

News Release

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New Study: Advertising Associated with CA Youths' Desire to Use Cannabis

OAKLAND, CA -- California has the largest regulated cannabis market in the world, and youth are increasingly being exposed to advertising for regulated cannabis products and services. Findings from a new study that published today in the *International Journal of Drug Policy* reveal California cannabis ads contain features that increase adolescents' interest in cannabis use. The study, [*Characteristics and Effects of Cannabis Advertisements with Appeal to Youth in California*](#), was released by [Getting it Right from the Start](#) at the [Public Health Institute](#) (PHI) and the [UCLA Center for Cannabis and Cannabinoids](#).

"Youth are particularly vulnerable to harms of cannabis use because their brains are still developing," said **Dr. Alisa Padon, lead author on the study and research director for Getting it Right from the Start at PHI**. "No one wants the regulated market to increase youth use of cannabis, but teens are seeing these very persuasive cannabis ads, especially on social media. We wanted to know *how* the ads are increasing their interest in using cannabis so we could offer recommendations for better policy," she added.

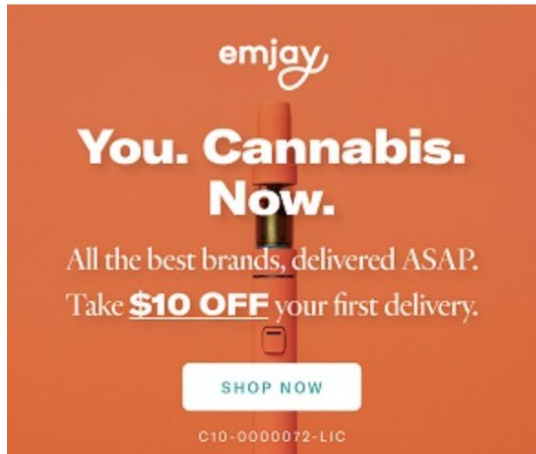
A sample of over 400 California teens (age 16-20) were asked to rate cannabis ads from traditional (i.e. newspapers, billboards, internet) and social media. The ads varied in the types of content features used, such as product information, lifestyle appeals, production elements, health appeals, and characters.

Key Findings

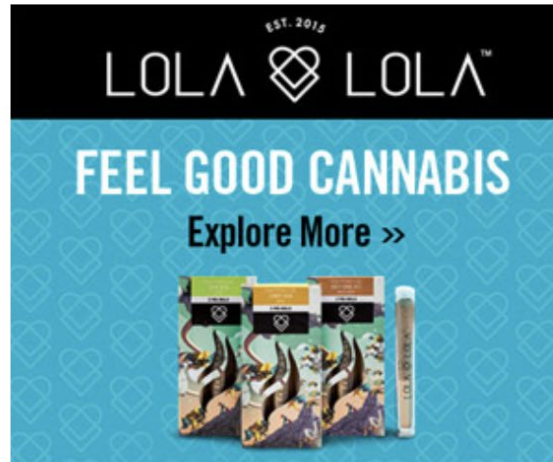
- Several features were significantly associated with increasing youth interest in cannabis use following ad exposure, including illustration, food and flavor references, depictions of positive physical sensations and psychoactive effects from cannabis use, animals or creatures, and descriptive product information.
- The lowest-rated features were health appeals, serious faces, and suggestions that cannabis can be effective at preventing negative moods.

- 87% of youth had seen or heard cannabis ads in the past 30 days.

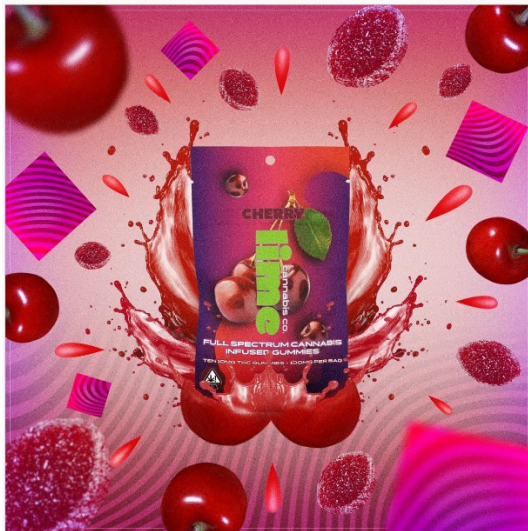
“These findings represent an opportunity to make targeted adjustments to cannabis marketing regulations to clarify what is attractive to youth. This will help the industry know what to avoid to prevent and reduce cannabis use among youth,” **explained Dr. Alisa Padon.**



Source: Vivvix; Emjay Mobile Web Ad



Source: Vivvix; Lola Lola Internet Display Ad



This was the highest scoring ad in the study.

