



Oregon Juvenile Department Directors' Association

Representing Oregon's County Juvenile Departments

www.ojdda.org

- Faye Fagel, President
- Torri Lynn, President Elect
- Joe Ferguson, Treasurer

OJDDA
609 W. 10th St
Medford, OR, 97501

OJDDA Supports HB 2313 with -1 Amendments

As we move forward with the conversations about the legalization of Marijuana in the state of Oregon we must also take into consideration the results and effects of this law on our youth.

Current research on adolescent brain development indicates that teenage years are one of the most critical and susceptible times for a youths' brain. The brain is building new pathways getting ready for adult executive functioning so the protective coating along those pathways is greatly reduced making the teenage brain at higher risk when chemicals are introduced into the body such as drugs and alcohol.

This is not the same marijuana as was available in the 60's and 70's with the THC content only being about 4%. Today's marijuana has anywhere from a 15% THC content for street level marijuana to 80% THC content in some medical marijuana dispensaries. With processing the THC extract can reach 90% in the concentrated form called "Dabs".

ORS 475.864 Unlawful possession of marijuana or marijuana product makes it illegal for any person to possess marijuana. This will obviously change for adults over the age of 21 years old but what of our youth.

We need to continue to limit access to marijuana for persons under 21 years of age.

HB 2313 -1 makes it illegal for a youth to be under the influence of marijuana. There is not currently a law which makes this illegal. This bill will close the gap in statute.

ORS 475.864 (3) (c) Unlawful possession of less than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana is a specific fine violation. The presumptive fine for a violation under this paragraph is \$650.00.

This issue most commonly comes up in the educational setting. Youth may not be in current possession of marijuana but either admit being under the influence or there are obvious signs of them being under the influence. The only recourse the school has is to suspend or expel the youth, it is a violation of school policy but not a violation of any law. This can impact the student in a couple of ways. Violations of the law generate a referral to the county juvenile department who would process the youth and which could include referring for a drug and alcohol evaluation, provide education or other services identified by the worker. The juvenile department would have the ability to support the young person's sobriety by conducting random urine analysis tests to make sure they have discontinued use and provide consequences if they fail to comply such as lose of driving privileges. Schools are more likely to re-admit a youth into school knowing there are additional supports and structure in place for the youth.

Support our youth by supporting HB 2313-1.

For additional information, please contact Lara Smith, (503) 804-9750