



# HALLUCINOGENS AND THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

## DISTORTING FUTURES

DON'T HAVE ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE RISKS.

There is a lot that is unknown about the effect of using hallucinogens on the brain, but we know that they cause mind-altering effects by disrupting how neurotransmitters work. Changing the way the brain functions has a number of negative effects and is risky. Teens who use these substances are probably not aware of the damaging impact of hallucinogens.

## SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

**Altered perception:** Time distortion, hallucinations, and detachment from reality

**Cognitive decline:** Disordered thoughts, confusion, and impaired judgment

**Behavior:** Intense mood swings, violent behaviors, and agitation

**Mental state:** Paranoia, delirium, and fear

## WHAT IS THE RISK?

Hallucinogens are dangerous substances with unpredictable effects. The risk is not just their direct impact on the body but also the behaviors that they can cause. The hallucinations and paranoia that come from using hallucinogens can lead to impulsive actions and risky behaviors that can further disrupt brain development and even be deadly.





**A HALLUCINOGEN'S EFFECTS CAN LAST UP TO 12 HOURS**

## **POTENTIAL LONG-TERM EFFECTS**

- Interference with brain circuits
- Delusions, nightmares, and hallucinations
- Disruption of prefrontal cortex
- Cognitive decline
- Persistent psychosis
- Disorganized thoughts

## **HOW TO HELP**

The best way to avoid the negative impacts of hallucinogens on the young mind is to avoid using. The first step is talking and learning about the risk of using them and what they can do to a developing brain. If use is an issue, there are many places to get help, including:

**National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)  
or [www.findtreatment.gov](http://www.findtreatment.gov)**

**HALLUCINOGENS ARE  
DANGEROUS AND UNPREDICTABLE.**