



Pine River Institute

Cannabis Legalization: Youth and Community

Association of Municipalities Ontario Annual Meeting

Vaughan Dowie
CEO, Pine River Institute



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- **PRI is a residential program for adolescents with addictive behaviors and mental health concerns**
- **Most are funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care**



PRI youth mirror the profile of problematic cannabis users:



- **Start using early and often**
- **Believe cannabis is a benign substance**



Ontario has remained silent on what investment it will make from the proceeds of cannabis sales in the woefully underfunded youth substance abuse area, Vaughan Dowie writes. (JUSTIN TANG / THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE PHOTO)



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“The reason we are choosing to legalize and control marijuana is because the current system is not protecting our kids. It’s right now easier for an underage Canadian teenager to buy a joint than it is for them to get their hands on a bottle of beer.”

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

Cannabis debate: Not enough is being planned to protect youth from effects of marijuana

By **VAUGHAN DOWIE** Opinion
Mon., April 16, 2018

Legalizing marijuana: let's get this right

By **VAUGHAN DOWIE**
Sun., Feb. 21, 2016

Ontario must do right thing with cannabis revenues

By **VAUGHAN DOWIE**
Fri., Nov. 3, 2017





PRI advocates for two key areas:

- **A robust and continuous public education approach to youth to ensure that they understand the effects and risks of cannabis on the adolescent brain**
- **Investment in adolescent treatment from the proceeds of cannabis taxation and sale**



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Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Public Education Initiatives

Federal Budget 2018

\$62.5 million over 5 years



Revenue

- Projected \$ 400 Million in tax revenue
- 75% of tax revenues to provinces/territories
- Federal tax revenues capped at \$100 million



Ontario Liberal Budget 2018 Cannabis Revenue Projections

- \$215 million/year by 2021

(Portion of Federal Taxes
+ Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation)



**Ontario has not yet announced
any investment in public education and
treatment linked to expected cannabis
revenue**



“There will be revenue... And we recognize that any additional revenue that might be generated needs to be invested in public education, research, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. I think the prime minister has been unequivocal that those things, we think, can help us achieve what we’ve set out to do which is reducing the social and health harms of cannabis use.”

Bill Blair, Liberal MP
Dec 2017



- It is not ethical that any government should profit from this endeavor while investing nothing in either effective public education or treatment
- An investment in the prevention and treatment continuum is necessary to fulfill the government's commitment to make the protection of youth one of its primary concerns



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PINE RIVER INSTITUTE: THE SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR A RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PROGRAM

We can't afford NOT to invest in our young people



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