

'LEGAL HIGHS'

MEPHEDRONE



"It's almost like a game of Russian roulette. The hope is you'll be okay. The risk is that you would suffer permanent damage and sometimes even death"



Dr Andrew Dearden, British Medical Association

Information for Parents, Students and Schools

In recent weeks and months there has been much discussion and publicity about "Legal High" drugs.

Young people are wrongly presuming that Mephedrone and other Legal High Drugs are in fact safe to use because they are legal.

MOST LEGAL HIGH DRUGS ARE NOT PROVEN TO BE SAFE TO USE.

They must therefore be treated as unsafe and dangerous to use. Some young people have died from using these drugs and many others have been admitted to hospital.

The School Drug Education Advisors and Pent Valley Technology College WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS

- Legal High drugs are not safe to use.
- Adults should immediate medical action if a young person is thought to be under the influence of a substance (DFE 2004).
- Legal High drugs are not permitted under any circumstances irrespective of their legal status, and that any infringement of unauthorised drugs use will be considered a serious breach of school rules and will be dealt with accordingly. In particular, the use, possession, supply or distribution of these drugs at school or during school business, including during off site visits, and within residential or school boarding houses, is against school rules.
- Pent Valley Technology College will consider any unauthorised drugs/substances or suspicious substances found at school, to be potentially dangerous and inform the Police who will deal with this in accordance with National and Local KCC guidelines.
- Some Legal Highs have now been made illegal under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Schools should not be distracted from the dangers by this legal aspect. Call the Police wherever a suspicious substance is found.
- **Care Pathways** - Any pupil found in possession of Legal High drugs will be referred to KCA Young Persons Team's treatment services for a full assessment. Use the Drug Use Screening Tool (DUST). You can contact KCA East Kent on 01227 456744 or West Kent on 01634 33840.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Legal High drugs are being marketed and targeted at young people and local intelligence indicates that Legal High drugs are increasingly more attractive to young people who would not normally be associated with illegal drug use. Young people feel more able to try them and experiment without fear of any consequences. This can act as a gateway drug experience and encourage young people to experiment with other illegal drugs.
- There are many different types and regional names for these so called legal drugs, eg Mephedrone is also called “meow”.
- Mixing Legal High drugs with other substances, eg alcohol, can cause strokes, paranoia, seizures and even death.
- Some of these drugs/substances are plant fertilisers adapted for human consumption. Others are organic plants or chemical compounds.
- Many of these drugs described as being legal have not been fully tested and information about their long term health impact is not yet fully informed. There is growing evidence which shows increased A&E hospital admissions associated with these drugs and they have contributed to deaths.
- It is believed, by experts, that Mephedrone will become a banned substance in the near future.

For more information check out the following links:

<http://www.talktofrank.com/drugs.aspx?id=3597>

<http://www.cph.org.uk/showPublication.aspx?pubid=614>

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/news/gbl-and-other-legal-highs-banned.html>