


 Project supported by the PHA.


Young People and Substance Misuse



Day One



  **Housekeeping**


- Breaks
- Microphones
- Internet connections
- Confidentiality
- Questions/comments





  **Course Objectives: Day 1**

By the end of today, you will be able to:

- Understand the prevalence of substance misuse amongst Northern Irish young people
- Describe what a drug is and ways to categorise drugs
- Identify reasons why young people might use substances
- Identify possible impacts of substance use for young people





 **Introduction**

What is the prevalence of substance use in NI youth?

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Prevalence of Substance Use in NI Youth (11-16)

Smoking (Tobacco)

- 10% have ever smoked; 4% are current smokers
- Boys are more likely to report smoking than girls
- Somewhat more common in the most deprived areas than least deprived (13% vs 7% ever smoked; 5% vs 3% current smokers)

E-cigarettes/vapes

- 20% have ever used EC/vape, with variation in age groups (4% in Year 8; 38% in Year 12)
- 3% use EC/vape at least once a week

Source Young Persons Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (2019)

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Prevalence of Substance Use in NI Youth (11-16)

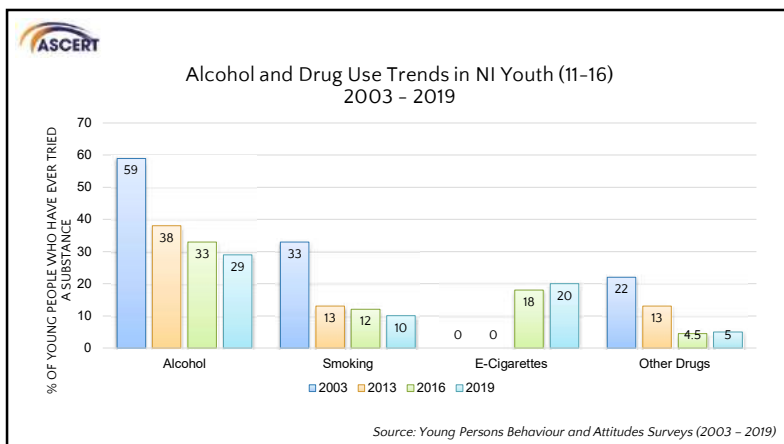
Alcohol

- 29% have ever drunk
- Boys were more likely to have ever taken a drink (32%) than girls (26%)
- Year 12 pupils were more likely to report having ever taken a drink (56%) than those in Year 8 (9%)

Other Drugs

- 5% have ever used drugs
- Boys were more likely to report having ever used drugs (6%) compared to girls (3%)
- Year 12 pupils were more likely to report having ever used drugs (10%) than those in Year 8 (2%)

Source Young Persons Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (2019)



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2 Identifying and Understanding Drugs

What is a drug and what are the main categories of drugs?


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A **drug** is a chemical which causes a **change** (or **multiple changes**) in the way the human body functions, either physically, mentally, or emotionally.

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Types of Drugs



- Two ways to categorise drugs – both focused on effects
 - 4 main categories: depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and opiates
 - The Drugs Wheel
 - More categories/substance effects

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Depressants

<p>Definition</p> <p>Any agent that suppresses, inhibits, or decreases some aspect of the Central Nervous System</p>	<p>Possible Effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased heart rate and blood pressure Blurred vision Feeling relaxed Loss of inhibition/ impaired judgement Slurred speech/ loss of coordination Drowsiness and memory loss 	<p>Examples of Substances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol Cannabis Solvents Tranquilisers
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Stimulants

<p>Definition</p> <p>Any agent that activates, enhances, or increases neural activity in the Central Nervous System</p>	<p>Possible Effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abnormally rapid heart rate (tachycardia) Elevated blood pressure Sweating and chills Nausea/vomiting Abnormal behaviour including agitation, grandiosity, and impulsivity 	<p>Examples of Substances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cocaine Amphetamines Caffeine Nicotine
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Hallucinogens

Definition
A chemical agent that induces alterations in perception, thinking, and feeling

Possible Effects

- Dilated pupils
- Elevated BP
- Tachycardia
- Tremors
- Overly responsive reflexes (hyperreflexia)
- Psychedelic phase (euphoria or mixed moods, visual illusions, altered perceptions)

Examples of Substances

- LSD
- DMT
- Mescaline
- Magic mushrooms

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Opioids/Opiates

Definition
Agents that interact with the Central Nervous System to relieve pain and produce a sense of wellbeing

Possible Effects

- Pain relief
- Feelings of wellbeing
- Respiratory depression
- Impaired concentration
- Drowsiness
- Impaired judgement

Examples of Substances

- Opium
- Heroin
- Codeine
- Methadone
- Fentanyl
- Dihydrocodeine
- Buprenorphine

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The Drugs Wheel

Created by Mark Adley in response to increase in NPS

Adds three new categories: cannabinoids, empathogens, and dissociatives

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Stimulants
"Uppers": increased energy, increased heart rate, euphoria, dilated pupils, paranoia, anxiety

Empathogens
"Loved up": connectedness, warmth, understanding, sweating, arousal, mood swings, depression

Psychedelics
"Trips": spiritual connection, heightened senses, visual or auditory hallucinations, anxiety, panic, mental health issues

Dissociatives
"Out of body": euphoric, floaty, disconnected, relaxed, numb, scared, "room to move" in a "hole"

Cannabinoids
"Stoned": calm, munchies, chilled out, floaty, giggly, sensual, paranoid, dry mouth, sensitive, mental health issues

Depressants
"Buzzing": euphoric, confident, relaxed, risk-taking, withdrawal, unconsciousness, coma, vomiting, death

Opioids
"Innocible": confident, pain-free, safe, euphoric, constricted pupils, addiction, hallucinations, withdrawal, overdose

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The Drugs Wheel

Cannabinoids

- Includes cannabis and synthetic drugs designed to mimic the action of THC (psychoactive chemical in cannabis)
- Example: Spice

Dissociatives

- Drugs that cause a feeling of detachment, as if the mind and body have been separated, with some people feeling incapable of moving
- Includes drugs like ketamine or PCP (phencyclidine), and NPS that mimic those drugs
- Example: Salvia

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The Drugs Wheel

Empathogens

- Substances with a stimulating effect on the brain
- Feelings of arousal, connectedness, belonging
- Includes MDMA and NPS that mimic it
- Example: PMA/PMAA

Psychedelics

- Drugs that cause hallucinations, feelings of relaxation/happiness (or agitation/confusion)
- Includes drugs like LSD, magic mushrooms, and NPS that mimic them
- Example: Bromo- DragonFLY

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How Can Drugs Be Taken?

- Also known as "route of administration"
 - Oral consumption (swallowing)
 - Intranasal consumption (snorting)
 - Inhalation into lungs (smoking/vaping)
 - Intravenously (via hypodermic needle)
 - Absorption (e.g. dermal patches)




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3 Substance Use and the Law

What are some laws that surround substance use?


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Drugs and the Law
 What do you know about drugs and the law? Take the quiz to find out.

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Misuse of Drugs Act 1971



- Came fully into effect in 1973
- Aims to prevent the misuse of controlled drugs → complete ban on the **possession, supply, manufacture, import, and export** of controlled drugs
 - Except as allowed by regulations/license from the Secretary of State

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Misuse of Drugs Act 1971: Classes

Class A	Class B	Class C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cocaine and crack cocaine ○ Ecstasy ○ Heroin ○ LSD ○ Crystal meth ○ Magic mushrooms ○ Any Class B drug prepared for injection ○ PMA/PMMA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amphetamine ○ Barbituates ○ Codeine ○ Ketamine ○ Cannabis ○ Synthetic cathinones (e.g. mephedrone) ○ Synthetic cannabinoids ○ GHB/GBL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anabolic steroids ○ Minor tranquilisers (e.g. Rohypnol) ○ Khat ○ Piperazines (e.g. BZP) ○ Nitrous Oxide

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NPS Legislation – Psychoactive Substances Act 2016



- 26 May 2016
- Covers all substances capable of a psychoactive effect
- Legitimate substances excluded
 - Food, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, caffeine, medical products

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NPS Legislation – Psychoactive Substances Act 2016


- Criminalises possession with intent to supply, supply/offer to supply, production, and import/export
- Main aim of the PSA is intended to act against shops and websites selling NPS/"legal highs"
 - Sellers need to ensure that substances being sold aren't "likely" to be consumed for psychoactive effects
- Possession isn't a crime (except in custodial institutions)
 - Government didn't want the PSA to lead to the mass criminalisation of young people

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4 Adolescent Substance Use and Its Possible Impacts

Why might young people use substances, and how might substance use impact them and those around them?


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Why might a young person use substances?
Think of some reasons why young people might use drugs or alcohol.

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Relieving tension/anxiety/form of escapism



Boredom

Dependency

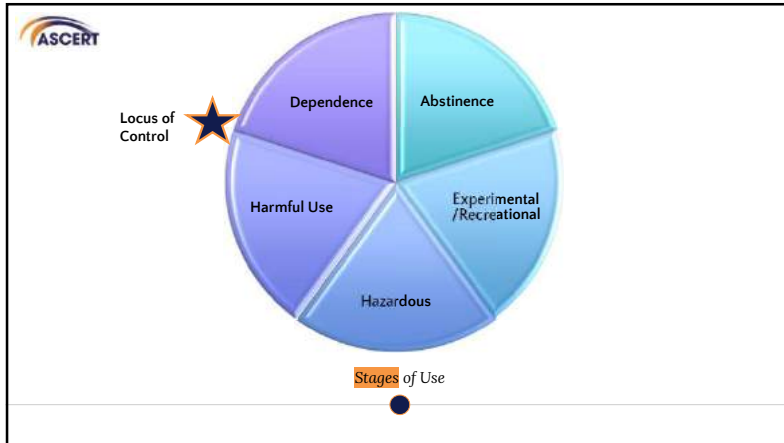
Availability

Rituals

Rebellion

Self-medication

Social norms and/or peer pressure



Possible Impacts of Substance Use on Young People

<p>Emotional Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Paranoia Aggression Anxiety Psychosis May trigger a mental health issue they didn't have previously 	<p>Physical Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart failure/stroke Liver or kidney damage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cancer Weight loss or gain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seizures Brain damage Lung disease 	<p>Academics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased concentration/memory → school work is harder Poor sleep → fatigue and inability to go to class May affect overall success in exams May affect future prospects of further education
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Possible Impacts of Substance Use on Young People


<p>Social Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of friends who don't want to engage in substance use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in peer group Impact on relationship with family members Increased use often leads to loss of interest in other hobbies Impacts on emotions → arguments and fights with family and friends 	<p>Finances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debt Spending money on substances Money struggles can lead to decisions that will affect person in other ways (e.g. theft → criminal record) Ability to get certain jobs can be affected by drug convictions Financial impact on society (e.g. cost to A&E for drug related admissions)
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Effects on the Brain

- Central Nervous System**
 - When a person thinks of something he wants his body to do, the CNS (brain and spinal cord) send a signal to that part of the body
 - Alcohol/drugs can slow or speed up the CNS
- Cerebral cortex**
 - Substances can affect the cerebral cortex as it works with information from a person's senses

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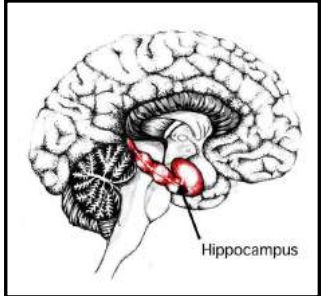
Effects the Brain: Frontal Lobes



- The brain's frontal lobes are important for planning, forming ideas, making decisions, and using self-control
- Substances affect the frontal lobes → a person might find it hard to control emotions and urges
 - May act without thinking or may even become violent
- Drinking alcohol over a long period of time can damage the frontal lobes forever

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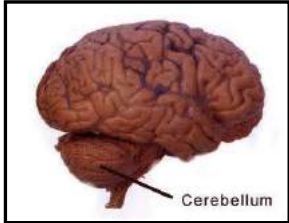
Effects the Brain: Hippocampus



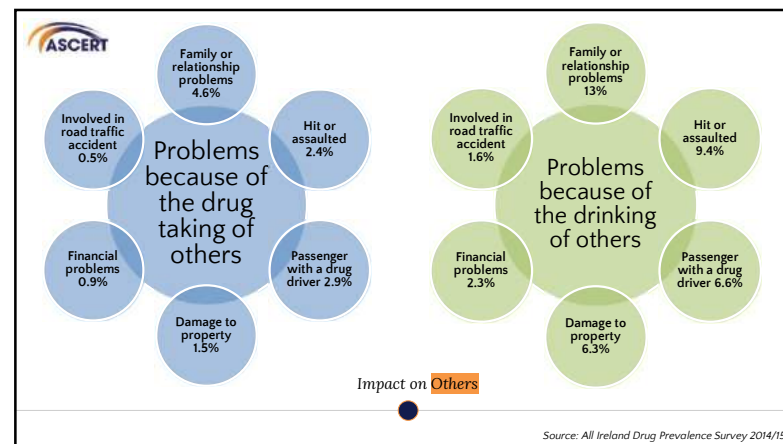
- Where memories are made in the brain
- If damaged by alcohol/drug use → possible difficulty with learning and holding on to knowledge


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Effects the Brain: Cerebellum




- Important for coordination, thoughts, and awareness
 - Possible difficulty with these skills when substances enter the cerebellum




 **Next Time...**

We will discuss:


- The role of adolescent brain development in risk-taking behaviour (including substance misuse)
- Risks and protective factors
- Ideas for providing substance misuse prevention education to young people



 **Thanks!**


Any questions?



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 **Next Time...**

We will discuss:


- The role of adolescent brain development in risk-taking behaviour (including substance misuse)
- Risk and protective factors
- Ideas for providing substance misuse prevention education to young people
- Signposting



 
Project supported by the PHA

Young People and Substance Misuse

Day Two




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Course Objectives: Day 2

By the end of today, you will be able to:

- Describe the role of adolescent brain development in risk-taking behaviour (including substance misuse)
- Identify risk and protective factors for substance misuse in young people
- Understand strategies for providing substance misuse prevention education to young people
- Identify sources of support




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1 Adolescent Brain Development

Why is substance use particularly concerning with youth?

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Adolescent Brain Development



- By the age of 6, the brain is about 95% of its maximum size
- Females' brains are fully grown (in size) at 11.5 years
- Males' brains are fully grown (in size) at 14.5 years
 - Larger on average than females' brains

Source: Cledd et al., 1999

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Adolescent Brain Development

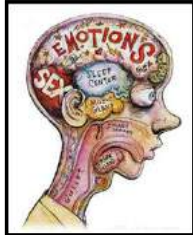
- Significant brain growth and development occurs during adolescence and continues into the twenties
- Some studies show this growth/development extends to age 30
- The adolescent's brain is in a constant state of development
- Some areas of the brain mature faster than others
 - Areas associated with reward, motivation, and impulsivity mature earlier

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- Proliferation
- Pruning
- Myelination

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Adolescent Brain Development: **Summary**



- Your prefrontal cortex, which thinks about things logically, weighs the pros and cons, and restrains you matures later
- This means teenagers may be more prone to riskier and impulsive behaviours, and less likely to consider consequences compared to adults


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3 Adolescent Risk-Taking Behaviour

What might adolescent risk-taking behaviour look like, and what are risk and protective factors?

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Risk-Taking Behaviour



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Adolescent Risk-Taking Behaviour

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Adolescent Risk-Taking Behaviour: Research

- J. David Hawkins, Richard F. Catalano, and Janet Y. Miller
- Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescence and early adulthood: Implications for substance prevention.*
- Psychological Bulletin 1992. Vol. 112, No.1, pg 64-105



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Adolescent Risk-Taking Behaviour: Research



- Hawkins's domains that risk and protective factors occur in
 - Individual
 - Family
 - School
 - Community

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Source: Hawkins et al., 1992

Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Substance Use: Individual

<p>Risk Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebellious Alienated/isolated Early anti-social behaviour Positive attitude to drug use Poor self-esteem/expectations for success Friends who use 	<p>Protective Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong bond/attachment to at least one parent Strong bond with friends Conventionality (follow the rules) Child's temperament Good repertoire of helpful coping mechanisms
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ASCERT Source: Hawkins et al., 1992

Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Substance Use:
Family

<p>Risk Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family history of drug use ○ Poor family management of problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parental drug use ○ Positive attitude to drug use by parents ○ Unstable home environments 	<p>Protective Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strong bond/attachment to at least one parent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marital harmony ○ Supportive family ○ Good management of problems ○ Consistent discipline
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ASCERT Source: Hawkins et al., 1992

Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Substance Use:
School

<p>Risk Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic difficulties ○ Low attendance ○ Anti-social behaviour ○ Friends/peers who use ○ Unrealistically high expectations 	<p>Protective Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic success ○ Good attendance ○ Follow the rules/social norms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bonds with friends ○ Friends/peers who don't use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive school climate
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ASCERT Source: Hawkins et al., 1992

Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Substance Use:
Community

<p>Risk Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic/social deprivation ○ Community norms for drug use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drugs easily available ○ Low attachment or few links in the community ○ Community violence/disruption 	<p>Protective Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Involvement in church/other groups ○ Anti-drug attitude in community (values/norms) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Difficult to access drugs ○ Area promotes sense of belonging ○ External support system
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Risk and Protective Factors

In your groups, identify the risk and protective factors for your young person in your case studies.

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4 Tips for Substance Use Prevention Programmes for Youth

How can you provide substance use prevention education to the young people you work with?

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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education: **DIY**

- Things to avoid when carrying out prevention work with young people
 - Pretending you know everything or making up answers without knowing if they're true or not
 - Avoiding the reality of the situation/"just say no"
 - Awareness raising *by itself*
 - Scare tactics



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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education: **DIY**

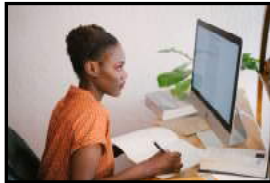


- What's wrong with scare tactics?
 - Examples: graphic pictures without contextual information, bringing someone in to tell scary stories about their own substance use or someone else's (e.g. a bereaved family member)
 - Evidence shows it doesn't work!
 - "I know people who use drugs and that didn't happen to them"
 - Brain development → don't process this type of information the same way as adults
 - Risk of re-traumatisation

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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education: **DIY**

- Reputable sources for substance-related information
 - drugwise.org.uk
 - talktofrank.com
 - drinkaware.co.uk
 - release.org.uk
 - drugsandalcoholni.info (local services)



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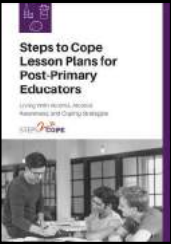
Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education: **DIY**

- Skills building *must* be included if you want your programme to be successful
 - How would young people be able to act on your information otherwise?
- Examples of relevant skills
 - Communication
 - Assertiveness and refusal skills
 - Media literacy (e.g. alcohol advertising)
 - Decision making/risk assessment
 - Emotional regulation

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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education: **DIY**

- Examples of evidence-based programmes and other pre-established resources
 - Talk About Alcohol: 11-18 year olds (alcoholeducationtrust.org)
 - Project ALERT: 12 – 14 year olds (projectalert.com)
 - Keepin' It REAL: 11 – 15 year olds (real-prevention.com)
 - Steps to Cope Lesson Plans for Post-Primary Educators (<https://stepstocope.co.uk/practitioners-area/>)



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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education by Involving Outside Organisations: **Targeted Lifeskills**



- Group-based programme for young people aged 11 – 21 focused on life skills and harm reduction → decrease substance use and related harms
- ASCERT and Start360
 - Northern, Western, Southern
- Lisburn YMCA
 - Belfast, South Eastern

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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education by Involving Outside Organisations: **Youth Engagement Service (YES)**

- Formerly known as One Stop Shop; multi-focus health hub (including training) for young people aged 11-25
- Extern
 - Belfast, South Eastern (in Bangor YMCA)
- Magnet Centre (Newry) & FutureProof (Banbridge)
- Find Centre (Enniskillen) & Longtower (L/Derry)
- Start360 (Ballymena) & Carrickfergus YMCA

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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education by Involving Outside Organisations:
DACT Connections Service

- Information, advice, signposting, and awareness raising
- ASCERT
 - South Eastern and Western
- Start360
 - Northern and Southern
- Extern
 - Belfast



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Provision of Substance Use Prevention Education by Involving Outside Organisations:
Other



- ASCERT Training Services (all areas)
- Extern REACH-Out (BHSCT)
- Falls Community Council Community Drugs Programme (BHSCT)
- HURT Drug and Alcohol Lifeskills Programme (WHSCT)

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5 Signposting
Who's available to help?

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NIDACTS

Northern Ireland Drug and Alcohol Coordination Teams

drugsandalcoholni.info







 **Family Support NI**

familysupportni.gov.uk

A directory of various support services (e.g. mental health, finances) and registered childcare services in NI







Thanks!

Any questions?

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