



**COMMEMORATING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ADDICTION
PREVENTING DRUG USE AMONG CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS
- ACTIVITY REPORT (JUNE – AUGUST 2023)**



**ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL AND HUMAN ADVANCEMENT (ASHA)
DAMDAMIA, LEMBUCHERRA, AGARTALA, WEST TRIPURA.**

INTRODUCTION – ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Association for Social and Human Advancement (ASHA), registered as Development Organization, in the year 1999 is the official Social Service wing of the Society of Fathers of Holy Cross, Northeast India. ASHA strives to serve the people of Northeast particularly in the states of Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram through its 25 centers administered by the Society of Fathers of Holy Cross for socio-economic and human development. ASHA aims at the integral development of social and human potentials irrespective of race, creed and religious affiliations in a spirit of love, service, justice, equality and peace.

ASHA Holy Cross Damdamia, had kick started Awareness Drives across the State of Tripura from 26th June 2023, the International Day Against Drug Addiction & illicit Trafficking against the abuse of various substances among the young generation especially among the students in our educational institutions. This report elucidates ASHA's program for the past three months (June to August 2023).

Substance abuse prevention, also known as drug abuse prevention, is a process that attempts to prevent the onset of substance use or limit the development of problems associated with using psychoactive substances. Prevention efforts may focus on the individual or their surroundings. ASHA offers a package of services to institutions, student communities and youth clubs wherever necessary to address the issue of an ever-increasing abuse among our youth in a non-threatening environment.

We also provide a platform at the same time to the vulnerable ones to consider on the irreversible disorder, susceptibility to chronic diseases like HIV - AIDS, Liver Cirrhosis, kidney dysfunction, killer diseases like Hepatitis B & C which accompanies an addict throughout his/her lifetime. They will be helped to understand the impact of Substance abuse on behavior patterns, family, career and life as a whole.

There are 3 levels of service interventions that ASHA provides for the student's community and other stakeholders. They are:

1. Awareness Programs to campaign against Substance Abuse and its Disorder on the victims with the help of personal testimonies of young people who underwent the ordeal but had shown exemplary courage to recover and return to normal and meaningful lifestyle;
2. Engage with/arrange Counseling & Medical assistance to minor patients through Day Care Centre facilities meant for early sufferers (A team consists of psychiatric counsellors, doctors assist); and
3. Recommend/ connect with a healthy Rehab Centre for serious patients in the process of recovery.

OUR ACTIVITIES – TO DATE...

Today's youth face many risks, including drug abuse, violence, and HIV/AIDS. Responding to these risks before they become problems can be difficult. One of the goals of ASHA is to help the public understand the causes of drug abuse and to prevent its onset. Drug abuse has serious consequences in our homes, schools, colleges and communities. From ASHA's perspective, the use of all unlawful drugs and the unfortunate use of legal drugs is considered drug abuse.

Prevention science has made great progress in recent years. Many prevention interventions are being tested in "real-world" settings so they can be more easily adapted for community use. Scientists are studying a broader range of populations and topics. They have identified, for example, effective interventions with younger populations to help prevent risk behaviors before drug abuse occurs.

We are pleased to present our report "**Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents**". Drug abuse or substance abuse refers to *the use of certain chemicals for the purpose of creating pleasurable effects* on the brain. The drug abuse, the excessive, maladaptive, or addictive use of drugs for nonmedical purposes despite social, psychological, and physical problems that may arise from such use.

Structured treatment programs, substance abuse counseling, and 12-Step programs do help. While they are not the only sources of help, they are the most consistently effective, especially when combined in some systematic fashion. Treatment and counseling provide structure, support, and intervention. We have prepared a draft Manual to help parents, teachers and those who cater to adolescents and students that we found to be useful and helpful to the participants.

COMMEMORATING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ADDICTION

REACHED SO FAR...

- ASHA organized over 15 awareness Programs in Schools and Colleges – 7 in West Tripura, 2 in South Tripura, 2 in Gomati District, 2 in Dhalai District and 2 in Khowai District. More than 2000 students (girls and boys), teachers and parents have benefited from the awareness sessions.
- **The sessions were conducted in the following locations;**
 - ASHA Holy Cross prior to celebrating the International Day Against Drug Abuse (26th June) conducted an Awareness Drive on Substance Abuse on Sunday, 11th June at Holy Cross School Auditorium Tuikarmaw, Shanti Bazar, South Tripura. Addressed over 145 Parents and Teachers.
 - Awareness Drive to the 170 hostel students of Montfort School Champak Nagar on the occasion of the International Day Against Substance Abuse and Illicit Trafficking organized on 26th June 2023.
 - Organized Awareness Drive to the 95 SMO trainees at ASHA on the occasion of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26th June 2023, Damdamia, Lembucherra Agartala.
 - Addressed the Parents Teachers Gathering at Holy Cross School Tuikarmaw as an awareness program on dangers of the chronic disease of Substance Abuse among the youth and students on 27th June 2023.

- Organized an awareness program on addiction & substance abuse for class IX & X students and their parents at Montfort School Dukli, Agartala on 28th June 2023. Over 110 of them participated.
- Organized sessions on Career Guidance and Skills for Effective Performance in learning to students of class IX & X of Olive Hill Holy Cross School Twithampui on 29th June 2023. We had also engaged informally with the teaching staff of the school on the occasion for making them aware of their various roles and responsibilities in the school. At least 52 benefited from the sessions.
- Organized an Awareness Session for 46 teacher's faculty of Holy Cross College about the imminent dangers of substance abuse becoming a crisis among students based on an article published in JETIR April 2023, 'DRUG ADDICTION: YOUTH OF TRIPURA' at College premises on 30th June 2023.
- Conducted an interactive session with 64 teaching faculty of Auxilium School Nandan Nagar Agartala for increasing awareness among care takers on prevention tactics against abuses and the characteristics of ever new abuseable substances available in Tripura on 1st July 2023.
- Organized an Awareness Program to students of Classes V - X on developing positive attitudes as weapons to war against Substance Abuse which is rampant among the student's community and Youth at Fatima School Agartala on 2nd of July 2023.
- In continuation of the efforts of ASHA to fight against Substance Abuse and a drive to bring awareness among students' communities in Tripura, we organized multiple sessions for teachers and students in far flung village schools (Holy Cross Schools Depacherra & Karbook) on 14th & 15th July 2023. ASHA reached out to more than 1200 students during the weekend with a message NO TO DRUGS & YES TO LIFE & about 60 teachers with the message Be Responsible & Ethical Custodians of students in your care.
- ASHA had the opportunity to address the entire student's body (Class VI - XII) of Don Bosco School Nandannagar as part of our ongoing Mission Against Substance Abuse and Disorder among Students & Youth on Monday 17th July 2023. About 1050 students attended the Awareness Program which lasted for about 2 hours.
- ASHA reached out to the senior students of St Arnold's Schools of Ambassa and Kamaranga with the message to resist the FIRST DRAG of Drugs from PEER PRESSURE in order to safeguard oneself from lifelong Addiction to Substance Abuse. Good Discipline & Positivity are key to succeed. During the occasion we had also organized interactive sessions with teachers to boost their skills to unearth the different talents buried in their students to develop them for a fulfilling career. We met with a few students who are fence sitters and lack motivation in studies. 21st & 22nd July 2023.
- On the occasion of the friendly Football Match organized to commemorate the Birthday of Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur on August 19th 2023 to drive home the message of the threats and the irrevocable harms Drugs will bring to the life of individual person, family and society as whole through the medium of Awareness Programs especially using personal testimonies of those who have come back to pro-life activities from Drug affected menace to the people of Lefunga village more specifically to the youth gathered to watch the game.

REFLECTIONS BY THE SPEAKERS

- According to WHO there are 54 kinds of addictions as today and all are equally destructive and affecting the normal life in the society.
- Substance Abuse; Disorder and its impact on the lives of youth and students.
- Drug Addiction is a chronic sickness just like cancer, diabetes etc. and needs medication and treatment.
- Once you are addicted to drugs, you will always be vulnerable to relapse.
- Character defect, psychological disorder, unhealthy family relationships etc. can adversely affect the individuals to seek refuge in substances.

The team highlighted the findings and engaged in discussion with the participants in recognizing the seriousness of Drug Addiction particularly among the youth and students in W. Tripura.

The speaker cautioned the hearers not to take lightly the emerging traits of the addiction related killer diseases like Hepatitis B & HIV AIDS found among the abusers instead fight unitedly against the menace because it will have far reaching consequences to individuals especially the younger generation, families and societies.

The sessions included personal testimonies by young recovering drug abusers who shared their views, experiences and appeals to the participants as persons introduced to Substance Abuse at a very early age in life.

A senior recovering drug abuser for about 20 years, Mr Soumitra Shankar Mukherjee who presently travels across Northeastern states as a counsellor and teacher was our main resource person to speak about the aspects connected with Substance Abuse.

During the input sessions the article shown below (Published in JETIR, April 2023) had been referred and its findings on study done with 100 respondents who were subjected to Drug Addiction.

**Exclusive session on Drug Addiction: A Reflection on Youths of Tripura
By Dr Madhumita Debnath, PGT (Henry Derozio School, Agartala) &
Prof. Chandrika Basu Majumder, Dept. of Political Science, Tripura University**

A study conducted on 100 Drug Abusers of both urban and rural youth of W. Tripura District, State of Tripura. An article published in JETIR, April 2023

FINDINGS WHICH NEED OUR ATTENTION

AGE GROUP OF THE VICTIMS OF ADDICTION

- 23% - 16-20 yrs.
- 51% - 21-30 yrs.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE VICTIMS

- Graduated - 27%
- Class XII - 22%
- Below class V - 17%

SOCIAL STATUS OF THE VICTIMS

- Students - 42%
- Self Employed - 17%

MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME OF THE VICTIMS

- 15,000 - 30,000 - 29%
- Less than 5000 - 24%
- 5,000 - 15,000 - 21%

PREDOMINANT CAUSES OF ADDICTION

- Peer Group Pressure - 23%
- Troubled Relationship - 12%
- Stress in life - 10%

IMPACT OF DRUG ABUSE UPON ESSENTIAL AREAS OF THE LIVES OF VICTIMS

- Financial Breakdown - 82%
- Damaged relationship with family, relatives and friends - 73%
- Feel bad and guilty of having taken drugs - 67%
- Experienced related perennial sickness - 61%
- Faced negligence and looked down by family, relatives and friends - 56%
- Entered into Fight & violent behavior after the use of drugs - 39%
- Lost job - 34%
- Engaged in illegal activities - 27%
- Arrested for possession of illegal drugs - 21%
- Legal consequences and harassment - 11%
- Accidents and Injuries - 8%
- Sexual abuse - 0%

CONCLUSION

In West Tripura, more than half (51%) of the respondents are 21-30 years of age, followed by nearly one-fourth (23%) of the respondents whose age is between 16-20 years. Among them, maximum have completed higher secondary or graduation, also it has also been found that still the maximum (42%) of them is studying. They are more or less influenced by Genetics & family history; environmental cause and psychological cause though it was more with the influence of peer group pressure.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Addiction is commonly found among the age group between 18-30. Sometime, Family (genetic) history has a natural inclination to addictions.
- Youth in the schools & colleges are target for easy sale of drugs and they easily find refuge in drugs to reduce their stress and avoid facing reality in life so as to evade struggles.
- Commonly used drugs in Tripura: CHARAS, GANGA, DENDRITE, COREX, HEROIN, YAVA, PHENSEDYL and others. These drugs when constantly used in ingesting one, breach the blood – vein.
- Vulnerable are those who leave the family & village to a new place for studies & work, hence completely distancing from family and close relatives could be lessened.
- Psychological imbalances & character disorder are the main reasons for voluntary choice to substance abuse. Many normal people are dragged into substance abuse due to peer pressure.
- The environment and the neighborhood have greatly influenced the victim to develop the habit even from early childhood.
- Barrier and change the brain's normal chemical functions and lead to cognitive impairment (abnormalities).
- Three ways of impact on a person who is addicted: Family; Relationship; & Career
- One who is vulnerable to the abuse of drugs needs repeated instructions about its impact on future life. Addiction is a chronic disease just like any other chronic disease and so needs continued medication and after care treatment.
- Methodology used in Rehab Centre: breaking the chain breach the habit through constant COUNSELLING. General duration prescribed by accepted treatment is 178 days (6 months) of Rehabilitation. The four levels of Treatment include are: Detoxification, Rehabilitation, Follow up program & After Care.
- No medicine can heal addictions; it can be tamed only. Alcohol is socially accepted and available in markets while drugs are illegal and consumption of them are also a taboo by the society. Abuse of Drugs are considered as crime.
- We need to keep updating our data, information and knowledge about the new forms, name and sources of substances coming to the society because they are rapidly changing its presentation.
- Instructions and proper guidance to children & students when they are young is of paramount importance for habits and addictions are directly connected
- Consistent with good habits and mannerisms will bring the desired results in recovering as this is the positive outcome of our few brothers who are coming to give personal testimonies.
- We have to fight together against this menace for it has already had strong grip on the ground.

POST PROGRAM EVALUATION FORM

Post Program Evaluation Form

Substance Abuse, Disorder and its impact on the lives of Youth of Tripura
ASHA (Association for Social & Human Advancement), Agartala
POST-WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

1. Your Name or Nickname (Optional) _____

2. Name of the School/ Institution: _____

3. Please identify yourself as: Male / Female/ Other

4. Your age: _____

5. Your District: _____

6. Can you name two new things that you learnt about substance abuse today?

1.

2.

7. Have you changed your views about substance abuse in anyway? (*Tick*)

Yes

No

Not sure

8. Do you feel confident in offering someone else information about substance abuse? (*Tick*)

Yes

No

Not sure

Encircle Your Answer

9. How aware are you of the effects of substance abuse after the workshop?
(Use 1 – 5 scale, where 1 being not at all aware and 5 extremely aware)

1

2

3

4

5

10. How confident do you feel about supporting yourself or someone else using drugs after the workshop?
(Use 1 – 5 scale, where 1 being not at all confident and 5 extremely confident)

1

2

3

4

5

11. How confident do you feel about resisting pressure to use drugs after the workshop?

1

2

3

4

5

12. How likely are you to change your attitude to using drugs after the workshop? (Use 1 – 5 scale, where 1 being not likely and 5 extremely likely)

1 2 3 4 5

13. Did you find the workshop interesting and engaging?
(Use scale of 1-5, where 1 being uninteresting 5 very interesting and engaging)

1 2 3 4 5

14. Can you think of a strategy to resist peer pressure to take drugs when you don't want to? (*Tick*)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

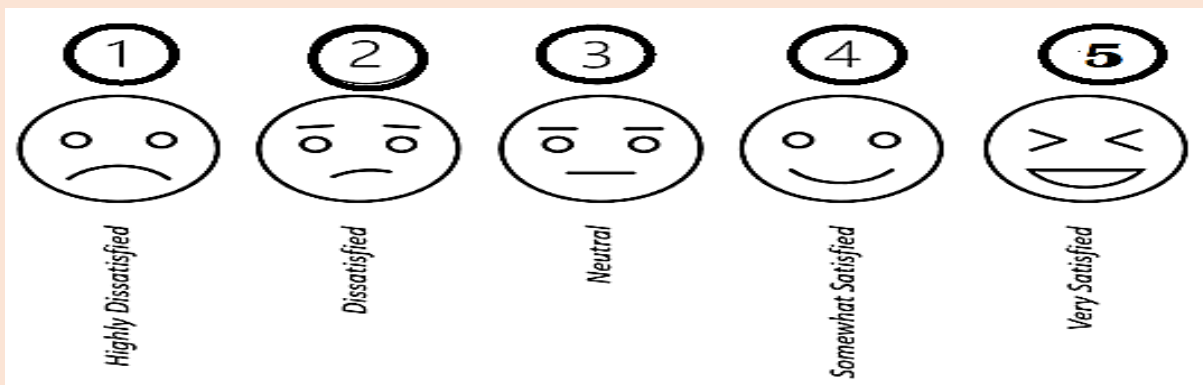
15. Do you feel you can make informed choices about substance abuse now?
(*Tick*)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree

16. How would you rate the pace of the presentation?

- Too fast
- Moderate
- Too slow

17. Overall, how would you rate this workshop?



18. Would you like to suggest or make any specific comment about the workshop?

CERTIFICATES



HOLY CROSS HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

DEPACHERRA

Jatanbari, P.O. : Gomati Tripura-799104

Ref. No. HCHS 07/12/23.....

Date : 17-07-2023

To whom it may concern,

Subject: Certificate of Participation - Substance Abuse Awareness Program

This is to certify that ASHA Holy Cross conducted a successful awareness program against Substance Abuse and an interactive session with Students and teachers at Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Depacherra on 15 July 2023.

The program was organized with the objective of raising awareness about the detrimental effects of substance abuse and fostering a sense of responsibility towards creating a safe and supportive environment for the students and staff at Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Depacherra.

During the awareness program, students were educated about the various forms of substance abuse, its impact on physical and mental health, and the importance of early intervention and prevention. The interactive session with the teachers aimed at equipping them with the knowledge and tools to identify potential signs of substance abuse among students and provide appropriate guidance and support.

ASHA Holy Cross demonstrated exceptional dedication, expertise, and communication skills throughout the event, effectively engaging the audience and encouraging meaningful discussions. Their commitment to spreading awareness on this critical issue was evident in their presentations and interactions with the participants.

On behalf of Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Depacherra, we extend our deepest gratitude to ASHA Holy Cross for their valuable contribution to our school community. The program's impact will undoubtedly leave a lasting impression on our students and faculty, fostering a safer and healthier learning environment.

We are pleased to present this Certificate of Participation to ASHA Holy Cross as recognition of their efforts and commitment to creating a positive change in our society.

Yours sincerely

Fr. Lawrence Darlong

Principal

Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Depacherra

Principal

DEPACHERRA HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

Jatanbari PO Depacherra

Gomati Tripura - 799104



MONTFORT SCHOOL

RANIR KHAMAR, AGARTALA, TRIPURA WEST, PIN - 799 003

Contact : 8258953159, 9436169202

E-mail : montfort017@gmail.com • Website : montfortagt.in

CBSE Affiliation No. 2030039

Date :

25/07/2023

To whom it may concern

Subject: Certificate of Participation

This is to certify that ASHA Holy Cross actively participated in Awareness Drive against Substance Abuse organized (Awareness on Substance Abuse and Health) on 29th June 2023. The event was held at Montfort School, Agartala, and aimed to create greater awareness among teachers, parents, and students in the fight against substance abuse.

ASHA played a significant role in conducting various awareness programs during the specified period, contributing immensely to the success of the initiative. The engagement included a two-hour interaction with the teaching faculty, parents, and students of Montfort School on 29th June 2023.

We express our sincere appreciation to Mr. Soumitra Shankar Mukherjee (54), a renowned and effective counselor, and resource person, who was specially invited for this noble cause. Mr. Mukherjee's valuable insights, garnered from his experience of working in Tripura and personal journey of recovery from substance abuse and disorder, undoubtedly left a lasting impact on all participants.

We acknowledge ASHA's commitment and dedication to spreading awareness about drug abuse and its consequences. Their active involvement in this vital project showcases their unwavering commitment to creating a healthier and safer community.

In recognition of their valuable contribution, we are pleased to present ASHA Holy Cross with this Certificate of Participation for their outstanding efforts in conducting the awareness program against Substance Abuse at Montfort School, Agartala.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to ASHA Holy Cross for their cooperation and support in this endeavour. We believe that their involvement has contributed significantly to the success of the awareness drive.

Thank you once again for your valuable contribution to the fight against substance abuse.

Sincerely,

Bro. Joseph Reddy
25/07/2023

Bro. Joseph Reddy

Principal

Montfort School

Ranir Khamar, Agartala-799003





HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL KARBOOK

M : 8258007557

Bagya Prasad Para, Karbook-799104
Affiliated to TBSE, School Code : 2H133 # Udise Code : 160761501

Ref. No.

Date : 03/08/2023

To whom it may concern

Subject: Certificate of Participation

This is to certify that ASHA Holy Cross actively participated in Awareness Drive against Substance Abuse organized (Awareness on Substance Abuse and Health) on 14th July 2023. The event was held at Holy Cross High School, Karbook, and aimed to create greater awareness among teachers, parents, and students in the fight against substance abuse.

ASHA played a significant role in conducting various awareness programs during the specified period, contributing immensely to the success of the initiative. The engagement included a two-hour interaction with the teaching faculty, parents, and students of Holy Cross High School, Karbook on 14th July 2023.

We express our sincere appreciation to Fr. Thomas John, Mr. Diamond Singh and his members present, a renowned and effective counselor, and resource person, who was specially invited for this noble cause. Mr. Diamond's valuable insights, garnered from his experience of working in Tripura and personal journey of recovery from substance abuse and disorder, undoubtedly left a lasting impact on all participants.

We acknowledge ASHA's commitment and dedication to spreading awareness about drug abuse and its consequences. Their active involvement in this vital project showcases their unwavering commitment to creating a healthier and safer community.

In recognition of their valuable contribution, we are pleased to present ASHA Holy Cross with this Certificate of Participation for their outstanding efforts in conducting the awareness program against Substance Abuse at Holy Cross High School, Karbook.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to ASHA Holy Cross for their cooperation and support in this endeavor. We believe that their involvement has contributed significantly to the success of the awareness drive.

Thank you once again for your valuable contribution to the fight against substance abuse.

Sincerely,
Sr. Rosita Kinny
Headmistress

Headmistress
Holy Cross High School
B. Prasad Para, Karbook
Gomati Tripura-799104.

LETTER TO GOVT. OFFICIALS



ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL & HUMAN ADVANCEMENT (ASHA)

ASHA HOLY CROSS,
Damdamia, Lembucherra P.O
Agartala, West Tripura – 799210
Contact: 9436775975/8730822411
Email: ashaagartala@gmail.com

SAJU VAHEED A. IAS

District Magistrate & Collector of South Tripura,
Belonia

August 21, 2023

Subject: **FIGHT AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN ALL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

Dear Sir,

Greetings from ASHA Holy Cross!

Based on an article published in *JETIR, April 2023*, '**Drug Addiction: A Reflection on Youths of Tripura**' ASHA Holy Cross Damdamia, had kick started Awareness Drives across the State of Tripura from **26th June 2023**, the **International Day Against Drug Addiction & Illicit Trafficking** against the abuse of various substances among the young generation especially among the students in our educational institutions. The article highlights some data collected from a study conducted on 100 Drug Abusers of both urban and rural youth of W. Tripura District which in turn depicts some pointers for consideration and raises some serious concerns for our further study.

Our efforts in this regard is to offer a package of services to institutions, student communities and youth clubs wherever necessary to **address the issue of an ever increasing abuse among our youth in a non-threatening environment**. We also provide a platform at the same time to the vulnerable ones to consider on the irreversible disorder, susceptibility to chronic diseases like HIV - AIDS, Liver Cirrhosis, kidney dysfunction, killer diseases like Hepatitis B & C which accompanies an addict throughout his/her lifetime. They will be helped to understand the impact of Substance abuse on behavior patterns, family, career and life as a whole.

There are **3 levels of service interventions that ASHA could provide** for the students community and other stakeholders. They are:

1. **Awareness Programs** to campaign against Substance Abuse and its Disorder on the victims with the help of **personal testimonies of young people** who underwent the ordeal but had shown exemplary courage to recover and return to normal and meaningful lifestyle.
2. Engage with/arrange Counseling & Medical assistance to minor patients through **Day Care Centre facilities meant for early sufferers** (A team consists of psychiatric counselors, doctors will assist)
3. Recommend/ connect with a **healthy Rehab Centre** for serious patients in the process of recovery

ASHA Holy Cross would be willing to organize interactive sessions to discuss on the basics of drug-related issues: what is addiction, how to identify students who are in the first stage of addiction, empowering them with life skills & coping mechanisms etc. with the collaboration of Teaching Faculty, persons in authority and those involved in decision making. It will I believe, raise the level of awareness and evoke a thinking process in the society. It will be accompanied by multiple discussions on preventive measures and united action plans with your team. Further we may have to come up with a set of programs as follow up activities so as to reach out to our target group and accelerate the level of awareness on this issue even to the parents and guardians as well.

ASHA HOLY CROSS has been in the forefront for more than two decades now with hopeful signs of Social welfare activities and promoting human dignity and advancement for a better future. **The World Health Organization (WHO)** has declared addiction as one such a disease and we have to treat addiction as a disease with timely and proper treatment. In union of hearts and joining hands with all people of good will we can resist this menace to safeguard our families, neighborhood and societies. So I highly solicit all your co operation, help and support in any way possible for this noble cause of saving lives before it is too late.

Let us carry the message of '**NO TO DRUGS and YES TO LIFE**'

Thanking you and looking forward to engage and working with you in the future,

Kind regards,


Thomas John
DIRECTOR, ASHA



'Drug Addiction: A Reflection on Youths of Tripura', article published in *JETIR*, April 2023 was authored by:

1. Dr. Mathumita Debnath, PGT (Henry Derozio School, Agartala &
2. Prof. Chandrika Basu Majumder (Dept of Political Science, Tripura University)

REFERENCE ARTICLE



Drug Addiction: A Reflection on Youths of Tripura

* Dr. Madhumita Debnath, PGT,
Henry Derozio School, Agartala &
** Prof. Chandrika Basu Majumder,
Dept. of Political Science, Tripura University

Abstract:

Drug addiction is an international issue that puts people's lives, societies, and the political stability and security of many nations in grave peril. The United Nations said in 2005 that the use of illicit drugs has increased globally and that the main global trend is the rising accessibility of various narcotics among an ever-widening range of consumers. The fact that young people attending school and colleges appear to be the new target market for the global pharma industry is quite concerning. The goal of this study is to comprehend the issues that respondents experience as a result of their drug addiction and how these issues directly impact their families, their social networks, and society, with particular emphasis on growing future generation.

The study intended to comprehend the issues that respondents with drug addiction cause for their families, social networks, and society as a whole, with particular reference to young people from Tripura's west region. The kids and youngsters or adolescents from West District were the study's target group. The study area and each respondent were chosen through the use of purposeful sampling. Using systematic sampling, a total of 100 respondents from areas of Tripura's west district—have been chosen. Data collection involved the use of interview schedules.

Keywords: Drug addiction, youngsters, adolescents, family, society, West Tripura.

Introduction:

Drug addiction has spread throughout the world, and young people in particular are becoming dependent on various narcotics and stimulants that have narcotic effects. Addicts live in a foreign world and lose touch with their family, which spoils their life in every way. They spend a lot of money on drugs before looking for criminal ways to make money. There are many harmful drug side effects, especially when we compare them to health issues.

Due to the fact that drug consumption is such a big issue in today's culture, drug addiction among young people is on the rise in Tripura. The source claims that young people between the ages of 18 and 30 are addicted to substances like charas, ganga, as well as dendrite, phensedyl, corex, heroin, yava, and many other addiction-inducing pills. The majority of those impacted by drug use are students in schools and colleges. Young people abused by drugs, increasing its pace creating negative impacts on society.

Young adults who have recently begun college or relocated to a new place in search of employment frequently encounter numerous issues and difficulties in their daily lives. They are more likely to use drugs and other similar

substances to reduce stress. It frequently seems simpler to find a quick remedy than to face and handle the actual issue. Trying illicit drugs can result in addiction and develop into a lifelong habit.

Contemporary world is extremely competitive, and it is challenging to advance in one of these environments. Both young and old people, but particularly young people, are always under peer pressure. It is rarely noticeable, though, most of the time. For this reason, many young people anticipate feeling pressured to try drugs, smoke, or consume alcohol. Being the person who doesn't use alcohol or smoke might be challenging for young people. Due to their sense of loneliness and exclusion from society, they develop a habit of using drugs, which eventually turns into an addiction.

Another reason why young people become hooked to drugs is exposure to drug usage in the environment in which they are raised. If a person grows up around drug use among adults, they are more inclined to experiment with drugs on their own. A person who uses drugs for the first time frequently receives recommendations from friends, coworkers, and elders. It's crucial to lead by example if you want to keep your children away from drugs and other addictive substances. The greatest strategy to avoid drug addiction is to offer accurate information and awareness campaigns about the effects of drugs.

Review of Literature:

McConnell (1983) defined that "A drug is usually defined as any substance that can affect the structure and function of the body." To be more clear, what McConnell stated, "A drug is any chemical which when taken in relatively small amounts, significantly increases or decreases cellular activities, somewhere in the body."¹

Drug misuse is a significant global public health issue, according to UNODC (2005). Numerous teenagers who are in school participate in mental health programmes, either temporarily or for an extended period of time. Some students go crazy; don't fit in at school, and eventually quit. Fawa defines a drug as any substance that is utilised to treat or prevent disease in both humans and animals. Drug use affects how the body operates, either favourably or unfavourably, depending on the user's body type, the drug's type, dosage, and whether it is used alone or in conjunction with other substances.²

Drug abuse, according to Haladu, is defined as excessive and ongoing self-administration of a drug without consideration for socially or culturally acceptable behaviours. Insofar as it affects a person's ability to operate socially and healthily, it is also considered drug usage.³

Although there is disagreement over what exactly qualifies as an addiction, it is generally accepted that people can become addicted to any substance. As an illustration, consider alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, nicotine, opioids, sedatives, hallucinogens, inhalants, cannabis, phencyclidine, caffeine, and a large number of other chemicals that, when ingested, breach the blood-brain barrier and change the brain's normal chemical functioning.⁴ Early onset and chronic alcoholics both had cognitive abnormalities, according to Pishkin et al. (1985). The results showed that, regardless of the length of problem drinking, an early initiation of alcoholism is highly predictive of cognitive impairment.

¹ McConnell, J.V. (1983) *Understanding Human Behaviour*. 4th Edition, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, pp. 67-73

² Fawa, M. S. (2003). Drug abuse eradication programme in schools: the relevance of team, approach alternative, in A. Garba (Ed) *Youth and drug abuse in Nigeria: Strategies for counselling, management and control*, Kano: Matasa Press.

³ Haladu, A. A. (2003). Outreach strategies for curbing drug abuse among out-of school youth in Nigeria: A challenge for community Based Organization (CBOS), in A. Garba (ed). *Youth and drug abuse in Nigeria: Strategies for counselling, management and control*. Kano: Matosa Press.

⁴ Pishkin, V., Lovallo, W. R. & Bourne Jr., L. E. (1985). Chronic Alcoholism in Males: Cognitive Deficit as a Function of Age of Onset, Age, and Duration Alcoholism. *Clinical and Experimental Research*, 9(5), 400-406.

According to the DSM-IV-TR of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the term "addiction" refers to a persistent pattern of behaviour that persists despite having negative effects. Students have a very high level of understanding about how detrimental substance usage is, according to Tsering et al. (2010). Even though they were aware of the negative impacts of substance use, the users were successful in convincing their peers.⁵

Socialising included doing things like drinking, smoking, and using drugs. When compared to urban adolescents, Donath et al. (2011) found that a greater proportion of rural adolescents engaged in binge drinking. They smoked in a variety of settings, including bars, clubs, parks, parties, school grounds, their bedrooms, and while travelling to and from school.⁶

Meager social support, family strife, parental drinking, and low and high economic status were reported to appear to increase the likelihood of alcohol usage in research investigations. The findings showed that drug users are less likely to be in good mental and physical health, have low self-esteem, and have lower academic achievement, which has a negative impact on their involvement in school and social interactions.⁷

Tyas and Pederson (1998) focused on socio-demographic, environmental, behavioural, and personal factors with smoking and discovered that adolescent smoking was linked to a number of factors, including age, ethnicity, family structure, parental socioeconomic status, personal income, parental smoking, parental attitudes, sibling smoking, peer smoking, peer attitudes and norms, family environment, attachment to family and friends, school factors, risk behaviours, and lifestyle factors.⁸

Many indigenous cultures have used drugs in one way or another as part and parcel of religious rituals over the years. Different drugs have been preferred by various cultures, with the decision frequently being influenced by the climate and occasionally by trade.⁹

When someone feels alone for psychosocial, financial, or cultural reasons, their need to belong draws them to other people who share their isolation and who may have turned to drugs for solace or escape. Drug subcultures are born as a result of this, and these subcultures blame society for their isolation and, in turn, blame society for their members' abnormal, antisocial behaviour. Being welcomed into a new atmosphere where using drugs is acceptable may and frequently does have terrible effects on both the individual and society.¹⁰

The frequent patterns of abnormal behaviour displayed by drug users are therefore not surprising. When traditional family groups and social values are being rejected, engaging in such behaviour can be a way to win over peers and be accepted into a group because it is frequently perceived by young people as sophisticated and adult behaviour.¹¹

Conceptual clarity of the concepts and variables employed, as well as the current perception of addicted teenagers, are provided by the aforementioned introduction and the reviewed literature. However, there is a sensed need to conduct research to comprehend and identify the various co-related aspects of adolescent drug addiction. In light of this, the current study is intended to offer fresh perspectives and open up new horizons to assist addicted teenagers in resuming their normal lives by enhancing their capacity for adjustment, self-efficacy, and socio-psychological competence.

⁵ Tsering, D., Pal, R. & Dasgupta, A. (2010). Substance use among adolescent high school students in India: A survey of knowledge, attitude, and opinion. *Journal of Pharmacy & Bio-Allied Sciences*, 2(2), 137-140.

⁶ Donath, C., Gräßel, E., Baier, D., Pfeiffer, C., Karagülle, D., Bleich, S. & Hillemecher, T. (2011). Alcohol consumption and binge drinking in adolescents: comparison of different migration backgrounds and rural vs. urban residence - a representative study. *BMC Public Health*, 11(84), 1471-2458.

⁷ Tyas, S. L. & Pederson, L. L. (1998). Psychosocial Factors Related To Adolescent Smoking. *Tobacco Control*, 7(4), 409-420.

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Stockley, D. (1986). *Social Reality of Drug problem* (2nd ed.). London, England: Ebury Press. P-22

¹⁰ Kennedy, P. (1996) *Preparing for the Twenty First Century* London, P. 43

¹¹ Aggarwal, R.K. (1994) *Drugs and Addictive Behaviour* Delhi, P. 55-62

Objective:

1. To find out the economic background of drug abusers.
2. To explore the different causes of drug addiction among the adolescents of West Tripura.
3. To explore the impact of drug abuse.

Research Methodology:

Research methodology refers to the precise methods used to find and choose information about a subject. For the current study, a descriptive research methodology was used to better understand the issues facing young people who use drugs. The research was kept exploratory so that each respondent's issues could be considered subjectively throughout the research process. Survey research is the methodology used, and only a small sample of the population is researched. The study is based on primary data. The target population is from Tripura's west district, i.e., selected respondents were interviewed to obtain average statistics for the study. For this study, a total of 100 participants were chosen, randomly by snowball sampling method. The West District is one of Tripura's eight districts. In the Indian state of Tripura, there is a district known as the West district. The district's administrative centre is in Agartala, the state capital. In Tripura's eight districts, it has the highest population as of 2012. West Tripura district is bordered on the north and west by Bangladesh, on the east by Khowai district, and on the south by Sepaijijala district. The overall area of the district is 983.63 square kilometres following the creation of four new districts in the state of Tripura.

Analysis and Findings:

Analysis has been made to find out the economic background of drug abusers: to explore the different causes of drug addiction among the adolescents of West Tripura; and to explore the impact of drug among the abusers- through the following tables.

Table: 1 Age Distribution among Drug Abusers

Age	Rural Frequency	Urban Frequency	Total	Percentage
< 15 years	2	6	8	8%
16-20 years	7	16	23	23%
21-30 years	12	39	51	51%
31-40 years	6	4	10	10%
> 40 years	3	5	8	8%
Total	30	70	100	100%

The above table shows the age distribution among drug abusers, where it has been found that more than half (51%) of the respondents are 21-30 years of age, followed by nearly one-fourth (23%) of the respondents whose age is between 16-20 years, 10% of the respondents is between 31-40 years, and 8% percent from both less than 15 years as well as above 40 years. Moreover, it has been found that more (39%) numbers of respondents are from urban area followed by 12% of the respondents from rural area from 21-30 years of age: followed by 16% of the

respondents from urban area and 7% from rural area from the age group of 16-20 years. So the table shows that urban respondents are more addicted towards drugs which are a youth group from West Tripura district.

Table: 2 Educational Levels of the Drug Abusers

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Below Class V	17	17%
Class V	16	16%
Class X	11	11%
Class XII	22	22%
Graduation	27	27%
Post-graduation	5	5%
Above Post Graduation	2	2%
Total	100	100%

The above table 2 shows the educational levels of the respondents, where it has been found that maximum (27%) of them are graduates, followed by 22% of the respondents who are higher secondary (XII) passed, 17% have educational level below class five(V), 16% of the respondents have educational qualification of Class five(5), 11% of the respondents have qualification of secondary level, i.e., class ten(X), 5% have qualification of post – graduation and a very less percentage, i.e., 2% of the respondents have qualification above Post-graduation. So, it reveals that upto graduate level youngsters are more inclined towards drugs.

Table: 3 Employment statuses among Drug Abusers

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Students	42	42%
Self-employed	17	17%
Part-time employee	12	12%
Full-time employee	14	14%
Any Other	15	15%
Total	100	100%

The above table 3 shows the employment status of the respondents, where it has been found that 42% of the respondents are Students who still continuing their studies at different levels, followed by self-employed (17%), Full time employee (14%), Part-time employee (12%) and 15% of the respondents, who reveals Other kind of occupation or employment status which is not even clear to them.

Table: 4 Level of Monthly Family Income of Drug Abusers

Level of Monthly Family Income (in Rs.)	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5000	24	24%
5001-15000	21	21%
15001-30000	29	29%
30001-50000	12	12%
More than 50000	14	14%
Total	100	100%

The above table 4 shows the monthly family income of the respondents, where it has been found that nearly one-third (29%) of the respondents monthly family income of respondents is between Rs. 15001- Rs. 30000, followed by nearly one-fourth (24%) of the respondents whose monthly family income is less than Rs.5000, more than one-fifth (21%) of the respondents' monthly family income is between Rs. 5001 – Rs.15000, 14% of the respondents' monthly family income is more than Rs. 50000 and the rest 12% of the respondents' monthly family income is between Rs. 30001 – Rs.50000. So it reveals that drug abusers are from different levels of monthly family income group.

Table: 5 Causes of Drug Addiction

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Genetics and Family History	8	8%
Peer group pressure	23	23%
Trouble relationship	12	12%
Stress in Life	10	10%
Low economic status	7	7%
Mental disorder or depression	4	4%
Low social status	9	9%
Domestic Violence or negligence from family members	8	8%
Lack of friends	5	5%
Huge academic pressure	8	8%
Traumatic events	6	6%
Total	100	100%

The above table 5 shows the causes of Drug addiction among the respondents, where it has been found that the main causes related to drug addiction in Tripura includes Genetics & family history; environmental cause and psychological cause. Drug abusers may be more prone to addiction due to Genetics. The way your ancestors responded to a particular medicine is how our body and brain respond to it. Chances of becoming hooked to drugs significantly increase if your parents have a history of drug misuse, where it has been found that 8% of the respondents only belonged to this category of Genetics and family history.

The environment we live in is equally important in the emergence of drug dependence. Growing up in a home with a drug addict increases the likelihood that the child will battle with drugs as well because environment influences behaviour. In addition, there are additional environmental elements that can fuel drug addiction. It includes - Abuse of drugs among friends and peers (23%), Lack of social and economic support (16%), Troubled relationships (12%), Stress in life (10%), Domestic Violence or negligence from family members (8%), Low socioeconomic status (7%) – which has been revealed after the study.

Drug addiction is largely influenced by heredity and environment, but psychological elements are also at play. Everything from physical or sexual abuse to peer and parental neglect to domestic violence can cause psychological stress. And to relieve this stress, individuals turn to narcotics. This drug abuse can eventually develop into an addiction. Other psychological cause includes - Mental disorder such as depression (4%), Lack of friends (5%), Huge academic pressure (8%), and Traumatic events (6%). Thus it has been found that the drug abusers are more or less influenced by Genetics & family history; environmental cause and psychological cause though more it was with peer group pressure which is part of environment for a respondent as a Drug abuser.

Table: 6 Impact of Drug Abuse

Impact of Drug Abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Feel bad or guilty after drug used	67	67%
Fights with other under the influence of drugs	39	39%
Engaged in illegal activities to obtain drugs	27	27%
Arrested for possession of illegal drugs	21	21%
Experienced sickness while not taking drugs	61	61%
Damaged relationships with family / friends	73	73%
Loosed job/s	34	34%
Financial trouble	82	82%
Sexual abuse	0	0%
Accidents and injuries	8	8%
Legal consequences (e.g. going to jail)	11	11%
Faced negligence from neighbours	43	43%
Faced negligence from Relatives	56	56%

The above table 6 shows the impact of Drug abuse on the respondents as abusers, where it has been found that 67% of the respondents feels guilty of being a drug addict, 61% of the respondents experienced sickness while not taken drugs, 73% of the respondents damaged family relations as well as friendship due to abusive use of drug, 39% fights with other under the influence of drugs, 27% engaged themselves in illegal activities by consuming abusive drugs, 34% loosed their jobs due to this addiction, 43% percent of the drug abuser respondents faced negligence from neighbours, 56% percent of the drug abuser respondents faced negligence from relatives also, 8% of them also faced accident due this addiction of drug and lastly, more than for-fifth (82%) of the respondents faced financial trouble also due to this addiction of drugs. So, it reveals all the impact of drug addiction on personal and social aspects.

Conclusion: From the above analysis revealed that in West Tripura, more than half (51%) of the respondents are 21-30 years of age, followed by nearly one-fourth (23%) of the respondents whose age is between 16-20 years, who are from more from urban area. Among them, maximum have completed higher secondary or graduation, also it has also been found that still maximum (42%) of them are studying. The drug abusers are from all levels of monthly family income group. They are more or less influenced by Genetics & family history; environmental cause and psychological cause though it was more with the influence of peer group pressure which is part of environment for a respondent as a Drug abuser. Also, it reveals all the impact of drug addiction through different aspects of personal and social sphere.

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EVENT PHOTOS

EVENT ALBUM

