

# Substance Abuse

JUNE NEWSLETTER - HEALTH AND MIND CLUB

## What is substance abuse?

Substance abuse in simple terms can be defined as the use of illegal drugs /vape /alcohol /prescription for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in excessive amounts.



## Causes of Teens Using Drugs

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, these are the five main reasons why teens and adolescents experiment with drugs and alcohol:

**1**

To fit in  
(peer pressure, social acceptance)

**2**

To feel good  
(activate pleasure pathways in the brain)

**3**

To feel better  
(stress, mental health, physical pain)

**4**

To do better (enhance athletic or academic performance)

**5**

To experiment  
(thrill-seeking, new experiences)

# Signs of Drug Abuse

Recognizing the warning signs of addiction to a substance is crucial for early intervention and treatment. Some behavioral signs are:

**1** Periods of high energy followed by extended periods of sleep 

**2** Neglected Responsibilities: This can include skipping work or school, ignoring family obligations, or neglecting personal hygiene.

**3** Social Isolation: Withdrawal from social activities they once enjoyed and spend an excessive amount of time alone.

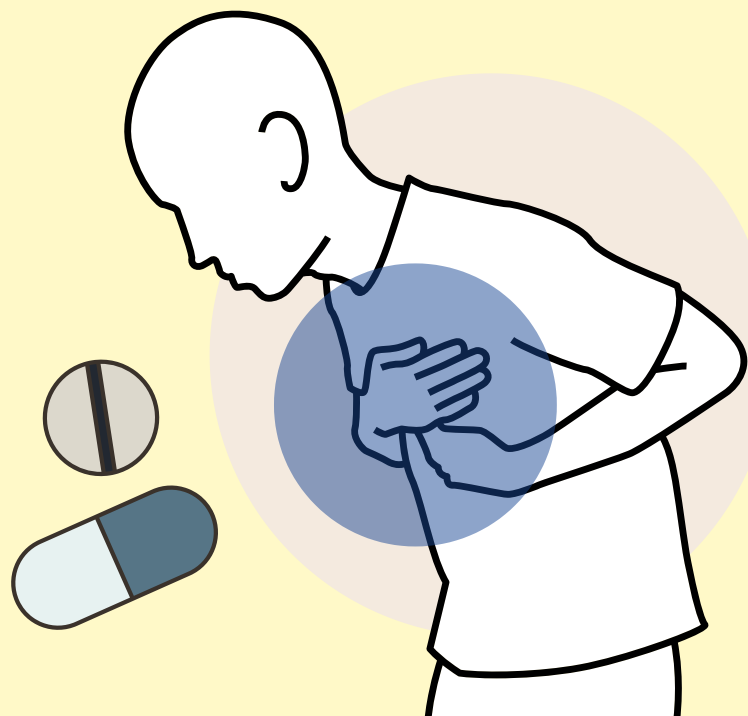
**4** Mood Swings: Sudden and extreme changes in mood or behavior.

**Some physical signs may include:**

- Frequent illness
- Slurred or rapid speech
- Nosebleeds or runny nose
- Unexpected weight loss
- Skin bruising
- Vomiting

## World drug day

The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World Drug Day, is marked on 26 June every year to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving a world free of drug abuse.





# Risks of Drug Use

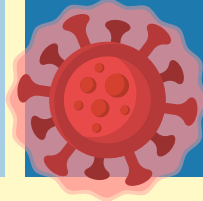
## Effects on the Brain

Studies have indicated that substance use can have a negative impact on a teen's learning capacity, psychomotor skills, and short-term memory.



## Effects on The Body

It raises the danger of disease and accidents.



## Effects on Social Life

Addicts frequently stop participating in school clubs, athletics, and extracurricular activities.



## Effects on Academics

Lower grades, poor attendance, and an increased likelihood of dropout before graduation are all associated with teen substance abuse.



## Why has the use of substances among adolescents increased over the past few years?

- With at least 1-in-8 teenagers abusing an illicit substance in the last year, youth drug abuse has become a high-profile public health concern. There are several reasons behind this alarming trend.
- The increased availability of drugs and alcohol over the years: Adolescents nowadays can easily access drugs and alcohol from their friends, acquaintances, and even from their own homes.
- Increasing stressors: Many young people turn to drugs or alcohol as a way to cope with their emotional struggles.
- The glamorized version of substance abuse shown in media targeting Gen-Z: Teens are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of what they see on social media and the normalization of substance and alcohol abuse by celebrities and popular culture can contribute to making them wrongly believe that such behaviors are appropriate.

# Peer Pressure In Substance Abuse.

Peer pressure is a significant factor that contributes to substance use among teenagers. Adolescents feel the need to fit in and be accepted by their peers more than any other age group. They may start using drugs or alcohol to impress their friends or to feel more confident in social situations.

Often, peers may encourage such a thing as using substance and you may begin to believe that using substance is the only possible way to redeem yourself in their eyes. You feel obligated to use a drug or to drink in the presence of those that encourage it, with a continuing cycle, it is easy to develop an addiction.

**Learning how to say NO, even to your friends, is an important skill, the following strategies can help you with it:**

- Plan and practice what you will say if you are pressured to do something you do not want to do.
- Communicate with your parents; Arrange a "bail-out" code phrase you can use with your parents without losing face with your peers.
- Know yourself: When faced with peer pressure to engage in risky behaviors, such as using drugs, it is important to remember your values.
- Choose the right friends: Peer influence during adolescence is strong, so it is important to choose friends wisely. As noted previously, peer pressure can be positive, so having the right group of friends can help you make good choices.
- Nurture self-esteem A teen with strong self-esteem can make decisions and follow through on them, despite what his or her friends say.



# May highlights

**03.05.23**

***Hope; A musical concert***

The concert included a range of musical performances highlighting the need for individuals and communities to work together to build hope.



**08.05.23**

***Sakura concert***

The songs implied that one should take good care of their mental health and wellbeing during hard times and look forward to a fresh start.



**09.05.23**

***Break the Bias session 1***

The session enabled students to go into the comprehensive and layered details of the popular Japanese philosophy; ikigai.



**11.05.23**

***Unleash your Senses***

Unleash Your Senses was held to create a supportive environment where participants could freely express themselves through movement and art.



**16.05.23**

***Scavenger Hunt***

The hunt highlighted the importance of the green ribbon and mental health awareness week.



**17.05.23**

**Rise Up**

The choreopoem's aim was to show, rather than tell, the audience that it is important to 'rise up' and speak out against the stigma towards anxiety.



**25.05.23**

**Wellbeing Trivia Quiz and wellbeing stall**

The club facilitated open discussion in the form of a mental health quiz which included insightful content that allowed participants to raise knowledge of several topics related to mental health. The stall also provided a highly interactive way to spread awareness about mental health.



# Coming Up

Research writing competition for students of grades 9 to 12 will be held between 3rd July-31st July, check urgent info for more information!

## Credits

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