

- 1) Because I love you and I always want you to have a safe home, you can expect that I will be a responsible parent. I do not want you to use marijuana, and that will not change. I care, and I will act like I care – by staying involved in your life, by having clear expectations for your behavior at home, at school, and with friends, and by talking to you if I am worried about you.
- 2) I am speaking with you about marijuana right now, because I care about you, your health, your choices, and our relationship. I will probably talk to you about this again sometime soon, because I will continue to care about you and your choices as you get older. Likewise, I am here if you want to talk about marijuana or other drugs with me. I'll give you my attention when you ask and be a respectful listener.
- 3) My marijuana use was a big mistake, one I want you to avoid by making a healthier choice than I did and choosing not to use marijuana now and as you get older.

*Alternatively* – I am so grateful that when I was young, I consistently made the choice not to use marijuana. I want you to make the healthiest choices for yourself and chose not to use marijuana now and as you get older.

(Choosing how much information to share with your children about your past use of, or abstinence from, substances is a personal decision. Research shows us that adolescents are interested in their parents and respect parents who are communicative with them about important topics like alcohol and other drugs. Reading FCD's "Tips for Communicating with Kids" will help parents prepare to engage in such a conversation with their children in the most appropriate way for their unique family situation.)

- 4) Marijuana competes with your brain and your body's natural opportunity to become stronger and faster during this time in your life, and that is an opportunity I don't want you to miss out on, because I want the best for you right now and the best chances for you in the future.

Research shows that:

- a. Marijuana compromises the ability to learn and remember information, so that the more a person uses, the more he or she is likely to fall behind in accumulating intellectual and social skills.
- b. Depression and anxiety have been associated with ongoing marijuana use.
- c. Many chemical components of marijuana are just as unhealthy for the lungs as tobacco products.
- d. Marijuana has the potential to cause problems in daily life and to make a person's existing problems worse.

I want you to know the risks involved with using marijuana and to know that there are much better ways – and *healthier* ways – to have new experiences, spend time with friends, and grow up than to use marijuana, alcohol, or any other drug.

- 5) I am proud of the person you are and excited by who you are becoming. I do not want marijuana to interfere with your potential. Instead, I want you to have the opportunity to have a great time and to take positive risks in your life without marijuana or other drugs. So if you have interests that I can support, let me know, because I want to encourage and reward you for making good choices.