

Gone to pot

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ALMOST 300,000 Australians are using cannabis on a daily basis, a national drug council says.

Concerned by misinformation about the effects of the drug, the Australian National Council on Drugs (NACD) today released a booklet aimed at educating the 1.8 million Australians who have used cannabis in the past year.

The NACD said 5.5 million people had tried the drug at some time, while 295,200 were using it every single day.

Council executive director Gino Vumbaca said the 20-29 years age group were the heaviest users and users came from a range of socio-economic groups.

"It's quite clear from studies that you can become dependent on cannabis and that it can lead to mental health issues as well," Mr Vumbaca said.

"A lot of people have grown up with the idea that cannabis is a soft drug, but long term studies show that those who use it long term seem more likely to suffer high anxiety and mental illness like depression."

The booklet, which was available from the NACD website, aimed only to provide facts to users and their families and not to editorialise the issue, Mr Vumbaca said

The Daily Telegraph, Australia