

“ I have met many patients that moved to California as Cannabis Refugees ”

Maya's Story

Written by Shelby Lucero | Photograph by Derek Nickell

We live in an era of change for medical cannabis and its legalization in California. In December 2014 Congress finally took steps toward ending federal prohibition by forbidding federal agents from interfering in legal, state-authorized medical operations. Yet, the National Guard still seizes medical gardens in Mendocino County and Native American Tribes suffer raids on sovereign land.

California provides excellent environmental conditions conducive to growing organic cannabis, including those plants high in the chemical compound known as CBD. This is just one of over 80 chemical compounds found in cannabis, but only CBD has received national attention as the medicine healing children suffering from intractable epilepsy. Over the years, I have met many patients who moved to California as “cannabis refugees” because here they can get the best CBD medicine to ease their children’s pain and suffering. I have also worked with many organic farmers and provided guidance to parents with sick children. My expertise comes from having a healthy 22 year old son today who was diagnosed with cancer at age four. Our experience is the reason I am a cannabis activist and consultant.

Recently, a woman shared her experience as a cannabis refugee living in California with her three year old daughter, Maya. They travelled from Georgia with the help of a charitable group giving them money for gas, food and hotel. Maya suffered from a rare form of epilepsy called Dravet Syndrome. She had been on seizure medication since infancy. All the pharmaceuticals initially appeared to be the answer. The seizures would stop, then slowly the symptoms would reappear along with the seizures, until it would become time to change the dose or try a new medicine. Maya suffered about 200 seizures a day.

Desperate to help her child, having relocated to California, she received a medical doctor’s recommendation for Maya, and then made phone calls. She called me. After listening to her heart-felt story, I networked with farmers for donations of CBD for Maya. She received a limited supply of CBD, only two weeks worth, because of the ongoing raids of medical gardens.

At the end of two weeks, I received another call from Maya’s mother who was so grateful for all the kindness she had received from CA activists. She told me that Maya had zero seizures during the two weeks of using CBD oil. It was a miracle. For the first time in her daughter’s life, she was able to play, run, talk and laugh with her. Her happiness and gratitude spilled over in tears. She explained she was now on a waiting list to receive more medicine so Maya’s life recovery could continue. That never happen, because raids happened instead.

One week after Maya had her last CBD oil, she had a grand mal seizure. It took her life. The reason Maya’s mom had called was to thank me for giving her daughter the only happiness she had ever known, a life without seizures, thanks to the kindness of strangers and medical cannabis.

It is devastating to lose a child, especially knowing the death could have been prevented. Although cannabis is recognized medically, we still need so much more research regarding the healing power of CBD. Prohibition and the federal government controlled substance scheduling of cannabis often stand in the way. Cannabis is a miraculous plant which heals, but cannabis activity still a felony to the feds.

If you are in need of obtaining more information regarding medical cannabis, this writer can be reached at Flowerchildconsulting@gmail.com.



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