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foundation



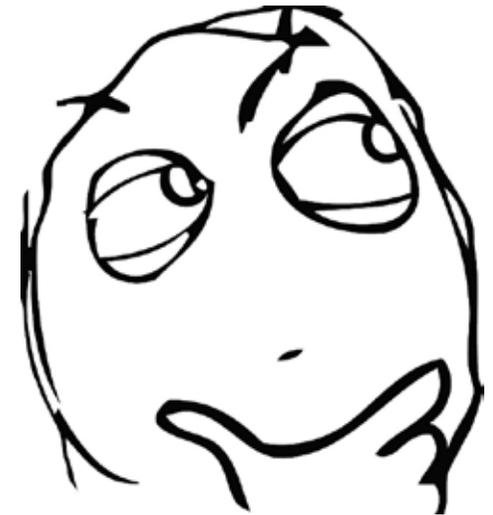
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'Supporting young people to make safe choices about drugs'

# Making Safer Choices

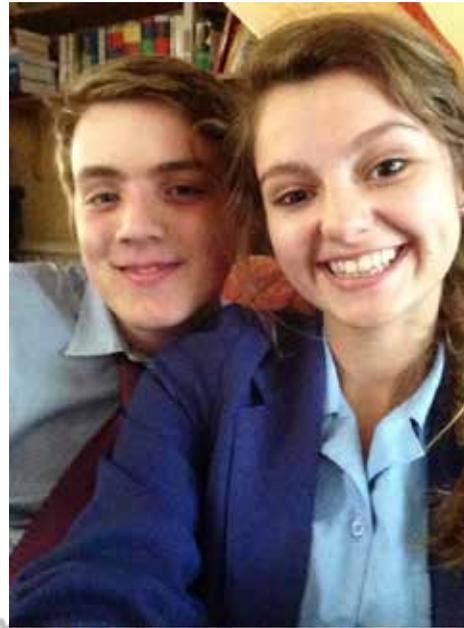
## Find out more about...

- levels of young people's exposure to drugs and alcohol
- what young people and parents need to know about the risks
- factors that affect young people's decisions about drugs and alcohol
- what you can do to support your children to stay safe



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**Working with young people, parents/carers, teachers and professionals to ensure every child and young person has the information, understanding and life skills they need to make informed, healthy and safe choices about drugs and alcohol**



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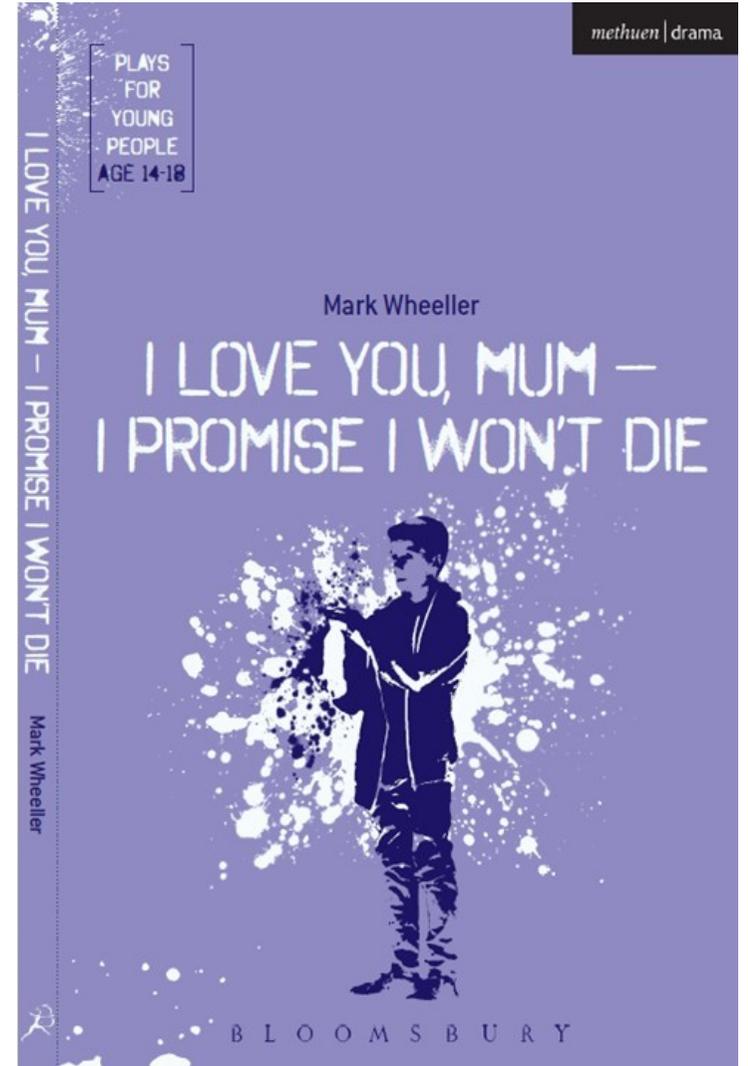
# Making Safer Choices

- Dan's story assemblies
- Workshops
- Planning and resources for PSHE lessons and form time sessions
- Youth ambassadors/ peer mentoring
- Parents' workshops
- Staff training

**150+ schools, colleges  
and community groups**



'Supporting young peop



**'I Love You, Mum – I Promise I Won't Die'**  
A verbatim play written by award-winning  
playwright Mark Wheeler  
StopWatch Theatre second professional  
tour 2018



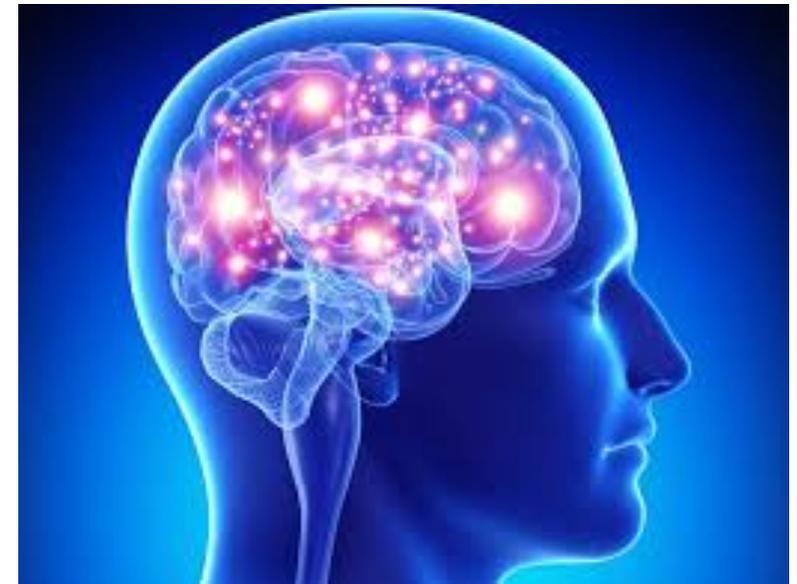
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# Young people and substance use



# What are drugs?

**Drugs are substances that alter, block, or mimic chemical reactions in the brain. This causes an alteration of the body's normal processes, and can affect your mind, body and behaviour**



# Substances Used By Young People



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# Substances Used By Young People

**Caffeine**  
**Alcohol**



**Nicotine**



**Volatile substances**

**Cannabis/ skunk**



**Nitrous oxide**



# Substances Used By Young People

**MDMA/ ecstasy**



**Speed**



**LSD/ acid**



**Cocaine**



**Ketamine**



**Lean**



**Xanax**



**Steroids**



*Be aware...*

**What % of 11 year-olds have been offered illegal drugs?**

**What % of 15 year-olds have been offered illegal drugs?**

**What % of each age have ever tried illegal drugs?**



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## Be aware...

### Who did they get them from?

**49%** got drugs from a friend

**26%** from a dealer

### Where did they get them?

**52%** got drugs in the park, street etc

**14%** got them in someone else's house

**14%** got them from school

### 11 year-olds:

**16%** have been offered drugs

**6%** have tried drugs

**4%** in the last month

### 15 year-olds:

**55%** have been offered drugs

**37%** have tried drugs

**18%** in the last month



*NHS Digital: Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Among Young People  
England 2016*

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# But don't panic

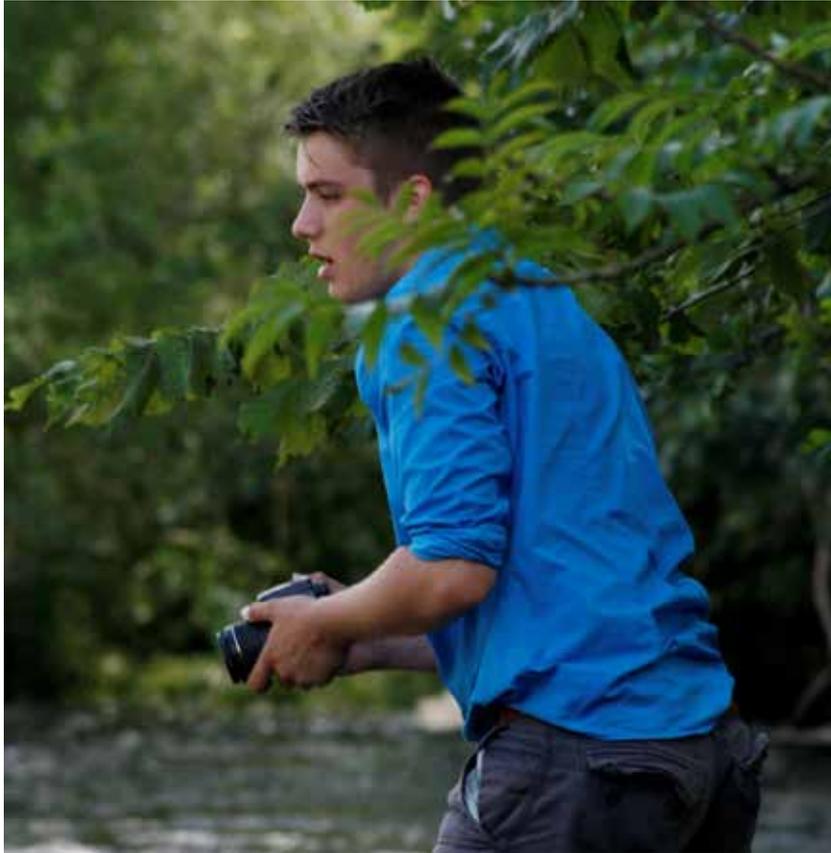
**Most don't say yes, and of those that do, most don't come to any long term harm.**

**Young people need:**

- **Information, understanding and awareness**
- **Life skills to navigate choices confidently and safely**



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# Youth Ambassadors



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What is the first drug most young people experience?



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What are the risks?



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## Stimulants

Cocaine  
Ecstasy/MDMA  
Caffeine  
Tobacco



## Sedatives

Cannabis  
Alcohol  
Heroin  
Tobacco

## Hallucinogens

LSD  
Magic mushrooms



## Dissociatives

Nitrous Oxide  
Ketamine

# Drugs - what are the risks?





**ECSTASY**



foundation

1 1 3 7 3 1 1



Which two substances cause young people most problems?



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# Is cannabis safe?

- It's used as medicine
- It's just a plant
- It's traditional
- It's only class B
- It's 'just weed'



# Is cannabis safe?

Heavy cannabis smokers are five times more likely to develop psychosis, and half of these go on to develop schizophrenia



One in six who start smoking in their mid-teens become addicted

Just one joint a week or even once a month will ensure a permanent presence of THC in the brain. Concentration, learning and memory are all badly affected.

More young people are in treatment for cannabis addiction than all other drugs put together.

Studies show skunk takes up 80-90% of the UK cannabis market. Skunk is one of over 100 high-THC varieties.



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# What is the most common risk for young people with drinking alcohol?

## Answer: Having an accident

Alcohol affects co-ordination, balance and judgement.

1 in 7 young people have had an accident as a result of drinking.

22% of all accidental deaths in the UK are alcohol related.



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# How many alcoholic drinks/units a week is the safe limit for under 15s?

**Answer: there is no safe limit**

**UK Chief Medical Officers' recommendations January 2016:**

Children under 15 shouldn't drink alcohol at all. There is clear evidence that alcohol can harm the developing brain, bones and hormones



**An alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option.**

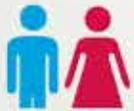


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# What does 1 unit of alcohol look like?



You shouldn't regularly exceed

 **14**  
UNITS  
per week

**drinkaware**



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Be aware...

What % of 15 year-olds had been drunk in the last month?

23%

Where did most young people get alcohol from?



*NHS Digital: Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Among Young People  
England 2016*

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# Drugs, alcohol and the law

**Possession?**

**Supply?**

**Class A?**

**Class B?**

**Class C?**

**'Legal highs'/NPS**



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# One Night of Ecstasy

Home Episodes Clips



Summer 2015. 20 year old Simon heads to a festival with his best mates. Like thousands of others they're looking forward to getting drunk, enjoying live music and partying the weekend away.

Within 36 hours Simon's in hospital, one childhood friend is dead, another is on life support and Simon is about to be interviewed by the police. And that's just the beginning ... Told over eight short-form episodes, this is the story of how a single ecstasy pill changed the lives of a group of young friends forever.

## On iPlayer



## One Little Pill

Series 1

# Warning? Caution? Arrest?

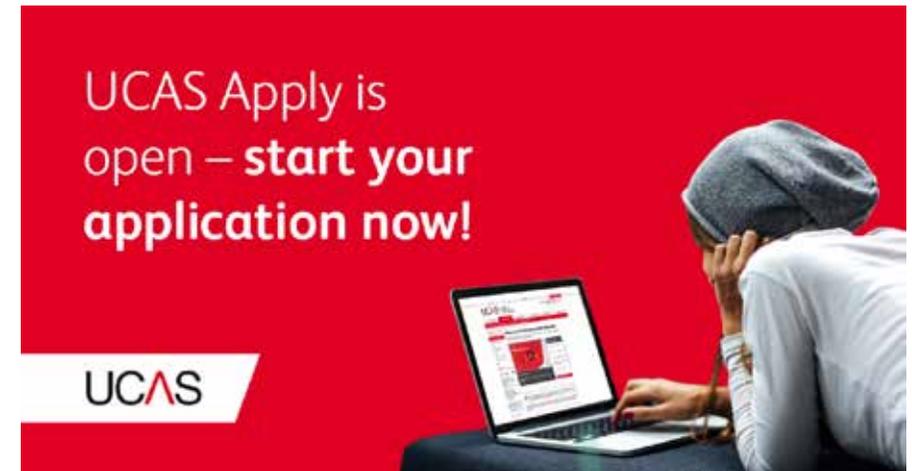
**What could the consequences be...?**

- **For going to university?**
- **For employment?**
- **For travel?**



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# UCAS declaration 2018 entry



**“We ask you to declare if you have any relevant unspent criminal convictions or punishments. Also, if you are applying for a course leading to certain professions or occupations, such as nursing or teaching, that are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, we will ask you to declare any spent or unspent convictions or punishments that would appear on a criminal records check.”**



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Why take  
drugs?



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## Why some say yes

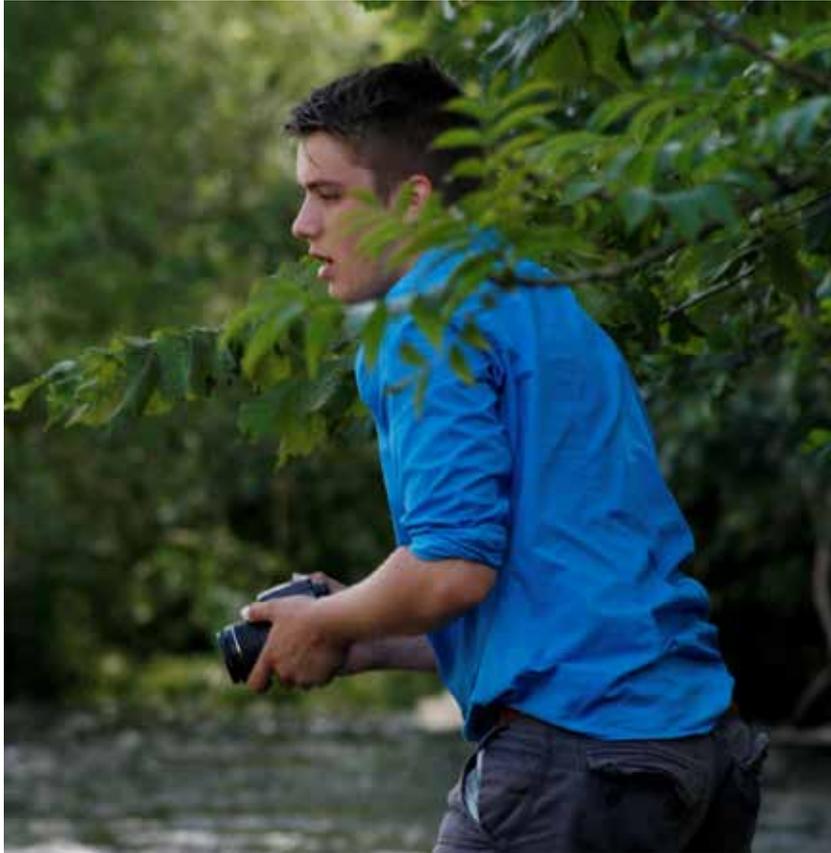
- To socialise and fit in with friends
- Peer influence
- To look 'good'/impress
- Curiosity
- For the buzz/ to relax
- For fun
- To rebel
- To help cope with stress or difficult emotions
- Don't understand the risks

## Why some say no

- Know the risks
- Sports/ health
- Can have fun without it
- Like to stay in control
- Legal consequences
- Family, culture, religion
- Know people with drink/drug problems
- Cost
- Just don't want to!



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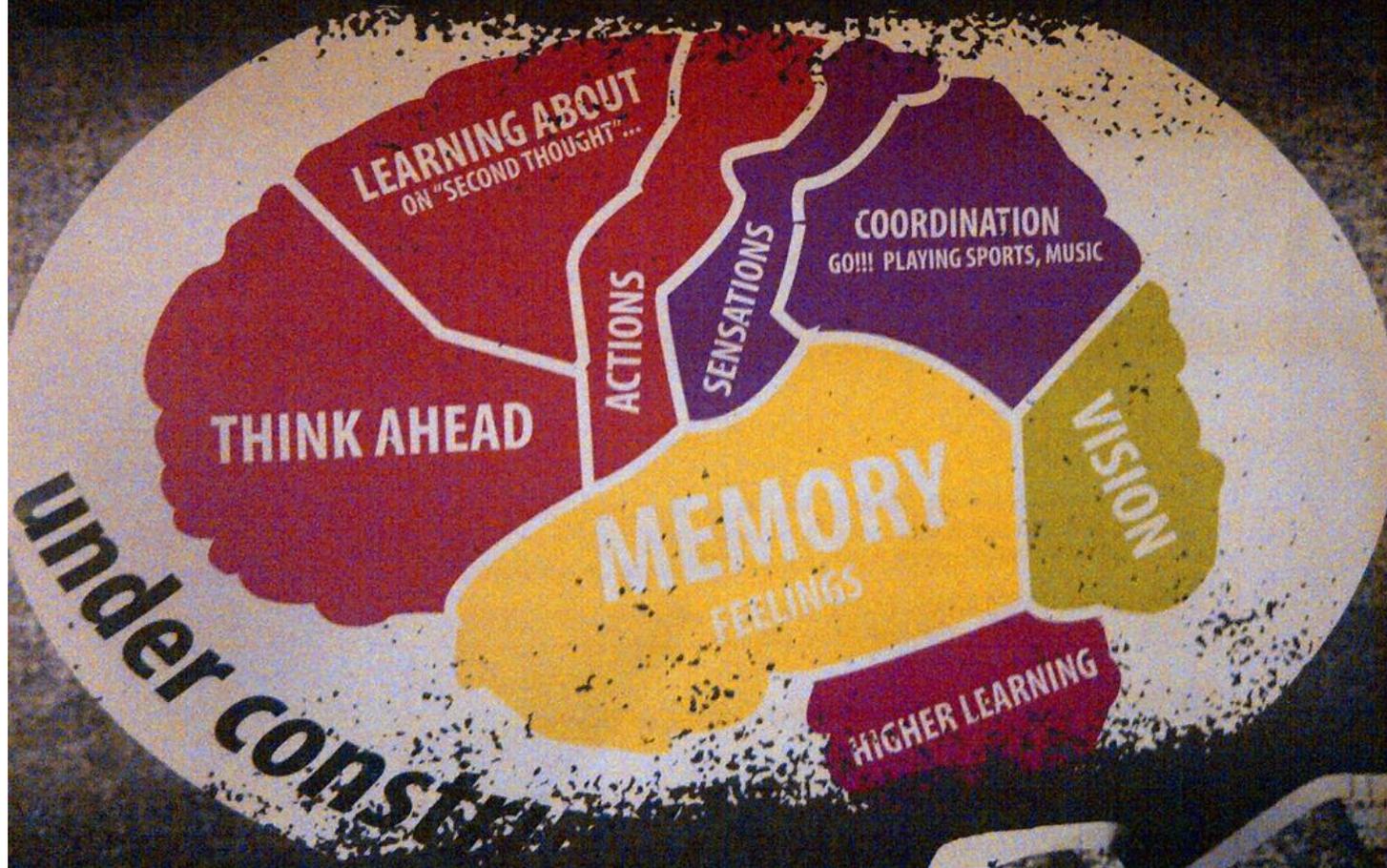
# Youth Ambassadors



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**UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

**UND**





# Five important facts about the growing teenage brain...



## 1. Pleasure

Greater **dopamine** activity = intensified experience of pleasure

## 2. Reward

Strong activity in **ventral striatum** = intensified response to rewards

## 3. Peer influence

Huge changes in growing **pre-frontal cortex** = heightened self-consciousness and concern for their peers' good opinion

## 4. Decision-making

Growing **pre-frontal cortex** = underdeveloped ability to assess risk and gauge possible consequences

## 5. Risk-taking

A combination of all the above...

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# Young people and risk-taking

**“Studies have shown that teenagers only take risks when they are being watched by their peers. One study that placed teenagers in a driving simulator showed that if they were on their own or with an adult, then their accident rate was identical to an adult's. But place another teenager next to them, and the accident rate increased dramatically.”**

**TES 27 May 2016**



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# Peer influence – what can you do?

- **Remember they're not alone!** Most people their age don't take drugs or drink to excess
- **Prepare ahead** – help them work out where they stand, think through their responses
- **Help them try to understand who is (or they feel is) encouraging them to take drugs/ another drink and why**
- **If they want to say no be firm but clear** and don't make it a big deal
- **Try to focus on their own opinion of themselves** - what someone else thinks is OK may not be OK for them - and that's OK!



**They can be a positive peer influence!**



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# Types of drug use

**Experimental**

**Recreational**

**Dependence**

- **Physical dependence** - when the body adapts to a drug and cravings result in physical withdrawal symptoms
- **Psychological dependence** – habitual or emotional reliance on a drug resulting in cravings to which a person has become accustomed.



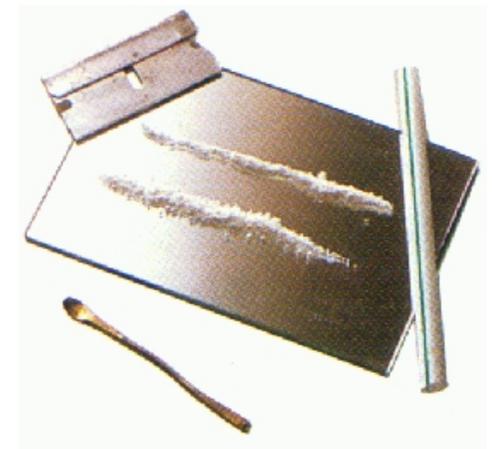
# How can you tell if your child is using drugs?

**They tell you**

**Someone else tells you**

**You see the effects or after-effects**

**You find drugs or drug paraphernalia**



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# Signs of puberty or signs of drug use?

- Acne or poor skin
- Reduced self-care and hygiene
- Excessive or poor sleep
- Change in energy levels
- Irritability and anger
- Emotional withdrawal
- Moodiness
- Change in appearance
- Body odour
- Distractibility
- Change in peer group
- Social withdrawal
- Unexpected changes to weight or build
- Unusual smells on breath, body &/or clothing
- Unpredictable behaviour/ self harm
- Associating with people who use drugs
- Too much/little money (compared to what they should have)
- Significant unexplained drop in school performance
- Talking about drugs on social media
- Paraphernalia of drug use



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# Staying safe...

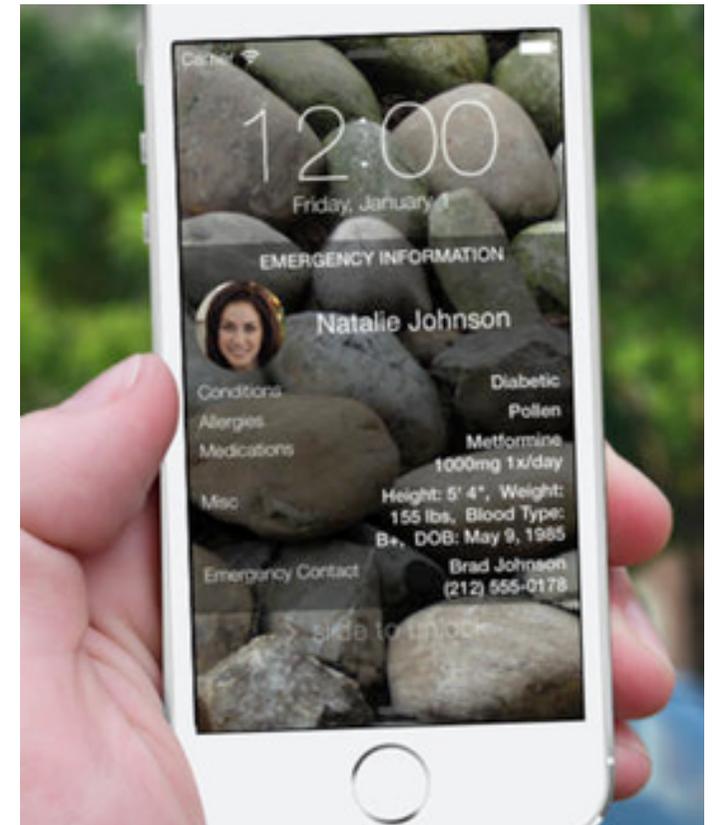
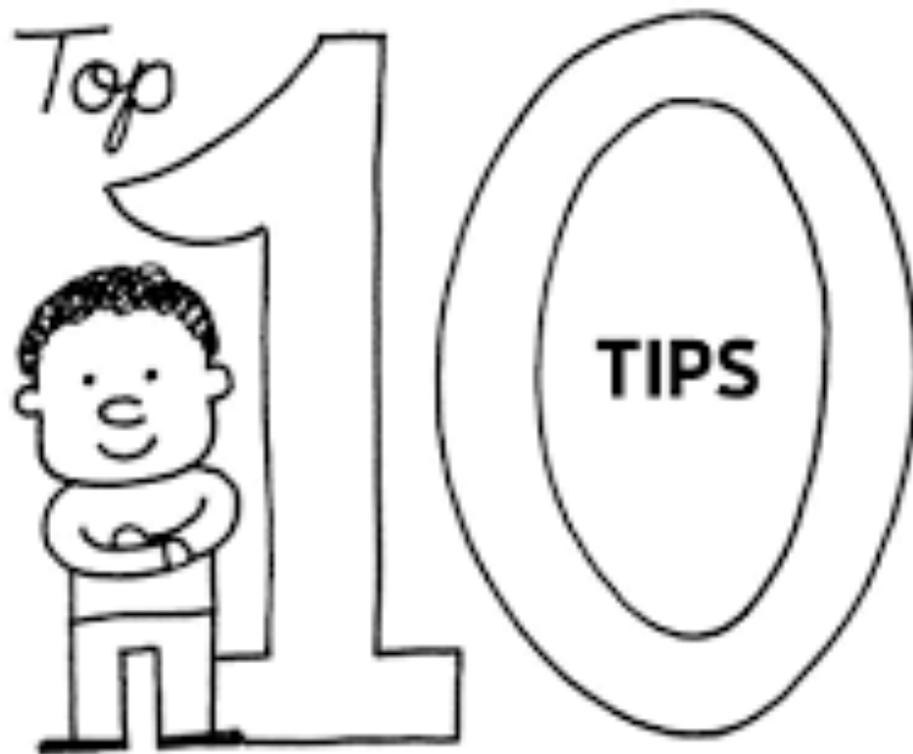
**Remember! You can never know you'll be safe if you take illegal drugs or 'legal highs' – but if you do take that risk...**

- Eat before you go out, make sure your phone's charged, plan a route home...
- Stick with your friends – but make your own choices
- Start low, go slow, pace yourself
  - Watch your drink - and your drinking
- Don't mix – anything!
- Keep packaging, and tell someone what you're taking if you do
- Beware of risks around you
- Get somewhere safe if you don't feel safe
- Don't do anything you'll regret



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# How can I help & support my child?



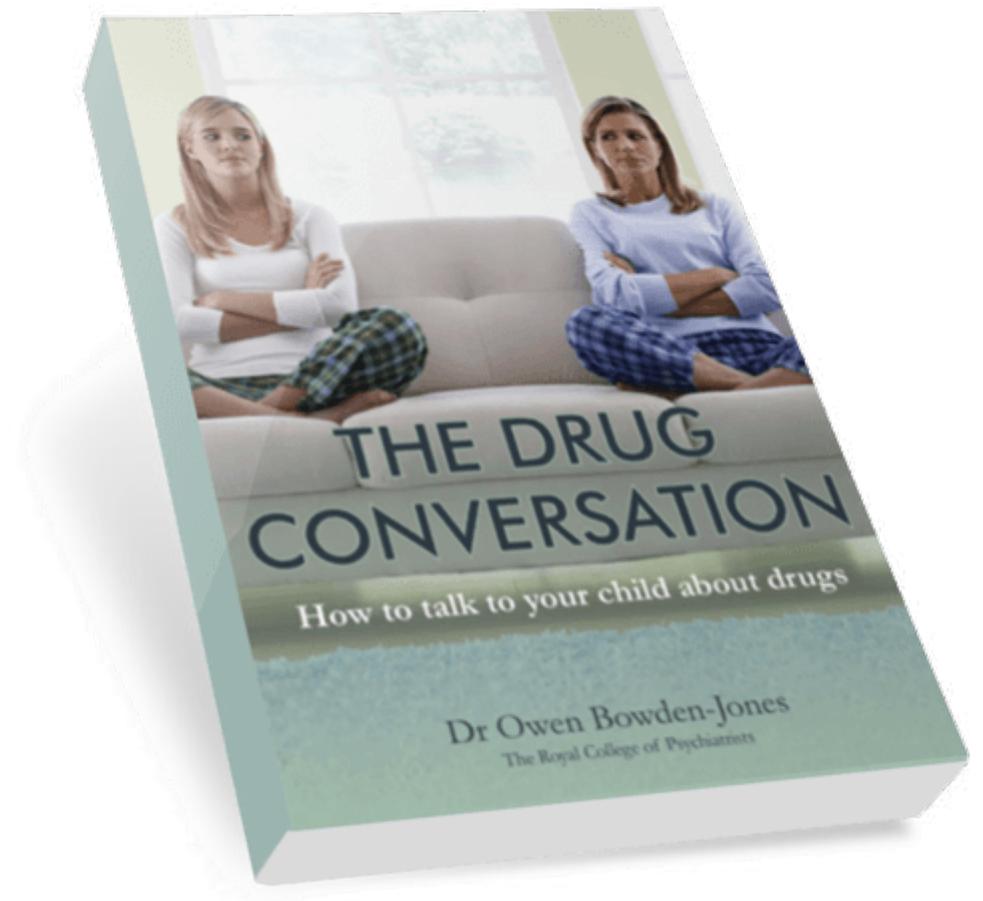
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# The drug conversation...



- Get informed – but don't feel you have to be an expert before you can have a conversation
- Make and take opportunities for conversations about drugs and alcohol e.g. in news or TV programmes
- Keep talking and listening – keep the conversation open and two-way, try not to lecture or panic, try to stay calm and keep an open mind
- Be honest – about your reasons for wanting to talk and listen, for being concerned...
  - If it all goes haywire, don't give up!

# ***The Drug Conversation*** **Dr Owen Bowden-Jones**



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# #xplan

## Giving your kids a way out



<https://bertfulks.com/2017/02/23/x-plan-giving-your-kids-a-way-out-xplan/>

- Agree a simple message that means they need help to get away from a situation, and what they'll use as an excuse their end
- Plan together how they'll get home
- Agree not to pass any judgements or ask any questions (the hard part!)



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[www.drugsand.me](http://www.drugsand.me)



[www.vice.com/safe-sesh](http://www.vice.com/safe-sesh)

## Useful info

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[www.riseabove.org.uk](http://www.riseabove.org.uk)

**drinkaware.co.uk**  
for the facts

[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)



Friendly, confidential drugs advice

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)



[www.nhsgo.uk](http://www.nhsgo.uk)

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- A free and confidential service
- Advice and information for young people
- 1:1 support to help young people reduce or stop their drug/alcohol use

**Telephone: 020 8773 1881**  
**35 Manor Rd, Wallington**



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**[www.dsmfoundation.org.uk](http://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk)**