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# American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



## South Carolina Chapter

March 19, 2019

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the South Carolina Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I would like to provide comment on S.366, the medical marijuana bill. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) opposes 'medical marijuana' outside the regulatory process of the US Food and Drug Administration.

Cannabinoids, compounds found in the cannabis plant, may be helpful in adults for certain medical conditions. However, *for pediatricians the recommendation of medical marijuana is problematic* for the following reasons:

- (1) It is not regulated by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration)
- (2) Its purity and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content are not consistently verified.
- (3) As there are only small case studies available, the risk-benefit relationship cannot be determined.
- (4) Medical marijuana edibles represent a poisoning risk to children.
- (5) Smoking medical marijuana worsens lung function.

Marijuana, of the cannabis plant, contains both THC and cannabidiol. There are currently no published studies on the efficacy of marijuana as a medication in children; thus, its safety and efficacy are unknown. Therefore, *medical marijuana cannot be recommended for children*. Cannabidiol (branded in the US under the trade name Epidiolex), on the other hand, has been shown to be beneficial for certain children with seizure disorders.

In closing, the AAP opposes 'medical marijuana' outside the regulatory process of the US Food and Drug Administration and strongly supports research and development of pharmaceutical cannabinoids. Please don't hesitate to contact us if there are any questions. Thanks so much for your time and for your commitment to SC's children.

Sincerely,

Kerry K. Sease, MD, MPH  
President - SC Chapter of the American  
Academy of Pediatrics