

DON'T CRACK

YOU AND YOUR CHILD

What every parent needs to know
to beat the threat of drugs.



CARITAS MALTA



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

LIBRARY

Progressive No. of Work 212865

No. of Volumes one

Class Mark MZT, LD
P.B. 47a

Remarks

**REFERENCE
ONLY**



INTRODUCTION

It's tough being a parent.

All parents have a responsibility towards the younger generation to learn the facts about drugs. This booklet can help.

In this day and age, parents and guardians are under increasing pressures to maintain close relationships

with their child for a whole host of reasons.

Unfortunately some youngsters are turning to drugs.

Most children never use drugs and hopefully yours will be among them.

But we cannot afford to ignore the issue until it arrives on our own

doorstep. Never more so than now, as drugs ravage Society

worldwide and threaten to do the same to ours.

In Malta and Gozo we can and must prepare ourselves before

the nightmare affects our children too.

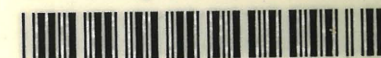
YOU CAN START AT HOME BY

EXAMINING YOUR

RELATIONSHIP WITH

YOUR OWN CHILD.....

University of Malta Library



212865



For effective Parenting during Adolescence we parents need to develop 3 important traits:-

A. LOVE – the ability to act for someone's benefit, whether we feel like it or not.

B. WISDOM – the ability to take the knowledge and turn it into the appropriate action.

It is NOT WHAT WE KNOW but WHAT WE DO which is most important.

C. COURAGE – the ability to act in the face of fear when you are afraid that your decision could be the wrong one.

WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP MY CHILD SAFE FROM DRUGS?

1. Say hello . . . Take an interest in what your children do outside the home. Greet them when they come in and ask them: "Did you have a good day?" and then "Tell me about it". . . .

2. Spend time. . . make sure you set a part of each day, to spend with your children.

If you are not investing in your children then you cannot expect to get from them the returns you deserve.

3. Split your day . . . Give time to your partner and reserve some time for your own interests. If your partner feels neglected or you feel you are neglecting yourself then your relationship with your children may suffer.

4. Think positive . . . You may be unhappy with how you get on with your children. But think of what you have already achieved, like keeping them clothed and fed, and providing a home for them each night.

There is no such thing as the perfect parent so don't just concentrate on how you can do better; appreciate what you already do.

Sometimes children reach a stage where they cannot talk to their parents but will confide in another person, like a teacher or the parent of a friend. This is fine, as long as you know and approve of the person concerned.

Children need to think positive as well. They need to feel good about themselves. You can help by praising whenever possible, rather than condemning.

Most young people do not take drugs. Those that do will probably only take them once or twice. Only a tiny minority will become addicts BUT do not use this fact to justify your child's unexplainable behaviour.

Youngsters take drugs partly because they enjoy the nice feeling of 'getting high' but also for other reasons, like wanting to experiment or to show off in front of friends or to project a certain type of image. Unfortunately, they do not consider the after effects.

It is a sign of a normal, healthy child to be inquisitive. If your children experiment with drugs it does not mean that you have behaved wrongly as a parent or that there is anything wrong with them as children, because a contented child gets curious too.

BUT . . . think of the possible bad consequences of your OWN behaviour. Your child's curiosity could have been aroused by watching parents and adults drinking and smoking. Youngsters may also take drugs to get attention or as a show of rebellion.

CHILDREN DO NOT LISTEN TO WHAT WE SAY BUT WATCH WHAT WE DO.

Remember the points in the section, **PARENTS AND CHILDREN**.

Kids will very often get their drugs from **FRIENDS** and take them because they want to be part of a crowd.

Ask yourself. . . .

Do I know who my children mix with?

Do I know where they go?

Introduction: – It is your responsibility as a parent to develop your child's character and therefore his behaviour.

Throughout their childhood your children need to be taught three important Principles to develop into healthy, confident adults.

- 1. Responsibility** – Your children must learn to do the things that need to be done and not what they feel like doing.
- 2. Dependability** – Your children must learn to finish their work whether they feel like it or not.
- 3. Accountability** – Your children must learn to face their mistakes and accept the consequences.

The following guidelines should help you avoid the various pitfalls encountered when raising children.

- 1. DO NOT BE THEIR LAWYER:-** Do not defend your children before any competent authority, (no matter what your children are accused of), in their presence. Even if you do not agree with the decision taken, one must teach his/her children that the person involved knows what he's doing and the children must learn to cope with such situations.
- 2. DO NOT BE THEIR BANKER:-** Do not give your children an unlimited source of money to gratify their every wish. Teach them, that to achieve success, one must work hard for it, and only so will they feel PLEASURE and satisfaction in their achievements.
- 3. DO NOT BE THEIR INSURANCE COMPANY:-** Let the children know that you are not ready to pay the price for their behaviour, just because they wanted to have fun, irrespective of the consequences. Let the children learn that they are responsible for their behaviour.
- 4. DO NOT BE THEIR AGENT:-** Do not use your connections to get them a job, whether they have the necessary qualifications or not. Making life easy for them only leads to the children becoming totally dependent on you later on in life.
- 5. DO NOT BE THEIR MECHANIC:-** Do not solve their problems but let them do so. Do not protect them from any unpleasant events, from their friends' bitchiness, etc., otherwise they will never learn to cope with their feelings and carry their responsibilities.

- 6. DO NOT BE THEIR MAID:-** Children need a set of rules to feel secure in their environment. Therefore they must learn that there are set times for their meals, to keep their room tidy and that certain household jobs are their responsibility. Only so will your children learn that life is not a bed of roses, nor will they expect others to provide all the services needed for them to live in the lap of luxury.
- 7. DO NOT BE THEIR ASSISTANT:-** Do not do their homework or sit next to them to solve all their homework problems. They must learn to work on their own and that they must organise their life to avoid any unpleasant surprises.
- 8. DO NOT BE THEIR APOLOGIST:-** Everyone goes through a rough time. Finding excuses to protect them from their failures will not enable them to learn from their mistakes.
- 9. DO NOT BE THEIR DOORMAT:-** They must learn to control negative emotions such as ANGER, BOREDOM, ETC. You do not gain the respect and love of your children by allowing them to pour their frustrations on you.
- 10. BE SURE TO ENFORCE YOUR BELIEFS ON YOUR OWN CHILDREN:-** Do not allow them to decide for themselves when to have sex, whether to go to church, the kind of films they watch, etc. The values you teach them during the pre-teen years are the same values they will use later on in their adult life, even though during Adolescence, due to PEER-PRESSURE, it might seem that they have lost them.



TOBACCO

APPEARANCE: Dried brown leaves.

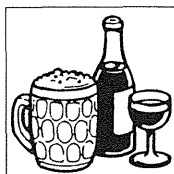
DURATION: A few minutes.

METHOD: Smoke.

POPULAR NAMES: Cigarettes, cigar, pipe.

SYMPTOMS: A small amount can be relaxing and stimulating.

SIDE EFFECTS: Damages lungs, causes cancer of the lungs, increases blood pressure, causes heart and circulatory problems, and creates a dependency on nicotine.



ALCOHOL

APPEARANCE: Liquid swallowed as a drink.

DURATION: 30 minutes to several hours.

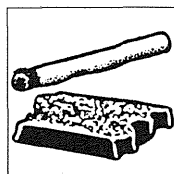
METHOD: Oral.

POPULAR NAMES: Booze, 'xorb'.

SYMPTOMS: Initial euphoria and well being, followed by disorientation, lack of co-ordination, slurred speech, confusion, aggressive behaviour.

SIDE EFFECTS: Blurred vision, headache, nausea.

Damages heart, liver, stomach and brain and can become addictive.



MARIJUANA

APPEARANCE: Dried leaves or brown mud-like lump.

DURATION: 30 minutes to a few hours, but the drug T.H.C. found in Marijuana is still traceable after one month in the body.

METHOD: Smoke.

POPULAR NAMES: Grass, pot, weed, hash, cannabis, ganja, hashisha, 'blokka', joint.

SYMPTOMS: Euphoria and mild disorientation. Mood-swings. Motor function impaired. Dry mouth. Whites of the eyes may become reddened.

SIDE EFFECTS: Short term memory loss. Increased appetite and heart rate. Long term use may cause cancer of the lungs and may affect both male and female reproductive systems. Loss of concentration and no motivation.



HEROIN

APPEARANCE: White or brown powder.

DURATION: 4 hours.

METHOD: Inject, sniff.

POPULAR NAMES: Smack, horse.

SYMPTOMS: Initial euphoria. Relaxation, drowsiness, constricted pupils, constipation and lowered respiration.

SIDE EFFECTS: Nausea, ear and skin infections, lowered blood pressure. Risk of Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS virus and other infections from dirty needles. Extremely addictive. Addicted newborn babies.



COCAINE HCL

APPEARANCE: White powder.

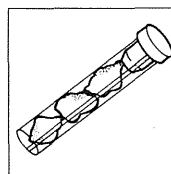
DURATION: 30 minutes.

METHOD: Inject, sniff.

POPULAR NAMES: Coke, snow.

SYMPTOMS: Excitement, pupils dilate and respiration is rapid. "Cocaine bugs" itching of the skin, extreme irritability.

SIDE EFFECTS: Paranoia, aggression, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, risk of HIV/AIDS virus when injecting. Extremely addictive. Newborn babies addicted to cocaine.



FREEBASE COCAINE

APPEARANCE: Small white or offwhite crystals.

It is made from powdered Cocaine – the newest and potentially most dangerous drug.

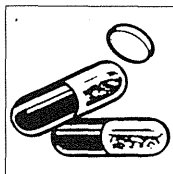
DURATION: 1 to 2 minutes.

METHOD: Smoke.

POPULAR NAMES: Crack, rock, wash, base.

SYMPTOMS: Immediate intense exhilaration. Dilated pupils. Indifference to pain and fatigue, sense of well-being.

SIDE EFFECTS: A massive depression follows within minutes causing intense paranoia and an overwhelming urge for more crack. Stroke, heart attack, seizure, crack babies.



TRANQUILLISERS

Secobarbita

1 (phenobarb) amylobarbita 1 (barbiturates), Valium, Librium.

APPEARANCE: Pills, Capsules, Tablets.

METHOD: Oral

POPULAR NAMES: Downers.

SYMPTOMS: Initial relaxation and euphoria followed by motor impairment, confusion, slurred speech, depressed respiration, occasionally aggression.

SIDE EFFECTS: Reflexes decreased, lowered pulse rate, personality changes, hostility and irritability. Can become addictive and can kill in large doses if taken with alcohol.



AMPHETAMINE TYPE

Dexamphetamine/

Amphetamine

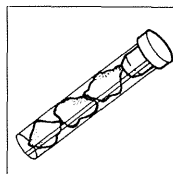
APPEARANCE: Tablets, Capsules

METHOD: Oral

POPULAR NAMES: Speed, Uppers

SYMPTOMS: Stimulation, wakefulness, dry mouth.

SIDE EFFECTS: Irritability, increased blood pressure, agitation, headache, loss of appetite, dizziness, personality change. High doses may cause panic and fear. Long term users can become seriously mentally ill.



CRYSTALLINE

METHAMPHETAMINE

APPEARANCE: White crystals.

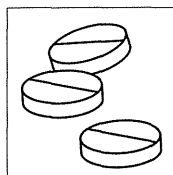
DURATION: 2 to 4 hours.

METHOD: Smoke

POPULAR NAMES: Ice

SYMPTOMS: Intense euphoria, increases alertness.

SIDE EFFECTS: Paranoia, murderous rages, hallucinations and fatal kidney failures.



METHYLENEDIIOXY-

METHYLAMPHETAMINE.

APPEARANCE: Tablets

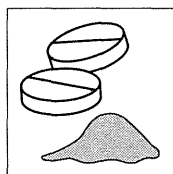
DURATION: 20 minutes to several hours.

METHOD: Oral

POPULAR NAMES: MDMA, Ecstasy, Adam

SYMPTOMS: Pupils dilate, euphoria, dry mouth, sweating, loss of appetite, difficulty in co-ordination, followed by fatigue and depression.

SIDE EFFECTS: Hallucinations with fatigue and severe depression following the euphoria.



HALLUCINOGENS

Phencyclidine.

APPEARANCE: Powder, tablet

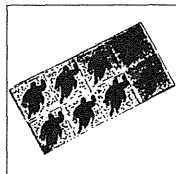
DURATION: Few minutes to several hours depending on dose.

METHOD: Swallowing, Smoke, Sniff, Inject.

POPULAR NAMES: PCCP, Angel dust.

SYMPTOMS: Dizziness, variable pupil size, blurred vision, tremors, drowsiness. The user could be disorientated and out of touch with reality to the point of suicide or murder.

SIDE EFFECTS . . . Respiratory depression, hallucinations, distortion of body image, muscle rigidity, paranoia.



LYSERGIC ACID DIETHYLAMINE

APPEARANCE: Usually liquid dropped onto a small piece of paper, which may have pictures of Goofy or Superman or some other character on them.

DURATION: 30 minutes up to 12 hours.

METHOD: Paper placed on tongue.

POPULAR NAMES: LSD, ACID, TRIP.

SYMPTOMS: Vary from extreme pleasure to extreme fear and panic. Dilated pupils, muscle tremors and twitching, changes in vision including shapes, colours and blurred vision.

SIDE EFFECTS: Psychological disturbance. Sensory distortion, panic reactions which may lead to suicide, fear of going insane. Flashbacks (replays of all the drug effects including visual changes, distortions in the senses, time and reality) may occur from 5 to 10 times a day and up to 18 months after drug use.



SOLVENTS

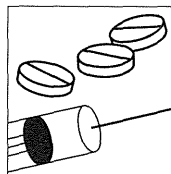
APPEARANCE: Volatile liquids

METHOD: Vapours are sniffed through mouth and nose, sometimes from inside a plastic bag.

POPULAR NAMES: Glues, pains, petrol.

SYMPTOMS: Slurred speech, staggering gait, giddiness, euphoria, difficulty in co-ordination, clear thinking and concentration.

SIDE EFFECTS: Hallucinations, deadening of the senses. Overuse can result in permanent damage to the nervous system, bone marrow, liver and kidneys. Danger of death due to asphyxiation and choking on vomit.



STEROIDS

APPEARANCE: Tablets, Injections,

METHOD: Swallow, Inject.

SYMPTOMS: When taken in high doses increases muscle size, makes athletes aggressive.

SIDE EFFECTS: Can cause CANCER of liver or kidney. Affects male and female reproductive systems. Increases the chances of heart attacks and causes mental problems.

PRESCRIBED DRUGS

Doctors prescribe many drugs to ease pain, alleviate illness and disease and save lives. These and over-the-counter drugs can be very dangerous if misused.

- 1. Medicines should be kept somewhere safe.**
- 2. Follow the recommended dose.**
- 3. Never share prescribed medicines.**
- 4. Dispose of them safely after the course of the treatment.**



First do not overreact and jump to conclusions. Many of the signs below are experienced by all adolescents as growing pains. However, they could be evidence of drug taking.

- **Unusual smells, stains or marks on the body or clothes or around the house.**
- **Unusual powders, tablets, scorched tinfoil or needles.**
- **Sudden changes of mood from cheerful and alert to sullen and moody.**
- **Unexpected irritability or aggression.**
- **Telling lies or being secretive and withdrawal from family circle.**
- **Money or belongings disappearing.**
- **Lost appetite.**
- **Losing interest in hobbies, sport, school and adopting “I don’t care” attitude.**
- **Changes in values, ideals, beliefs, friends, and unwillingness to introduce new friends.**
- **Secretive phone calls, callers who refuse to identify themselves or hang up when you answer.**
- **Decline in academic performance, frequent absenteeism, increased discipline and behavioural problems.**
- **Bouts of drowsiness or sleeplessness.**
- **Discussion of Suicide.**

No one becomes an addict overnight. THE KEY IS BEHAVIOUR. Once children become addicted we have solitary use. They take drugs to change the way they feel. Therefore, if they are down (depressed) they will take an Upper; if they are nervous they will take a Downer. Thus the VICIOUS CIRCLE is formed.

REMEMBER:-

Children lie, Teenagers lie, Adults lie, BUT Behaviour never lies.

If you are sure that your child is taking drugs try not to show anger. It will only make things worse.

Show your children that you care and want to help, allowing them to talk about any worries or problems they might have without putting them under pressure.

If your child is on a 'HIGH'—feeling woozy, sleepy, unco-ordinated, overaroused:

1. **Remove the drugs or solvents if possible without any confrontation.**
2. **Do not expect your children to act normally and do not crowd or threaten him/her. It could be that your child will resist your interference with an unexpected level of violence. This violence is often regretted within minutes.**
3. **Don't put your children to bed to sleep it off. Youngsters have died from choking on their vomit during sleep, so keep a watchful eye on them for at least half an hour while the high passes.**
4. **Do not lecture your children because in their present state they will probably not be able to concentrate or remember what you have said.**
5. **Record the incident, noting what happened before or afterwards. If you involve a doctor later, it will help to have a clear and accurate picture of what happened.**

DISCUSS the matter with your partner and seek help from one of the help groups listed in the section : WHERE TO GO FOR HELP.

There are no Guarantees in Life. No matter how well you parent, no matter how well you communicate with your child.

Your child is an individual and not a puppet.

Your child has to make his/her own decisions in life whether Good or Bad.

We parents have to be their safety net, when our children are in trouble.

Love, Wisdom and Courage are the keys to success in overcoming the problems.

Drug Addiction is :-

1. **Chronic – It can be arrested. Drug Addiction is a state of dis-ease.**
2. **It gets worse as time goes by.**
3. **It is fatal. It can kill.**
4. **It can 'COME BACK'.**
5. **There is hope and it can be treated effectively.**

For treatment and rehabilitation to succeed, we parents have to realise that our child needs help and he/she needs it quickly.

Therefore:-

1. **ACCEPT THE PROBLEM.**
2. **TAKE ACTION AND ASK FOR HELP.**

Hopefully your own children will never become involved with drugs.

But think about the advice you have been given in this booklet.

It could enable you to help not only your child but those of your friends and neighbours too.

And if you feel you need help, there are plenty of people ready to assist.

GET IN TOUCH WITH:

1. CARITAS MALTA - 237935 / 245358 / 233933

2. OASIS GOZO - 563333 / 561196

3. MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE AT:

DETOX UNIT, ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL - 225096

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, LUQA - 244562 / 244517 / 244522

DETOX UNIT, CRAIG HOSPITAL, GOZO : 561600

