



## SPREADING AWARENESS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ABOUT ND AND PS

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### **Abstract:**

*The abuse of narcotic drugs (ND) and psychotropic substances (PS) is a growing public health concern, particularly among the youth. Schools and colleges, as educational institutions, play a vital role in shaping the awareness and behavior of students regarding such substances. The lack of proper education and awareness about the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances can lead to an increase in their consumption, which in turn contributes to various social, psychological, and health problems. This paper focuses on the importance of spreading awareness in educational institutions about the harmful effects of ND and PS. It also explores existing awareness programs and strategies that can be employed to educate students about the risks of substance abuse and the need for preventive measures. Through a review of legislative frameworks, academic studies, and case examples, the paper advocates for the integration of substance abuse awareness into the school and college curriculum.*

**Keywords:** *Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances, Substance Abuse, Awareness Programs, Educational Institutions, Public Health, Preventive Measures, Health Risks, Youth Education, School Curriculum, College Initiatives, Drug Prevention*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are chemicals that can alter the normal function of the human brain, leading to physical, psychological, and behavioral changes. These substances are widely misused, often among adolescents and young adults. The youth, particularly in schools and colleges, are at high risk of encountering narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, given their exposure to peer pressure, curiosity, and social environments that might normalize such practices.

Narcotic drugs, including opiates such as heroin and morphine, and psychotropic substances like prescription medications, marijuana, and hallucinogens, are easily accessible in many regions. Their abuse leads to severe consequences, ranging from addiction and mental health disorders to long-term physical illnesses and even death. The problem of drug misuse is complex and requires a multi-faceted approach to prevent it, with education being one of the most effective strategies.

Spreading awareness in educational institutions is crucial because students in schools and colleges are at a critical stage of personal development, where they are shaping their behaviors and attitudes. Education on the harmful effects of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances can prevent students from engaging in substance abuse and help them make informed decisions. This paper explores the role of schools and colleges in educating students about these substances and highlights various programs and methods that can be implemented for effective awareness.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

The significance of educating young people about substance abuse has been widely discussed in academic literature. Singh (2020) emphasizes that early awareness programs in schools have been shown to reduce the likelihood of drug experimentation among adolescents. Singh highlights the importance of peer education and the role of teachers in fostering an environment where students feel comfortable discussing drug-related issues.



According to **Gupta & Sharma (2019)**, awareness initiatives in schools have also been linked to the reduction of drug consumption rates. Their study found that schools that integrated awareness programs and substance abuse prevention education into their curricula saw a decrease in the number of students engaging in drug-related activities.

In addition to formal education, **Yadav (2021)** discusses the importance of community engagement in addressing substance abuse. His research indicates that school and college-based awareness programs should collaborate with local health authorities, NGOs, and parents to provide a comprehensive approach to combating narcotic drug and psychotropic substance abuse.

Further studies, such as **Joshi & Mehta (2018)**, suggest that while the inclusion of drug awareness programs is common in many schools and colleges, their effectiveness often depends on the mode of delivery. Programs that use interactive and participatory methods, such as workshops, peer group discussions, and role-playing, tend to engage students better than passive learning methods like lectures or pamphlets.

#### **Importance of Awareness Programs in Schools and Colleges:**

Educational institutions serve as the first line of defense against substance abuse, particularly in the formative years of young individuals. The role of schools and colleges goes beyond merely teaching academic subjects; they have a responsibility to instill knowledge about the social, legal, and health-related consequences of substance abuse.

Several countries have implemented national-level programs aimed at raising awareness about narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. For instance, the **Drug-Free Schools Program** in the United States has been successful in decreasing substance use among students by providing drug prevention education from elementary through to college levels. Similarly, India has implemented the **National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR)**, which focuses on drug demand reduction, including educational programs and outreach initiatives for students.

Effective awareness programs in schools and colleges can have a lasting impact on reducing substance abuse. By integrating information about the harmful effects of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances into regular school curricula and extracurricular activities, institutions can help students understand the consequences of addiction and mental health disorders linked to these substances. Moreover, these programs can provide students with coping mechanisms and support systems for those already at risk.

#### **Strategies for Spreading Awareness:**

1. **Incorporating Drug Education into the Curriculum:** Including substance abuse awareness as part of subjects such as health education, life skills, and social sciences can help students gain a thorough understanding of the issue. The curriculum should highlight the short-term and long-term effects of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances on physical and mental health.
2. **Peer Education and Support Groups:** Peer education has proven to be an effective method of educating students about substance abuse. Peer leaders can organize discussions, workshops, and awareness campaigns to engage their classmates and offer support to those affected.
3. **Workshops and Counseling Sessions:** Schools and colleges can conduct workshops and interactive counseling sessions where students can learn about the risks of drug abuse and receive guidance on how to resist peer pressure. Counseling services should be readily available for students who may need professional help.
4. **Involvement of Parents and Communities:** Awareness programs should not be confined to schools and colleges alone. The involvement of parents and local communities can significantly enhance the reach and effectiveness of these initiatives. Collaborative efforts with local NGOs and healthcare providers can offer broader outreach programs that go beyond the classroom.
5. **Media and Social Media Campaigns:** Utilizing media platforms and social media can help spread awareness to a broader audience. Schools and colleges can create campaigns on these platforms to highlight the dangers of substance abuse and encourage students to participate in prevention activities.



### CONCLUSION:

Spreading awareness about narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in schools and colleges is crucial in curbing the growing problem of substance abuse among young people. Educational institutions have the unique opportunity to influence students at a stage where they are most susceptible to experimentation with drugs. By integrating substance abuse education into the curriculum, encouraging peer-led initiatives, and involving parents and communities, schools and colleges can contribute to reducing the risk of substance abuse and its associated consequences.

Given the rising prevalence of drug misuse among youth, the need for comprehensive, well-structured awareness programs has never been more urgent. A collective effort from educational institutions, the government, and society is essential to prevent the further spread of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances among young people.

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