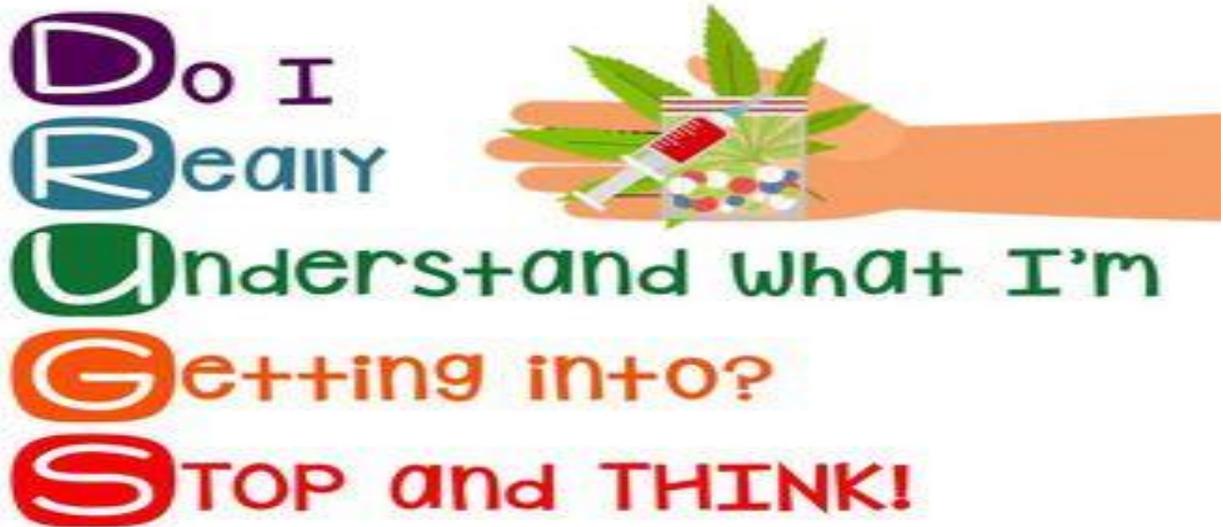


DRUG AWARENESS WEEK JUNE 2021



Drugs are chemicals and substances that affect both your mind and body. The prolonged use of drugs may lead to physical and/or psychological dependence. An overdose of any drug may lead to death.

Drug Awareness Week (24-28 June 2021)

The South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence's objective of the Drug Awareness Week is to educate the public, about the dangers and consequences of substance abuse for a drug-free South Africa. Once thought to only be a "township problem", substances abuse and related crimes are now a serious national concern, with the emergence and easy availability of designer drugs such as nyaope and whoonga reaching rural areas. Drug addiction is a complex disease, and quitting usually takes more than good intentions or a strong will. In 2017 Akeso Clinics reflects that "In South Africa 80% of male youth deaths are alcohol-related and drug consumption is estimated to be twice the world norm". Males over 20 are the biggest abusers of alcohol while male youths are main abusers of cannabis.



Reward Circuit

Drugs and Substance abuse affects the brains “reward circuit”, causing euphoria. Surges of dopamine in the reward circuit causes the reinforcement of pleasurable but unhealthy behaviors like taking drugs, leading people to repeat the behaviors again and again. The brain adapts by reducing the ability of cells in the reward circuit to respond to it. This reduces the high that the person feels compared to the high they felt when first taking the drug-an effect known as tolerance.



Drug Addiction

Addiction is a chronic disease characterized by drug seeking and use that is compulsive, or difficult to control, despite harmful consequence. Repeated drug use can lead to brain changes that challenge an addition person’s self-control and interfere with their ability to resist intense urge to take drugs. Drug addiction is referred to as a “relapsing” disease – it’s common for a person to relapse. People in recovery from drug use disorders are at increased risk for returning to drug use even after years of not taking the drug. Treatment should be on going and should be adjusted based on how the patient responds.



Drug abuse in the work place.

Alcohol and Drug abuse by employees causes many expensive problems for business and industry ranging from loss of productivity, injuries and increase in insurance claims. Effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse on employees in the workplace include:

- Tardiness/sleeping on the job.
- Hangover or withdrawals affecting job performance.
- Poor decision making.
- Increased likelihood of having trouble with co-workers/supervisors or tasks.

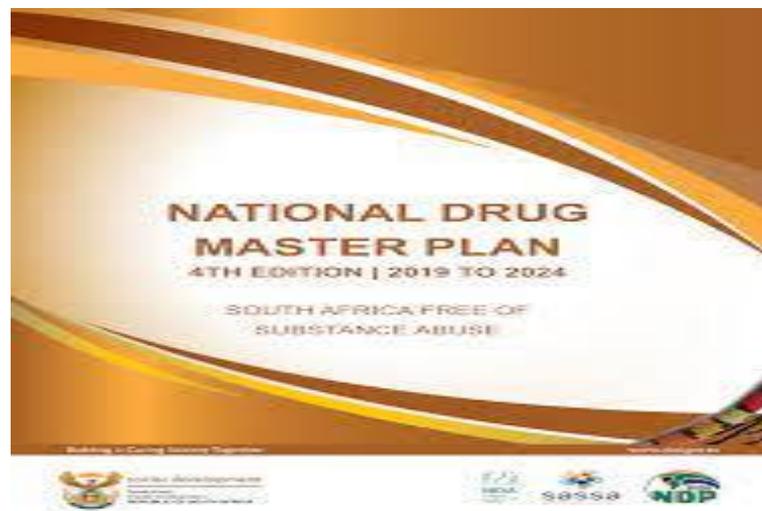
Contributing factors that contribute to misuse of alcohol and drugs in the workplace include:

- Workplace culture and acceptance of misuse of substances.
- Workplace alienation.
- Availability of Alcohol and Drugs

- Existence and enforcement of workplace substance abuse policies.

NDMP – (National Drug Master plan)

This is a five-year programme of action focusing on demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction strategies in the general population, in particular on youth and those who are high-risk and vulnerable groups. Cabinet approved the National Drug master plan for 2019-2024. This master plan is a national blueprint to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking and mitigate its negative consequences to South African society.



Substance abuse treatments in South Africa

(SADAG) South African Depression and Anxiety Group in partnership with National Social Development has run a 24-hour Substance Abuse Helpline – 0800 12 13 14 or SMS 32312 to get a call back from a counselor.

Akeso Clinics throughout the country offer short term inpatient programs-21 to days, including detoxification and longer term inpatient programs – 90 days to a year

References: www.gov.za/speeches/drug-awareness-week-highlight-impact-alcohol-and-substance-abuse-youth-people-22-jun-2020

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