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IN HEALTH EDUCATION

BOOKLET

10

Education sector responses to the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



World Health
Organization

GOOD POLICY AND PRACTICE IN HEALTH EDUCATION

Booklet 10

**EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSES
TO THE USE OF ALCOHOL,
TOBACCO AND DRUGS**

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FOREWORD

Use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs – referred to as ‘substance use’ in this booklet – commonly begins in adolescence. It is associated with a wide range of negative impacts on young people’s mental and physical health as well as on their well-being over the short and long term. Substance use has also proven to be linked with a number of negative education-related consequences, including poor school engagement and performance, and school drop-out. This has an impact on education sector efforts to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all and accomplish the new global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There is a wide range of factors that put children and young people at risk of substance use and its consequences, including their individual attributes and the environment in which they live. Education is a platform that engages children and young people at a crucial stage in their development, and helps them assess and counter such risks and pressures.

The education sector therefore has a fundamental responsibility to protect children and young people from substance use. This means taking steps such as: working to ensure that schools are 100% free of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs; ensuring the core curriculum includes learning about the risks associated with substance use and facilitates the development of students’ personal and social skills relevant to health-seeking behaviours; and building the knowledge and skills of educators, parents, caregivers and communities to empower and support children and young people to prevent and address substance use. All of these steps require the education sector to adopt a comprehensive approach to mobilize the whole system in collaboration with other sectors, in particular the health sector and drug control authorities.

This booklet has been developed through an international consultation process led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Building on the synergies of the respective mandates and competencies of the three UN agencies, which are members of the UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and control of Noncommunicable diseases, it exemplifies a collaborative inter-sectoral effort to support our Member States in strengthening and accelerating their education sector responses to substance use.

Within the framework set by the *International Standards on Drug Use Prevention* (UNODC, 2013) and *Health for the World’s Adolescents* (WHO, 2014), this joint publication provides the context and rationale for improved education sector responses to substance use. It presents evidence-based and promising policies and practice, including practical examples from different regions that have been shown to be effective by scientific research. It also suggests issues to consider in sustaining and scaling up effective approaches and programmes in education sector responses to substance use.

Qian Tang (Ph.D.)
Assistant Director General
UNESCO



ACRONYMS

ATS	Amphetamine-type stimulants
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CICAD	Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission
CND	Commission on Narcotic Drugs
DALY	Disability Adjusted Life Year
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Abuse
ESPAD	European School Survey on Alcohol and Other Drugs
EU	European Union
FRESH	Focusing Resources on Effective School Health
GBG	Good Behaviour Game
GDP	Gross domestic product
GHO	Global Health Observatory
GSHS	Global School-based Student Health Survey
GYTS	Global Youth Tobacco Survey
HBSC	Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDU	Injection drug use
INL	US Department of State's Bureau on Law Enforcement and Narcotics Affairs
ISSUP	International Society of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Professionals
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPS	New psychoactive substances
PWID	People who inject drugs
RCT	Randomized control trial
SBHS	School-based health services
SES	Socio-economic status
SFP	Strengthening Families Programme
SHS	School health services
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UPC	Universal Prevention Curriculum
WHO	World Health Organization

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- A desk-based literature review and data collection exercise commissioned by UNESCO and summarised in a technical background paper. The research and writing of the background paper was undertaken principally by the University College of London (UCL) consultants team of Daniel Hale, Chris Bonell and Russell Viner, with contributions from Arrash Yassaee, Kirsten MacGregor and Leonardo Bevilacqua.
- Regional and country-based literature reviews were commissioned by UNESCO Offices in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, East and Southern Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, and provided input to the technical background paper.
- An international expert meeting was organized by UNESCO in partnership with UNODC and WHO and with support from the Turkish Government (29 September–2 October 2015, Istanbul, Turkey), where the technical background paper was presented to, and benefited from additional input from, experts in the field.

The process was coordinated by a team led by Christophe Cornu, Senior Programme Specialist at UNESCO under the supervision of Christopher Castle, Chief of UNESCO's Section of Health and Education, and with the overall guidance of Soo Hyang Choi, Director of the Division for Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development at UNESCO.

Gary Roberts drafted the booklet based on the outputs of the above-mentioned process. UNESCO, UNODC and WHO offered support and advice throughout the process – with particular thanks to Yongfeng Liu from UNESCO's Section of Health and Education; Giovanna Campello and Hanna Heikkilä from UNODC's Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section in the Drug Prevention and Health Branch; and Maria Renstrom, Vladimir B. Poznyak, Elise Gehring and Regina Guthold from WHO's Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Valentina Baltag from WHO's Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health, and Yuka Makino from WHO's Department for Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases.

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GLOSSARY

Alcoholic beverage

An alcoholic beverage is a liquid that contains ethanol and is intended for drinking. In most countries with a legal definition of ‘alcoholic beverage’ a threshold for content of ethanol by volume in a beverage is set at around 0.5%. The predominant categories of alcoholic beverages are beers, wines and spirits.

Dependence

Dependence or dependence syndrome is a cluster of physiological, behavioural and cognitive phenomena in which the use of a substance or a class of substances, takes on a much higher priority for a given individual than other behaviours that once had a greater value. This would cover the use of any **psychoactive substance** including **tobacco**, **alcohol** and **drugs**. Dependence is one of the **substance use disorders** that can occur due to the use of one or many **psychoactive substances**.

Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)

One **DALY** can be thought of as one lost year of ‘healthy’ life. DALYs for a disease or health condition are calculated as the sum of the years of life lost due to premature mortality in the population and the years lost due to disability for people living with the health condition or its consequences.

Disorders due to substance use

Mental and behavioural disorders due to the use of one or more **psychoactive substances**. They include a wide variety of disorders of different severity and clinical forms, such as **intoxication**, **harmful use**, **dependence** syndrome, withdrawal syndrome, psychotic disorder, etc. Substance use disorders include harmful use and substance dependence.

Drugs

In this document, the term ‘drugs’ is used to refer to substances that belong to one of the following three groups:

- Psychoactive substances (see **Psychoactive substances**)
- New psychoactive substances (see **New psychoactive substances**)
- Volatile substances (see **Volatile substances**)

Drug use

In this booklet the term ‘drug use’ is used to refer to the use for non-medical or non-scientific purposes of the three groups of substances mentioned above (see **drugs**).

Education sector

In this booklet the ‘education sector’ is operationally defined to refer to all the activities with the primary purpose of providing education in educational institutions, and the people, institutions, resources and processes – arranged together in accordance with established policies – to support the provision of education in educational institutions at all levels of the system. At national level

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