

Let's Talk About MEDICAL CANNABIS

One of the Earliest
Medical Communities
Seen Through the Eyes of
its Youngest Advocate



Alexis Bortell

Author, Advocate, 2+Years Seizure-Free
Cowritten with Avery, Liza & Dean Bortell

PRAISE FOR THE FIRST EDITION OF

Let's Talk About Medical Cannabis

“Table talk! That’s what I hope this book prompts - conversation about responsible use of cannabis. Alexis Bortell and her family are brave to fight for medical freedom. Through suffering epilepsy and the benefits of medical cannabis, young Alexis has already experienced and learned much. If her goal with this book was to help educate legislators, parents, and kids, on medical cannabis, she has succeeded.”

–David Simpson, Former Texas State Representative

“Alexis Bortell is passionate about this issue and rightly so. Medical cannabis has improved her health. Skeptics should take a closer look at Alexis's journey. She is articulate, full of knowledge and insightful. When pharmaceuticals failed her, Alexis and her family had no choice but to leave Texas for Colorado where cannabis is legal. Doctors, lawmakers and voters across the country are realizing its benefits. Alexis is proof.”

–Jason Whitely, WFAA-TV, Dallas

“Alexis’s story is one of thousands around the world, perhaps with different conditions, but with similar circumstances and, often, shared stigma for using cannabis as medicine. If her goal with this book was to help educate legislators, parents, and kids who are medical cannabis patients, in a dinner table-like conversation, she has succeeded. Alexis’s story will touch you in a way that will awaken your human sense of compassion and understanding.”

–Dr. Jokūbas Žiburkus, PhD, Co-Founder & CEO, Canntelligence



Alexis M. Bortell

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the Eyes of its Youngest Advocate

by

Alexis Bortell

cowritten with Avery, Liza, and Dean Bortell

FIRST EDITION



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by Shannon Way

**To Vincent, Avery, Mom & Dad
Thank you for inspiring me to continue
the fight for patient's rights.
Hugs, Alexis**

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I also want to thank the entire Team Alexis team and all my friends that have gone to heaven. The information I write about in this book came from them and the rest of our cannabis community.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the advocates and patients who continue to fight the battle for patient freedom across this great country.

Please, do not give up.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our book. I say “our” book because this book isn’t just about me and it isn’t just written by me. This book is about our medical cannabis community. I am lucky because I know people that are experts in every area I cover in this book. I meet them as our family travels to conventions and other places. They all helped me write this book in a big way. Our family is writing this book every time we sit down at a meal. We always talk about something related to cannabis, politics, news, or we play a trivia game about them. The only time we don’t do this is when I have friends over. Mom and dad have a strict “no marijuana” policy then. ☺ When we started to actually write this book we would take pages to the dinner table and edit them together while we ate. We did that for months and it got pretty frustrating sometimes honestly. Other than that, we are a pretty normal family. We fight, we argue, we play, we laugh, and we live up here on our farm in Colorado. I’m glad you are reading this book and I can introduce you to my family and my medical cannabis community.

We are going to talk about a lot of cannabis subjects, but I can’t write everything about cannabis. I am still learning about my medicine every day too, on top of going to school like my friends. I will do my best to tell you what we have learned so far and give you references to get more information (my references look like ^[this] throughout the book) if you want to read more. What I won’t do is say that I know everything about cannabis or the cannabis community. My whole family had to work together to write this book and we still had to get help from the cannabis experts we know. Don’t worry if you are a little confused sometimes. It happens to me all the time. Whatever you do, please don’t ever think I did this alone. My family and my cannabis community helped a lot, just like they always do.

I have to point out, because of federal law, I am not making official medical claims throughout this book. I am sharing my thoughts and experiences.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alexis Bortell is not your ordinary 11-year-old girl. At the age of seven, Alexis began having seizures and was diagnosed with intractable epilepsy. After two years of doctor visits, tests, ER visits, and pill after pill, all with their long list of negative side effects, her family gave up on traditional pharmaceutical options to stop her “seizure monster.” At that point, they turned to the last known “safe” option available: cannabis.

Cannabis provided Alexis immediate relief from her seizures, but the CBD-only cannabis extract, that she could legally get in her home state of Texas, did not stop the seizures from coming. Her form of epilepsy, along with so many other patients like her, responds best to whole-plant medical cannabis. Now, forced to move from her home state of Texas or face prison, her family fled Texas’ war on patients to seek life-saving treatment in Colorado. There, Alexis was thrust into a very grown-up world and joined a largely unknown community of cannabis patients known as, “Medical Marijuana Refugees.”

Alexis has now gone more than two years seizure-free using whole-plant medical cannabis. She has settled into her new adopted home state of Colorado and continues to advocate for patient freedom for all patients. Alexis has made it her mission to break the marijuana stigma and make medical cannabis a dinner table conversation and speaks at events and conferences about her family’s experience regularly.

Her drive to help those around her has led to her newest project, “Patches of Hope.” Alexis and her sister Avery are growing USDA certified organic garden vegetables on their family farm to donate to hungry people in need, including her beloved cannabis refugee community. Her story and advocacy has been featured in documentaries, newspapers, magazines, TV, and on radio stations worldwide.

Avery Bortell is Alexis’s younger sister and co-founder of Patches of Hope. Now 8-years-old, for the period Alexis was suffering debilitating seizures, she had to watch in horror and play the “big sister” role. Thanks to cannabis, her sister is now free from her “seizure monster,” and Avery looks

forward to many years of playing with her sister and riding bikes like other kids, thanks to this terribly misunderstood plant.

Analiza Bortell is Alexis and Avery's mother. She is a military veteran and recipient of the "Navy Achievement Medal" for her accomplishments overseas on active duty. She met her husband of 20 years while stationed at Naval Air Station, Keflavik, Iceland. Analiza has a degree in Computer Science and is now retired on their Colorado farm where she enjoys the best job she has ever had, "mom and Patches of Hope volunteer."

Dean Bortell is Alexis and Avery's father. He is a disabled military veteran and retired medical software engineer. Dean dedicates every minute he is physically able to volunteering for his daughters' Patches of Hope project. He understands that Alexis's cannabis use will limit her future career opportunities and so dedicates his teachings with Alexis to creating jobs for cannabis patients where medical discrimination will not be tolerated. Alexis often quotes him saying, "Dad won't allow us to say 'get a job'. Instead he makes us live by the motto, 'create a job.'"

Be sure to visit www.alexisbortell.com for more information, or signup for author updates [here](#).

