

## Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Drag the statements below to reorder them. In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria to consider:**

Education, Accessing and using cannabis, Social impacts, Young people and children, Mental health, Public health, Public safety, Criminal activity

**What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? (select all that apply) :**

Individual

**Are there any additional themes we should consider?**

Regulation, tax revenue, how prohibition has failed

### YOUR SUBMISSION

My stance on this issue is that cannabis should be legal but properly regulated in order to minimise harm and at the same time reduce the amount of people facing criminal charges. I will now address the terms of reference:

a) Preventing young children from accessing cannabis:

As an 18 year old university student, I believe that I have valuable insight into this aspect of the issue. From my personal experiences, I have noticed that even though cannabis is currently illegal, its use is incredibly abundant and deeply ingrained in Australian youth culture. It is also, in my opinion, easier to obtain as an underage teenager than alcohol, despite its legality. This is because when buying alcohol, ID is needed whereas when acquiring cannabis from a dealer, they will never confirm the buyers age because they only care about profit. I believe that while it may seem counter-intuitive, legalising cannabis and regulating its sale will ultimately reduce the use among youth because it will force the sale of cannabis out of the black market and out of the hands of criminals.

I believe that in order to further protect youth, these proposed changes must also be accompanied with educational programs that provide both factual and REALISTIC information regarding the safe use of cannabis.

c) Health education campaigns:

While I believe that cannabis should be legalised, I also recognise the potential harms that come with its use.

From my experience with drug education at high school, it was mainly focused on the harmful side of the substance and it did not explore harm reduction. In reality, approx 35% of all Australians have tried cannabis, so it is clear that it is unrealistic to simply tell children that they should never use cannabis. I believe that the focus of these programs should shift from zero tolerance to harm reduction so that if people do choose to use cannabis (which many undoubtedly will), they are making an informed decision and are able to recognise the potential risks and aim to mitigate them.

**Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:**

**Select all that apply.**

**Do you think there should there be restrictions on the use of cannabis? :**

Personal use of cannabis should be legal. Sale of cannabis should be legal and regulated. Cultivation of cannabis for personal use should be legal.