

First-of-its-kind Psychedelic Safety Campaign ‘Before You Trip’ Launches

*Piloted in Denver/Boulder/Aspen, Program Seeks to Encourage
Balanced Understanding with Gen Z Audiences*

DENVER, May 7, 2025 – While use of psychedelic substances continues to increase across the country, public understanding and information about their risks, contraindications, and harm reduction strategies lags behind. Today marks the launch of “Before You Trip,” a groundbreaking public health education campaign designed to bridge this gap. Developed by the Coalition for Psychedelic Safety and Education (CPSE), the campaign delivers science-based digital content from an authentic Gen Z lens, aiming to empower young adults to seek a balanced understanding and informed decision making about psychedelic substances.

“Psychedelics can be powerful tools for self-discovery and healing. The potential benefits are exciting. At the same time, there are risks, and the research about adverse events and the prevalence of harms is emerging,” said Richard Dart, MD, executive director of Denver-based Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Safety at Denver Health. “Psychedelics aren’t for everyone. We know that certain medical and mental health conditions can make their use risky for some. As policy and public acceptance evolve, public health education is key to mitigating preventable harms.”

Psychedelic use among young adults has more than doubled over the past decade, and is now at an all-time high, with 8.9 percent of 19-30-year-olds reporting psychedelic use in the past year. According to a recent Wondros/Edge poll, 75 percent of 18–25-year-olds are interested in using psychedelics, yet less than half – only 46 percent – can name an associated risk. More data is needed to understand prevalence of adverse events, but among US adults who used a classic psychedelic one or more times, roughly one in ten (8.9 percent) reported ever having experienced functional impairment lasting more than a day, and 2.6 percent reported having sought post-trip medical, psychiatric, or psychological assistance following their most challenging experience.

“Over the last 20 years, there has been a surge of positive media coverage of psychedelic drugs and their therapeutic potential, a flourishing of psychedelic companies and retreats, and policy reforms increasing accessibility,” said Rick Strassman, M.D., adjunct associate professor of psychiatry at University of New Mexico, and renowned psychedelics researcher and author, including of *The Psychedelic Handbook*. “However, much less attention has been paid to public health education about the harms of psychedelics and how to minimize them.”

“Before You Trip” was developed by CPSE and a coalition of Gen Zers, researchers, healthcare providers, drug educators, mental health advocates and safety experts. The campaign encourages young adults to Pause. Learn. Reflect by asking themselves six critical questions, before deciding if psychedelics are right for them. It is being piloted in the Denver/Boulder/Aspen areas as psychedelic use has increased 65 percent in Colorado since certain psychedelic substances, including psilocybin mushrooms, were decriminalized in 2022.

“‘Before You Trip’ aims to neither encourage nor discourage psychedelic use, instead, as these powerful substances become more mainstream, we’re working to prevent harms, like the ones we’ve suffered,” said Susan Sagy, co-founder of CPSE. “Though they can’t be eliminated, risks can be mitigated. And we believe public health education is at the front lines of reducing preventable harms.”

The campaign leverages influential content creators, digital content and a website – BeforeYouTrip.org – to engage young people in critical thinking related to psychedelics and uplift and share the campaign's key messages in a way that feels authentic and digestible: “Different minds, different rides. Psychedelics hit each person differently based on emotional state, mental health or medical conditions, mixing with other substances, environmental and hidden triggers.” or “Each substance and dose hits differently. Substances have unique effects and risks. Doses can have unknown strength and purity.” Among the campaign’s cast of content creators are filmmaker and explorer [Charlie Kernkamp](#), superstar drag queen [Symone](#), and creative technologist, [Emma Ohrun](#). Find their content at #BeforeYouTripPartner.

As a test-and-learn pilot, the campaign will measure reach, engagement and resonance with the target audience, message effectiveness, and shifts in awareness. Based on those findings, CPSE and its team of experts will refine campaign elements and aim to scale more broadly, among additional audiences and other markets.

CPSE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing public education and shaping responsible, evidence-based public policy. The founders, deeply affected by the personal losses of family members due to adverse events involving psychedelics, were driven to address the critical and unmet need for accurate, evidence-based information and harm reduction strategies. Learn more here: coalitionforpsychedelicsafety.org.

ABOUT “BEFORE YOU TRIP”

With the rising use of psychedelics and with use among young adults (19-30) at an all-time high, people need a balanced, nuanced understanding and information to help them decide if psychedelics are right for them or right for them, right now. While psychedelics are becoming more normalized, there is still much we don’t know about these powerful, potent substances and risk awareness is low. Preventable harms can be mitigated with public health education. “Before You Trip” delivers that science-based public health education to encourage a balanced understanding of psychedelic substances, including risks, contraindications, and harm reduction strategies, through an authentic Gen Z lens. The program was developed by CPSE and a coalition of Gen Zers, researchers, healthcare providers, drug educators, mental health advocates and safety experts and asks people who are curious about psychedelics to: Pause, Learn, Reflect. For more information go to BeforeYouTrip.org.

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