

# Investigation Reveals Medical Marijuana Is Getting Into School Kids' Hands

By David Goldstein

LosAngeles.CBSLocal.com | February 25, 2015

**LOS ANGELES (CBSLA.com)** — In a CBS2 News exclusive, Investigative Reporter David Goldstein uncovers medical marijuana being sold to school-aged kids in broad daylight, within walking distance of local schools.

He reported the city was quick to act when he brought his disturbing findings to officials.

Goldstein recorded many instances of adults buying the marijuana and quickly turning around and re-selling it to the underage kids.

The students were shown, many times, smoking the pot minutes after leaving their schools. The student's faces were covered because most appeared to be under 18 — the legal age for receiving doctor's approval to buy medical marijuana without a parents' consent.

So exactly how did these kids get their hands on it?

Our hidden cameras caught the students paying someone else to get it for them — like this one man who didn't want his face shown on TV. On most afternoons, residents of the area say kids like these gather on Barton Avenue, near Western in Hollywood.

On a map, it's easy to see the area is walking distance to several schools.

With their sneakers, skateboards and backpacks, it looks like any afterschool meeting place. Until you see what's taking place on the corner — Natural Remedies Caregivers, a marijuana dispensary.

Goldstein reports, "we saw plenty of activity."

In one instance, a group of young women is shown handing a man on a skateboard some money. He gets on the skateboard, then walks into the store. A few minutes later, he comes out carrying a white bag. He passes out what looks like pill jars to the girls on the street

The jars are similar to one Goldstein found in the bushes near the dispensary. They're used as containers for the pot. It says right on the label, "Not for children — Keep out of reach." But that didn't seem to stop the seller or the buyers.

The girls are shown opening up the jars and smelling their newly-purchased medical marijuana.

Goldstein and his producer also observed a customer leaving the dispensary two times in one afternoon to hand off the contents inside his white bags.

The man is shown delivering the jars to two kids on the street — then he just crumples up the bag and throws it over his head.

One teen is still holding his school notebook under his arm when he is shown tossing a jar to his friend who takes a whiff to check it out.

On another occasion, Goldstein saw two teens buying and selling what appears to be medical marijuana — exchanged openly in broad daylight.

On another day, our cameras caught a group of teens collect their money. Their connection comes up to grab it. He goes into the dispensary and comes out with the tell-tale white bag.

He distributes the contents to his teenaged customers.

Goldstein then confronts the man. “You just went into the dispensary and bought pot for these guys, didn’t you?” he asks. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” the man replies. Goldstein tries again. “We just saw you go in there and you bought pot for these guys.” This time the man hit our camera and also made an obscene gesture.

The teens also had nothing to say. “How old are you?” he asked several.

Goldstein then asked to speak to a manager at the dispensary. He was told the manager “wasn’t around” and that a security guard hired by the store to police the area said he didn’t see anything going on.

“You are the security guard, you don’t see these people coming in here and then selling to kids right around the corner?,” Goldstein asks, “and you don’t see anything, right?” The guard closed the door.

Residents said they see it and complained to police and nothing was done.

“Well, it’s very frustrating,” said resident Dazzier Jimenez, “because you know, we have kids around the area, so they see that. It’s a bad example for our youth.”

Goldstein asked City Attorney Mike Feuer why this dispensary was allowed to remain open.

His office oversees LA’s Prop D marijuana law. He said the dispensary complies with all the written requirements, as far as being a safe distance from schools and parks.

After we told him what was going on, authorities acted.

“I can report that because you provided us with that location,” Feuer said, “the police conducted an investigation at the site and last evening they arrested an individual, an adult for allegedly selling medical marijuana to a minor just outside the facility.”

The manager of the dispensary also emailed Goldstein.

“We are doing everything in our power to stop the illegal patient solicitations outside of the building and to also stop second-hand transactions from happening,” the manager wrote.

Residents wonder why it took so long.

“Why are there now arrests when there haven’t been any in the past?,” said Jimenez.

“Quite frankly,” says LAPD Commander Andrew Smith, “it was not a big problem location. It was not known to us as a problem location.”

Police and prosecutors told Goldstein that after seeing CBS2’s undercover video, they are now cracking down.