



Drug and alcohol support for young people

young people friendly
St.Helens



St.Helens Council

Young People's Drug &
Alcohol Team
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Our ref:

4th July 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

As the summer holidays are swiftly approaching this is often a time when young people may have more freedom than usual and as they start to feel "older" they can start to take more risks, test boundaries, try new things etc. For some young people this may include experimenting with alcohol or drugs, and although many young people will choose not to do this, some will and it is important that they are made fully aware of the potential risks and harms of this.

I would like to bring to your attention some emerging concerns across the area about the potential risks of the drug ecstasy and its possible appeal to some young people. This information has also been printed in the local press.

I have also attached a copy of the School nurse newsletter which contains their contact details (as well as other summer safety information) should you/your child wish to access confidential advice and information via their school nurse in school or at your local clinic.

"St Helens Council's Public Health team is urging young people across St Helens to be 'extremely cautious' with the use of ecstasy (MDMA) pills, tablets and powders.

New tablets available have branding and bright colours that can appeal to young people in particular. But varying production methods mean that two tablets that look similar may cause very different effects, they can often be mixed with other potent substances or variations of MDMA and users won't be able to predict the effect it will have until they have taken them.

"The potential consequences could be severe or life threatening," said St Helens Council's Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing Councillor Jeanie Bell. "Users are more at risk if they are using other substances and alcohol at the same time. It can cause additional health complications or risk to life to those who have existing medical conditions".

Users of ecstasy locally have been reporting a number of adverse effects including extreme agitation, paranoia, numbness, shaking and feelings of being unwell lasting for several days after using.

Councillor Bell added: "Parents are being asked to talk to their children about the risks of all drugs, but particularly ecstasy, and advise them not to use. Side effects may go unnoticed, can come on very

quickly and can lead to very serious consequences or fatalities. Young people who experience any unfamiliar, unwanted or other concerning symptoms should seek urgent medical treatment”.

Again, it is not my intention to cause panic or distress for any parent, however, if you do have any concerns about the information provided please do not hesitate to contact your child’s school/college, your school nurse or the Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Team on 01744 675605 or visit www.sthelens.gov.uk/ypdaat for additional information.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and safe summer!

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Jones', is centered within a light grey rectangular box.

Helen Jones
Team Manager
Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Team