



# PREVENTIVE DRUG EDUCATION TOOLKIT

The Essentials to Help You  
Champion A Drug-Free Singapore



# HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Singapore's proximity to the world's largest drug-producing region continues to pose a significant threat to our society. The harms of drugs are extensive and real – they don't just affect your mind and body, but also the people around you. Livelihoods are lost, relationships are destroyed, and those who grow up in a home environment of a drug abuser suffer.

Partners like yourselves are essential in engaging and safeguarding our community against the harms of drugs.

This toolkit, comprising a handbook, a set of frequently asked questions and a deck of presentation slides, is designed to **help you share within your organisation and spheres of influence what we as a community can do to help Singapore remain drug-free.**

## The essentials:

- Topic 1:** Why Singapore is Tough on Drugs
- Topic 2:** The Drug Situation in Singapore
- Topic 3:** The Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) 1973
- Topic 4:** What if Singapore Legalises Drugs?
- Topic 5:** Tell-tale Signs of Drug Abuse and How to Help
- Topic 6:** Pathways of Recovery for Drug Abusers
- Annex A:** Commonly Abused Drugs and Their Effects
- Annex B:** Useful Resources
- Annex C:** Helplines

Brought to you by

Inter-Ministry Committee  
on Drug Prevention for Youths



In May 2023, the Inter-Ministry Committee (IMC) on Drug Prevention for Youths was set up, as a Whole-of-Government response to the drug problem among youths. Through strengthening drug prevention efforts on youths, parents and members of public, the IMC aims to engage and empower key stakeholders as amplifiers of the #DrugFreeSG message.

# WHY SINGAPORE IS TOUGH ON DRUGS

Singapore aims to create a drug-free society where our people can work, live and play safely.

Our strict laws ensure harmful drugs are kept out of the easy reach of most people, especially youths, while enforcement efforts are focused on tackling drug supply and dismantling syndicates. Our approach may be seen as tough, but it places the welfare of the abuser and society at the centre of our policies.

As an open and well-connected country, Singapore is not immune to external influence and the worldwide movement for the legalisation and decriminalisation of cannabis. Singaporeans may grow to be more accepting of drugs as a lifestyle choice.

But it is not just a personal choice – drug abuse bears repercussions at both an individual and societal standpoint.

It is thus important to reinforce the national consensus of zero tolerance towards drugs. This is why we need your help to spread the anti-drug message in your circles of influence and get our community to stay resilient against drug abuse!



**“Everything we do, even the slightest thing we do, can have a ripple effect and repercussions that emanate. If you throw a pebble into the water on one side of the ocean, it can create a tidal wave on the other side.”**

**– Victor Webster**

# Drugs don't just harm us, but the people around us as well



Man who killed his mother, grandmother after taking LSD to be confined indefinitely<sup>1</sup>



Buangkok swordsman took some unknown pills before leaving home with sword<sup>2</sup>



Man who held woman at knifepoint in Yishun tests positive for drugs, charged & remanded at IMH<sup>3</sup>



Woman who stabbed herself in Tampines police stand-off was on drugs, get 6 months' jail<sup>4</sup>



Baby found in squalid flat during recent drug bust; mother was abusing Ice near him<sup>5</sup>



'A heart-wrenching scene': Heavily pregnant woman climbs out window of 11th floor flat to escape CNB<sup>6</sup>

# THE DRUG SITUATION IN SINGAPORE

While the local drug situation remains under control, we must not take this for granted. The increasing cannabis consumption is one worrying trend, particularly among abusers below the age of 30. Many, particularly youths, still misperceive cannabis as less harmful and addictive than other substances, despite its proven harms.



**Back in the 19th century, Singapore had faced a severe opium problem. What do you think Singapore would be like now if we had failed to tackle the opium problem?**



**Do you think drug abuse affects just the individual?**

**What about their family and the wider community?**

**How would this affect our social, economical and political landscape?**

**Scan to visualise what our future could possibly be, if we don't stand firm on our zero-tolerance stance.**



## DID YOU KNOW?

1



**Stress, curiosity and external influence** are the reasons commonly cited by youths for taking drugs.

2



Youths today tend to have a **more permissive attitude** towards drugs, largely influenced by the internet and social media.

3



There is widespread misinformation on drugs on the internet, which downplays or dismisses the harms of drugs, especially cannabis.

4



Youths may be more willing to experiment with cannabis, which is often **misperceived as a “soft and cool” drug.**

“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

How can you help our youths work together towards a drug-free Singapore?



# MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT (MDA) 1973

Under the MDA 1973, it is an OFFENCE to:

1

## Traffick controlled drugs

*Depending on the drug class and quantity, the penalty ranges from imprisonment and caning to the mandatory death penalty*

2

## Possess and consume controlled drugs

*Offenders may be liable for imprisonment of up to 10 years, or a fine not exceeding \$20,000, or both*

3

## Consume controlled drugs outside of Singapore

LAW

4

## Possess drug paraphernalia

5

## Allow and facilitate drug activities

We need you to help keep Singapore drug-free, so we can protect ourselves and our loved ones from the harms of drug abuse.

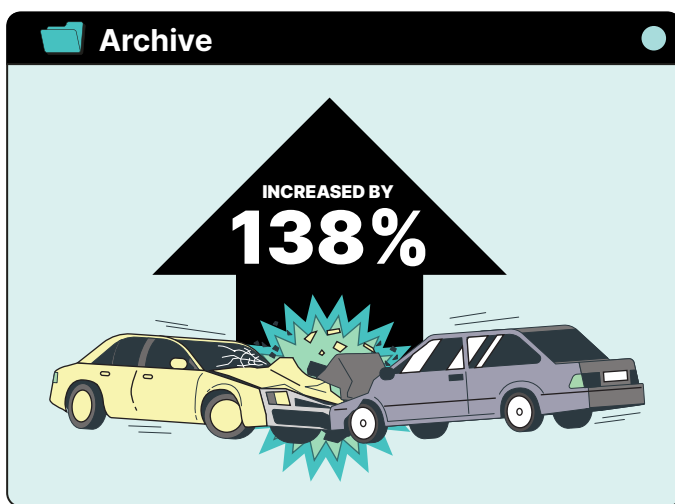


Scan to find out more on Singapore's drug laws.

# WHAT IF SINGAPORE LEGALISES DRUGS?

The global shift in attitudes toward drugs has led to the liberalisation of drug policies in some countries. Supporters of drug legalisation claim that it would eradicate the illegal drug market, free up the criminal justice system and generate more revenue. However, this has proven unsuccessful.

On the contrary, drug legalisation has resulted in increased drug abuse with higher frequency and substance potency. It also has widespread impacts on public health, the rule of law and general social harm.



## Potential Risks of Legalised Drug Abuse

The ASEAN Journal of Psychiatry shared that acute cannabis use could increase the risk of fatal accidents by two to seven-fold.<sup>7</sup> In Colorado, it was noted that after cannabis was legalised for recreational use in 2013, traffic deaths where drivers were tested positive for cannabis increased by 138%.<sup>8</sup>



When the measure to eliminate all criminal charges for possession of small amounts of drugs was passed in Oregon in 2020, findings showed a dramatic increase in drug addiction and overdose rates, increased homelessness and other crimes.<sup>9</sup>

There were reports of teenagers in Thailand hallucinating and harming themselves after smoking cannabis, and a 3-year-old girl who ate part of a cookie containing cannabis had to be rushed to hospital.<sup>10</sup>





# TELL-TALE SIGNS OF DRUG ABUSE AND HOW TO HELP

There are ways to look out for the people around you and guide them onto leading a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

**R.I.S.E** up and make a difference by playing a positive role in someone else's life!



## Teach Refusal Skills

Empowerment begins with making the right choice and saying "no" to drugs.

- Avoid situations where you might be influenced or pressured to try drugs
- Be bold and firm – say "no" when you are offered drugs
- Use humour to lighten the tension or change the subject
- If all else fails, walking away is the best way to protect yourself

## Look Out for Indicators

Here are some indicators that someone you know may need help.



Hangs around with a different group of friends



Sudden drop in performance grades



Exhibits extreme mood swings



Displays poor body coordination



Has bloodshot/sunken eyes



Skips school/work regularly

You may feel uncertain about notifying the authorities. But remember, you play an important role in saving the people around you from falling deeper into the dangers of drugs.

What are the possible outcomes if you choose to turn a blind eye to your loved ones abusing drugs?



# Starters

Use teachable moments like news stories to highlight the harms of drugs. Stress is a potential reason for drug abuse, so it is important to start a conversation about managing our habits and coping styles healthily.

## 1 Use well-known celebrities/news cases

- “Do you have any favourite actors or singers?”
- “Some celebrities have talked about their struggles with drug abuse. Why do you think they were addicted to taking drugs?”



## 2 Share personal encounters

- “Do you have any friends who think lightly of drugs? If so, how do they show it?”

## 3 Ask about healthy coping styles

- “What do you do when you feel stressed?”  
“Which copying style do you resonate with?”
  - a. **Problem-focused:** addressing issues head-on, seeking practical advice and solutions
  - b. **Emotion-focused:** seeking emotional support from others
  - c. **Disengagement:** give up, actively avoid the problem
- “What are some steps you can take when dealing with stress, to avoid extreme disengagement styles, which can lead to unhealthy habits like substance abuse?”

# Engage Meaningfully

Build positive habits, spend quality time together and always communicate in an open, non-judgemental manner. Here are some steps you can take.

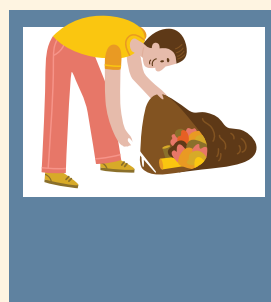


**Listen to them** when they feel stressed and teach them coping skills. Suggest healthy group activities to widen their social circle.

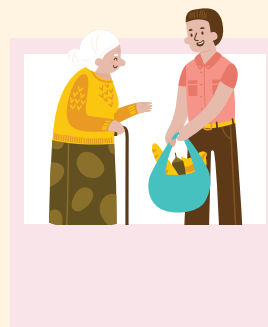
**Equip them** with the skills to refuse drug offers. This may include decision-making skills to assess the consequences of the different opinions they will face, as well as creative thinking and problem-solving skills.



**Find teachable moments** to emphasise that substance abuse is not the right way to fit in.



**Involve them in** work that requires higher responsibility so that they are gainfully occupied and feel valued.



**Develop their self-awareness** so that they can recognise their own strengths and weaknesses. Give praise where it is due.

Teach one to be discerning and critical thinkers when encountering dubious sources or information using the “**S.U.R.E**” model

- **Source:** Look at its origins. Is the information credible?
- **Understand:** Look for facts, not opinions.
- **Research:** Dig deeper and compare with other sources.
- **Evaluate:** Look at different angles before making a fair judgement.



## How to Help?

### If you...

- Suspect someone is involved in drug activities.
- See someone abusing drugs.
- Come across suspected drug items or drug utensils.

### You should...

- Avoid interacting with that individual.
- Refrain from handling the items any further.
- Contact CNB at 1800-325-6666. In case of any immediate danger, call the Police.



### What happens if you report a family/friend?

Upon reporting any drug-related information, you will be asked to provide some details so that CNB officers can assess the case. CNB will then make an informed assessment and take early intervention and appropriate measures to assist you.

### What happens after your family/friend is arrested?

The person will be brought back to CNB or the police station for investigation and will be dealt with in accordance with the law. If suspected to be a drug abuser, he/she will be subjected to an Instant Urine Test (IUT) or hair test and interview by a CNB officer. Based on their investigation results and risk profile, CNB will recommend the appropriate treatment and rehabilitation option to help the abuser accordingly.

Are you ready to R.I.S.E up to help someone in need to lead a positive, drug-free life?

# PATHWAYS OF RECOVERY

## FOR DRUG ABUSERS

Rehabilitation and aftercare form one of Singapore's multi-pronged drug control strategies to help drug abusers return to a drug-free life and reintegrate into our society.

Our criminal justice system focuses on youth rehabilitation. We want to intervene early and effectively, so that youth abusers do not ruin the rest of their lives.



### Enhanced Direct Supervision Order (EDSO)

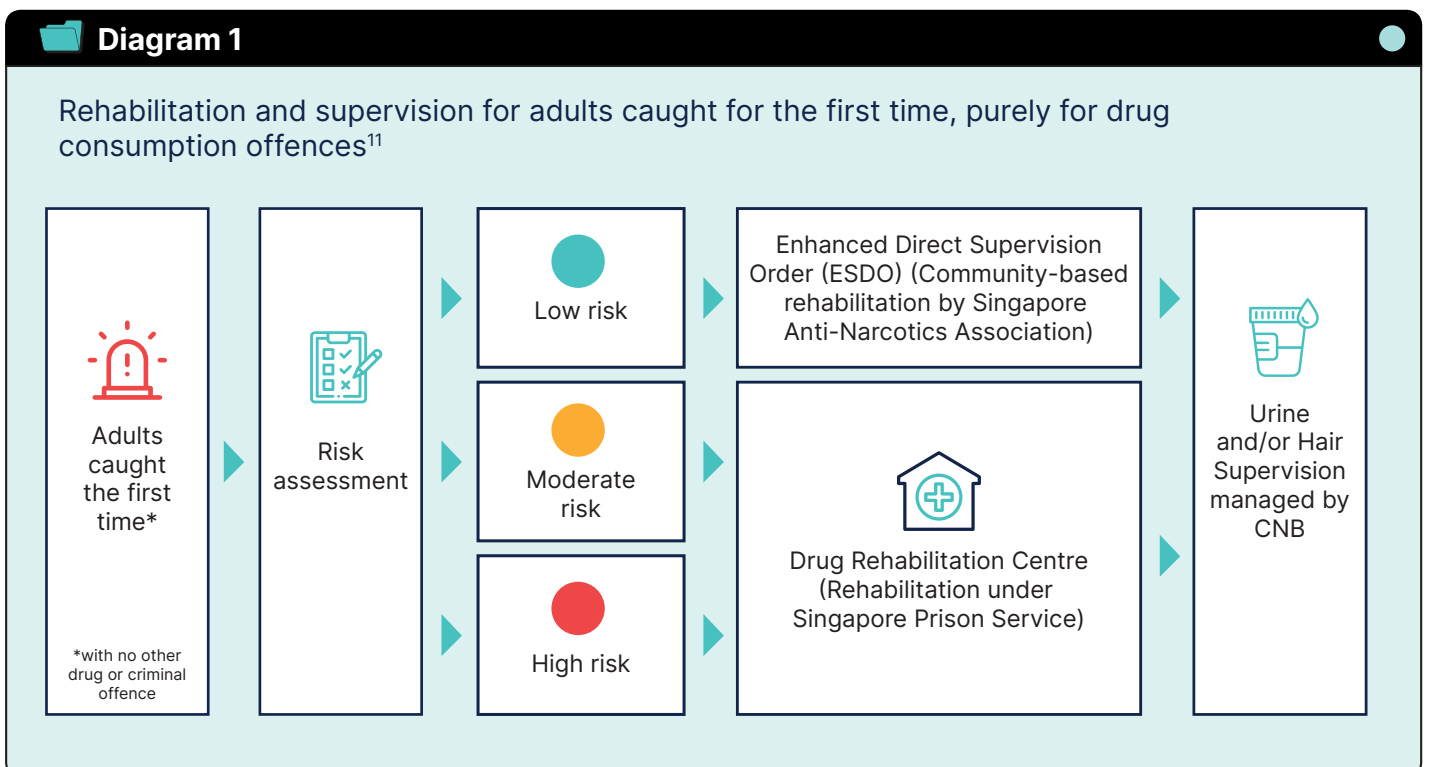
For first-time drug abusers who are assessed to have low-risk of reoffending, and given a non-custodial supervision order with compulsory counselling.

### Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC), followed by a 5-year Supervision Order

For drug abusers who are assessed to be at moderate or high-risk.

### Youth Enhanced Supervision (YES) Scheme

For low-risk youth offenders below the age of 21.



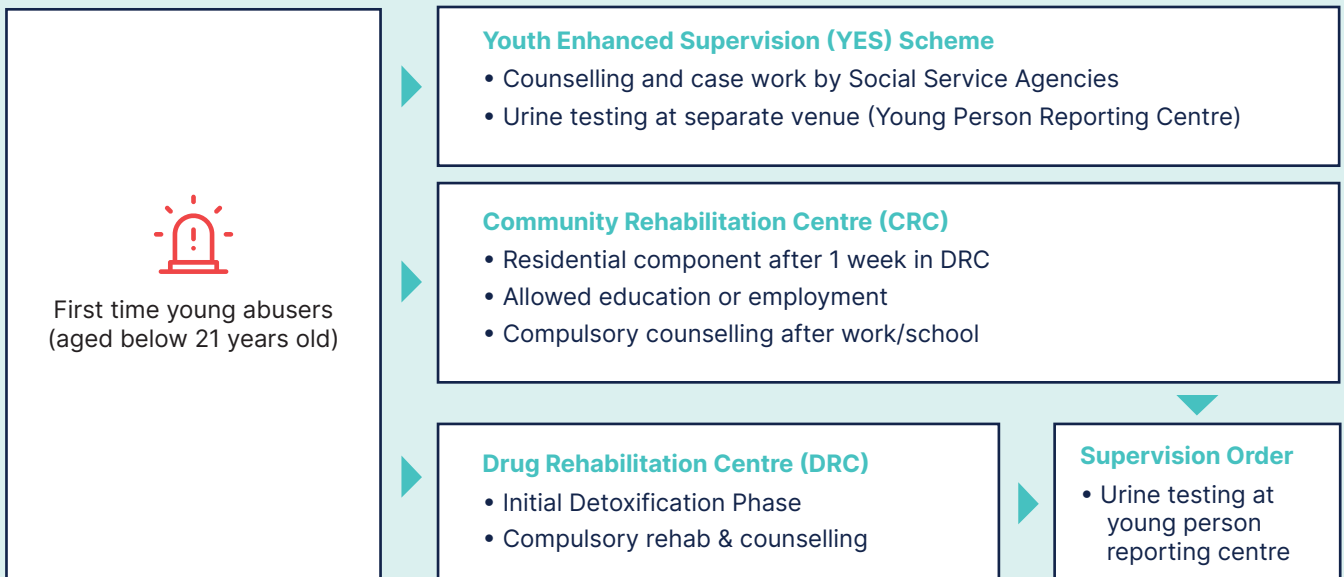
## Diagram 2

### Rehabilitation and supervision for adults caught multiple times for drug consumption offences



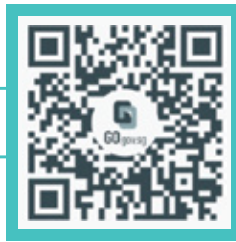
## Diagram 3

### Programme for first time young abusers



# Annex A - Commonly Abused Drugs and Their Effects

For more information, please scan here.

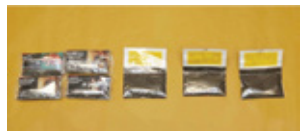


**Methamphetamine** (a.k.a 'Ice', Glass, Crystal, Speed, 'Ya Ba', 'Quartz', 'Hiropon', Shabu and Syabu)

- Usually a colourless and odourless crystal that resembles glass fragments or shiny white "rocks".
- Also comes in tablet form.

**Harmful Effects**

- Increased heart rate and body temperature.
- Fits, stroke and death.
- Damage to heart and nerves.
- Liver and kidney diseases.
- Abnormal behaviour with mood swings, confusion, delusion and hallucination.
- Anxiety and irritability.



**New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)** (a.k.a Spice, K2, Bath Salts, Kronic, and Bromo-Dragonfly)

- Substances that mimic the effects of controlled drugs.
- Have unknown, dangerous toxicology effects and are as addictive and harmful as controlled drugs.



Severe intoxication



Severe toxic reaction leading to death



Paranoia



Hallucinations



Adverse cardiovascular problems



Renal failure



**Cannabis** (a.k.a Marijuana, Pok, Grass, Joints, Ganja, Hashish and Weed)

- Resembles dried herbs or tea leaves. Can also be hidden in food products, like brownies or candies.
- Contains a chemical, tetrahydrocannabinol, that affects one's mood and the way one sees and hears things.

## BRAIN CHANGES IN CHILDREN EXPOSED TO CANNABIS

- Lower IQ
- Cognitive performance decline in adulthood



## DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR MENTAL CONDITIONS



SCHIZOPHRENIA



DEPRESSION



BIPOLAR DISORDER

## CANNABIS IS ADDICTIVE

Among daily abusers,

**50%**

are going to get addicted







Cannabis use has **adverse impact on public health**. Effects of short-term use include intoxication and panic attacks, while long-term use is associated with dependence, stroke and increased risk of cancer.



Cannabinoids should only be approved for medical use on the basis of **scientific evidence**.



Clinical trials suggest that while some cannabinoids may relieve the symptoms of certain illnesses, they **do not address the underlying diseases**.



Attempts to market and promote the medical use of cannabis products as “herbal medicines” are **inconsistent with the classification of cannabis** and its derivatives under the 1961 and 1971 United Nation International Drug Control Conventions.

Source: Annual Report 2018, International Narcotics Control Board



**Heroin** (a.k.a White, Smack, Junk, Powder, Putih, Medicine, Ubat)

- Comes in granular, powder or solution form.
- Whitish or brownish in colour.

#### **Harmful Effects**

- Lowered heart rate and respiration.
- Damage to lungs, kidneys and liver.
- Dull feeling and tiredness.
- Difficulty in concentrating.
- Constipation.



**'Ecstasy'** (a.k.a XTC)

#### **Harmful Effects**

- Increased heart rate and blood pressure.
- Jaw clenching, teeth grinding and uncontrollable shaking.
- Kidney, liver and brain damage.
- Long term memory loss.
- Chills, sweating and vomiting.
- Inability to think, see and co-ordinate properly.
- Hallucination.



**Lysergide (LSD)** (a.k.a Acid, Trips, Blotters, Tabs, Stamp, Black Sesame, Seed, Micro, Micro Dot)

- A hallucinogen, often sold on blotting paper with a colourful design.

#### **Harmful Effects**

- Increased heart rate, breathing and body temperature.
- Numbness.
- Distorted sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste.
- Loss of control of thoughts.
- Severe panic, confusion, hallucination and paranoia (irrational fear or suspicion).



# Annex B - Useful Resources

Get drug-related information here



**CNB website**

Watch educational videos here



**CNB.DrugFreeSG  
YouTube Channel**



**#TheStruggle playlist,  
CNB.DrugFreeSG  
YouTube Channel**

Learn tips here (for parents, counsellors, educators and NS commanders)



**Smart Parenting  
Articles**



**PDE Toolkits**



**PDE Message  
Cards**




**Information Booklet  
On Cannabis**



**Information Booklet  
On New Psychoactive  
Substances (NPS)**

# Annex C - Helplines

Agency	For who?
<p><b>Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB)</b></p> <p> 1800-325-6666</p>	<p>Those who wish to report cases of suspected drug abuse.</p>
<p><b>Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA)</b></p> <p><a href="https://talk2sana.com/tools-for-change/live-chat/">https://talk2sana.com/tools-for-change/live-chat/</a></p> <p>6pm to 9:30pm (Mon to Fri)</p>	<p>Those who wish to speak to para-counsellors about any drug-related issue that you or someone close to you might be facing.</p>

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**For a Drug-Free Singapore**

