

## Kia Ora

We hope that you are all going well as we feel our way forward during these Covid times. The focus of this newsletter is the proposed Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill which is to be voted on in a referendum held at the same time as the General Election in September. The Bill is now publicly available. At 154 pages it is unlikely that many people will read this entire bill before they vote for their preferred referendum statement:

\* Yes, I support the proposed Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill

\* No, I do not support the proposed Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill.

A summary of the Bill is available on the Government's website. <https://www.referendums.govt.nz/cannabis/summary.html>

We have tracked the historical progression of the discussions on the legalisation and control of cannabis, writing several articles along the way in response to those discussions. These articles: A Cannabis Referendum Starter Kit; Is New Zealand Going to Pot? The Social Setting and Implications of Cannabis Law Reform; Legalising Cannabis - The Rhetoric and the Reality, can be found on our website at <http://enquiringminds.education/resources.html>

We recently had an opinion piece published by Stuff in which we argued that it is wiser to say 'no' to legalisation and explore decriminalisation if we are going to achieve the social goals that are important to us.

See: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/300005217/better-to-decriminalise-cannabis-rather-than-legalise-it--bill-opponents>

These articles can all be used to stimulate conversations about cannabis in New Zealand. Some questions to think about include:

- Is the legalisation of the growth, possession, use and supply of cannabis necessary to achieve the intended social goals, or can these goals be achieved through decriminalisation of these practices?
- To what extent might the move toward legalisation in our current political and economic climate be driven by financial considerations rather than social ones?
- If New Zealand voters take the legalisation route, should there be restrictions or prohibitions in regards to cannabis use in particular situations, for example: in relation to driving or operating machinery; being pregnant; in the workplace; in the sporting arena? How will these restrictions/prohibitions be enforced?
- If the recreational use of cannabis is legalised, could this lead to a logical progression to legalise all drugs? At what point does 'recreational use' move into an addiction?
- If New Zealand follows other jurisdictions that have legalised cannabis for recreational use, a range of products containing CBD and/or psychoactive THC could be put on the market. These include edibles, beverages, cosmetics, non-prescription health supplements and so forth. Do the controls outlined in the legislation go far enough in controlling these, or do they go too far?

[admin@nzcsc.org](mailto:admin@nzcsc.org)

[www.enquiringminds.education](http://www.enquiringminds.education)

