

# Drug Abuse

## Introduction

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Due to the huge market that exists, police have their hands full trying to limit the access! And with some cases being struck off the court roll due to technical aspects, as well as corrupt police officials that serve as informants to the drug cartels that in turn foil the attempts of dedicated servicemen.

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### - Statistics

It is estimated that 70% of drug addicts in South Africa, are addicted to over-the-counter items - alcohol, nicotine, painkillers, sleeping pills and other products like cough syrup, glue and even various fuels like petrol.

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Statistics have shown that 2 out of 3 youths will experiment with some form of drugs, that's approximately 4 million young people trying out drugs! Drugs dependency, according to SANCA, is that between 40% and 60% of all teenagers, are high risk cases to develop a dependency on drugs. Another shocking statistic is that 1 out of every 6 youngsters (Â±15%) are already dependent on drugs!

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### - Accessibility

The access to the use of drugs like alcohol, nicotine (cigarettes), painkillers, diet pills, sleeping pills as well as fuel and glue, not to mention the easy access to things like dagga (marijuana), "tik", cocaine, heroin and ecstasy on the streets, especially the areas where the youth socialize, is one of the main reasons for the increase in the use and the dependency on drugs in South Africa.

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### - Uninformed

Monkey-politics (Hear no evil, See no evil, Speak no evil) from parents as well as school authorities the past couple of decades, despite the authorities' calls and pleas, are still the order of the day. The naivety from both parents and the youth in terms of the possibility of drug addiction, shows the near impossible task of preventing the use and abuse of drugs.

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If the youth, and even parents, could only but realize what the use of substances like alcohol and nicotine does to the central nervous system, not to mention the brain itself! A person's brain is the source of all the abilities that one possesses and your body can only function correctly if the right amounts of natural chemicals are provided. Some bodies do need additional chemicals to restore the balance, but they should be prescribed by professionals and be monitored on an ongoing basis.

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### - Uninvolved

It is way too easy simply ignore drug addicts by suspending learners from schools or firing workers from the workplace, because then the problem becomes someone else's, instead of getting in professional help to assist the person.

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The past 35 years I have been giving free counseling and have been involved many a time with the rehabilitation of drug addicts - it is very important to look past the addict, and see the cause - the reason behind the initial experimenting or use of drugs. For this reason, the assistance from all professional sectors - the medical, psychologists, community workers and the educational circles are of utmost importance.

## Â Solution

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The only way that this problem can be eradicated is when the whole community begins to stand together and cooperates:

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gather information and educate especially the young child of preschool and primary level thoroughly about the dangers of drug abuse;

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to approach the treatment of the drug addict holistically;

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to provide information about the drug cartels to the authorities so that the penalties for dealing in drugs can be increased!

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If churches and schools can provide both the parents and the youth with facts and could provide or call in help faster, then the use and abuse of drugs can and could be dealt a severe blow!