

Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team

Autumn 2021

Focus on... Street Safety

Info for young people

With evenings now starting to get longer young people may be more at risk of having an accident or being involved in an incident than in the Summer months. Checkout the safety tips below to help young people who may be out in the local community to stay safer:

- **Avoid areas that are poorly lit or remote areas where there is little access (if there is an accident and you need emergency assistance it will take crews longer to find you)**
- **Avoid areas where there is water. It may be deeper than you think and people can drown even in shallow water**
- **Keep an eye on your mates, don't let them wander off by themselves. Make sure you all get home safely**
- **Alcohol or other drug use can affect your judgement. Be careful crossing busy roads, cars may be travelling much faster than you think. Be Safe – Be Seen.**
- **Keep your mobile phone charged and have credit, in case anything happens and you need to contact someone**
- **Try and keep in contact with your parents or carers, let them know where you are, who you are with and what time you'll be home. Parents are in their rights to report their children missing to the police if they are worried about them and they don't come home at an expected time.**

Come in We're
OPEN

SERVICE UPDATE:

During the coronavirus pandemic we have adapted our ways of working in many ways to continue to deliver our services in the best possible way whilst following national guidance.

The team are now back in our office at Lord Street, St Helens. We are having appointments with young people there as well as in the community, at home visits, schools and colleges etc.

The team can be flexible and if young people want to maintain contact and appointments over the phone or by facetime we can also offer this.

KNOW ABOUT KETAMINE?

In St Helens and other parts of England we are seeing a rise in young people using Ketamine (Ket, K). There are lots of risks about this so try this quiz and see how much you know

Try this quiz for yourself:



1. What type of drug is ketamine?
a) anesthetic? b) stimulant? c) depressant?
2. Is Ketamine illegal?
a) Yes b) No
3. Ketamine can cause a range of long term health problems including, sometimes irreversible damage to the bladder and kidneys?
a) True b) False
4. One of the main risks of ketamine use is hurting yourself and not knowing because of it's numbing properties
a) True b) False
5. It's ok to use ketamine and drink alcohol at the same time because the alcohol will water down the ketamine in your body?
a) It's ok b) it's not ok
6. Street Ketamine must be safe to use though because it's a medicine?
a) True b) False
7. If you use ketamine and it takes ages to kick in you mustn't take any more in case there is a delayed reaction
a) True b) False
8. If people have a bad time using ketamine you should leave them and they will soon snap out of it
a) True b) False

The longer term effects of ketamine use can include flashbacks, memory loss and problems with concentration.

Regular use can cause depression and, occasionally, psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations. Ketamine can also make existing mental health problems worse.

If you take too much ketamine you may lose the ability to move and go into a 'k-hole'. This feels like your mind and body have separated and you can't do anything about it – which can be a very scary experience.

Regular ketamine use can cause:

- *agitation*
- *panic attacks*
- *damage to short- and long-term memory*
- *depression, if taken frequently*
- *for more info visit:*

<https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/ketamine>

(See last page for Quiz Answers)

Our next Newsletter, out in November, will focus on Alcohol as part of Alcohol Awareness Week

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS:

Teenage years are a wonderful and scary time. It is a time when they are taking first big steps to independence, where they have more freedom than before and more likely to be curious about the world around them and take risks.

This may seem a natural progression towards adulthood (some may call a “rite of passage”) however some young people run into difficulties and may need an extra bit of help and support along the way. Research tells us that young people expect their parents to talk to them about things like alcohol and drugs, sex and relationships, growing up and guide them through teenage years. This can be a scary or nervous experience for parents and sometimes steering your teenagers through adolescence can be like herding cats!

If you'd like some information on how to broach some of these discussions with your teenager then feel free to come along to one of our “Talking to your Kids” sessions. These are fun and interactive and will equip you with confidence and information to sit down with your kids and talk about real life issues that they may experience along their way through teenage years.

Parents -do you know about Child Exploitation?

Child Exploitation takes place in 2 main ways (although there are others), these being sexual and criminal exploitation. Our “Talking to your Kids” session also explores the risks of exploitation and some of the signs to spot if your child is at risk of this.

Ways you can help to protect your child from exploitation:

Know who they are spending time with, who are their friends, how do they know them? Have they met online or through other, sometimes older, people?

Know where they are when they are out – are they coming home really late or not at all and you don't know where they are?

Are they coming home with new “gifts”, money, clothes, phones etc that they can't or won't explain?

Are they becoming more secretive?

CONTACT YPDAAT TO BOOK A PLACE ON OUR “TALKING TO YOUR KIDS” SESSION – visit our website for more information and see what parents say about us: <https://yaz.sthelens.gov.uk/main-sections/drugs-alcohol/parents-carers-information/>

TELEPHONE: 01744 675605

EMAIL – ypdaat@sthelens.gov.uk



Staff Training and other resources

YPDAAT works with a range of different agencies to prevent harm caused to young people through the use of drugs or alcohol.

We do this in a number of ways such as:

Working together to make a plan to help young people and their families with things they might be struggling with.

Training to workers from a wide range of organisations to help them have more knowledge and information to support young people they may be working with. Our training sessions are free to all professionals in St Helens and it is easy to book on by using our Eventbrite link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/ypdaat-st-helens-17419744578>

Alcohol Workshop for schools

Over the last year, YPDAAT with Citadel Arts service and St Helens music service worked together with a group of young people to produce a video and workshop resource for schools about the risks of alcohol use. This is ideal for Year 7 and 8 students and aims to generate a wide range of discussion. To access this workshop you can download from the St Helens Council RSHE website (contact the team for details). There are also a number of lesson plans that you can use as part of PSHE lessons.

Quiz Answers:

1. A (ketamine is a strong anesthetic drug and often used in surgery to cause numbness)
2. A (ketamine is a Class B drug – you can face a criminal record if found in possession of or supplying ketamine)
3. A (ketamine can cause a range of health problems that may last for the rest of someone's life)
4. A (because it is an anesthetic people can hurt themselves, very seriously, and not feel the pain for number of hours as they are unaware)
5. B (it can be very dangerous to mix ketamine with alcohol or other drugs such as benzos or opiates, it can lead to overdose or a fatality)
6. B (street ketamine can be mixed with a number of different substances that you won't know about, plus you can't measure how pure or safe or how much to take unlike medicines that are clearly measured)
7. B (if you use any drugs and they don't kick in when you expect them to, don't double dose. The original drugs may kick in at any time, which can lead to being completely off your head or risk an overdose)
8. B (if anyone is having a bad time, take them to a quiet area, stay with them and reassure them. Arrange to get them home. If things get really bad, call 999 for an ambulance)

