Clear30

Engaging Young Adults Around Cannabis

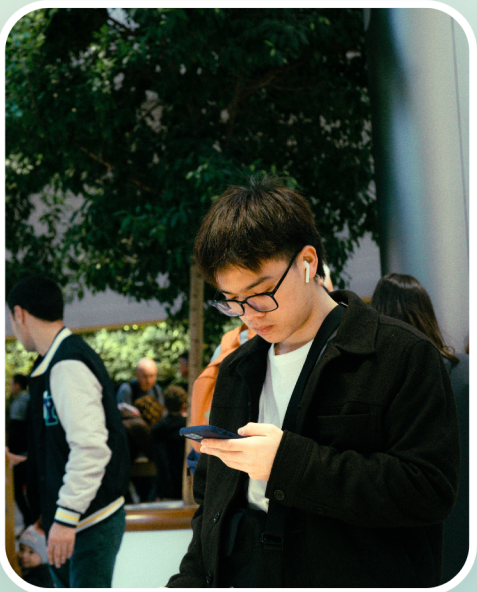
What the data can teach you about talking to students struggling with cannabis use.

LEARNINGS FROM

Tens of millions
social-media impressions tested across the feed

1,000+
pieces of content tested to see what makes young people stop and engage

150,000+
downloads of the most popular cannabis behavior-change app



Inside: what's actually reaching this generation, and how to put it to work the next time it comes up.

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Co-founder, Clear30 · Leads the social and creator campaigns behind the findings in this paper

Adapted from invited presentations at

Stanford MEDICINE REACH Lab

»CannAct a public health - cannabis action conference

Why engage young adults around cannabis at all?

17.7M

Americans use cannabis daily or near-daily, more than alcohol (14.7M)

Caulkins, *Addiction* (2024), NSDUH data

15×

increase in daily or near-daily cannabis use since 1992

Caulkins, *Addiction* (2024), NSDUH data

<1 in 10

of the ~20 million Americans with cannabis use disorder ever receive treatment

NSDUH / SAMHSA

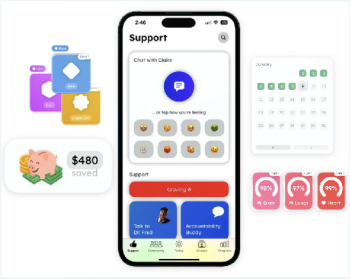
This isn't the cannabis from the 90s

Source: NIDA Cannabis Potency Monitoring Program.

Stronger products, used more often, by the age group with the highest rates of use and cannabis use disorder, and the lowest treatment rate. Short of formal treatment, there's been almost nowhere for these students to turn.

The intervention behind this data

Everything here was learned serving users of our cannabis intervention, **Clear30, the most popular support app in the world**, and the engagement data and A/B testing that come from it.



All Clear30 user figures come from in-app surveys of app users; see the methodology note on page 6.

EVERY FIGURE ON THIS PAGE COMES FROM CLEAR30 APP USERS

Who we're actually reaching

When you build something this population chooses to download, you learn who's really out there looking for help. Here's who shows up, and three things that surprised us.

89%+
use cannabis daily, almost nobody is a weekend user

5+ yrs
average length of regular use, often since high school

~75%
had already tried to take a break before finding us

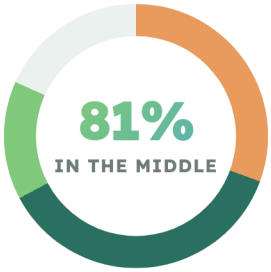
65%
say they're very or extremely committed to trying again

Three things that surprised us

Most have already tried a break

- 45% tried, didn't maintain it
- 29% maintained, then came back

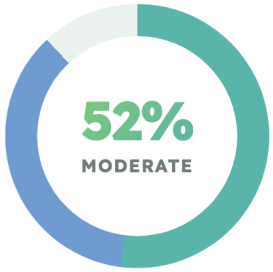
65% are very or extremely committed to trying again.



See cannabis as helping *and* harming

- 36.6% equally helping & harming
- 30.6% somewhat harming more
- 14.5% somewhat helping more

Only **~19%** feel it's mostly one or the other.



Want to moderate, not only quit

- 52% moderate use
- 36% quit entirely
- 12% not sure yet

Both convert alike. **Build for one, serve half.**

Why they want a break, in their own words

- 🧠 **Mental clarity**
- 🔒 **Less dependency**
- 😌 **Less anxiety**
- 🎯 **More self-control**
- 💭 **Out of their own head**
- ❤️ **Overall health**

In peer support they say **"dependency," "loop," "stuck," "out of control"**, not "cannabis is bad for me." **"I want my mind back."**

Catching the eye: lessons from 1,000+ pieces of tested content

Nobody's calling a hotline, they're scrolling at 11pm. Here are four of our top performers, and how to use each the next time cannabis comes up with a student.

🏆 Each piece below ranked among the **top performers out of 1,000+ pieces of content** we've tested to engage young people around cannabis.

1 Disarm, don't warn

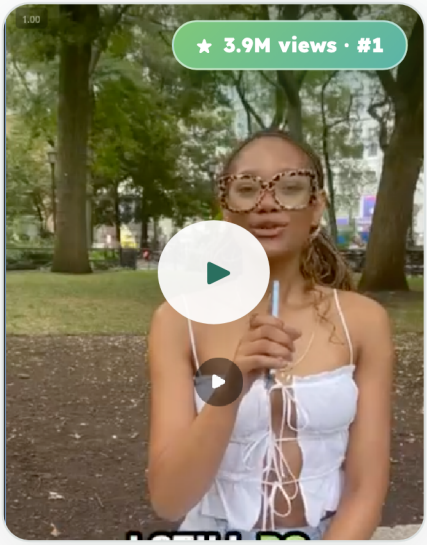
▸ FROM THE VIDEO

> *"If you smoke every day and it's making your life better, keep scrolling, this isn't for you. But if it's dragging you down…"*

💬 IN CONVERSATION

Give them an out, and a reason. "I'm not here to lecture you, just wondering if you've noticed anything."

▶ Watch it at clear30.org/sample-content



2 Engage around control, not quitting

▸ FROM THE VIDEO

> *"I still smoke a little bit. But it's decreased compared to how I was smoking before."*

Our highest-performing ad ever. **Not a quit story, a "got control back" story.**

💬 IN CONVERSATION

Lead with control. For an all-day user, cutting back to once a week is a real win.

▶ Watch it at clear30.org/sample-content

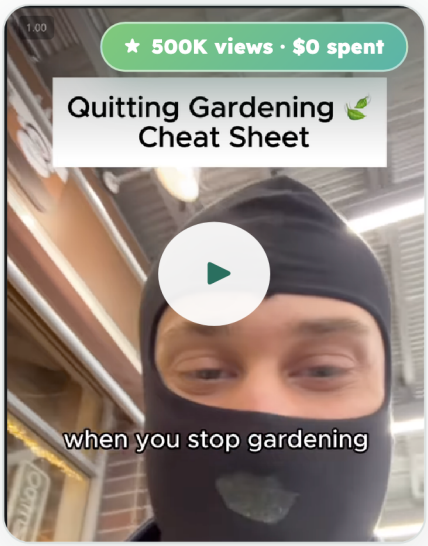
🏆 **Top performers, continued**, two more lessons from the content that engaged young people best.

3 Humor disarms

A brand-new account, zero followers, a ski mask, riffing about quitting weed. **500K+ views in 24 hours**, because it came at people as a peer, not a warning.

> 💬 **IN CONVERSATION**
>
> **Lightening the mood lowers the guard.** You don't have to be funny, but coming in warm and without judgment helps a student relax and actually start listening.

▶ **Watch it at clear30.org/sample-content**

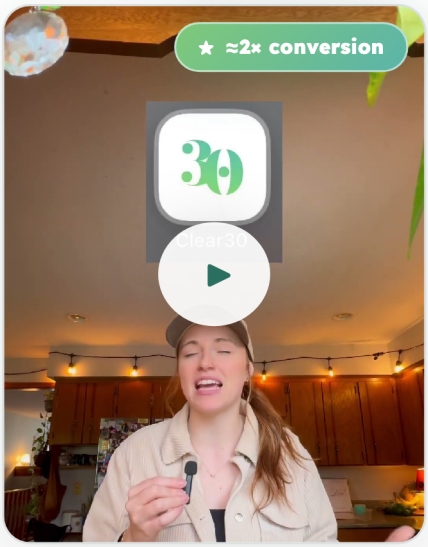


4 Peer voice converts ≈ 2× brand voice

When a video comes from a company, it doesn't land the same way. When a creator young people already trust and follow makes it, it brings in roughly **twice as many people ready to make a change**. Same app, same intervention, but the messenger can matter more than the message.

> 💬 **IN CONVERSATION**
>
> **Put peers out front.** Your highest-leverage role isn't being the messenger, it's equipping one.

▶ **Watch it at clear30.org/sample-content**



See all four for yourself

Watch the videos behind these lessons, then send your favorite to a student.

▶ **clear30.org/sample-content**

What happens at 30 days, and how the app does it

Among 1,829 users surveyed in-app at day 30:

50%+
completely abstinent at 30 days

66%
average reduction in days using

67%
of those still using used less on the days they used

How the app works

Three steps every student moves through, from first open to a real break.

1

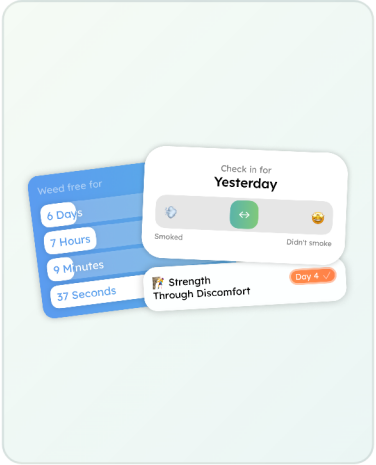
It starts with an assessment

A five-minute intake: use, goals, commitment, and what each student wants back.

2

Daily tracking & content

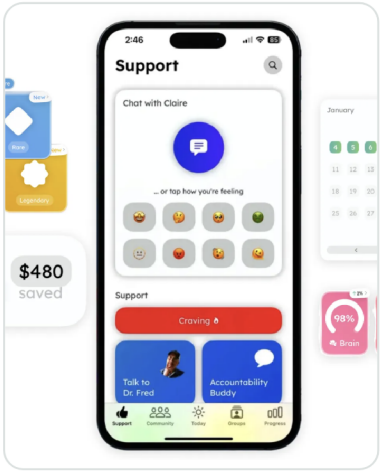
A daily routine: tracking, streaks, health stats, and lessons personalized to each student's goal.



3

A full support system

Community and peer support, expert guidance for questions, achievements, groups with friends, and smart SMS and notification nudges.



A note on methodology. Outcome figures are from N = 1,829 Clear30 users surveyed at day 30, self-reported via in-app survey. This was asked of everyone who reached 30 days after opening the app, not only those still actively using it, so it reflects a broad cross-section rather than a hand-picked group of engaged participants. Content figures are observed from engagement on social media, not structured A/B tests.

Free resources, customized for your campus

Everything below already exists and is in use on campuses today, and we're happy to co-brand any of it for your university, free, no partnership required. These are the four pieces staff request most:

30-Day Calendar

A printable day-by-day companion for a 30-day break, something tangible students can put on a wall.

Cravings Meditations

Guided audio meditations built for the moment a craving hits, short enough that students actually use them.

Cannabis Support Kit

A non-judgmental handout covering breaks, quitting, and safer use, written in the language this paper describes.

Symptom Packet

What cannabis withdrawal actually feels like, day by day, so students know what's normal and what helps.

Or bring Clear30 to your university

FOR PREVENTION & SCREENING

Education & Screening

A cannabis education layer students complete in one sitting, paired with validated screening (CUDIT-R) and a campus dashboard, so you can see what's actually happening with cannabis on your campus and act on it.

FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO CHANGE

App Intervention

The 30-day program this white paper is built on: quit, moderate, or take an intentional break, offered through your wellness system, with the engagement engineering described in these pages doing the work of keeping students in it.

Want any of this for your campus?

Email **julian@clear30.org** and we'll schedule a meeting, customize these resources for your school, or walk your team through education, screening, and the app intervention.

julian@clear30.org