach.
- Store cannabis products in their original **child-resistant packaging**.
- Keep cannabis products completely **separate** from regular foods and drinks.
- Understand the potential risks associated with unintentional cannabis exposure.

If you think someone consumed cannabis without meaning to or consumed too much, call the Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222**. Dial **911** if there's a medical emergency. Keep cannabis products locked and out of sight and reach.

Cannabis Products Today

Cannabis is different than what it used to be. Today's products can be:

- **Flower** – smoked in blunts, joints, or pipes
- **Vapes & Concentrates** – highly potent extracts found in oils, wax, and vape pens.
- **Edibles & Drinks** – gummies, baked goods, infused beverages, which can look like regular snacks.
- **Topicals** – infused lotions and balms applied directly to the skin that do not typically cause a high.

Licensed Cannabis Dispensaries in New York

Licensed cannabis dispensaries and products in New York must meet strict public health and safety standards. Look for:

- A **Dispensary Verification QR code** at the entrance to confirm the store is licensed.
- A **QR code or link to lab test results** (called a certificate of analysis) showing the product has been tested.
- Packaging that does not look like candy or snacks and does not appeal to children.
- **Clear THC content**: Legal products must display the amount of THC on the label.
- **The New York State Universal Symbol** on product packaging:



Unregulated products are not required to follow testing or labeling rules, making them risky to you and your family, since you cannot know for sure what is in them.

Keep in mind that a licensed dispensary cannot sell any tobacco or alcohol products.

Interested in learning more about weed?
Get the facts. Make informed choices.
Scan QR code or visit cannabishonestly.org



014-OCM-EN | 07/13

AUDIENCE
Parents and
trusted adults

FORMAT
4x11 Rack Card

Caretakers Who Use cannabis

CONSUMING SAFELY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE HOME

Provides tips and best practices on safer, more responsible consumption for adults who use cannabis and care for young people – including the importance of safe storage and other safety considerations.

CANNABIS HONESTLY  **Office of Cannabis Management**

Caretakers Who Use Cannabis

I'm curious

Let's get into it

Talk to Them About Cannabis

Teens pick things up fast – from friends, social media, and what they see at home. Starting the conversation about cannabis early, before they run into misinformation, puts you in a much better position than waiting until you're forced to address it.

If you, as a caretaker, use cannabis recreationally or medically – teens in your life may already know or may figure it out. Having the conversation early and being upfront builds trust and helps avoid stigmatization. You can acknowledge your own cannabis use while being clear that developing brains face different risks than adult brains.

Here are a few quick tips to consider when talking to your teen about cannabis:

- Listen, don't lecture – Ask questions, don't talk over them, listen genuinely.
- Keep your cool – Avoid accusations, watch your tone and body language, stay calm.
- Find the right moment – Keep it casual by choosing a time where everyone is present and has the time and energy to talk.
- Set clear boundaries and expectations – It's okay to have a stance. Just be consistent.
- Be informed – The more trusted information you have in your back pocket, the more prepared you'll feel for conversations.

Adult-Use Cannabis

Adult-use cannabis (marijuana, weed, or pot), sometimes referred to as "recreational," is legal in New York for adults **21 and over**.

If you use cannabis and care for young people here are some simple steps you can take to keep everyone safer.

Mind Your Smoke

Secondhand cannabis smoke is a real health risk, especially to developing lungs and brains.

- Avoid smoking around children and teens
- Use cannabis in a well-ventilated space

New to Cannabis?

Cannabis affects everyone differently. Take time to learn what works best for you. Pay close attention to how your body responds and consume responsibly as a caretaker for young people.

 **For more read:**
[GUIDE TO SAFER CONSUMPTION](#)

Store it Safely!

Store cannabis products securely—locked and out of sight and reach of children and pets.

Keep cannabis products in their original child-resistant packaging.

Store cannabis products completely separate from regular foods and drinks, and away from common household areas.

Make sure all parents, grandparents, caregivers, and other trusted adults in the home understand the potential risks associated with unintentional cannabis exposure.

If you think someone consumed cannabis without meaning to, call the **Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222**. Dial 911 if there's a medical emergency.

 **For more read:**
[SAFE STORAGE RACK CARD](#)

Interested in learning more about weed?

Get the facts. Make informed choices. Scan QR code or visit:

cannabishonestly.org



842-OCM-EN | 07/13

AUDIENCE

Parents and trusted adults

FORMAT

8x11 Flyer

Talking with young people about weed

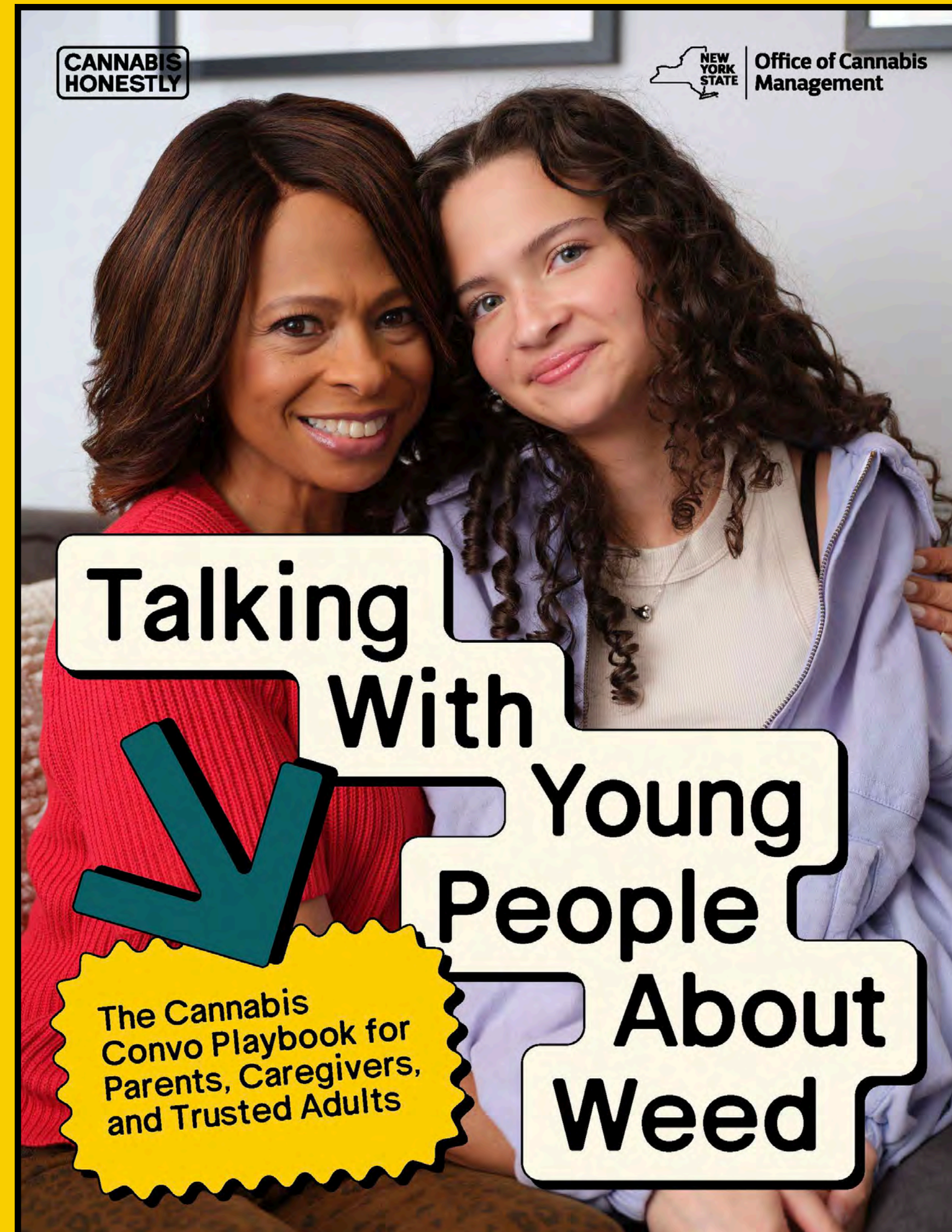
A CONVERSATION PLAYBOOK
FOR PARENTS, CAREGIVERS,
AND TRUSTED ADULTS

Provides tailored guidance to build confidence + provide real language to make parents and trusted adults more confident in talking about cannabis with the young people in their lives.

CANNABIS
HONESTLY



Office of Cannabis
Management



AUDIENCE

Parents and
trusted adults

FORMAT

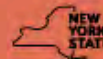
8x11 Booklet

Weeding though the myths

BREAKING DOWN THE MOST
COMMON MYTHS WE HEARD
FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Addresses clear, myth-busting facts about weed so young people can better understand real risks, recognize misinformation, make safer choices, and know when and how to seek help.

CANNABIS
HONESTLY

NEW
YORK
STATE

Office of Cannabis
Management

Weeding out the Myths

There's a lot of talk about weed, and not all of it is accurate. Learn the facts, understand the risks, and know where to turn for help.

Myth

Most teenagers are using weed.

Fact

Most teens are not using weed. In a New York class of 20 high school students, about 17 said they have not used weed recently.

Myth

If I see people my age using weed, it must be legal for me.

Fact

In New York, you must be 21 or older to buy, have, or use weed. However, some people under 21 may use weed for medical purposes with approval from a healthcare provider. If they are under 18, they need permission from a parent or guardian.

Myth

Weed is not addictive.

Fact

Cannabis Use Disorder is when someone keeps using weed even when it causes problems in their daily life or with their health. People who start using weed young are more likely to develop it.

Myth

It is safe to drive after using weed.

Fact

Driving while impaired by cannabis is illegal and unsafe. Weed slows reaction time and makes it harder to focus. Never consume weed before or while driving, or take a ride from someone who has.

Myth

Weed will help with my anxiety and depression.

Fact

For many people, especially teens, using weed can worsen anxiety or depression. For others, it can trigger panic attacks or, in some serious cases, psychosis.

Myth

Weed is natural, so it must be safe.

Fact

Natural doesn't mean harmless. Many natural substances are toxic or dangerous, like tobacco. Using weed can affect your brain development, among other health risks.

Let's talk about it.  cannabishonestly.org

Talk With Someone You Trust

You are not alone. If you have questions about weed, talking about it with someone you trust can help. This may be a parent or caregiver, a teacher, a coach, a doctor, or another adult you feel comfortable with.



Need help now?

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Call or text **988** or chat online at 988lifeline.org
Free. 24/7. Confidential.

Feeling stressed or overwhelmed?

Go to bewell.ny.gov
Access quick tools to calm your mind, manage stress, and sleep better.

Worried about substance use — yours, a friend's or family members'?

Call 1-877-8-HOPENY or text HOPENY (467369)
No-cost, judgment-free support anytime.

Greening out or used too much weed? Used it by mistake?

Call the Poison Center for help: 1-800-222-1222.
Dial 911 if there's a medical emergency.

Interested in learning more about weed?

Get the facts.
Make informed choices.
Scan QR code or visit:
cannabishonestly.org



844-OCM-EN | 07/23

AUDIENCE

Youth
(11-17 year olds)

FORMAT

4x11 Wallet Card



Provides clear, plain language facts about weed so young people can understand the real risks, question what they see online, make safer choices, and know when and how to reach out to a trusted adult or get support.

An infographic titled "Cannabis Facts, Honestly" from the New York State Office of Cannabis Management. It is divided into several sections: "What Your Feed Gets Wrong About Weed" (discussing online misinformation), "The Legal Reality" (stating that adult-use recreational weed is legal for adults 21 and older in NYS), "Your Brain Is Still Developing" (explaining that the brain develops until age 25 and listing effects like memory, focus, learning, mental health, relationships, and feelings), "Signs Weed Use May Be a Problem" (listing signs like trouble stopping use, spending too much time using weed, craving weed, losing interest in hobbies, using it in unsafe situations, and needing more to feel the same effects), "Have Questions?" (providing resources for help, including the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and the 1-877-8-HOPENY), and "You May See People Online Using Weed" (warning about the risks of using too much weed and providing information on edibles). The infographic also includes a QR code for more information and the website cannabishonestly.org.

AUDIENCE

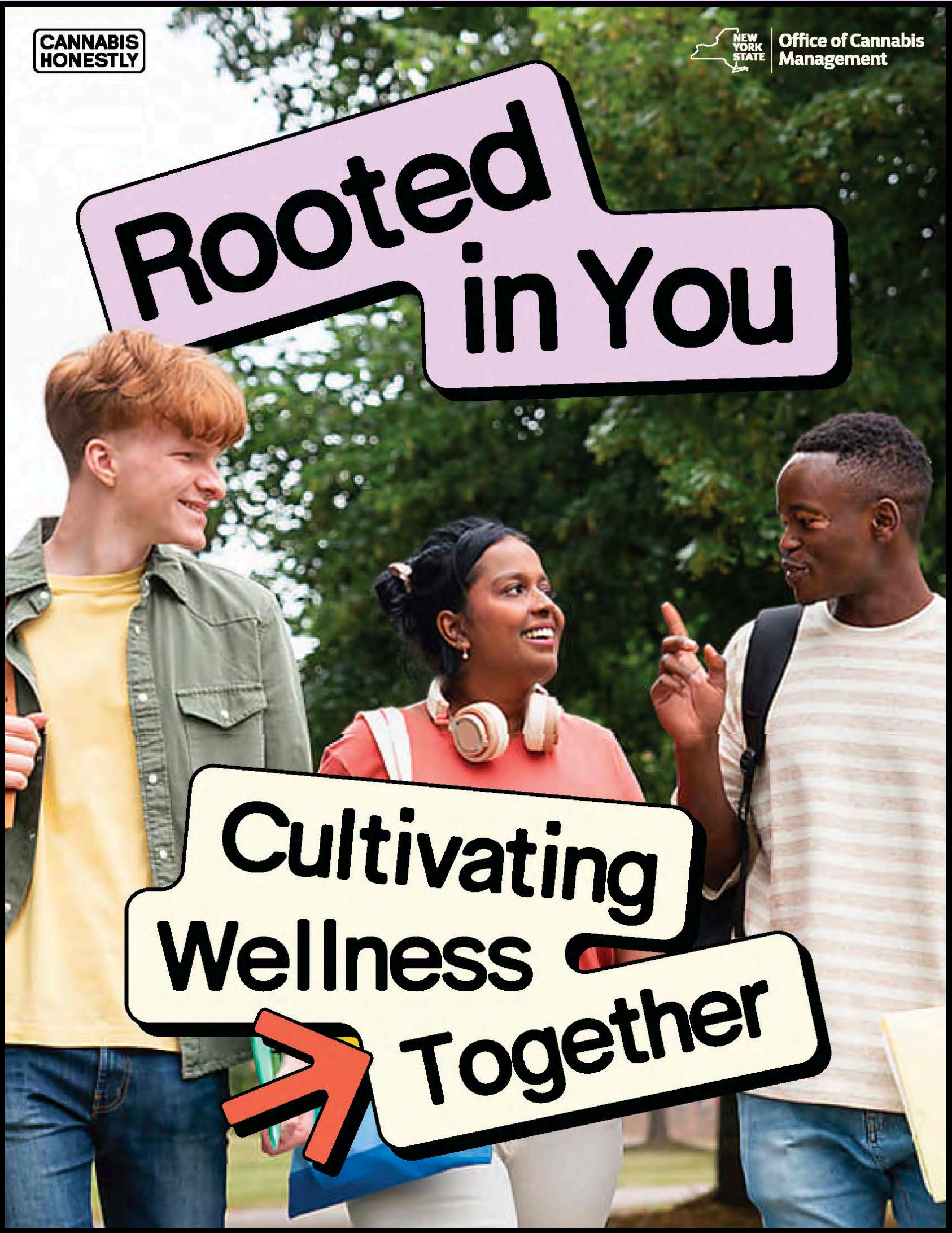
Youth
(11–17 year olds)

FORMAT

4x11 Rack Card



Empowers young people to seek healthy alternatives with practical coping strategies, reflective prompts, and engaging activities that strengthen resilience, self-awareness, and emotional well-being – outside of cannabis/substance use.



AUDIENCE
Youth
(11–17 year olds)

FORMAT
8x11 Booklet

Recognizing the Cannabis Education Advisory Panel

Cannabis Honestly was shaped by the guidance and expertise of the Cannabis Education Advisory Panel. Their contributions helped strengthen the campaign's educational resources, messaging, and approach.

The panel consists of 15 members from across the state with expertise in:

- Public Health
- Healthcare
- Education
- Youth Development
- Prevention
- Family & Caregiver Perspectives

Thank you to the members



Office of Cannabis Management

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Cannabis Education Advisory Panel!



**Thank you
for
partnering
with us**

**CANNABIS
HONESTLY**



**Office of Cannabis
Management**

Young people have questions.
Families are looking for trusted information.
Communities are asking for practical resources.

Together, we can help more New Yorkers navigate
conversations about cannabis with honesty,
curiosity, and care.



SCAN HERE TO VISIT
[CANNABISHONESTLY.ORG](https://cannabishonestly.org)

Did you know you can order free evidence-
informed cannabis education resources
covering the law, health effects, safer use,
medical cannabis, and more—including the
complete Cannabis Honestly print
collection via the Office of Cannabis
Management's Print Library!



QUESTIONS?

✉ education@ocm.ny.gov

📷 [cannabishonestly](https://www.instagram.com/cannabishonestly)

📘 canna.honestly