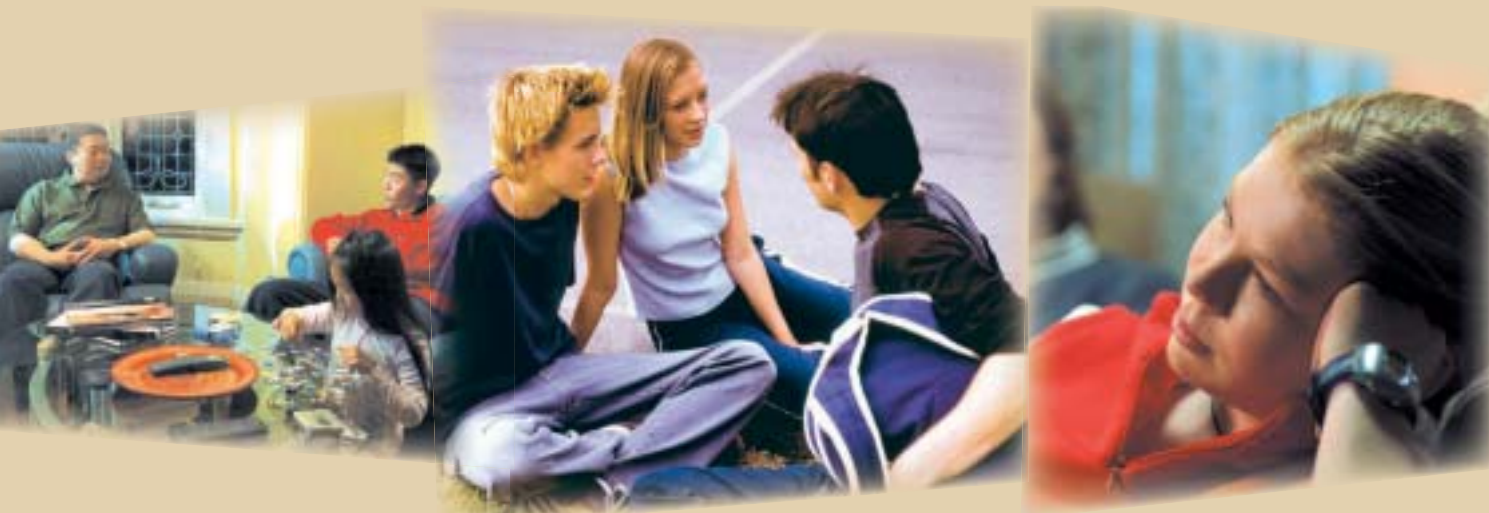


Talking

**Talking
with your kids
about drugs.**

drugs.

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DISCLAIMER: The purpose of this booklet is to provide information and guidance to parents on talking with their children about drugs.

'Drugs' are any substance that affects someone's mood, thinking or behaviour, and includes illicit drugs (where production, sale or possession is prohibited), tobacco, alcohol and some pharmaceutical products.

This booklet, including information about specific drugs and their effects, is a general guide only. Its focus is on illicit drugs and the non-medical use of some pharmaceutical products. The booklet should not be used as a substitute for advice from suitably qualified medical or health professionals.

Message from the Prime Minister



As parents you can play an important role in helping your children to understand the dangers involved with using drugs.

This booklet provides practical information to help you to talk with your children about drugs - what they are, what they do and how they can affect your family.

A national survey found that 85 per cent of 15 to 17 year olds were willing to talk to their parents about drugs and 79 per cent said that

parents could influence them not to use drugs.* This is a good reason to sit down and explain to young people the consequences of using drugs and the importance for all of us to take personal responsibility for our own actions.

As parents we need to remember that, sooner or later, our children are going to learn about drugs.

If we don't talk to our sons and daughters about drugs, you can be sure that our children will hear the wrong message from someone else.

My government has committed over \$1 billion under the *Tough on Drugs* initiative and we are making real progress in the fight against drugs.

Since *Tough on Drugs* started the number of drug seizures has risen, the proportion of people

using illicit drugs has fallen and there are more treatment options for drug users.

Australians can feel proud of what has been achieved so far. But there is more to be done. Only if families, communities and governments work together can further progress be made.

Please talk to your children about the dangers involved in using drugs.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Howard". The signature is written in a cursive style.

John Howard,
Prime Minister.

*Source: Department of Health and Ageing, 2003.

The facts about illicit drugs speak for themselves

Teenage drug use

In 2004, 29 per cent of teenagers aged between 14 and 19 had used an illicit drug of some type, including cannabis, in their lifetime.

(Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2005)

Obtaining drugs

About 7 out of 10 illicit drug users obtained their drug from friends or acquaintances.

(Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2005)

Drugs and property crime

In several jurisdictions where surveys were recently done, 83 per cent of adult males detained on property offences tested positive to a drug of some type (excluding tobacco and alcohol).

(Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, 2004)

Mental health

In 2004, people aged 18 years and over who used illicit drugs in the past month were twice as likely to report high or very high levels of psychological distress than those who had not.

(Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2005)

The cost to our community

The estimated social cost of illicit drug abuse to the Australian community each year is around \$6.1 billion.

(Source: National Drug Strategy, Monograph Series No. 49, 2002)

Drug deaths

In 2001 there were 1,038 drug-related deaths.

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003)

What families can do about illicit drugs

The most effective deterrent to drug use amongst young people is a parent who is devoted to spending time with them. Someone who talks with them about their friends, what goes on at school, the sport they play, what interests them.

The more parents and other family members get involved in children's lives, the more positive young people will feel about themselves and the more likely they will be to respond favourably to their family's views.

Making sure you know where your children are and who they are with doesn't mean you don't trust them, it means that you care enough to be involved.

Always remember that contact with illicit drugs involves the risk of criminal penalties and possibly a criminal record. This means



that it is worth spending some time to check a few facts so that you can talk confidently about drugs with young people.

They will be more likely to accept your advice if you don't exaggerate or make false claims.

Remember that you don't need to be an expert about drugs to help a young person choose not to use them.

Will your children listen to you?

When it comes to talking about drugs, extensive research conducted with Australian parents and their children tells us that young people will appreciate your advice and look to you for your views.

But they will expect you to be informed, up front and honest. And if you show you are listening to them, they are more likely to listen to you.

Regardless of your knowledge and experience of drugs, you have a valuable role to play in talking with your children about drugs. When a young person is considering whether or not to take drugs, an important issue for them is “What will my parents think?”. This means that it is very important to make your position absolutely clear that

you don't want them to use illicit drugs. Ever.

Again, by being involved in your children's lives, their friendships, school and sporting activities, they will be more likely to look to you for advice, and their self-esteem will be enhanced so they can more confidently resist any pressure to take drugs.

In talking to your children about drugs, be honest, frank and don't assume for a moment that they already know where you stand. They expect you to talk about drugs, so be very plain about what you think. You owe it to them not to leave any room for misunderstanding. It is also important to talk often about the dangers of drug use and that your rules apply at home, at school and everywhere else.

This section outlines examples of various drugs, their street names (which change over time and have differing use across Australia), symptoms of use and some of the potential consequences of using them.

People can become dependent on these drugs (addicted). This can include having trouble controlling their use of drugs and still using even when they realise it is causing them problems. It can also include the development of tolerance – where a person needs to use more of the drug to get the same effect. People can also become physically dependent on some of these drugs. This means that they will experience physical symptoms (withdrawal) when they try to stop using them.

Please note that this booklet, including information about specific drugs and their health effects, is a general guide only. Other effects can include breakdown in relationships and job loss.

The focus of this booklet is illicit drugs and the non-medical use of some pharmaceutical products. This booklet should not be used as a substitute for advice from suitably qualified medical or health professionals.

“As someone who has more than 25 years' experience as a Salvation Army officer working with drug addiction, I have seen just how important families can be in deterring young people from taking up drugs in the first place and in supporting those caught up in drug use.”

Major Brian Watters AO, Chairman, Australian National Council on Drugs

Know drugs

- Information about drugs

Cannabis

Product: Marijuana, hashish, hashish oil, Cannabis sativa, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol.

Street name: Pot, grass, weed, reefer, joint, Mary-Jane, Acapulco Gold, rope, mull, cone, spliff, dope, skunk, bhang, ganja, hash, chronic.

Symptoms: Slow thinking, slow reflexes, reduced coordination and concentration, reduced motivation, apathy, dilated pupils, blood shot or glassy eyes, increased appetite, dryness of the mouth, increased pulse rate.

Potential consequences: Mood swings, memory impairment, weight gain, increased risk of cancer of the lung, mouth, throat and tongue, panic attacks, delusions, hallucinations, paranoid thinking and other mental health problems. Cannabis serves as a barrier against self-awareness, and may interfere with a young person's development including possible interference with reproductive function.



Ecstasy

Product: MDMA (Methylenedioxymethamphetamine), ecstasy.

Street name: Ecstasy, E, Ex, E and C, eccy, MDMA, PMA, Adam, XTC, love drug, eggs.

Symptoms: Increased blood pressure and pulse rate, raised body temperature, sweating, overheating, jaw clenching, teeth grinding, nausea, anxiety, excitability, tremors, insomnia, dilated pupils, loss of appetite.

Potential consequences: Weight loss, chronic sleep problems, cracked teeth through grinding, high blood pressure, dehydration, anxiety, nervousness, hallucinations, decreased emotional control, lethargy, severe depression, nerve cell damage, thermal meltdown, death from heart failure.



Amphetamines

Product: Methamphetamine, amphetamine sulphate, dexamphetamine, Ritalin, Tenuate.

Street name: Speed, uppers, ice, meth, crystal, whizz, snow, go-ee, shabu, point, paste, base, zip, eve, leopard's blood, oxblood, gogo, MDEA.

Symptoms: Increased blood pressure and pulse rate, increased breathing, teeth grinding, excitability, anxiety, restlessness, insomnia, fever and sweating, flushing, dry mouth and lips, dilated pupils, nausea and vomiting,

loss of appetite, mood swings.

Potential consequences: Weight loss, paranoia, hallucinations, chronic sleep problems, cracked teeth through grinding, high blood pressure, panic attacks, anxiety, nervousness, decreased emotional control, severe depression, violent behaviour, speed psychosis, nerve cell damage, death from heart failure or suicide. High risk of addiction, especially if injected.



Cocaine and crack cocaine

Product: Cocaine, crack cocaine.

Street name: Cocaine – coke, flake, snow, happy dust, Charlie, gold dust, Cecil, C, freebase, toot, white girl,

Scotty, white lady. Crack cocaine – crack, rock, base, sugar block.

Symptoms: Excitability, euphoria, talkativeness, anxiety, increased pulse rate, dilated pupils, paranoia, agitation, hallucinations.

Potential consequences: High risk of addiction, violent or erratic behaviour, hallucinations, cocaine psychosis, eating or sleeping disorders, impaired sexual performance, ongoing respiratory problems, ulceration of the mucous membrane of the nose, collapse of the nasal septum, cardiac arrest, convulsions.



Hallucinogens

Product: LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), Psilocybin, MDA (methylenedioxyamphetamine), PCP (phencyclidine).

Street name: LSD – acid, trips, wedges, windowpane, blotter, microdot. Psilocybin – mushies, blue meanies, magic mushrooms, gold tops, datura, angel's trumpet. PCP – angel dust, hog, loveboat.

Symptoms: Trance-like state, excitation, euphoria, increased pulse rate, insomnia, hallucinations, paranoia.

Potential consequences: Impaired judgement and coordination can result in greater risk of injury, self-inflicted injury, violent behaviour, paranoia, depression, anxiety, unpredictable flashbacks.

Inhalants

Product: Can include a number of general household and office products – solvents, aerosols, glue, petrol.

Street name: Nitrous oxide – laughing gas, whippits, nitrous. Amyl nitrate – snappers, poppers, pearlers, rushamines. Butyl nitrate – locker room, bolt, bullet, rush, climax, red gold.

Symptoms: Slurred speech, impaired coordination, nausea, vomiting, slowed breathing.

Potential consequences: Brain damage, pains in the chest, muscles, joints, heart trouble, severe depression, fatigue, loss of appetite, bronchial spasm, sores on nose or mouth, nosebleeds, diarrhoea, bizarre or reckless behaviour, sudden death, suffocation.



Depressants

Product: Sleeping pills, minor tranquillisers.

Street name: Benzos, temazzies, Valium, tranks, sleepers, Serapax, serries, Mandrax, mandies, Rohypnol, rohies.

Symptoms: Drowsiness, confusion, incoordination, slurred speech, depressed pulse rate, shallow breathing.

Potential consequences: Anxiety, depression, restlessness, tremors, insomnia, changes in eyesight, high risk of addiction, suicide.

Opioids

Product: Heroin, morphine, codeine, methadone, buprenorphine, pethidine, Dilaudid, Kapanol, MS Contin.

Street name: Heroin – horse, hammer, H, dope, smack, junk, gear, boy. Morphine – M, Miss Emma, Mister Blue, morph. Methadone – done.

Symptoms: Lethargy, drowsiness, euphoria, nausea, constipation, constricted pupils, slowed breathing.

Potential consequences: High risk of addiction, mood swings, depression, anxiety disorders, chronic constipation, infection at site of injection, HIV and hepatitis infections through sharing of needles, non-fatal overdose, death from overdose.



GHB

Product: Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB).

Street name: Fantasy, grievous bodily harm (GBH), liquid ecstasy, liquid E, G.

Symptoms: Drowsiness, induced sleep, nausea, reduced inhibitions, dizziness, headache, increased sociability, initial euphoria leading to confusion and agitation.

Potential consequences: Extreme drowsiness/grogginess, hallucinations, difficulty focussing eyes, vomiting, impaired movement and speech, reduces muscle tone, disorientation, convulsions/seizures, coma, respiratory distress, slowed heart rate, lowered blood pressure, amnesia, death. Can be addictive with prolonged use.



What other facts should you know?

There are some basic facts about illicit drugs that everyone should know

- All drugs carry risks and are dangerous.
- No one can ever be sure of exactly what they are taking.
- Mixing drugs, including alcohol and prescription drugs, can be very dangerous.
- There are no guarantees about purity or strength and no one knows exactly what illicit drugs have been mixed with.
- No one can be sure what effect a drug will have, even if they have used it before.
- Cannabis remains the most commonly used illicit drug in Australia. Among 14 to 19 year olds, 26 per cent had used cannabis in their lifetime.

(Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2005)

How do drugs affect different people?

It is possible for different people to have different reactions to the same drug just as one person may have a different reaction each time they use it. A person's reaction to a drug will vary according to factors such as:

- The type of drug.
- The amount and strength of the drug.
- How the drug is taken.
- A person's body size.
- Whether a person has used the drug before.
- The person's mood and the setting at which the drug is taken such as at a party with friends or on their own.
- Other drugs taken. The consequences of mixing drugs can be very severe.

What about drugs and mental health?

There is some ongoing debate about the link between drug use and mental illness. There is agreement however, that people with drug problems seem to have an increased risk of mental health problems, and similarly, people experiencing mental health problems have a higher rate of drug use.

The most commonly reported mental illnesses linked to drug use are anxiety and depression and there are also some reports of psychotic illnesses (such as schizophrenia).

Use of some drugs appears to contribute to, or trigger, mental health problems in some young people. Alternatively, a young person might already have emotional or mental health problems that could lead them to try and relieve these problems by 'self medicating' through using drugs.

For more information on drugs and mental health see page 22 of this booklet.



Why do young people try drugs?

Some parents think that young people use drugs only if they are having problems at home or at school. But there are many other reasons:

- Availability and acceptability of the drug.
- Curiosity and experimentation.
- Wanting to be accepted.
- Rebellion.
- Depression.
- As a way to relax or cope with stress, boredom or pain.
- To experience a high or a rush.
- To feel OK, at least temporarily (self medication).

When do young people try drugs?

There are no hard and fast rules about when young people start trying different types of drugs. However, cannabis use tends to start from the early to mid teenage years while experimentation with drugs such as ecstasy and amphetamines (speed) generally begins in the mid to late teens. Remember that many young people will never use drugs, but some will try them while they are still very young. Some will try drugs, but not continue to use them.

“Families play an important role in minimising alcohol and other drug related harms by maintaining supportive communications with their children and by creating a safe and secure environment for them.”

Dr Neal Blewett AC, President, Alcohol and Other Drugs Council of Australia.

The reasons teenagers give for trying drugs and what you can say

Here are some of the reasons young people give for using drugs and some ideas about how you might choose to respond to them.

“Someone had some and I just thought I’d try it.”

Express your concern and question their decision. Ask whether it was what they expected and talk about the risks of further use. Try and find out if they felt pressured – this may lead to better ways for them to handle a similar situation in the future. Consider using examples of times when you have had to deal with a similar situation.

“I always wanted to try that stuff.”

Ask what made that particular drug appealing, and what they expected to get from it. Questions such as “What did you think it would

be like?” and “Why that drug?” may be worthwhile. You may be able to discuss whether they have tried other drugs and if so, why. Say that you’re concerned with their behaviour and try to establish some ground rules.

“All my friends were doing it so I thought ... why not?”

Make your feelings about drug use clear and explain why you don’t want them to use drugs. Ask if they felt it was safe because their friends were using it. Ask why they thought their friends used it and whether they were aware of the risks. Discuss the dangers of experimenting with drugs. It may be useful to discuss the importance of being able to make their own responsible decisions instead of following the crowd.

“It made me feel really good.”

Try exploring the main reason the young person took the drug. Find out how they have been feeling. This is a good time to offer help and to find out if there is anything you can do for them or if they want to talk about another issue. Talk about less risky ways of feeling good.

“All my problems from school, home and life just went away.”

This statement is a chance to really confront other issues. You can express your concern about your teenager using drugs as a means of coping. Let them know that if there are problems, you would like to talk about them. Ask what can be done to make things better. Discuss whether the problems returned after the effects of the drug wore off. Express your feelings about the dangers

of using drugs to deal with problems. Make it clear that you want to work together to find a better way of solving their problems.

“It gave me more confidence.”

Let them know that this is of concern to you and explain that they don’t need drugs to feel good about themselves. Share your own experiences where you also found it difficult in social situations and explain ways that helped you gain more confidence. These can be both positive and negative experiences. By acknowledging your own behaviour, you will increase your credibility with the young person. Consider ways in which you can help to improve the young person’s confidence and self-esteem.

“Well, you used drugs.”

You should be prepared for this type of response if this statement applies to you. You need to be frank and open with your child. Acknowledge that illicit drugs are dangerous and that you would think differently now. You are an important role model.



10 ways to encourage young people to talk with you about drugs



1. Be part of their lives

Make sure that you make time for your children. Take an interest in their interests and establish a routine for doing things together. Don't be afraid to ask where your teenagers are going and who they will be with. Spending time together as a family is important. For example, try to talk and eat together every day and find other opportunities to enjoy time together as a family.

2. Listen to them

Showing a willingness to listen will help your children to feel more comfortable about listening to you. Ask for their input about family decisions to demonstrate that you value their opinions. Try not to

interrupt or react in a way that will stop further discussion. Encourage them to feel comfortable about telling you their problems.

3. Be a role model

When it comes to drugs, there is no such thing as "Do as I say, not as I do". If you take illicit drugs, you can't expect your child to take your advice. Don't underestimate the influence your behaviour can have on your children, particularly any use of tobacco or misuse of alcohol and medications.

4. Be honest

It is important to be informed but don't pretend to know everything. Be prepared to say "I don't know but I will try and find out". Be honest and clear about where you stand so that your children will find it easier to be honest with you.

5. Pick your moment

Choose the right time to discuss the topic by looking for natural opportunities as they arise. This might be watching TV, when talking about someone at school or in response to something that was similarly difficult to talk about.

6. Be calm

Being calm and rational is also important and don't overreact. You should keep the lines of communication open and don't ridicule or lecture. Remember that getting angry will just close the door on further discussion.

7. Avoid conflict

It is difficult to solve a problem when there is conflict. Try to see their point of view and encourage them to understand yours. If a confrontation develops, stop the conversation and return to it as soon as both of you are calmer.

8. Keep on talking

Once you've had a discussion, it's important to have another. Ensure that you are always willing to speak to your children about drugs and start early.

9. Set clear boundaries

Most young people expect and appreciate some ground rules. Allowing them to take part in setting the rules encourages them to take more responsibility for sticking to them. Once you have rules, enforce them and ensure young people know of the consequences of breaking them.

Find and agree to ways young people can act should they find themselves in a situation that exposes them to drugs. For example, let them know that you will always collect them if

they need you to, even if it is late at night.

However, make it absolutely clear that you would rather they didn't put themselves in a situation where they are likely to be exposed to illicit drugs.

10. Focus on the positive

Reward your children's good behaviour and emphasise those things they do well. Encourage them to feel good about themselves and let them know that they deserve respect.



How will you know if your teenager is trying drugs?



If you are worried that your teenager is trying drugs, asking them may be a good way to begin.

If your children have told you they aren't using drugs, but you are still concerned they may be doing so, there are warning signs that may indicate that a young person is experimenting with drugs.

The following is intended only as a guide, as many of these signs may be as a result of other changes related to development through the teenage years. Please consider how often these warning signs occur, if a number occur at the same time and the extent to which a young person's behaviour or actions have changed.

- A drop in school grades.
- A reduction in organised extra-curricular activities (such as an unexplained dropping-out of sport or other activities or interests).
- Blood shot or glassy eyes.
- Lethargy and loss of motivation.
- An unexplained change of friends.
- Unusual or irregular behaviour.
- Mood swings.
- Minimal interaction with the family.
- Valuable items or money missing.
- Changes in eating patterns.

What to do if you think your teenager is trying drugs

It is important that you discuss the issue with your teenager.

Let them know that you are concerned about their well-being and that they might be using drugs. You may not be able to discuss this easily, but don't give up. Be open with them so that they are encouraged to be open with you. Otherwise, you won't get the full story of what is going on in their life. Discuss with them what they consider to be the benefits and consequences of using drugs. This may provide an opportunity to give them new information about the risks of drug use.

Where do you go for help?

Don't be afraid to ask for help. A range of services and support is available to help both the person using drugs as well as their family and friends. Remember that you don't need to handle a drug problem on your own. There are many places in your community – doctor, schools, churches



and other organisations – that can provide support. Use the phone numbers at the back of this booklet to get in touch with people who can help and support you.

“We who are parents have a particular obligation to confront this social problem and to make our sons and daughters aware of the risks and possible consequences of drug use.”

Major Brian Watters AO, Chairman, Australian National Council on Drugs

The Tough on Drugs Strategy

No group can tackle the drug problem alone. However, communities working together can make a real difference. That's what the Australian Government's over \$1 billion Tough on Drugs strategy is all about.

It is the largest single national initiative ever undertaken in this country to fight the drug problem.

In cooperation with state and territory governments, *Tough on Drugs* is a grouping of individuals, families, business, government and community and charitable organisations, each contributing their expertise to tackle the drug problem at its source.

It is an approach that brings together law enforcement, prevention, treatment and education issues.

The Australian National Council on Drugs, representing a variety of views, advises the government from the front line on the development and

implementation of the *Tough on Drugs* strategy.

Educating young people at school

Schools are critical places to educate young people against drugs. That's why a *National School Drug Education Strategy* has been put in place to help parents, teachers, principals and school communities send a strong anti-drug message.

The Australian Government and its state and territory counterparts are working together on the strategy, which emphasises prevention and makes it clear that illicit drugs have no place in our schools.

Resources are available to improve teachers' skills and knowledge about drug prevention education and to inform parents and the wider community. Under the *National School Drug Education Strategy*, the Australian Government has committed over \$47 million to fund new and innovative drug education

programs for students and training for teachers.

These include:

- Helping teachers learn more about how to handle the issue.
- Providing information and support to parents.
- Developing better ways for school communities to fight drug misuse in schools.
- Providing material for schools to hold their own local 'summit' to bring the community together on this issue.

Parents have the right to know where their children's school stands on drugs. They also have the right to expect the school to have clear rules on how it will deal with students found with drugs.

Strengthening and Supporting Families

Strengthening and Supporting Families Coping with Illicit Drug Use (*Strengthening Families*) is an early intervention, family-focused initiative that helps

non-government organisations assist families struggling with or affected by the problems of illicit drug and substance abuse. This is achieved through education and counselling support services, advice and referral services and targeted projects for families.

Strengthening Families projects enhance emotional wellbeing and communication within families and are specifically directed towards family support, rather than the health, education or criminal aspects of the strategy.

The main focus of *Strengthening Families* is to provide support for families, including parents, grandparents, carers and

children of drug-using parents. The initiative focuses on illicit drugs but recognises polydrug use, as well as the problems arising from the abuse of legal substances such as alcohol and aerosols.

Providing more treatment

The Australian Government, in cooperation with state and territory governments, is well on the way to establishing a national drug treatment network across Australia's cities and towns.

In cooperation with health professionals and private and charitable organisations, this network will help bring treatment, education and

support services within reach of those who need it. Advised by the Australian National Council on Drugs, the government has granted more than \$124 million to over 200 non-government treatment programs. This allows charitable and non-government organisations to tackle the drug problem at the grassroots level.

A strong effort has been made to ensure that resources reach those with an illicit drug problem in rural and regional areas.

“While the Australian Federal Police and its partner agencies are working harder and more effectively than ever to stop illicit drugs being brought into Australia, criminals will continue to push new drugs and look for new ways to evade detection. The role of families is so critical to educating and safeguarding our children. As parents, we need to talk to our children about the possibility of their being exposed to drugs and increase their understanding of the dangers posed by drugs to their health and the quality of their lives.”

M J Keelty APM, Commissioner, Australian Federal Police, Member of Australian National Council on Drugs

Diverting users

In a major initiative, the Australian Government has allocated more than \$340 million to establish a national system to divert illicit drug users into expert assessment and on to necessary education and treatment.

Drug diversion says to users that if they want to be free of the criminal justice system they have a personal responsibility to work to be free of drugs.

Importantly, this new approach has the support of state and territory governments who will ensure that the diversion program will not be available to persistent or violent offenders or those dealing in drugs.

Those who refuse to participate in the scheme will be sent back to the criminal justice system and will face the possibility of gaol.

In this way drug users will be encouraged to take responsibility for themselves so that they can regain control of their lives.

Finding the answers

The Australian Government has sought to provide a stronger focus on proven treatment methods to assist drug addicts to recover.

Funding for practical research into drug addiction has been provided to trial and evaluate new treatments, such as naltrexone, buprenorphine and LAAM.

Along with current methadone and other outpatient, residential and drug-free programs, these treatments offer new hope to many people addicted to illicit drugs.

Tough on Drugs is also supporting the development of an early warning system for emerging drug problems and the creation of the Australian Drug Information Network as a single point of contact for web site information on drug education, prevention, treatment and research.



Stopping traffic

Under *Tough on Drugs*, an additional \$212 million has been allocated to stop trafficking and dealing in illegal drugs. Customs officers and federal, state and territory police are working together around Australia to apprehend those who are supplying and distributing illicit drugs.

Across the country there are more than 41,000 police officers who are working to keep local neighbourhoods, towns and cities safe from crime, including drug-related offences.

Police in local communities are supported by specially trained federal agents and by the more than 4,000 Customs officers who are protecting our borders.

Customs uses sophisticated surveillance resources, including National Marine Unit vessels fitted with satellite video transmission systems and Coastwatch aerial surveillance capabilities, to combat the importation of illicit drugs. Customs also employs sophisticated drug-detection technology such as ion scan and x-ray to assess and process passengers and cargo in order to intercept illicit drug importation. In addition Australian Federal Police mobile strike teams have been established to gather intelligence and pro-actively target drug trafficking networks.

Australia is also working with other nations to address the international problem of the supply and trafficking of illicit drugs. The Australian Government has increased cooperation with overseas authorities by establishing a *Law Enforcement Cooperation Program* and expanding the Australian Federal Police overseas liaison officer network.

These and other initiatives have contributed to the seizure of record quantities of illicit drugs in Australia in recent years. Since the inception of the original *Tough on Drugs* strategy, more than 10 tonnes of the most serious illicit drugs (including ecstasy, heroin, cocaine and amphetamine-type substances) have been prevented from reaching Australian streets.

Penalties have also recently been increased for the importation of commercial quantities of methamphetamine and amphetamine to enable life imprisonment for the most serious offences.

These actions send a clear message that Australians do not tolerate drug crime and that offenders will be caught and punished.



For more information

For more information about this booklet, to order extra copies or to get the booklet in other languages call 1800 250 015 (toll free) or visit the web site at www.drugs.health.gov.au

For information on counselling services or further drug information, including about alcohol, contact the Alcohol and Drug Information Service in your state or territory.

State and Territory Alcohol and Drug Information Services:

Australian Capital Territory

24 Hour Alcohol and Drug Telephone Line
(02) 6207 9977

New South Wales

Alcohol and Drug Information Service
(02) 9361 8000
1800 422 599 (rural)

Northern Territory

Alcohol and Drug Information Service
1800 131 350

Queensland

Alcohol and Drug Information Service
(07) 3236 2414
1800 177 833 (rural)

South Australia

Alcohol and Drug Information Service
1300 13 13 40

Tasmania

Alcohol and Drug Information Service 24 Hour
1800 811 994

Victoria

DirectLine
1800 888 236
DrugInfo
1300 85 85 84
Family Drug Helpline
1300 660 068
Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS Line)
(03) 9418 1020
1800 014 446 (rural)

Western Australia

Alcohol and Drug Information Service
(08) 9442 5000
1800 198 024 (rural)
Parent Drug Information Service
(08) 9442 5050
1800 653 203 (rural)

Other Information Services:

Family Drug Support
1300 368 186
Kids Help Line
1800 55 1800

Lifeline

13 11 14

Translating and Interpreting Service

13 14 50

If you find someone who you suspect has passed out from drug or alcohol use, phone **000** immediately for an ambulance. Do not hesitate. If you would like information on how to be prepared to handle a drug overdose, phone the Alcohol and Drug Information Services listed above.

If you would like more information on drugs and mental health problems, contact your doctor, talk to the Alcohol and Drug Information Services listed above, or call the SANE Helpline on **1800 688 382** or visit www.sane.org

For advice on how to quit smoking, call the Quitline on **131 848**.

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**For more information call 1800 250 015
or visit www.drugs.health.gov.au**

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