

ALCOHOLISM AND DRUGS/SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

ALCOHOLISM.

It is when people are involved in Alcoholism as an escape route for social, personal or career pressures that abuse or alcoholism can result. Abuse of alcohol or consumption of excessive alcohol may lead to liver damage and other debilitating conditions.

Alcoholism can also lead to alcohol addiction, in which a person becomes physically and psychologically dependent on alcohol to the point that he or she cannot function without it.

Alcohol abuse and addiction can also lead to destructive behaviour such as being violent with other people, driving under the influence of alcohol can lead to accidents and domestic violence. Most people who use alcohol or even abuse it are at a risk of alcoholism.

While abuse of alcohol to mask depression and other symptoms of mental illness is a warning sign for alcoholism, as well as a sign that a patient needs help, alcoholism is a disease in and of itself, and it may have a genetic component. We should all fight alcoholism.

Beers, wines and spirits are examples of alcohol and they contain a substance called ETHANOL. Other types of alcohol include illicit brew such as chang'aa that may contain a poisonous substance called METHANOL which may cause blindness or death when it is consumed.

DANGERS OF ALCOHOL ABUSE.

- 1) May Kill the brain cells especially in young people.
- 2) May Damage the liver by causing a disease called liver cirrhosis.
- 3) May Cause heart attack.

- 4) May Cause anaemia and diseases of the eye and skin.
- 5) It may also lead to diabetes, gout and cancer of the mouth.
- 6) May cause family conflicts such as quarrels and fights.
- 7) Drunk road users such as drunk drivers, pedestrians and riders may cause accidents.
- 8) It may lead to addiction where the user becomes an alcoholic.
- 9) Causes staggering and slurred speech.

DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

A drug is any substance that affects the normal functioning of the body, mind or both.

Most of the times drugs are used for uses which are not the intended use, and the excessive use of the drug will make a person not be able to live without a regular dose of such drug. This eventually leads to addiction which later causes destruction of the user.

When a person abuses drugs, He is prone to many negative effects of that specific drug.

COMMONLY ABUSED DRUGS.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| (1) Tobacco | (5) Mandrax |
| (2) Alcohol | (6) Cocaine |
| (3) Miraa (khat) | (7) Heroin |
| (4) Bhang | (8) Inhalants |

TOBACCO.

Tobacco contains three harmful substances:

- 1) TAR -A sticky dark brown substance that stains teeth that may cause cancer of the lips, mouth, throat and lungs.
- 2) NICOTINE-Causes addiction.

3) CARBON MONOXIDE-Combines with oxygen carrying pigment called haemoglobin to form a stable compound which prevents transportation of oxygen hence death.

DANGERS OF SMOKING TOBACCO.

1. May lead to respiratory diseases such as bronchitis.
2. It may lead to lung cancer.
3. It may lead to stomach cancer.
4. May lead to Discolouration of the teeth.
5. It may lead to heart attack.
6. Babies born by smoking mothers may develop slowly and have a weak immune system.
7. Smoking may cause fire outbreak in the house or place of work.
8. Smoking causes air pollution.
9. Causes addiction.

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MIRAA (KHAT)

The leaves and bark of young twigs of the miraa plant is chewed to serve as a stimulant.

DANGERS OF CHEWING MIRAA.

1. May cause Loss of sleep (awake the whole night).
2. May cause dryness of the mouth and lips.
3. May cause depression and wastage of money.
4. May cause addiction
5. May cause Loss of appetite.
6. May cause malnutrition and poor health.
7. May cause loss of contact with reality.
8. May cause aggressive behaviour.
9. May cause damage to tissues in the stomach.

BHANG (MARIJUANA)

It is derived from the leaves and flowers of plant called cannabis sativa.

It is an illegal drug in Kenya.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF USING BHANG.

- Distorted perception (sights, sounds, time, touch)
- Problems with memory and learning.
- Impairment of judgment and Impairment of memory.
- Loss of coordination.
- Trouble with thinking and problem-solving
- Increased heart rate, reduced blood pressure
- It leads to increased pulse rate.
- Reddening of the eyes (blood shot eyes).

- Leads to use of other harmful narcotics such as heroin.
- Itching and dilation of the pupil.
- Can also produce anxiety, fear, distrust or panic.
- Hallucinations.
- Delusions.
- Impaired memory.
- Can make the user aggressive and suicidal.
- Disorientation.

COCAINE.

It is obtained from the cocoa plant.

Cocaine originally had medicinal value but nowadays people use it as a narcotic drug. Its use and possession is illegal in Kenya.

DANGERS OF TAKING COCAINE.

- 1) It interferes with the nerves in the brain, and keeps brain chemicals such as serotonin and dopamine from being properly absorbed.
- 2) Make one to remain awake.
- 3) No desire to eat.
- 4) Causes hallucinations; hearing seeing or smelling non-existent things.
- 5) Impaired judgment (not able to make proper decisions)
- 6) Damages brain cells.
- 7) Causes false feeling of excitement and well-being.
- 8) Cocaine use may also bring feelings of restlessness, irritability, anxiety, panic, and paranoia.
- 9) It temporarily decreases the need for sleep and food.
- 10) Some users also experience restlessness, irritability, and anxiety.

11) Due to sharing of injections, the users are at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Shortly after cocaine is ingested the user may experience the following symptoms:

- Constricted blood vessels.
- Dilated pupils.
- Increased body temperature.
- Increased heart rate.
- Higher blood pressure.

Repeated cocaine use can cause the following health consequences:

- Chest pain.
- Irregular heartbeat.
- Heart attack.
- Respiratory failure.
- Stroke.
- Seizures and headaches.
- Abdominal pain and nausea.

Chronic users of cocaine can become malnourished due to the drug's ability to decrease appetite.

ADDICTION.

Cocaine is highly addictive and those who smoke cocaine develop an addiction to it and it becomes difficult to stop taking it.

WITHDRAWAL.

When cocaine users stop using cocaine, or when they end a cocaine spree, they immediately experience a "crash" which includes depression, fatigue, and lack of pleasure, anxiety, irritability, sleepiness and a strong craving for more cocaine.

Some people experience agitation and extreme suspicion when they quit using cocaine, but cocaine withdrawal usually does not have visible physical symptoms like vomiting, chills and tremors that occur with the withdrawal of other drugs.

HEROIN;

It is an illegal drug in Kenya.

Heroin is a derivative of morphine-a naturally occurring product of the poppy plant and has plenty of negative consequences and is powerfully addictive.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, heroin is the most abused drug in its class. Users who inject the drug are at an increased risk of several communicable diseases including HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.

Appears like a white crystalline powder.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF HEROIN.

1. Causes difficulty in breathing.
2. Makes the user drowsy.
3. Leads to memory loss.
4. Constricted pupil.
5. Nausea.
6. Mood swings.
7. Intoxication and withdrawal.

MANDRAX.

Its use is illegal in Kenya. This is a man-made drug that is artificially made in factories.

EFFECTS OF MANDRAX

1. Causes drowsiness.
2. Users experience memory loss.
3. Users are not able to think and reason well.
4. Slurred speech and stammering.
5. Breathing difficulty.
6. It is poisonous and can kill easily.

INHALANTS

These are drugs or substances that produce fumes that are inhaled through the nose.

Fumes produced make the user seemingly drunk excited.

EXAMPLES OF INHALANTS

- 1) Cobblers glue.
- 2) Kerosene.
- 3) Petrol.

EFFECTS OF INHALANTS.

1. Breathing difficulty.
2. Users feel dizzy.
3. Vomiting.
4. Damage brain cells of the user.

The fact is that Drug abuse will negatively impact on the individual performance of the students and eventually ruining the students' life. Drugs will also impact negatively on the lives of adults who are addicted to the drugs. BE ADVISED!