

KELY
SUPPORT GROUP
啟勵扶青會



禁毒常務委員會
Action Committee
Against Narcotics



保安局禁毒處
Narcotics Division,
Security Bureau

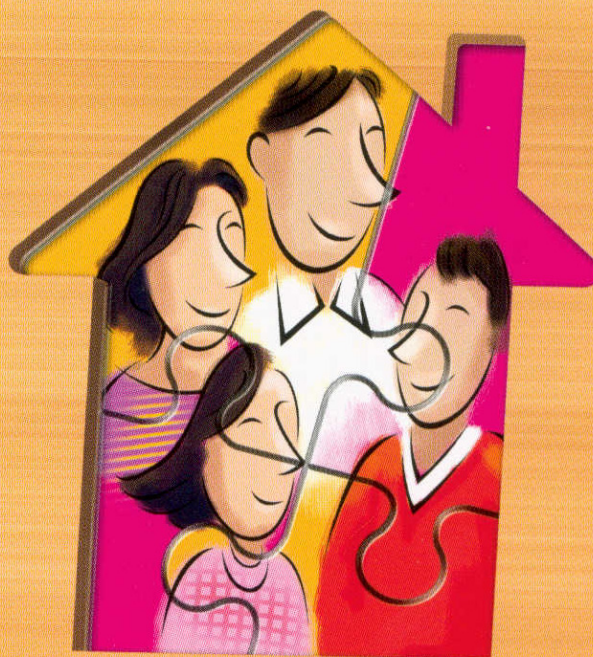
Drug Abuse

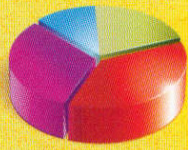
Drugs usually refer to chemicals that alter how a person thinks, feels or acts. They can include either legal drugs (medicines that are prescribed by doctors), alcohol, caffeine or illegal drugs (such as Cannabis, Cocaine or Ketamine—simply known as “K”). A drug abuser can either be abusing legal drugs or illegal drugs.

A study by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse 2007 (cited in www.drugprevention.gc.ca), found that youths who feel connected to their families are more likely to avoid the dangers of drugs.

Your involvement therefore, matters in our fight to keep Hong Kong youths drug-free. Be proactive and start the conversation.

*A Drug-Free Life
Begins at Home*



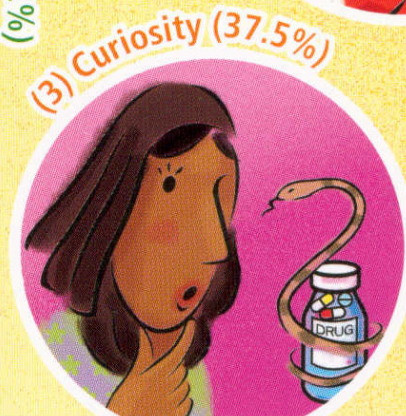
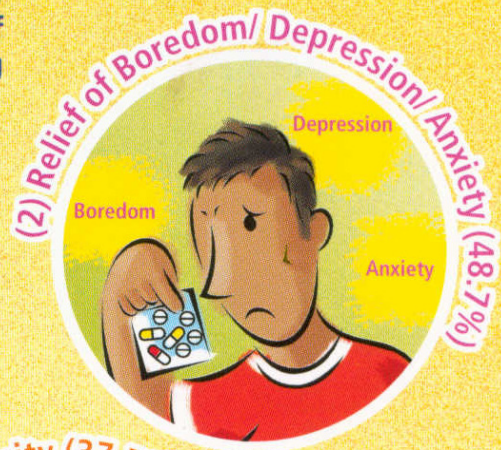
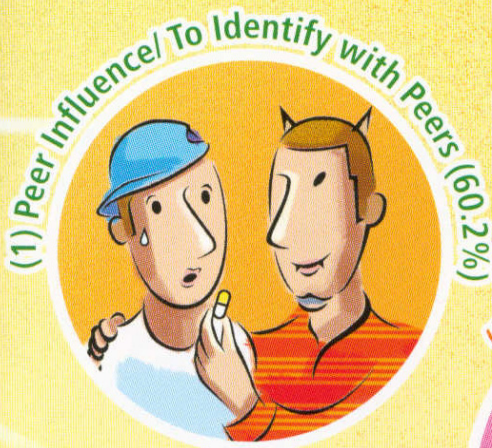


A Profile of Youth Drug Abuse in HK

The problem of drug abuse among youths in Hong Kong has escalated and here are some facts⁽¹⁾:

- The number of newly reported drug abusers under the age of 16 grew by 9.4% from 2007 to 2009.
- The number of female newly reported drug abusers under 21 grew by 28.8% from 2007 to 2009.
- In the first 9 months of 2010, 73.2% of girls under 21 surveyed reported that they first tried drugs before the age of 16, compared to 60.9% of boys.
- In the first 9 months of 2010, over 98.1% of youths under 21 reported using psychotropic substances, the most popular were Ketamine (80.1%), Ice (21.2%), and Cocaine (14.3%).
- In Hong Kong there are a number of adults who do not see the usage of Ketamine as a major problem for young people.

According to the Central Registry of Drug Abuse, in the first 9 months of 2010, the top 3 reasons why young people abuse drugs are:



⁽¹⁾ All data are from the Central Registry of Drug Abuse of the Narcotics Division, Security Bureau

How Do I Know If My Teen Is Taking Drugs?

Sometimes there are no clear indications of whether or not your teen is taking drugs. However, as parents, we can always look for signs which may be warnings:



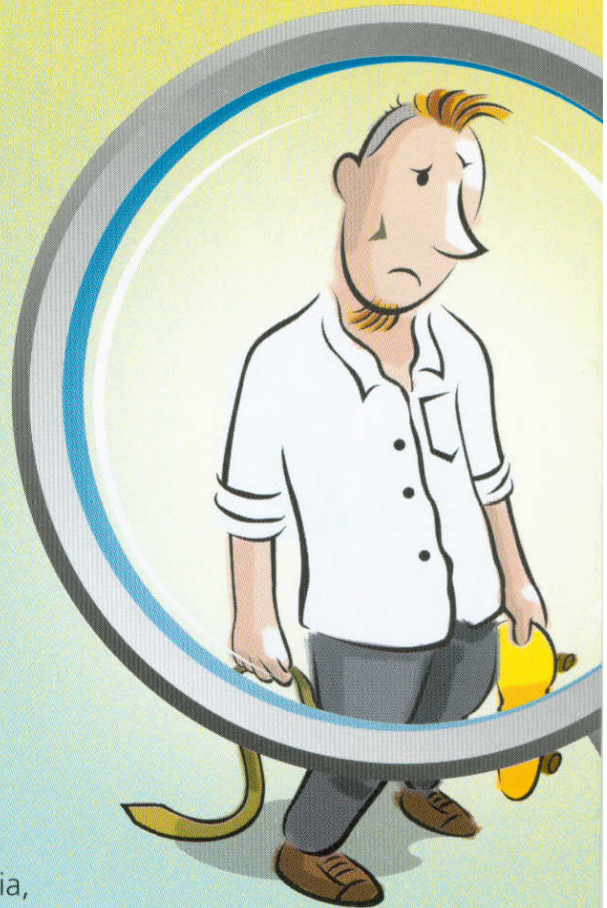
Physical

- Fatigue
- Repeated health complaints
- Frequent flu-like episodes, chest pains, "allergy" symptoms, chronic cough
- Red and glazed eyes
- Impaired ability to fight off common infections and fatigue
- Impaired short-term memory
- Change in health or feeling gloomy



Emotional

- Personality change
- Sudden mood changes
- Irritability, **anger**, hostility
- Irresponsible behavior
- Low self-esteem
- Poor judgment
- Feelings of loneliness, paranoia, or **depression**
- Apathy or general lack of interest
- Change in personal priorities





Family Relationships

- Decreased interest in the family and family activities
- Starting arguments
- Negative attitude
- Verbal (or physical) mistreatment of younger siblings
- Breaking rules
- Withdrawing from family
- Secretiveness
- Failure to provide specific answers to questions about activities
- Personal time that is unaccounted for
- Lying and dishonesty
- Unexplained disappearance of possessions in the home
- Increased money or poor justification of how money was spent



School Activities

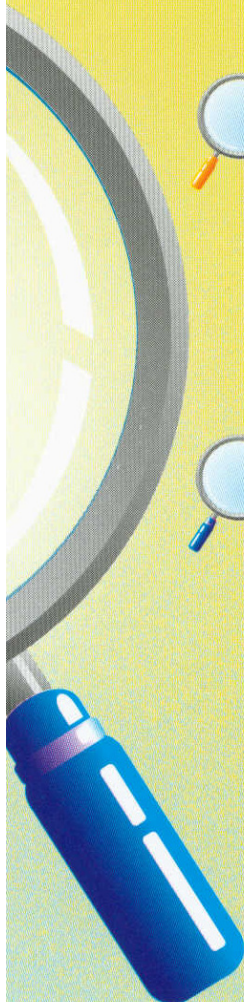
- Decreased interest
- Negative attitude
- Unexplained **drop in grades**
- Irregular school attendance
- Truancy
- Discipline problems
- Not returning home after school



Peer Relationships

- Dropping old friends
- New group of friends
- **New friends** who make poor decisions and are not interested in school or family activities
- Changes to a different style in dress and music
- Attending parties with no parental supervision

Some of the warning signs listed above can also be signs of other problems. Parents may recognise signs of trouble but should not be expected to make the diagnosis.



Talking To Your Teen About Drugs

Talking to your teen about drugs can be tricky. Parents can follow the **A-P-P-R-O-A-C-H** method to make the conversation go as smoothly as possible:

Attitudes that are positive will help to foster self-esteem in your teen. This will also help to increase their sense of self-worthiness and ability to refuse offer of drugs.

Pick a good time to bring up the topic, for example when you come across a programme on TV that talks about drug abuse, when it's just the two of you in the car together, or when you're both doing something relaxing.

Prepare to listen to things that may shock you and try to be non-judgmental, supportive and empathetic.

Resources such as Hong Kong Jockey Club DrugInfo Centre are available to help you. Don't hesitate to access those on the back page of this leaflet and seek professional help. You may also contact or e-mail us anonymously.

Open the lines of communication and maintain this by acting as an effective listener. This can be achieved by:

- Carefully identifying and clarifying the problem and exploring opportunities for providing assistance (such as seeking professional help and support available).
- Help your teen set realistic objectives to help them recover and make sure they stick to the plans. However, be prepared to be challenged.
- Develop action plans based on objectives by exploring different strategies.

Ask your teen how they feel about drugs and drug taking.

Communicate your expectations and be reasonable.

Honest about your feelings without projecting blame/guilt will help your teen understand what you are doing is for their own good.

What Else Can I Do?

While it is normally difficult for us to accept that our children maybe having a drug abuse problem, it is important to obtain **SUPPORT**, to **SUPPORT** ourselves and to **SUPPORT** our children in dealing with the issues. Here are some tips:

Services

There are various services available which will provide you with the support necessary in understanding and dealing with the problems. The details of support services are provided at the end of this leaflet.

Understanding

While it is always difficult to understand why this may have happened to you and people around you, getting insight into the nature of dependence and addictions can be helpful in assisting your children to overcome the lengthy recovery process.

Protect

It is important to protect ourselves and our family members. Seek help and support early to mitigate the potential dangers and health risks associated with drug abuse.

Positive

As parents, it is important for us to be positive in spite of the issues that we are facing. We must remember that many more families are facing the same kind of issues as we are, and they have overcome these difficulties. So we can too.

Opportunity

However unfortunate that our children have been exposed to drug abuse, this incident can also present an opportunity for us to educate our children or people around us. We should also use any opportunity to seek help from outsiders. We do not need to face this alone.

Responsibility

We all have responsibility in this situation. As parents, we need to be responsible for our children's safety and health. As children, they also need to face up to their responsibilities of the addiction in order to seek change and move forward.

Time-out

A situation like this can take over a family's life. We all need to take time-out so that we can have 'a normal family life' and 'recharge our batteries'.

Community Resources

EDUCATION/SUPPORT

KELY Support Group

Tel : 2521 6890

Community Drug Advisory Council

Tel : 2521 2880

Life Education Activity Programme

Tel : 2530 0018

Narcotics Division, Security Bureau

Tel : 186 186

Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre

Tel : 2867 2831

COUNSELLING

Counselling Centres for Psychotropic Substance Abusers (CCPSAs)

(1) TWGHs CROSS Centre – Central Western, Southern and Islands District Office

(Central & Western, Southern and Islands)

Tel : 2884 0282

(2) TWGHs CROSS Centre – Eastern and Wanchai District Office

(Eastern and Wanchai)

Tel : 2884 0282

(3) Evergreen Lutheran Centre

(Kwun Tong)

Tel : 2712 0097

(4) Rainbow Lutheran Centre

(Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung)

Tel : 2330 8004

(5) PS33 – Tsimshatsui Centre

(Kowloon City & Yau Tsim Mong)

Tel : 2368 8269

(6) PS33 – Shamshuipo Centre

(Sham Shui Po)

Tel : 3572 0673

(7) Hong Kong Children & Youth Services – Sane Centre

(Tsuen Wan & Kwai Tsing)

Tel : 2402 1010

(8) Caritas HUGS Centre

(Tuen Mun)

Tel : 2453 7030

(9) ELCHK, Enlighten Centre

(Yuen Long)

Tel : 2446 9226

(10) HKSKH Welfare Council – Neo-Horizon

(Shatin)

Tel : 8202 1313

(11) Cheer Lutheran Centre

(Tai Po & North)

Tel : 2660 0400

ReSource: The Counselling Centre

Tel : 2523 8979

St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service

Tel : 2525 7207/08

TREATMENT & REHABILITATION

Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers (SARDA)

Tel : 2838 2323

Operation Dawn

Tel : 2714 2434

Remar Association (Hong Kong)

Tel : 3193 4919

St Stephen's Society

Tel : 2720 0179