



# **Stuff You Need to Know About Party Drugs**

**2007  
26 minutes**

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## **Program Synopsis:**

This informative program provides students with the simple facts regarding the long and short term effects of particular drugs on the body. Drugs covered include alcohol, cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines and LSD. An extended interview with staff from the Fitzroy Legal Service clearly outlines the law as it relates to drug use, possession and trafficking in Australia and overseas.

## **Teacher Notes:**

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## **Related Programs:**

- Introducing Cannabis
- Party Drugs
- Drug Use and Misuse



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### **Program Summary**

This program seeks to educate young people, teachers and parents about party drugs in a non-censorious way, encouraging young people to make responsible choices about their health and wellbeing. It looks at a range of popular party drugs (including alcohol), traces the history of their discovery and use, their application in medicine, their use in recreation and legal control. A group of young users talk frankly about their experiences with party drugs. Dr Tanya Uebergang, a qualified pharmacologist and educator, describes likely effects on users and possible dangers, and suggests some basic safety precautions. In the second section, a lawyer answers a range of questions concerning the legal implications of illicit drug use.

### **Introduction**

Despite the legal and health risks, young people continue to experiment with party drugs. Many are cynical about the reasons for their legal control and either do not believe the negative publicity, don't think anything bad will happen to them, or just don't care. In such an environment it is no wonder that the so-called 'war on drugs' has arguably been a failure. In the contemporary world, young people are expected to make up their own minds about a whole range of things from how they spend increasing amounts of money, to what courses they take and what employment they engage in. Understandably, young people also expect to make up their own minds about party drugs. Some use the internet to find out information, but too much of this material is put out by organisations or individuals who have a particular agenda. Perhaps it is time for a different approach that places the emphasis on education.

### **Program Timeline**

00:00:00	EMS logo
00:00:50	Young users talk about their experiences with party drugs and suggest why they might have taken drugs and what they think about them
00:02:00	National Drugs Strategy Household Survey statistics on alcohol and illicit drugs
00:04:40	Title screen
00:04:50	Alcohol
00:05:10	Tanya Uebergang on alcohol
00:06:30	Cannabis
00:06:55	Tanya Uebergang on cannabis
00:08:30	Ecstasy
00:09:00	Tanya Uebergang on Ecstasy
00:11:00	Amphetamines
00:11:19	Tanya Uebergang on Amphetamines
00:12:14	LSD
00:12:40	Tanya Uebergang on LSD
00:14:07	All drugs carry risks, summary introduction
00:14:26	Summary of warnings: "Things to Remember"
00:15:00	<i>What if you don't care.</i> Tanya Uebergang suggests some safety precautions a user might take to reduce risk
00:16:18	The law, introduction
00:16:50	Interview with Stan Winford, Lawyer.
00:17:50	What constitutes 'trafficking' in Australia?
00:18:30	What are some of the consequences of having a criminal record?
00:19:50	Will a criminal record ever be removed?



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00:20.24	How about travelling overseas (with drugs)?
00:21.00	Suppose someone is having a 'bad trip'?
00:22.29	Suppose someone is caught with drugs?
00:24.20	Final advice
00:24.42	Conclusion
00:25.30	END



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### Program Worksheet

#### After the Program

##### Questions and ideas for discussion and research:

1. **Summarise** what the young users had to say about party drugs. Discuss some of the things that you found important about what they said.
2. **Discuss:** The young people who were interviewed were not told they had to say anything positive or negative about party drugs – they were free to say whatever they wanted to. Why, then were these young people not altogether positive about party drugs, even though they were talking anonymously?
3. **Discuss:** If you had children of your own, would you want them to experiment with party drugs and why/why not?
4. **Discuss:** Why is it that often young people don't believe bad things can happen to them; they believe they won't get caught, they won't get sick, they won't die, won't get hurt in a car accident and so on? For example, we now know for certain that smoking causes cancer, yet many young people still smoke. Discuss why this might be.
5. **Research:** Do some follow up research on the physiological, psychological and social effects of the various drugs mentioned and others you have heard of. The websites listed below may be a useful starting point.
6. **Research:** Find out what a pharmacologist does – what does a person who is a pharmacologist specialise in? How does this qualify Dr. Tanya Uebergang to talk about drugs and their effects? What areas of drug advice would be outside of Dr. Uebergang's expertise?
7. **Research and organise:** Consider what other professionals (Medical practitioners and drug counsellors, for example) might be able to offer advice on drug use. Could you or your teacher get one to come and talk with your group about party drugs?
8. **Research:** By far the most problematic drugs in our community are alcohol and tobacco. Find out how many deaths and hospitalisations are caused by alcohol each year and how those numbers compare to illegal drugs.
9. **Discuss:** As ex-addicts will tell you, heroin addiction is a terrible thing to experience and it quickly takes over your whole life. However, addiction to heroin does not affect nearly as many people in Australia as addiction to alcohol or cigarettes does. Would it be better to take some of the resources used to try to stop heroin use and apply that to better education and care facilities for alcohol or smoking addiction?
10. **Discuss:** Given what you know about problems with legal drugs, if party drugs were legalised, would that lead to greater use and so greater chances of harm being done to users?
11. **Discuss:** Some countries have a more tolerant attitude to some drug use than Australia. For example, in some countries it is legal to smoke cannabis. What do you think about this approach?



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12. **Discuss and research:** In New York recently, a 'zero tolerance' approach to drug use and petty crime (such as graffiti and litter) was enforced. Do you think we should be trying this kind of approach in Australia to drug use? What can you find out about this New York experiment?
13. **Research:** Carry out some research on the level of drug use in countries where drugs that are illicit in Australia are legal. Which countries are they? What are the findings of research into the use of drugs in these countries? Has the legalisation of certain drugs had an impact on overall levels of crime?
14. **Discuss:** In many states in the United States it is illegal to drink alcohol until you are over 21. Do you think we should have the same law in Australia? Why? What effects would that have on the lives of young people? Could it have community benefits?
15. **Research:** In some countries there is no legal age limit on the consumption of alcohol (with parent approval). Find out what countries these are and see what you can find out about whether this causes particular alcohol-related problems.
16. **Discuss:** Do you think we should introduce the death penalty for drug trafficking in Australia? Find out if it has been a deterrent in other countries.
17. **Research:** Find out what you can about addiction. What are its symptoms? What is it like to be addicted to a drug? What kind of person is most likely to become addicted to a drug? What different treatments are there for people who are addicted to a substance?
18. **Discuss:** Try to imagine you were addicted to heroin or alcohol. The only thing you care about is getting the next fix, or the next drink. Nothing else matters – not family, not friends, not even keeping clean. What would you regret most?
19. **Discussion and research:** What kind of person do you think becomes addicted to drugs of alcohol? Do some reading and research to find out whether you are correct or not.

### Website References

- [www.NationalTreatmentCenters](http://www.NationalTreatmentCenters)
- [www.AlanoRecoveryHomes.org](http://www.AlanoRecoveryHomes.org)
- [www.drugpreventionresource.org](http://www.drugpreventionresource.org)



## Stuff You Need to Know About Party Drugs

### **The Drug Education Forum aims:**

1. To bring together a broad range of organisations to develop a shared understanding of the nature and scope of drug education for children and young people and their families.
2. To establish more effective practice, improve coordination of activities and bring more resources into drug education.
3. To provide an authoritative voice to influence policy makers at local, national and international levels, in order to promote the provision of relevant and appropriate drug education for all children and young people and their families.
4. To promote and facilitate effective and meaningful involvement of young people in the development of drug education policy and practice, and the delivery of drug education at national and local levels.
5. To ensure that drug education provision is a high priority for all government departments and promotes a joined-up approach locally, regionally and nationally.
6. To encourage appropriate initial and in-service training for teachers, youth workers and other professionals involved in providing drug education.