

## Local store helping to break stigma around cannabis

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Despite being just 23, Cody Coulson is the proud owner of Stop & Smell The Roses, the first ever franchised hemp-based wellness centre in Canada that sells legal Cannabidiol (CBD), and has expanded now to Orangeville, looking to help break the stigma surrounding cannabis and help those in need.

Starting the business when he was 22 as an online franchise managed from his Toronto apartment, Mr. Coulson has now expanded it to four brick and mortar stores across southwestern Ontario ? in Orangeville, Port Elgin, Hanover, and Owen Sound.

He says all products sold are 100 per cent legal, safe and lab tested.

When he was 11 years old, Mr. Coulson's father was diagnosed with cancer and began using medical cannabis to relieve the discomfort, but passed away after the second attack, which left him frustrated with the cannabis system's lack of regulation and access to quality products.

When Mr. Coulson was 18, he had his first grand mal seizure. Shortly after, he was diagnosed with epilepsy and prescribed a series of daily prescription drugs. Soon, he began experiencing cold sweats, insomnia and a loss of emotions, and decided to quit his prescription and try CBD.

Mr. Coulson said the side effects of stopping his previous prescription and starting CBD were incomparable, as it allowed him to not only rid himself of the negative side effects associated with his previous prescriptions, but also from having to take further prescriptions his doctors had prescribed.

He now holds a Plant Production and Facility Management Diploma from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and has written and published multiple papers on CBD.

Mr. Coulson told the Citizen that he never took his age into account at the time. ?Now it's kind of sinking in how young I am, because it's being more noticeable now, but when I first started I never really worried about how old I was.?

He explained that he wants his customers to gain as much knowledge as possible and change the stigma on the cannabis plant. ?We really want to make sure everyone is welcome when they come in. They don't have to buy anything, they just need to be able to walk through the doors and ask the questions, because that's the first step in education.?

He advised that even though the country's planned legalization of recreational Pot will help ?kick-start? breaking the stigma, some businesses ?kind of go with that stigma,? and they are the ones who need to change the perception.

Mr. Coulson said it's amazing helping people and what keeps himself and staff going is the ?success stories.?

For more information on the store, visit their website at [www.sastr.ca](http://www.sastr.ca).