

Causes of Rising Drug Trafficking in India and Ways to Stop Drug Trafficking

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Abstract

Drug trafficking is the worldwide practice of distributing drugs and other substances which are legally banned under narcotics and associated laws. It includes the cultivation, manufacture, distribution, and sale of controlled substances. In India, the use of drugs in society especially among the younger generation has increased in the past decade and continuous to increase. This has direct and hidden effects on the future growth of the country. This paper discusses the problem of drug trafficking in India, their entry inside the country through the country's border and the various drugs which are seized in the country. It also discussed on how the investigation of drug-related cases can be improved by implementing different approaches to reduce the illegal trade of drugs. Drug trafficking is a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws. UNODC is continuously monitoring and researching global illicit drug markets in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their dynamics. The consequences of drug abuse can never be overemphasized as it has birthed a lot of problems not only in family but in the nation as well as the international community. Some medical issues associated with drug abuse include – mental disorder, liver cirrhosis, lethargy, irritability, heart disorders, among others. Studies also reveal that drug addiction contributes largely to social consequences such as internet fraud, gang formation, disruption of normal educational activities, cultism, violence, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, sexual abuse, reduced productivity. Drug and alcohol abuse are serious problems and has contributed largely to the sorry state of our dear nation. It has birthed a lot of social and medical problems, including school dropout, armed robbery, violence, mental disorder, irritability, heart disorders, to mention but a few. Talking about the way out the government alone cannot eradicate this social menace. It is a joint task of you and me – individuals, communities, families, schools, civil society, religious organizations, the media, business entities. Drug trafficking is a key part of this research. The author delves into analysing the current protective legislations in India in the light of drug trafficking and conclude by suggesting the necessary changes that can be implemented to stop drug trafficking.

Keywords: Trafficking, Drug, Prohibition, Transporters, Addiction, International.

Introduction

Drug trafficking involves the illegal trade, transportation, and distribution of narcotics and controlled substances across international borders and within countries. Economic disparities and lack of employment opportunities in certain regions are among the common causes of drug trafficking. Illicit activities don't just benefit organized crime. They also harm communities by causing more violence,

addiction, and social instability. Global law enforcement agencies have a tough job trying to stop this. So, it's crucial to come up with new strategies and work together to tackle the widespread impact of drug trafficking. Criminal networks traffic a range of drugs including cannabis, cocaine, heroin and synthetics such as methamphetamine and fentanyl. As international borders become increasingly porous, global abuse and accessibility to drugs have become increasingly widespread. This international trade involves growers, producers, transporters, suppliers and dealers. It affects all of our member countries, undermining political and economic stability, ruining the lives of individuals and damaging communities. The end-users and addicts are often the victims of a powerful and manipulative business. Drug trafficking is often associated with other forms of crime, such as money laundering or corruption. Trafficking routes are used by criminal networks to transport other illicit products including firearms, uncut diamonds and live pangolins creating a convergence of crime. As criminals devise ever-more creative ways of disguising illegal drugs for transport, law enforcement officials face challenges in detecting such concealed substances. In addition, new synthetic drugs are produced on a regular basis, so police need to be aware of new trends and products on the illicit market. Since the types of drugs trafficked and the routes used are constantly evolving, it is essential that countries work together in a united and coordinated way. At INTERPOL, we offer a range of services including training and operational support to help law enforcement agencies around the world increase their capacity to detect and investigate drug trafficking.

Literature review

Francisco E. Thoumi, SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF DRUG TRAFFICKING:

"The proclivity to produce illegal goods can be due to many factors, including: firstly, impunity, that is to say, the State's inability to enforce its laws I....] Secondly, weakened social controls [...] Thirdly, internalised weak controls in every individual... A society with a high percentage of individuals who are not concerned with the impact of their actions on others has higher proclivity to crime than one in which the opposite is the case." However, even though Thoumi's statement is true, the fact that drug trafficking is generated by a precarious socio-political and economic context or by failing public policies, and that its economic origin lies in endogenous factors such as unemployment and social impoverishment where the poorest become even poorer and minorities become wealthy as long as drug trafficking continues to be one of the most profitable activities in global activities. Hence the fact that, given the certainty of poverty and the guarantee of real, rapid wealth offered by drug trafficking activities, together with the status associated with it, many people from all social classes are involved in these activities. In fact, the social prestige acquired by drug traffickers as subjects of recognition and power as opposed to those who are existentially helpless often turns them into role models in many social media - something which disturbs social order inasmuch as it penetrates social structures, interferes with decision making circuits, and imposes its own laws. Its impact is such that in some Latin American regions a "drug trafficking culture" as a paradigm for the accumulation of power and wealth has even been described. As regards the drug trafficking chain, it can be said that its initial link lies in the peasants to whom growing coke or poppy crops have provided sufficient conditions to subsist. By advancing towards higher levels in the production chain, drug trafficking creates a pyramid structure, generating corporate networks which, hiding behind legal covers, provide a large capacity for adaptation in a frag-mented, anonymous circuit.

Janet Reno (2000) Promising Strategies to Reduce Substance Abuse:

Substance abuse treatment is the most cost-effective way to reduce addiction, improve the health of drug

abusers, and relieve the growing burden of drug-related health care costs. With treatment, addicts can get off drugs, get jobs, and become productive members of society. Addiction to alcohol and other drugs is similar to other chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and hypertension, in that successful treatment requires permanent behaviour change. As with all chronic illnesses, relapse is a possibility, and failure to comply with treatment weakens the chances for successful recovery. An untreated addict can cost society an estimated \$43,200 annually, compared with an average \$16,000 for a year of residential care or \$1,500 for an outpatient program.* A 1994 California study (CALDATA) found that \$1 invested in alcohol and other drug treatment saved taxpayers \$7 in future costs. The federal government's 1997 National Treatment Improvement Evaluation Study evaluated the effectiveness of treatment services for 5,000 clients in publicly funded programs. Treating these low-income clients saved society an average of \$9,000 per client, compared to \$3,000 spent on treatment. The study found a 3 to 1 ratio of benefits to costs. 36 Services offered by substance abuse treatment programs vary, as do the modalities, staff, and target populations. The four most common types of substance abuse treatment are?

- Outpatient methadone programs-provide methadone to reduce cravings for heroin. Counselling, vocational training, and case management are often used to stabilize patient functioning;
- Long-term residential programs-offer drug-free treatment in a residential community of counsellors and recovering addicts. Patients generally stay in the programs a year or more;
- Short-term inpatient programs—keep patients up to 30 days. Most of these programs focus on medical stabilization, abstinence, and lifestyle changes. Staff are primarily medical professionals and trained counsellors; and Outpatient drug-free programs-use a wide range of approaches, including problem-solving groups, specialized therapies, cognitive-behavioural therapy, and 12-step programs. Studies of successful drug treatment programs have identified certain elements that enhance effectiveness. Length of time in treatment, intensity of treatment, and aftercare are key factors in helping addicts stay clean. According to extensive national studies of tens of thousands of addicts, one-third of those who stay in treatment longer than three months are still drug-free one year later. The recovery rate jumps to two-thirds when treatment lasts a year or longer.

Pushpita Das (2010), DRUG TRAFFICKING IN INDIA: A CASE FOR BORDER SECURITY:

India has been enduring the scourge of drug trafficking for three decades. The country's proximity to two of the world's largest illicit opium growing areas as well as various external and internal factors have contributed to it becoming a transit, source and a destination for drugs. The trends and patterns of drug trafficking in the country demonstrates that there is a gradual shift from traditional/ natural drugs towards synthetic drugs that are being trafficked and consumed in the country. In the 1980s, a large quantity of heroin and hashish was smuggled in from the source areas into the country through various borders. While these drugs are still trafficked, albeit in lesser quantities, the share of synthetic drugs such as ATS and codeine based pharmaceutical preparations has gone up tremendously. Persistence of drug trafficking over the years implies that the sanctity of the borders is being breached and their security compromised. Various studies and newspaper reports indicate that drug consumption and trafficking are in fact showing an increasing trend. To deal with the problem of drug trafficking and to protect the country's borders against such infringements, India has employed a mix of measures. On the one hand, it has enacted stringent anti-drug laws, co-opted various voluntary organisations and sought to strengthen the physical security of its borders by various means, on the other hand it has been seeking the cooperation of its neighbours and

other countries through several bilateral and multilateral agreements. These efforts have only been partially successful in dealing with the problem.

Research Gap

Although many authors have done research on this topic but they just found that what are the provisions regarding drug trafficking all over world and some have also work on reasons and prevention of drug trafficking but they did not study that what they have found does it really apply in real world and what else we can do to prevent drug trafficking. So here is an attempt made to do a whole study at one place for all Laws regarding drug trafficking.

Research objective

- To identify what specifically provisions do we have for drug trafficking in India.
- To identify that do we really have better enforcement of those laws.
- To Analyse the possible reasons of rising drug trafficking in India.
- To identify the measures to prevent drug trafficking.
- How society deal with victims.

Research Methodology

In the present paper Doctrinal Methodology has been adopted by the researcher through the primary and secondary sources and by studying books, articles and other relevant materials in different libraries and through Internet. The present study is based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are collected from substantive as well as procedural pieces of legislation such as Indian Penal Code 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure 1973, The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985, NDPS Amendment Act of 2014, The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013 etc. The Secondary Sources include crime reports, journals, books, case laws, and Internet Surveys, Central Bureau of Narcotics etc.

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 23 August 1985. It was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and it was assented by the President on 16 September 1985. It came into force on 14 November 1985 as THE NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES ACT, 1985 (shortened to NDPS Act). Under the NDPS Act, it is illegal for a person to produce/manufacture/cultivate, possess, sell, purchase, transport, store, and/or consume any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.

Under one of the provisions of the act, the Narcotics Control Bureau was set up with effect from March 1986. The Act is designed to fulfil India's treaty obligations under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The Act has been amended three times - in 1988, 2001, and most recently in 2014.

The 2014 Amendment recognizes the need for pain relief as an important obligation of the government. It creates a class of medicines called Essential Narcotic Drugs (ENDs). Power for legislation on ENDs has been shifted from the state governments to the central governments so that the whole country now can have a uniform law covering these medicines which are needed for pain relief. Subsequently, NDPS rules which would be applicable to all states and union territories has been announced by the government of

India in May 2015. It also has included 6 drugs namely Morphine, Fentanyl, Methadone, Oxycodone, Codeine and Hydrocodone. According to these rules, there is a single agency - the state drug controller - who can approve recognised medical institutions (RMI) for stocking and dispensing ENDS, without the need for any other licences. The RMIs are obliged to ensure proper documentation and to submit annual consumption statistics to the drug controller of the state. The Act extends to the whole of India and it applies also to all Indian citizens outside India and to all persons on ships and aircraft registered in India. A proposal to amend the NDPS Act via a Private Member's Bill was announced by Dr. Dharamvira Gandhi MP in November 2016. Dr. Gandhi's bill would legalise marijuana and opium.

Section-27 talk's about **Penalty for manufacture, sale, etc., of drugs in contravention** of this Chapter.-
-Whoever, himself or by any other person on his behalf, manufactures for sale or for distribution, or sells, or stocks or exhibits or offers for sale or distributes,--

(a) any drug deemed to be adulterated under section 17A or spurious under section 2[17B and which] when used by any person for or in the diagnosis, treatment, mitigation, or prevention of any disease or disorder is likely to cause his death or is likely to cause such harm on his body as would amount to grievous hurt within the meaning of section 320 of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) solely on account of such drug being adulterated or spurious or not of standard quality, as the case may be, shall be 3[punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to imprisonment for life and shall also be liable to fine which shall not be less than ten lakh rupees or three times value of the drugs confiscated, whichever is more]:

[Provided that the fine imposed on and realised from, the person convicted under this clause shall be paid, by way of compensation, to the person who had used the adulterated or spurious drugs referred to in this clause:

Provided further that where the use of the adulterated or, spurious drugs referred to in this clause has caused the death of a person who used such drugs, the fine imposed on and realised from, the person convicted under this clause, shall be paid to the relative of the person who had died due to the use of the adulterated or spurious drugs referred to in this clause.

1. Explanation.--For the purposes of the second proviso, the expression "relative" means--
 - spouse of the deceased person; or
2. a minor legitimate son, and unmarried legitimate daughter and a widowed mother; or
3. parent of the minor victim; or
4. if wholly dependent on the earnings of the deceased person at the time of his death, a son or a daughter who has attained the age of eighteen years; or
5. any person, if wholly or in part, dependent on the earnings of the deceased person at the time of his death, -
 - A. the parent; or
 - B. a minor brother or an unmarried sister; or
 - C. a widowed daughter-in-law; or
 - D. a widowed sister; or
 - E. a minor child of a pre-deceased son; or
 - F. a minor child of a pre-deceased daughter where no parent of the child is alive; or
 - G. the paternal grandparent if no parent of the member is alive;]

(b) any drug-

(i) deemed to be adulterated under section 17A but not being a drug referred to in clause (a), or

(ii) without a valid licence as required under clause (c) of section 18, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall 1 [not be less than three years but which may extend to five years and with fine which shall not be less than one lakh rupees or three times the value of the drugs confiscated, whichever is more]:

Provided that the Court may, for any adequate and special reasons to be recorded in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of 2 [less than three years and of fine of less than one lakh rupees];

(c) any drug deemed to be spurious under section 17B, but not being a drug referred to in clause (a) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall 3 [not less than seven years but which may extend to imprisonment for life and with fine which shall not be three lakh rupees or three times the value of the drugs confiscated, whichever is more]:

Provided that the Court may, for any adequate and special reasons to be recorded in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of 4 [less than seven years but not less than three years and of fine of less than one lakh rupees];

(d) any drug, other than a drug referred to in clause (a) or clause (b) or clause (c), in contravention of any other provision of this Chapter or any rule made thereunder, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than one year but which may extend to two years 5 [and with fine which shall not be less than twenty thousand rupees]:

Provided that the Court may, for any adequate and special reasons to be recorded in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than one year.

Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act

The Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act is a drug control law passed in 1988 by the Parliament of India. It was established to enable the full implementation and enforcement of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985.

We manage what we call a Drugs Analysis File, which is a repository of intelligence shared by 114 countries on illicit regional and international drug trafficking, including:

- Transnational criminal networks, their members and associates;
- Telephone numbers, website addresses and other media linked to drug trafficking;
- Modus operandi;
- Financial information used to conceal or launder assets;
- Locations associated with criminal activities.

Unlike our criminal databases, the analysis file includes not only police data but also a wider range of information from international organizations, civil society and open sources to further identify potential links. This information helps law enforcement and government officials to make more informed decisions. Organized crime groups compress their drug packages with metal devices when they ship large volumes of drugs; this leaves traces on the packages and tablets.

We manage a database called Relief, which stores information about these markings. Officials in our member countries can check our database to see if the same device has been used to compress another

seized drug package, in a different case, somewhere else in the world. Relief also stores information on tablet logos and the chemical composition of different drugs.

From where the Illegal Drugs are trafficked in India?

- Threats from Death (Golden) Crescent: Comprises Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan.
- Parts of Pakistan adjoining Afghanistan are also used by Pakistani drug traffickers to convert Afghan opium to heroin and then sent to India.
- Threats from Death (Golden) Triangle: Consists of Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Myanmar.
- The Shan and Kachin provinces of Myanmar bordering China also pose challenges.
- China Factor: These heroin and methamphetamine-producing areas have porous borders and are, reportedly, under the control of rebel groups, indirectly supported by the Chinese.
- Illicit arms are manufactured here and supplied to underground groups active in India.
- According to the latest annual report by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), drug trafficking through sea routes in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, estimated to account for around 70% of the total illegal drugs smuggled into India.

What are the Initiatives taken by India to curb the Drug Menace?

- The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, (NDPS) 1985: It prohibits a person from producing, possessing, selling, purchasing, transporting, storing, and/or consuming any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.
- National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has prepared a plan for Drug Demand Reduction for the period of 2018-25. This plan focuses on:
 - Preventive education
 - Awareness generation
 - Identification, counselling, treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependent persons
 - Training and capacity building of service providers through collaborative efforts of government and NGOs.
- National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse: It was created in accordance with a provision of the NDPS, 1985 for meeting the expenditure incurred in measures taken for:
 - Combating illicit trafficking
 - Controlling abuse of drugs and substances
 - Identifying, treating and rehabilitating addicts
 - Preventing drug abuse
 - Educating public against drug abuse
- Nasha Mukta Bharat Campaign: Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) was launched in 2020 to tackle the issue of Substance Abuse and a vision to make India Drug Free. It is a three-pronged attack combining:
 - The supply curb by Narcotics Control Bureau
 - Outreach and Awareness and Demand Reduction effort by Social Justice and Empowerment
 - Treatment through Health Department.
- Initiatives of Indian Coast Guards: The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has developed a good synergy with the security agencies and with the coast guards of Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bangladesh for seizure of such drugs.

- It seized 2,160 kgs of meth in two different instances recently near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- International Treaties and Conventions to Combat Drug Menace: India is signatory of the following international treaties and conventions:
 - United Nations (UN) Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
 - UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971).
 - UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)
 - UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) 2000

What are the Challenges in tackling Drug Trafficking in India?

- Dark Net: Darknet markets are difficult to trace because of their anonymity and low risks. They have taken over the traditional drug markets. Studies reveal that 62% of the darknet is being used for illicit drug trafficking.
- The success rate in catching traffickers using the darknet has been very low the world over.
- Transactions in Cryptocurrency: Cryptocurrency payments and doorstep deliveries, through courier services, have made dark net transactions attractive.
- Traffickers have become Creative and Tech Savvy: The traffickers have adopted to new age technologies such as supplying drug and guns through drones in Punjab which have posed new challenges before the security forces.
- Using more Safe and Anonymous methods: The drug traffickers have started relying more upon courier/parcel/post after the restrictions imposed on vehicular/ship/airline movement during Covid-19 pandemic.
- In 2022, a person was arrested for doing the drugs business through making an e-commerce dummy website.
- In one more instance, few persons were arrested for selling drugs through e-commerce websites like amazon by listing fake products on the website.
- Nexus between Drugs Lords and NRIs: Recent investigations have revealed the connection of the drug cartels with NRIs based in Canada, Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and several European countries along with local drug lords and gangsters in India, who have links with Khalistani terrorists and the ISI in Pakistan.
- Trafficking through Local Gangs: A new trend has emerged wherein organised gangs, which primarily used to carry out extortion activities in their local areas are being used for drug trafficking as they are ready-made logistics to carry out such activities.

Prevention of Drug Trafficking

Preventing drug trafficking requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the root causes of drug trafficking and focuses on reducing the demand for drugs. Here are some strategies for preventing drug trafficking:

Education and awareness: Education and awareness programs can help to prevent drug trafficking by providing information about the dangers of drug use and the consequences of drug trafficking. These programs can target young people, parents, and other community members to help reduce demand for drugs.

International cooperation: Drug trafficking is a global problem that requires international cooperation to address. Countries can work together to share information, coordinate efforts, and target drug trafficking organisations.

Law enforcement: Strong law enforcement efforts can help to disrupt drug trafficking operations and apprehend those involved. This can include intelligence gathering, surveillance, and interdiction efforts at ports of entry, as well as efforts to dismantle drug trafficking organizations.

Treatment and support: Treatment and support programs can help those struggling with drug addiction to recover and rebuild their lives. This can include access to counselling, detoxification services, and other support programs.

Economic development:

Economic development programs can help to reduce the root causes of drug trafficking by providing job opportunities and economic stability. This can help to reduce poverty and unemployment which can be contributing factors to drug trafficking.

Border control:

Border control measures, including physical barriers, advanced technologies, and increased staffing, can help to prevent drugs from entering a country. This can include both land borders and ports of entry. It is important to remember that preventing drug trafficking requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of the problem. If you suspect drug trafficking in your community, you should report it to law enforcement.

Research finding

Based on a public health model, three types of strategies to prevent drug abuse can be discerned: primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention programs (anticipation and prevention of the occurrence of drug abuse) have mostly been directed to elementary grade school children in general. As knowledge about genetic predisposition increases, early developmental periods are increasingly plastic, and substance abuse is now beginning at earlier ages. Prophylactic interventions need to focus on childhood high-risk groups. With respect to secondary prevention (aiming at the discontinuation of infrequent drug-use) the stage (or stepping-stone) hypothesis is currently being challenged. Continuation is mainly a function of the type of drug as well as social and personality factors. Progression to higher-rank drugs depends mainly on the intensity of prior drug use. Comorbid psychiatric diseases are increasingly recognized and tractable. As in primary prevention the focus of secondary prevention shifts from sociocultural influences to the individual at risk. Regarding tertiary prevention (preventing the retaking of substances after achieving abstinence), research evaluating programs for the treatment of abuse of alcohol and other drugs indicates a limited staying power. Recent insights in the psycho- and neurobiologies of addictive behaviour and in the psychopharmacological properties of alcohol and other drugs provide clinicians with new pharmacological tools to prevent relapse.

Conclusion

Drug smuggling is an issue that is gaining international attention, particularly in the Indian Ocean region.

The Indian Ocean borders 24 states, and accounts for a third of the world's ocean area. Previously, other challenges, such as Somali piracy, have been at the forefront of international action. However, the utilisation of the Southern route by drug traffickers, and the consequent issues this has caused, has led to increased focus on how to tackle this issue. So for that Awareness must be spread among the people to lower down the drug addiction through campaigns and NGOs. The stigma associated with drug taking needs to be reduced. Society needs to understand that drug-addicts are victims and not criminals. Certain crop drugs which have more than 50% alcohol and opioids need to be contained. Strict action is required from police officers and the excise and narcotics department to curb the problem of drug menace in the country. Education curriculum should include chapters on drug addiction, its impact and also on de-addiction. Proper Counselling is another alternative. Concerted and coordinated efforts of all the agencies will be required to tackle this growing threat. Creating more employment opportunities would solve the problem to some extent as Quick, and more, money attracts unemployed youth towards such activities. The enactment of various legislations has indeed provided the government with the means to achieve the twin goals of reduction in drug supply and demand. However effective implementation of the laws has to be ensured by the executing authority so as to not let the law be a mere theory. To stop drugs from entering the country, measures must be taken such as controlling cross-border trafficking and improving drug enforcement. However, to fully address the problem, India must also work on reducing the demand for drugs through measures such as imposing harsher punishments under NDPS Act, 1985.

Recommendation

Police need timely, accurate criminal intelligence in order to understand crime trends so they can adapt their activities and policies accordingly. We support our member countries with intelligence through dedicated analysis on drug trafficking. We generate analytical reports by combining national police information with data from other sources – such as international organizations, civil society and open sources. These help our member countries to expand their knowledge on crimes, highlight subjects of potential interest, and foster cross-border coordination. Collaboration among law enforcement, health, and social service agencies can help reduce demand, which fuels drug trafficking activities, often involving violence and crime. Treating addicts and preventing the onset of drug use can complement law enforcement efforts to reduce supply. You cannot keep someone from going down the wrong path with substance abuse. However, you can help yourself through substance abuse prevention. Consider the five measures of drug and alcohol abuse prevention, including:

Understand How Substance Abuse Begins and Grows

Substance abuse starts when someone uses any drug or alcohol for recreational purposes. This means you can suffer addiction to prescription medications, as many Americans do today. Substance abuse also begins when you drink to drunkenness or use drugs for intoxication, exclusively. Of course, any abuse of prescription medication is a big red flag and risk for addiction.

Avoid temptations and triggers

You need healthy friendships and relationships, not toxic ones. If you need to write down some quick excuses to avoid people and places that trigger or tempt you, do it. Memorize your excuses and use them. Specifically, protect yourself.

Get the Therapies you Need for Co-Occurring Conditions

Mental illness and addiction often accompany one another. Anxiety, PTSD, ADHD, depression, and other mental conditions require professional help and support. It's that simple. You need a professional helping you to learn coping skills in the prevention of substance abuse.

Get to Know Your Risk Factors

Do you have a family history of substance abuse, mental conditions, or addiction? For example, studies indicate addiction runs in families, but you can prevent it. Know the risk factors for substance abuse in your life and guard against them.

Maintain Healthy Balance in Life

Drugs and alcohol fill the hunger brought on by boredom, depression, and general life issues. Learn and practice stress management and coping skills to keep you out of stress and in balance with a healthy life.

Plan, Hope, and Dream for Substance Abuse Prevention

An important means of preventing substance abuse is planning, hoping, and dreaming about your future. If you maintain realistic goals for your future, goals you work toward each day, then you cannot make space for drugs and alcohol. Track your progress toward your goals, so you can see even small accomplishments. This builds confidence, self-esteem, and positivity toward your future. Typically, people suffering from addiction started abusing drugs or alcohol in low self-esteem. For this reason, keep your eyes on a specific prize in the future to prevent substance abuse in your life.

Overcoming Addiction

Suffering addiction is not the end of your life, hopes, and dreams. Instead, you have the opportunity to turn your life around. You can overcome addiction to drugs or alcohol and use substance abuse prevention skills to keep yourself on track in good health.

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