



DANGEROUS DRUGS BOARD (DDB)

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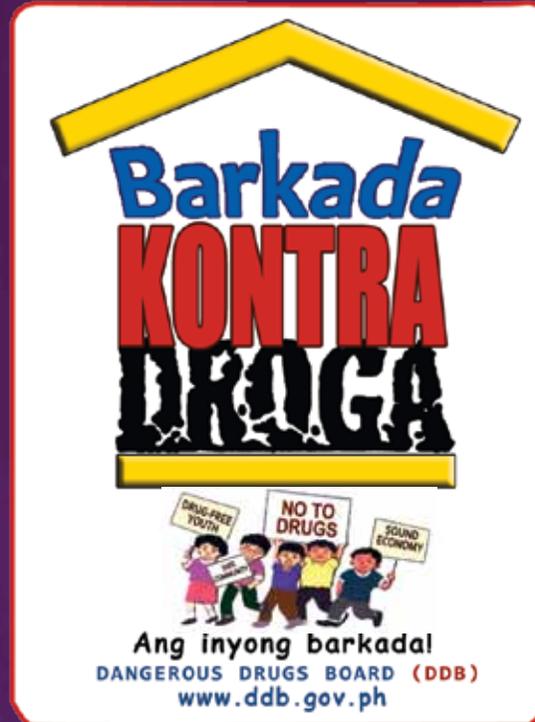
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SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON



DRUG ABUSE



WHAT IS A DRUG?

A drug is a chemical substance that brings about physical, emotional, or behavioral change in a person taking it.

WHEN ARE DRUGS HARMFUL?

Any drug may be harmful when taken in excess. Some drugs can also be harmful if taken in dangerous combinations or by hypersensitive (allergic) person in ordinary or even small amounts.

ARE PRODUCTS OTHER THAN DRUGS EVER ABUSED?

Yes, substances like glue, paint thinners, gasoline, and other volatile (breathable) solvents contain a variety of dangerous chemicals. They should be sold and used with caution.

WHAT IS DRUG ABUSE?

Drug abuse is the use of any chemical substance, licit or illicit, which results in the individual's physical, mental, or social impairment.

It may refer to any of the following practices:

- Using without benefit or prescription useful drugs which have the capacity to alter the mood or behavior.
- Using drugs and substances for a purpose different from the one from which the drug has been prescribed.
- Using drugs and substances having no legitimate medical application for purposes other than research

WHY DO PEOPLE TURN TO DRUGS?

There are various reasons – ranging from the reason that “medicines” can solve problems, to widespread access to various drugs, to “peer pressure” to the notion that drugs give enjoyment to users and in the context that is used as a substitute to alcohol.

WHAT DRUGS ARE COMMONLY ABUSED?

Drugs that are commonly abused depending on their pharmacological effects may be classified into:

- a) Stimulants - drugs which increase alertness and physical disposition. Examples: amphetamine, cocaine, caffeine and nicotine.

- b) Hallucinogens (also called psychedelics) - drugs which affect sensation, thinking, self-awareness, and emotion. Changes in time and space perception, delusions and hallucinations that may be mild or overwhelming, depending on dose and quality of the drug. Examples: LSD, mescaline and marijuana.
- c) Sedatives - drugs which may reduce anxiety and excitement. Examples: barbiturates, non-barbiturates, tranquilizers and alcohol.
- d) Narcotics - drugs that relieve pain and often induce sleep. Examples: opium and its derivatives such as morphine, codeine and heroin.



HOW CAN YOU TELL WHEN ONE IS ABUSING DRUGS ?

A lot of changes - in behavior, in appearance and in mood-occur in a person who is abusing drugs. Sudden changes occur in the person's disposition from pleasant to unpleasant. Thus he or she:

- is often associated with known drug abusers
- is irritable, discourteous, defiant and aggressive
- is untrustworthy and lacks self-confidence
- is unhealthy and unconcerned with good grooming
- has a low frustration tolerance
- lacks interest in his studies or work
- blames everybody but not himself for his problems

- prefers his peers where he feels accepted
- frequently peers to odd places to take drugs
- unusually wears sunglasses during inappropriate times
- unusual borrowing of money and at times stealing various items
- has abrupt changes in attendance in school or at work
- develop changes in normal capabilities in school or work

Malnutrition. The lives of drug dependents revolve around drug abuse. They miss their regular meals because they lose their appetite.

Panic Reaction. The loss of thought processes can cause panic reactions or feelings of invulnerability. Both of these states can lead to injury and death. The prolonged harmful reactions include anxiety and depressive states, or breaks with reality which may last from a few days to months.

Physical Damages. In addition to those diseases which accompany the use of unsterile syringes and contaminated drugs may cause certain medical problems. Liver and kidney damage may result when large quantities are taken. Many who abuse drugs also neglect personal hygiene, which can lead to multiple health problems. Kidney failure, hepatitis, drastic weight loss, and vitamin deficiencies are some of the adverse physical complications.

The life of drug abusers is a dreadful one. To support the habit they resort to committing crimes like stealing, prostitution and gambling, which hamper their emotional maturation.

WHAT CAN A PERSON DO TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE?

- Maintain physical wellness and mental health
- Use drugs properly. Most drugs are beneficial when used per medical advice.
- Understand yourself. Accept and respect yourself for what you are.
- Develop your potentials. Engage in wholesome, productive and fulfilling activities.
- Learn to relate effectively to whom you can communicate your problems freely.
- Learn to cope with your problems and other stresses without the use of drugs.
- Seek professional help if you feel you cannot cope with your problems.
- Develop strong moral and spiritual foundations.