THE TRUTH ABOUT DRUGS

Drugs destroy and ruin millions of lives every year. What can be done about it?

“SAY NO TO DRUGS, SAY YES TO LIFE”
WHY THIS BOOKLET WAS PRODUCED

Drugs destroy millions of lives every year. The most disturbing aspect of this problem is the damage drug abuse does to our young people—and the threat this represents to the future of our country. With more and more young people being introduced to drugs, it is vital to provide educational materials with factual information about their dangers.

This booklet is dedicated to those individuals and organizations working to salvage others from the ravages of drug abuse. Society owes them a debt of gratitude for their cooperative efforts and we hope this booklet will assist them.

Sadly, some in society seek to promote and spread drug use for profit or gain—a fact that has been exposed too many times for anyone to be fooled.
Drugs have been part of our culture since the middle of the last century. Popularized in the 1960s by music and mass media, they invade all aspects of society. The problem has many faces—from the college student dancing for three days straight in an Ecstasy- or methamphetamine-fueled rave, to the school child addicted to Ritalin (methylphenidate); from the mother who cannot get through a day without taking pills for depression, to the CEO addicted to cocaine.

An estimated 200 million people internationally consume illegal drugs. In the United States, results from the 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health
showed that 19.5 million Americans (or 8.2% of the population aged 12 or older) were illicit drug users in the month prior to the survey.

You probably know someone who has been affected by drugs, directly or indirectly.

The most commonly used—and abused—drug in the U.S. is alcohol. Alcohol-related motor accidents are the second leading cause of teen death in the United States.

The most commonly used illicit drug is marijuana. According to the United Nations 2005 World Drug Report, about 4% of the world’s population abuses cannabis.

Young people today are exposed earlier than ever to drugs. Based on a survey done by the Center for Disease Control in 2003, 45% of high school students nationwide drank alcohol and 22% smoked pot during a one-month period.

In Europe, recent studies among 15-year-olds suggest that use of cannabis varies from under 10% to over 30%, with the highest rates reported by boys in the United Kingdom (42.5%). Use of cocaine in Europe is also on the increase. In Spain and the United Kingdom, the level compares with that in the USA (2.5%). Cocaine use among young people has risen in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.
“My goal in life wasn’t living... it was getting high. I was falling in a downward spiral towards a point of no return. Over the years, I turned to cocaine, marijuana and alcohol under a false belief it would allow me to escape my problems. It just made things worse. I had everything, a good job, money, a loving family, yet I felt so empty inside. As if I had nothing. Over 20 years of using, I kept saying to myself, I’m going to stop permanently after using this last time. It never happened. There were even moments I had thought of giving up on life.”

— John
“It started with the weed, then the pills (Ecstasy) and acid, making cocktails of all sorts of drugs, even overdosing to make the rushes last longer. I took copious amounts of these chemicals every day for as long as two years until I had a bad trip one night and went into toxic psychosis. I prayed and cried for this feeling to go away, I had voices in my head, had the shakes and couldn’t leave home for 6 months. I became very withdrawn and thought everyone was watching me. I couldn’t walk in public places. Man! I couldn’t even drive.

“I ended up homeless and on the streets, living and sleeping in a cardboard box, begging and struggling to find ways to get my next meal. “I asked myself if this is rock bottom and I believe that it was. While observing these homeless people, I decided that I had had enough. Yes, I wanted drugs but I realized that I could want life more.”

— B.K.
Why do people take drugs?

People take drugs because they want to change something about their lives. Here are some of the reasons young people have given for taking drugs:

- To fit in
- To escape or relax
- They are bored
- It makes them seem grown up
- To rebel
- To experiment

They think drugs are a solution. But eventually, the drugs become the problem.

Terrifying as the consequences of drug use are, and as hopeless as they can seem to the addict, there are solutions to the drug problem.

Just growing up and living in the modern world can be emotionally draining. But talking problems over with a friend or a minister or trusted family member can work wonders. Simply taking a long walk to look at the objects in one’s environment until one is able to focus one’s attention outward and feels relaxed will also help.

And for the person you may know who has a drug problem, there are solutions that work. Narconon, a drug rehabilitation program that utilizes the methods of L. Ron Hubbard, has one of the highest success rates of any such program. As hundreds of thousands will attest, those addicted can free themselves of this tyranny and face life with renewed vigor and hope. (www.narconon.org)

The real answer, however, is not to take drugs in the first place. Difficult as it may be to face one’s problems, the consequences of drug use are always worse than the problem one is trying to solve with them, since drugs rob life of the sensations and joys that are the only reasons for living anyhow.
How do drugs work?

Drugs are essentially poisons. The amount taken determines the effect. A small amount acts as a stimulant (increases activity). A greater amount acts as a sedative (suppresses activity). A still larger amount poisons and can kill.

This is true of any drug. Only the amount needed to achieve the effect differs.

Drugs block off all sensations, the desirable ones with the unwanted. And while drugs might be of short-term value in the handling of pain, they wipe out ability, alertness and muddy one’s thinking.

“During the whole time I was on drugs I thought I had control over my life and that I had it great. But in my wake, I destroyed everything I had built up and fought for in my life. I cut ties to all my drug-free friends and disconnected from my family, so I hadn’t any friends but my drug mates. Every day revolved around one thing: my plan for getting the money I needed for drugs. I would do everything possible to get my amphetamine—it was the only thing in my life.”

— Pascal
One has a choice between being dead with drugs or being alive without them.

**Drugs Affect the Mind**

When a person thinks of something he or she gets a picture of it in his mind. These mental pictures are easy to see. Close your eyes and think of a cat and you will get a picture of a cat. The mind takes many pictures every second and files them away to solve problems in life.

Normally, when a person remembers something, the mind is very fast and information comes to him quickly from the pictures in the mind. But drugs blur the pictures in the mind, causing blank spots. When a person tries to get information through this cloudy mess, he can’t do it. Drugs make a person feel slow or stupid and cause him to have failures in life. And as he has more failures and life gets harder, he wants more drugs to help him deal with the problem.

This can distort the drug user’s perception of what is happening around him. As a result, the person’s actions may appear very odd or irrational. They can even become violent.

**Drugs Destroy Creativity**

One lie told about drugs is that they help a person become more creative. The truth is quite different.
There is a scale of emotions from enthusiasm to apathy. People move up and down on this scale as they go through life.

Someone who is sad might use drugs to give himself a false sense of happiness, but it does not work. Cocaine lifts a person into a false kind of cheerfulness, but when the drug wears off, he or she crashes even lower than before. And each time the emotional plunge is lower and lower. Eventually, drugs will completely destroy all the creativity a person has.

**Drug Residues Store in the Fatty Tissues of the Body**

One of the discoveries of L. Ron Hubbard, since proven by scientific testing, was that residues from drugs and other toxins lodge in the fatty tissues of the body and stay there, even years after they have been ingested. These residues can continue to affect the individual adversely long after the effect of the drug has apparently worn off.

Such drug deposits can cause lowered perception, tiredness, confused thinking and other reactions—all of which impede a person from achieving increased spiritual awareness and ability.

Recognizing this, Mr. Hubbard devised what independent researchers acknowledge as the safest, most effective—and only—detoxification procedure of its kind.
Developed to address biochemical barriers to well-being, this program is a carefully designed regimen of exercise, nutrition and sauna use which dislodges drug residues and other toxins from the fatty tissues so that these substances can then be eliminated from the body. A person undergoing this program is closely monitored by specially trained personnel in liaison with medical doctors to ensure that each aspect of the program is conducted precisely—and the desired benefits are attained.

This program is described in the book *Clear Body, Clear Mind*, by L. Ron Hubbard.

“I started drugs due to my own inability to face problems in my life and communicate to those around me what was really going on and how I felt. I also believed that drugs couldn’t hurt me and that I could control my use. This was not the case.

“For a 12-year drug dependent veteran who could manipulate the system as well as anyone, it was nothing short of a miracle to find the answer. It has been nearly five years since that day. I am now married. I help to get other people free from drugs and I have met so many wonderful, caring people that it is a joy to wake up in the morning and say that I am drug free.”

— Francesca
BASIC FACTS
ABOUT COMMONLY USED DRUGS
The facts about these commonly abused drugs have been compiled from the references at the end of this booklet. They are included here to provide you with the truth about what these drugs are and what they do.

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Alcohol depresses your central nervous system, lowers inhibitions and impairs judgment. Drinking large amounts can lead to a coma and even death. Mixing alcohol with medications or illicit drugs is extremely dangerous and can be fatal. Alcohol influences your brain and leads to a loss of coordination, slowed reflexes, distorted vision, memory lapses and blackouts. Teenage bodies are still growing and alcohol has a greater impact on young people’s physical and mental well-being than on older people.

Short-term Effects:
Feeling of warmth, flushed skin, impaired judgment, lack of coordination, slurred speech, memory and comprehension loss. Bursts of heavy drinking usually result in a “hangover,” nausea, shakiness and sometimes vomiting.
Tolerance to many of the unpleasant effects of alcohol and a resulting ability to drink more. This leads to a deteriorating physical condition that can include liver damage and increases the risk of heart disease. A pregnant woman may give birth to a baby with facial abnormalities, growth retardation and brain damage. A person can become dependent on alcohol. If someone suddenly stops drinking, withdrawal symptoms may set in. They range from jumpiness, sleeplessness, sweating and poor appetite to convulsions and sometimes death. Alcohol abuse also fosters violence and conflicts in one’s personal relationships.
Marijuana

Marijuana is usually rolled up in a cigarette called a joint or a nail. It can also be brewed as a tea or mixed with food, or smoked through a water pipe called a bong.

Over 60% of Americans in drug treatment programs (of which 19% are youth, aged 12-17), need treatment for marijuana. According to a National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, kids who frequently use marijuana are almost four times more likely to act violently or damage property. They are five times more likely to steal than those who do not use the drug.

Marijuana is often more potent today than it used to be. Growing techniques and selective use of seeds have produced a more powerful drug. Correspondingly, there has been a sharp increase in the number of marijuana-related emergency room visits by young pot smokers.

Because a tolerance builds up, marijuana can lead users to consume stronger drugs to achieve the same high. When the effects start to wear off, the person may turn to more potent drugs to rid himself of the unwanted conditions that prompted him...
to take marijuana in the first place. Marijuana itself does not lead the person to the other drugs: people take drugs to get rid of unwanted situations or feelings. The drug (marijuana) masks the problem for a time (while the user is high). When the “high” fades, the problem, unwanted condition or situation returns more intensely than before. The user may then turn to stronger drugs since marijuana no longer “works.”

**Short-term Effects:**
Loss of coordination and distortions in the sense of time, vision and hearing; sleepiness, reddening of the eyes, increased appetite and relaxed muscles. Heart rate can speed up. In fact, in the first hour of smoking marijuana, a user’s risk of a heart attack could increase fivefold. School performance is reduced through impaired memory and lessened ability to solve problems.

**Long-term Effects:**
Long-term use can cause psychotic symptoms. It can also damage the lungs and the heart, worsen the symptoms of bronchitis and cause coughing and wheezing. It may reduce the body’s ability to fight lung infections and illness.
INHALANTS

Street Names:
- Poppers
- Whippets
- Laughing Gas
- Rush

Inhalants include chemicals found in such household products as aerosol sprays, cleaning fluids, glue, paint, paint thinner, nail polish remover, amyl nitrite and lighter fuel. They are sniffed or “huffed” (act of inhaling vapors).

Inhalants affect the brain. When substances or fumes are inhaled through the nose or mouth, they can cause irreversible physical and mental damage. They starve the body of oxygen and force the heart to beat irregularly and more rapidly. People who use inhalants can lose their sense of smell, suffer nausea and nosebleeds and may develop liver, lung and kidney problems. Chronic use can lead to reduced muscle...
mass, tone and strength. Inhalants can make people unable to walk, talk and think normally. Much of the damage is caused to the brain tissue when the toxic fumes are sniffed straight into the sinus.

**Short-term Effects:**
In addition to the above, inhalants can kill a person by heart attack or suffocation as the inhaled fumes take the place of oxygen in the lungs and central nervous system. Someone on inhalants may also suddenly react with extreme violence.

**Long-term Effects:**
Can lead to muscle wasting and reduced muscle tone and strength. Can permanently damage the body and brain.
Ecstasy is usually taken orally in pill, tablet or capsule form. Taking more than one at a time is called “bumping.”

Ecstasy is a synthetic drug made in a laboratory. Makers may add anything they choose to the drug, such as caffeine, amphetamines and even cocaine. Ecstasy is illegal and has effects similar to hallucinogens and stimulants. The pills are of different colors and are sometimes marked with cartoon-like images. Mixing Ecstasy with alcohol is extremely dangerous and can be lethal.

The stimulative effects of drugs like Ecstasy enable the user to dance for long periods, and when combined with the hot, crowded conditions found at raves, can lead to extreme dehydration and heart or kidney failure.
Prolonged use causes long-lasting and perhaps permanent damage to the brain, affecting the person’s judgment and thinking ability. Some young people have died after using Ecstasy only once.

**Short-term Effects:**
- Impaired judgment
- False sense of affection
- Confusion
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Severe anxiety
- Paranoia
- Drug craving
- Muscle tension
- Involuntary teeth clenching
- Nausea
- Blurred vision
- Faintness
- Chills or sweating

**Long-term Effects:**
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“Ecstasy made me crazy. One day I bit glass, just like I would have bitten an apple. I had to have my mouth full of pieces of glass to realize what was happening to me. Another time I tore rags with my teeth for an hour.”

— Ann
Cocaine and crack cocaine can be taken orally, through the nose (snorted), intravenously, or, in the case of crack, through inhalation of the fumes from heating it.

The terms used to describe ingestion include chewing, snorting, mainlining or injecting and smoking.

The word cocaine refers to the drug in a powder (cocaine) form and a crystal (crack) form. It is made from the coca plant.
Cocaine causes a short-lived intense high that is immediately followed by the opposite—intense feelings of depression and edginess and a craving for more of the drug. People who use it often don’t eat or sleep properly. They can experience greatly increased heart rate, muscle spasms and convulsions. The drug can make people feel paranoid, angry, hostile and anxious, even when they aren’t high.

**Short-term Effects:**

In addition to those effects already mentioned, cocaine can cause irritability, mood disturbances, restlessness, paranoia and auditory hallucinations. Tolerance to the drug develops so that more is needed to produce the same “high.”

Coming down from the drug causes severe depression, which becomes deeper and deeper after each use of the drug. This can get so severe that a person will do almost anything to get the drug—even commit murder. And if he or she can’t get cocaine, the depression can get so intense it can drive the addict to suicide.

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Ritalin is the common name for methylphenidate, classified by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as a Schedule II narcotic—the same classification as cocaine, morphine and amphetamines. It is abused by teens for its stimulant effects.

While the law forbids unrestricted distribution of these powerful stimulants, the sad fact remains that these substances are freely available almost anywhere. “Kiddie cocaine,” as it has been called, is handed out like candy. In some schools as many as 20% of the students take Ritalin regularly.

**OTHER STREET NAMES:**

- Diet Coke
- Kiddie Coke
- Vitamin R
- R-ball

- Poor man’s cocaine
- Rids
- Skittles
- Smarties
Short-term Effects:
Its severest effects include nervousness, insomnia, pulse changes and heart problems. In June 2005, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration warned that Ritalin and its sister drugs may cause visual hallucinations, suicidal thoughts, psychotic behavior, as well as aggression or violent behavior. Hazards multiply as users up their quantity, grind and snort it, liquefy or inject it, and use it along with Ecstasy and other drugs. Abuse in larger doses puts stress on the heart, which can be fatal, and injection causes serious damage to the lungs and eyes.

Long-term Effects:
The manufacturer says methylphenidate is a drug of dependency. Children on stimulant medications have twice the future rate of drug abuse. Long-term effects include irreversible damage to the blood vessels of the heart and brain; liver, kidney and lung damage; malnutrition and weight loss; disorientation, apathy, and damage to the brain including strokes and possibly epilepsy. Children may also develop anorexia from use of the drug.

A Texas researcher found in a recent study that after only three months of methylphenidate use, every one of the dozen children treated developed genetic abnormalities.
Crystal meth and meth are inhaled, smoked or injected. Low doses are in pill form.

Crystal meth is a form of methamphetamine that resembles small fragments of glass or shiny blue-white rocks. On the street, it is known as “ice,” “crystal,” “glass” and other names. It is a highly powerful and addictive man-made stimulant that causes aggression and violent or psychotic behavior. Many users report getting hooked (addicted) from the first time they use it. It is one of the hardest drugs to treat.

Street Names:
- Speed
- Meth
- Crystal
- Crank
- Tweak
- Go-fast
- Ice
- Glass
- Tina
- Quartz
Short-term Effects: Negative effects can include disturbed sleep patterns, hyperactivity, nausea, delusions of power, increased aggressiveness and irritability. Can cause decreased hunger and bring on weight loss. In higher doses has a greater “rush,” followed by increased agitation and sometimes violence. Other effects can include insomnia, confusion, hallucinations, anxiety and paranoia. Can cause convulsions leading to death.

Long-term Effects: Increased heart rate and blood pressure, damage to blood vessels in the brain, leading to strokes or irregular heart beat and cardiovascular collapse or death. Can cause liver, kidney and lung damage. There are strong indications that users suffer brain damage, including memory impairment and an increasing inability to grasp abstract thoughts. Those who recover are usually subject to memory gaps and extreme mood swings.

“Crystal meth was my drug of choice, but there were others too—cheap, easy to get, easy to become addicted to and, of course, easy to use. I tried it once and BOOM! I was addicted. One of the main things that this affected was my music career. I had a great band and played great music and had great members who weren’t only band members but best friends. That all changed when I started using meth.” — C.C.
HEROIN

Heroin is usually injected, snorted or smoked. It is highly addictive. Heroin enters the brain rapidly but makes people think and react slowly, impairing their decision-making ability. It causes difficulty in remembering things.

Injecting the drug can create a risk of contracting HIV, hepatitis and other diseases caused by infected needles. These health problems can be passed on to sexual partners and newborns. Heroin is one of the three most frequently cited drugs in drug abuse deaths. Violence and crime are linked to its use.

**Street Names:**
- Horse
- Smack
- H
- Skag
- Junk
- Brown Sugar
Short-term Effects:
Abusers experience clouded mental functioning, nausea and vomiting. Awareness of pain may be suppressed. Pregnant women can suffer spontaneous abortion. Cardiac functions slow down and breathing is severely slowed, sometimes to the point of death.

Long-term Effects:
Scarred and/or collapsed veins, bacterial infections of the blood vessels, heart valves, abscesses and other soft-tissue infections, and liver or kidney disease. Lung complications may result. Sharing of injection equipment or fluids may result in hepatitis B and C, HIV and other blood-borne viruses.
LSD is sold in tablets, capsules or in liquid form. It is commonly added to absorbent paper and divided into small decorated squares. Each square is a dose.

LSD is still one of the most potent mood-changing chemicals and is derived from the extremely poisonous ergot fungus, which grows on rye and other grains. Its effects are unpredictable. A tiny amount can produce 12 hours or more of effects.

**Street Names:**
- Acid
- Cid
- Blotter
- Heavenly Blue
- Microdot
- Purple Heart
- California Sunshine
- Tab
- Dots
Flashbacks, or recurrences of an LSD “trip” can be experienced long after the drug is taken and its effect has apparently worn off. The “trip” itself usually begins to clear up after about 12 hours, but some users manifest long-lasting psychoses.

**Long-term Effects:**
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**Short-term Effects:**
Dilated pupils, higher body temperature, increased heart rate and blood pressure, sweating, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth and tremors. People can experience severe, terrifying thoughts and feelings, fear of losing control, fear of insanity and death and feelings of despair while using LSD.
Oxycodone is a powerful painkiller. It is the principal ingredient found in OxyContin, Percocet and Percodan. It is a legal narcotic drug available by prescription to treat severe pain. In pill form it is a controlled-release medication. When the drug is abused, it is crushed and snorted, chewed or mixed with water and injected—eliminating the time-release factor and providing a quick and intense rush to the brain. As powerful as heroin, Oxycodone affects the nervous system the same way.
Short-term Effects:
Common side effects include constipation, nausea, sedation, dizziness, vomiting, headache, dry mouth, sweating and weakness.

Long-term Effects:
Chronic use can result in increased tolerance so that higher doses are taken to experience the initial effect. Over time, the drug becomes addictive, causing withdrawal symptoms when discontinued. These symptoms include restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, cold flashes and involuntary leg movements.
There are solutions to the drug problem.

The first step is to understand why a person becomes trapped by drugs. In May 1969, author and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard wrote: “When a person is depressed or in pain and where he finds no physical relief from treatment, he will eventually discover for himself that drugs remove his symptoms.

“In almost all cases of psychosomatic pain, malaise or discomfort the person has sought some cure for the upset.

“When he at last finds that only drugs give him relief he will surrender to them and become dependent upon them often to the point of addiction.”

The best solution, however, is not to begin using drugs in the first place. Taking drugs is not an answer. As difficult as it can be to confront one’s problems, the consequences that come with drug use are always worse than the problem one is trying to avoid.

And the long slide into hell that comes as a result of taking drugs is even worse.
“Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Life” is an international drug prevention program that has distributed millions of educational booklets such as this to people around the world. As new drugs appear on the streets and more information about their effects becomes available, existing booklets are updated and new ones created.

The booklets are published by the Foundation for a Drug-Free World, a non-religious, nonprofit organization headquartered in Los Angeles, California.

The Foundation was established to meet the growing demand for the “Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Life” program, which has been conducted for more than 20 years by members of Scientology churches in collaboration with the interfaith community, youth organizations, educational institutions and government agencies.

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For more information or to obtain more copies of this or other booklets in this series, contact:

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