

Do your children know more about drugs than you do?



This booklet contains some basic facts about drugs and alcohol. It offers advice to help you talk to your child/ren about this subject.

Many parents are concerned about their child/ren becoming involved in drugs and/or alcohol. They feel they don't know enough about these to prevent their child from coming to harm.

Important Points...

- Most children and young people who do try drugs do not continue using them.
- Those who try illegal drugs do not usually suffer any long term harm to their health.
- Not all drugs are the same – some are more dangerous than others.
- Studies show that more young people experience problems caused by drinking too much than from drug use.
- 1 in 3 people have taken drugs.

However, there are serious health and legal risks associated with drug and alcohol use. All drugs carry risks.

Why do some young people want to use drugs?

Young people may be attracted to drugs for similar reasons as they are to alcohol. Although there are many reasons, a few are listed below:

- they enjoy or are curious about the effects
- their friends use them
- they are bored
- drugs and alcohol are easily available
- as part of growing up.

Before you discuss drugs and alcohol with your child, decide what you want to say. Think about the best way to get your message across. Try to put yourself in their shoes.

Discussions will be easier for both yourself and your child if you:

- show that your main concern is for their health, safety and wellbeing
- listen carefully to their views and feelings
- try to explain your feelings
- talk with them, rather than to or at them.

Discussing drugs and alcohol with your child/ren

There is no doubt that talking with young people about drugs and alcohol can be a challenge.

Parents may not be comfortable talking to their children about a subject they may feel they don't know enough about. Children may also be uncomfortable talking to their parents if they feel it will make their parents suspicious or if they think they may be punished if they admit to trying drugs.

What can you do?

- Make sure the information you and your child has is accurate.
- Discuss your views on drugs and alcohol with them, so that they know where you stand.

Try to make sure your child understands that you are there to help and support them.

What is taught in schools?

Drug education is taught in schools as part of the Science and Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) programmes. It aims to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding about drugs and alcohol, as well as encouraging them to explore attitudes towards drug and alcohol issues and develop skills to make informed choices. The programmes will include illegal drugs, alcohol, solvents and tobacco, as well as the use of over-the-counter prescription medicines.

The Law

"The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971" divides controlled drugs into three categories – classes "A", "B" and "C".

They are classified according to the harm they can do, both to the individual and to society at large, with penalties varying accordingly.

Drug	Maximum Penalties
Class A	Possession - 7 yrs in prison and an unlimited fine Possession with intent to supply - Life in prison and an unlimited fine
Class B	Possession - 5 yrs in prison and an unlimited fine Possession with intent to supply - 14 yrs in prison and an unlimited fine
Class C	Possession - 2 yrs in prison and an unlimited fine Possession with intent to supply - 14 yrs in prison and an unlimited fine

For further information and a guide to local services please visit the Norfolk Drug and Alcohol Partnership website: www.nordat.org.uk

To order additional copies of this leaflet please contact the Health Information Leaflet Service on 01603 268017 or go to www.heron.nhs.uk



If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the DAAT on 01603 677561 who will do their best to help.



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Alcohol



Booze, Bevy, Drink

- ▼ available in various liquid forms including alcopops and cocktails
- ▼ mixing different types of alcoholic drinks, making it difficult to know how much has been consumed

- ▼ exaggerates the mood (good or bad!)
- ▼ can reduce inhibitions and make people feel more sociable
- ▼ nausea and sickness at any point
- ▼ can make some people aggressive
- ▼ reaction times and decision making will be affected
- ▼ increased risk of being involved in violence, having an accident or being robbed

- ▼ addiction
- ▼ liver, heart and stomach damage
- ▼ risk of suffocation from inhaling own vomit when unconscious
- ▼ overdose is a particular risk if mixed with other drugs
- ▼ overuse can lead to alcohol poisoning

- ▼ can be sold to people over 18 yrs old in licensed premises
- ▼ people over 14 yrs of age can visit licensed premises when accompanied by someone 18 or over, but cannot consume alcohol
- ▼ 16 and 17 yr olds can have beer or cider with a meal in a bar or restaurant if bought for them by an adult who is with them
- ▼ it's illegal to give alcohol to a child under the age of 5

Cigarettes



Fags, Smokes, Ciggies

- ▼ dark leafy grass-like strands
- ▼ either pre-rolled filtered cigarettes
- ▼ or sold loose with cigarette papers that can be self-rolled

- ▼ a stimulant - users feel more alert
- ▼ calming effect - regular smokers claim it helps them to concentrate, relax, combat boredom and reduce anxiety
- ▼ first time users may feel dizzy or sick
- ▼ stops you feeling hungry, so you eat less

- ▼ addiction - without tobacco users can feel restless, irritable and depressed
- ▼ coughs, chest and breathing problems
- ▼ frequent minor illnesses eg colds
- ▼ lung cancer, heart disease, respiratory disorders, cancers of the mouth and throat

- ▼ any tobacco product can be sold to people 18 years and over

Drug

Other names

What it looks like & how it's taken

The effects

The health risks

Legal status

Drug	Amphetamines	Cannabis	Cocaine & Crack	Ecstasy	Gases, Glues & Aerosols	Heroin	Ketamine	LSD	Magic Mushrooms	Nitrites	Steroids	Tranquillisers
Other names	Speed, Whizz, Uppers, Amph, Billy, Sulphate	Marijuana, Draw, Dope, Blow, Weed, Puff, Shit, Hash, Ganja, Spliff, Wacky Backy Skunk (a stronger form of cannabis): white widow, purple haze	Coke, Charlie, Snow, C Crack (a smokeable form of Cocaine): Rock Wash, Stone	E, Hug drug, Burgers, Fantasy, Pills, Brownies, Mitsubishis, Rolex's, Dolphins Chemical name: MDMA (currently many tablets contain MDEA, MDA, MBDB)	Products such as lighter gas refills, aerosols containing products such as hairspray, deodorants and air fresheners, tins or tubes of glue, some paints, thinners and correcting fluids	Smack, Brown, Horse, Gear, Junk, H, Jack, Scag	K, Special K and Vitamin K, Super K, Green	Acid, Trips, Tabs, Blotters, Microdots, Dots	Mushies, Liberties, Magics, Liberty Cap	Poppers, Amyl Nitrite, Butyl Nitrite, Isobutyl Nitrite Product names include: Ram, Thrust, Rock Hard, Kix,TNT, Liquid Gold	'Roids Product names include: Sustanon, 250, Deca-Durabolin, Dianabol, Anavar, Stanozolol	Product names include: Valium, Ativan, Mogadon ('moggies'), Librium, Rohypnol, Normison Chemical names include: diazepam, lorazepam, nitrazepam, chlordiaze-poxide, flunitrazepam, temazepam ('mazzies')
What it looks like & how it's taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grey or white powder that is snorted, swallowed, smoked, injected or dissolved in a drink tablets which are swallowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a solid, dark lump known as 'resin' leaves, stalks and seeds called 'grass' a sticky, dark oil can be rolled (usually with tobacco) in a spliff or joint, smoked on its own in a special pipe or cooked and eaten in food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cocaine: white powder that is snorted up the nose, sometimes dissolved and injected crack: small raisin-sized crystals which are smoked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tablets of different shapes, size and colour (but often white) which are swallowed increasingly common in powder form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sniffed or breathed into the lungs from a cloth, sleeve or plastic bag gas products are sometimes squirted directly into the back of the throat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> brownish-white powder which is smoked, snorted or dissolved and injected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white crystalline powder tablets or clear liquid vials snorted up the nose, injected or swallowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/4 inch squares of paper, often with a picture on one side, which are swallowed. microdots and dots are tiny tablets can also be a liquid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small skinny mushrooms, usually brown these mushrooms are eaten raw, dried, cooked in food, or stewed into a tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear or straw-coloured liquid in a small bottle vapour which is breathed in through the mouth or nose from a small bottle or tube 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tablets which are swallowed liquids which are injected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tablets or capsules that are swallowed (or sometimes injected)
The effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> excitement – the mind races and users feel confident and energetic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> users feel relaxed and talkative cooking the drug then eating it makes the effects more intense and harder to control may bring on a craving for food (the "munchies") users may hallucinate strong cannabis (skunk) may increase the effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sense of wellbeing, alertness, confidence cocaine effects last roughly 30 minutes users are often left craving more crack has the same effects as cocaine, but a more intense and shorter 'high' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> users feel alert and in tune with their surroundings sound, colour and emotions seem much more intense users may dance for hours the effects last from 3 to 6 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effects feel similar to being very drunk users feel thick-headed, dizzy, giggly and dreamy users may hallucinate effects don't last very long, but users can remain intoxicated all day by repeating the dose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small doses give the user a sense of warmth and wellbeing larger doses can make them drowsy and relaxed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> users report feeling 'out of body' and spiritual experiences feelings of increased wellbeing a loss of control, difficulty moving and speaking can hallucinate - trip lasts up to an hour ketamine is an anaesthetic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effects are known as a 'trip' and can last for 8 to 12 hours users will experience their surroundings in a very different way sense of movement and time may speed up or slow down objects, colours and sounds may be distorted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> similar effects to LSD, but the trip is often milder and shorter (about 4 hours) brief but intense 'head-rush' flushed face and neck effects fade after 2 to 5 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> users claim the drug makes them feel more aggressive and able to train harder with exercise, can help build up muscle helps users recover from strenuous exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calm users and slow them down mentally relieve tension and anxiety high doses can make users drowsy and forgetful 	
The health risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> while on the drug, some users become tense and anxious leaves users feeling tired and depressed for one or two days and sometimes longer high doses repeated over a few days may cause panic and hallucinations long term use puts a strain on the heart heavy, long term use can lead to mental illness sharing injecting equipment puts users at risk of infections like Hepatitis B or C and HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> smoking it with tobacco may lead to users becoming hooked on cigarettes reduced ability to learn and concentrate may leave people tired and lacking energy users may lack motivation and feel apathetic may make users paranoid and anxious, depending on their mood and situation smoking joints over a long period of time can lead to breathing disorders, including lung cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cocaine and crack are addictive cocaine effects leave users feeling tired and depressed for one or two days and sometimes longer can cause chest pain and heart problems that can be fatal heavy use can cause convulsions a habit can be expensive and hard to control crack and cocaine carry the same risks, but, as the high can be so intense, crack use is even more difficult to control sharing injecting equipment puts users at risk of infections like Hepatitis B or C and HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can leave users feeling tired and depressed for days risk of overheating and dehydration if users dance energetically without taking breaks or drinking enough fluids (users should sip about a pint of non-alcoholic fluid such as fruit juice, sports drinks or water every hour) use has been linked to liver and kidney problems some experts are concerned that use of ecstasy can lead to brain damage causing depression in later life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nausea, vomiting, blackouts and heart problems that can be fatal squirting gas products down the throat may cause the body to produce fluid that floods the lungs and this can cause instant death risk of suffocation if the substance is inhaled from a plastic bag over the head accidents can happen when the user is high because their senses are affected long term abuse of glue can damage the brain, liver and kidneys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> heroin is addictive (even when smoked) users who form a habit may end up taking the drug just to feel normal excessive amounts can result in overdose, coma and in some cases death risk of death from inhaling vomit, as heroin stops the body's cough reflex injecting can damage veins sharing injecting equipment puts users at risk of infections like Hepatitis B or C and HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> possibility of accidental injuries mental health problems, anxiety, panic attacks, depression, sleeplessness and suicide compulsive use injecting can cause damage to veins leading to abscesses and thrombosis sharing injecting equipment puts users at risk of infections like Hepatitis B or C and HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> once a trip starts it cannot be stopped users may have a 'bad trip', which can be terrifying 'flashbacks' may be experienced where parts of a trip are relived some time after the event can complicate mental health problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can cause stomach pains, sickness and diarrhoea eating the wrong kind of mushroom can cause serious illness and even fatal poisoning can complicate mental health problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> headache, feeling faint and sick regular use can cause skin problems around the mouth and nose dangerous for people with anaemia, glaucoma and breathing or heart problems if spilled, can burn the skin may be fatal if swallowed mixing Viagra with nitrites may increase the risk of heart problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can stop young people growing properly risks for men include: erection problems, breast growth, shrinking testicles, sterility, acne, increased chance of liver failure and heart attack risks for women include: growth of facial hair, deepening voice, shrinking breasts, possible miscarriage and stillbirth sharing injecting equipment puts users at risk of infections like Hepatitis B or C and HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some tranquillisers are addictive extremely dangerous if mixed with alcohol some tranquillisers cause a temporary loss of short term memory users trying to quit may suffer panic attacks it is very dangerous to inject tranquillisers sharing injecting equipment puts users at risk of infections like Hepatitis B or C and HIV/AIDS
Legal status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class B class A if prepared for injection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class B All young people under 18 are likely to be arrested if found in possession. For persons 18 and over, there are 3 possible responses - 1. Cannabis Warning (warning by an Officer at street level) 2. Penalty Notice for Disorder (fixed penalty ticket for £80 at street level) 3. Arrest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class A other drugs similar to ecstasy are also illegal and class A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is illegal for shopkeepers to sell gas lighter refills to anyone under 18, and it is illegal to sell gases, glues and aerosols to under - 18's, or to people acting for them, if they suspect the product is intended for misuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class C 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> class A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> amyl nitrate is a prescription-only medicine possession is not illegal, but supply can be an offence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can only be sold lawfully by a pharmacist to someone with a doctor's prescription supply is illegal and class C penalties apply class C penalties may apply even if you give someone the drugs and don't ask for money in return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> while possession is not illegal without a prescription (except tamazepam or flunitrazepam), supply is against the law and class C penalties apply

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