



Ministry of Education, National Heritage, Culture & Arts, Youth & Sports

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION POLICY IN DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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## 1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the prevention, intervention and elimination of the use of illegal drugs and abuse of legal drugs in schools.

## 2.0 POLICY

2.1 The Ministry of Education [MoE] does not permit the possession, consumption, promotion, distribution, or sale of all harmful drugs and the abuse of legal drugs such as kava. The following will not be tolerated in any official function held in or out of the school environment. These drugs include :

2.1.1. Marijuana and other illicit drugs such as: Cocaine, Heroine & other hard drugs

2.1.2 Tobacco

2.1.3 Alcohol

2.1.4 Inhalants

2.2 The MoE has declared all schools as smoke free and drug free. The MoE however, makes allowance for kava only to be used by relevant school authorities at ceremonial purposes in moderate amount.

2.3 Government employees are strictly prohibited from drinking kava on school/ government premises during office hours.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 Drug and substance abuse is of national concern due to its detrimental effects on the user's health and socio-economic costs to the people, the government and the security of the nation.

3.1.2 The National Substance Abuse Advisory Council (NSAAC) is a statutory body that was established through the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council Act of 1998 to work under the MoE.

3.1.3 The Cabinet agreed that the primary objective of NSAAC should be, *'the promotion of health and the minimization of harm associated with the abuse and misuse of alcohol and other substances for students in schools and the community as well'*.

3.1.4 The MoE through NSAAC is required to provide policies and advice to government in relation to alcohol and other drug problems in Fiji.

3.1.5 One of NSAAC's key outputs is the provision of a policy and other advice on substance abuse related issues to Government and other relevant organizations.

3.1.6 This policy was first implemented in 2008 and has been reviewed twice in 2009 and 2011.

## **3.2 RATIONALE**

- 3.2.1 This policy was formulated because of the increasing problem of drugs and substance abuse in schools which is of a national concern due to the health, social and economic costs to the people.
- 3.2.2 The number of young people sent out from schools with drugs and alcohol related cases as well as those caught by police and those treated at St Giles Hospital are increasing every year and early intervention is needed.
- 3.2.3 Drugs and alcohol abuse is directly connected to the prevalence of many sexually transmitted infections and HIV and AIDS of which young people are the most vulnerable.
- 3.2.4 Secondary and primary school students are at risk and we can no longer deny that drugs and substances abuse is becoming a problem amongst our young people. Researches conducted in schools in 2004, 2005 and 2010 indicate the extent of the problem. The findings revealed that students were experimenting at a very young age.
- 3.2.5 The effects of drugs and substance abuse is evident in the increase in social problems such as crime, high school drop out rate, family break ups, accidents, high incidences of sexually transmitted infections, long term detrimental health effects and death.

## **4.0 DEFINITION**

### **4.1 Ceremonial purposes**

Gathering such as the welcome of dignitaries such as the President, Prime Minister, Minister, Permanent Secretary, Ambassador, High Commissioner and Guests of very high status.

### **4.2 Child Protection Officer**

An officially designated officer with such credential or an officer designated by the school to protect the child from abuse.

### **4.3 Counselor**

An officially designated officer with such credential or an officer designated by the school to such position.

### **4.4 Drug**

“Any substance with the exception of food and water, which, when taken into the body, alters its function physically and psychologically”. It includes all legal and illegal drugs (World Health Organization).

### **4.5 Drug Free**

A condition at a particular designated period in which a person or the school/government premises or environment has been rid of illegal drugs and or abuse of legal drugs.

#### 4.6 **Drug Free environment**

Refers to the school/government premises being free of drug trafficking and or consumption. The teachers, students and other members of the school community also take an active role in combating drug trafficking and or consumption so that drug use and abuse is eradicated in the premises.

#### 4.7 **Drug Free Premises**

Refers to mark up areas within the school/government environment that are designated as smoke and drug free.

#### 4.8 **Drug related incident**

Occasion involving alcohol, tobacco and or other drug use and or the possession of a drug or drug – related equipment, including bongos, pipes, and syringes (except for legal medical use).

#### 4.9 **Drug related problems**

Comprehensive term that describes all problems associated with drugs, including those that arise from personal use and use by another person or persons.

#### 4.10 **Government premise**

A setting and or building under the jurisdiction of the government of Fiji.

#### 4.11 **Illegal drugs**

Illicit or unlawful drugs listed in Schedule 1 of the Illicit Drugs Control Act 2004.

#### 4.12 **Moderate amount**

The amount appropriate for the purpose of the ceremony

#### 4.13 **National Substance Abuse Advisory Council Act**

The legislation (ACT No 25 of\_1998) which established the Substance Abuse Advisory Council defines its functions and powers and provide for related matters.

#### 4.14 **Official Function**

Refers to any activity in which dignitaries such as the President, Prime Minister, Minister, Permanent Secretary, Ambassador, High Commissioner and Guests of very high status is /are a part of.

#### 4.15 **Psychoactive drug**

A substance that affects the central nervous system of the user and alters the mood, perception and consciousness. Psychoactive drugs can be categorized as depressants, stimulants and hallucinogens. Some drugs do not fit neatly into any one of these categories and are grouped as 'others'.

#### 4.16 **School community**

It includes the parents, teachers, students, old scholars and all the active participants in the school's affairs.

#### 4.18 **School drug policy-Internal**

Set of brief statements outlining the school community's agreed position on, and accepted procedures for dealing with drug related issues in harmony with the MOE Policy in Drugs and Substance Abuse.

#### 4.19 **School Environment**

Refers to the whole premises and ground officially under the jurisdiction of a school.

#### 4.20 **School Function**

Refers to any activity that requires authorization and or has been given the appropriate approval by MoE and or respective school authority for implementation.

#### 4.21 **School Premises**

Refers to the place of instruction - buildings, grounds, sites and properties within the jurisdiction of a school except teachers' quarters.

#### 4.22 **School drug policy guidelines and/ or procedures**

A number of statements that detail the accepted procedures for dealing with drug related issues. School drug policy guidelines may include appendices or references to other schools, Education Department or other sector policies.

#### 4.23 **Smoke free**

A defined area in which tobacco or any other drug smoking related activity is prohibited.

#### 4.24 **Solvents/Inhalants**

Are substances that give off vapour at room temperatures, Example are glue, benzene, correction fluid thinner, polish remover, paint remover.

#### 4.25 **Substances**

4.25.1 Any liquor, psychoactive pharmaceutical or illicit drug

4.25.2 Any volatile substance such as petrol, certain fluorocarbons and anabolic steroid

4.25.3 Any other chemical that changes the mental state and may be abused by a person to achieve that effect

#### 4.26 **Substance Abuse**

Substance can refer to any physical matter, but in this policy it refers to excessive drug use, dependence on a drug or using other chemicals leading to effects that are harmful to

the user's physical and mental health, or the welfare of others.

#### 4.27 **Kava**

It is a general term to describe the drink prepared from the different parts of the pepper plant *piper methysticum*.

## 5.0 **RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND AUTHORITIES**

### 5.1 **Relevant Legislation and Authorities**

- 5.1.1 Reviewed Education Act –Part IX-Health and Safety in Schools.
- 5.1.2 Pharmacy and Poisons Act of 1985 –Parts V-VII
- 5.1.3 Substance Abuse Advisory Council Act 1998, Part III Section 8 i-v
- 5.1.4 Tobacco Control Decree 2010
- 5.1.5 Illicit Drug Control Act 2004, Parts I-IV
- 5.1.6 Ministry of Education, Science & Technology School Code of Ethics 2005
- 5.1.7 Liquor Act 2006 Parts VII-XII
- 5.1.8 Article 33 - UN Convention on the Rights of Children
- 5.1.9 2012-2014 Education Sector Strategic Development Plan-Outcome 3,
- 5.1.10 MOE Annual Corporate Plan 2012 Sub Output 3.2 & 4.2
- 5.1.11 Policy in Behavior Management in Schools 2011
- 5.1.12 PSC Circular 22/2007
- 5.1.13 Policy on Workplace Health Promotion of the Public Service 2011
- 5.1.14 Policy in Child Protection of the Ministry of Education and Fiji Schools 2011

### 5.2 **Linkages to other Policies/Plans**

- 5.2.1 Linked to Sub – Output 3.2 & 4.2 of the MOE Annual Corporate Plan 2012 of the Ministry, “Safety and Care of All Students in Schools improved”.
- 5.2.2 Linked to Objective 14 of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Recommendations of the Education Commission/ Panel Report 2000 “Developing Students as Responsible Informed and Involved Citizens of Fiji and the world” through the development and support of curriculum initiatives that contribute to civic pride and values such as Family Life, STI, HIV & AIDS and Substance Abuse Education.
- 5.2.3 Also linked to Objective 24 (1) “Promoting A Healthy Life style” of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Education Commission/ Panel Report 2000.

## 6.0 **PROCEDURES**

### 6.1 **PREVENTION**

One of the key priorities of MOE is the Protection and Care of Children from unsafe and unlawful drug use. The MOE will implement the following preventative measures:

- 6.1.1 a well resourced and relevant Health Promoting School, Family Life and Drug Education Programmes to be incorporated in the New Curriculum Framework
- 6.1.2 a regular needs assessment to plan and update the Health Promoting School, Family Life and Drug Education Programmes

- 6.1.3 regular professional development for staff teaching Health, Family Life and Drug Education
- 6.1.4 staff attending training are to write a report on the lessons learnt and how it has been implemented in the school and submitted to the Trainers and circulated to all teachers and student leaders.
- 6.1.5 involvement of parents and community members in Health and Drug Education Programmes.
- 6.1.6 regular awareness programmes for students, teachers, parents and the community through lectures, presentations, workshop, dissemination of drug information in the media and through the publication and distribution of drug education materials.
- 6.1.7 regular two yearly review of the Ministry of Education Policy in Drugs and Substance Abuse.

This policy, procedures and the Health Promoting School Education Programmes are consistent with the Fiji Government policy framework in relation to drug use as outlined in the Substance Abuse Advisory Council Act. This document stresses the need for a comprehensive approach emphasizing the principles of *opposition to drug abuse* and promotion of *harm reduction*.

## **7.0 GUIDELINES**

### **7.1 INTERVENTION AND ERADICATION**

The following intervention procedures are designed to address alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and substance related problems to ensure the health and well being of all parties concerned are represented. All intervention guidelines conform to legal requirements:

- 7.2.1 in case of suspected drug or substance abuse, respond to the student's immediate safety- apply or organize to apply first aid where necessary (follow normal school emergency procedures for medical issues)
- 7.2.2 accompany the student and take the substance involved immediately to the school Head Teacher or Principal
- 7.2.3 if in a compromised environment, send a teacher or responsible student to seek immediate assistance from school administration
- 7.2.4 refer the student to a Counselor/Child Protection Officer (CPO) or an entrusted Religious leader for counselling first then the student will be referred to the Principal, Vice Principal, Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher who will report the incident to the District Education Office . This person contacts the local police who will be responsible for the testing of the drugs by the government analyst.
- 7.2.5 the school head teacher or principal writes to the PSE to inform that drugs have been taken for testing.
- 7.2.6 no disciplinary outcomes to be determined until after the analysis and a report is received from the government analyst. For the safety and welfare of other students, the principal may suspend a student who is under investigation for possession or use of drugs in line with the Policy in Behavior Management in Schools.

7.2.7 the Counselor/Child Protection Officer (CPO)/Religious leader with the School's Internal Disciplinary Council or the External Disciplinary Council will be responsible for managing the incident.

7.2.8 the line of actions to be taken by the person or persons responsible for managing the incident should be in accordance with that outlined in MOE's Policy in Behavior Management in Schools.

**8.0 EFFECTIVE DATE.....22/02/12**

**9.0 REVIEW DATE.....22/02/13**

**10.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS**

Alcohol, Behavior Management, Drugs, Inhalants, Liquor, Marijuana, Substance Abuse, Tobacco.

**11.0 APPROVED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, NATIONAL HERITAGE, CULTURE & ARTS AND YOUTH & SPORTS AMBASSADOR FILIPE BOLE.**



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**SIGNATURE**

**22/02/12**

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**DATE**



## APPENDICES – Solvents and their Potential Health Effects on Humans

SOLVENTS	CHEMICAL CONTENTS	MAJOR USES	EFFECTS ON HUMANS
1) PAINT THINNER	Methanol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Paint Remover</li> <li>❖ Embalming Fluids</li> <li>❖ Inks</li> <li>❖ Duplicating Fluids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Headaches</li> <li>❖ Dizziness</li> <li>❖ nausea and blurred vision</li> </ul>
2) CORRECTI ON FLUIDS  BENZENE	TRI CHLOROETHANE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ used as a solvent for chlorinated rubbers, fats, oils waxes and resins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Stinging and burning sensations and whitening of skin in human</li> <li>❖ acute short term exposure to very high level of trichloromethane can cause death through cardiac arrhythmias and in one case massive liver damage.</li> <li>❖ sleeping, confusion and feeling euphoria</li> <li>❖ headache, dizziness blurred vision</li> <li>❖ drowsiness, dizziness, headaches and unconsciousness in human</li> <li>❖ Death may result from exposure to very high levels of benzene</li> <li>❖ ingestion of large amount of benzene may result in vomiting, dizziness, convulsion and death in human</li> <li>❖ long term inhalation of benzene causes disorders in the blood in humans.</li> <li>❖ benzene specifically affects bone marrow (the tissue that produce blood cells)</li> <li>❖ Excessive bleeding and damage to the immune system (by changes in blood levels of antibodies and loss of white blood cells) may develop menstrual disorders and a decrease size of ovaries have been observed in women occupationally exposed to high levels of benzene</li> <li>❖ Increased, incidence of leukaemia cancer of the tissues that form white blood cells, has been observed in humans occupationally exposed to benzene.</li> </ul>
3) DUNLOP GLUE	Polyurethane contains TDI Toluene DI-Isocyanate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ irritate all living tissues especially the mucous membranes of the eyes and the respiratory tracts</li> <li>❖ it will cause severe irritation and bring tears if liquid isocyanate is splashed in the eyes.</li> <li>❖ Vomiting, nausea and abdominal pain as well as breathing problems</li> <li>❖ if you breath too much TD, within minutes your throat will begin to burn and deep coughing fits and choking sensations may follow</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ a severe allergic reaction that can lead to a full blown asthmatic attack involving wheezing, great difficulty in breathing and a feeling of constriction to the chest.</li> <li>❖ at least 4 people are reported to have died from reaction to inhaling TDI</li> </ul>
4) PVC GLUE	Ethyl Acetate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ the substance is toxic to mucous membranes, upper respiratory tract.</li> <li>❖ the substance may be toxic to blood, kidneys, liver and central nervous system (CNS)</li> <li>❖ repeated or prolonged exposure to the substance can produce target organs damage</li> <li>❖ causes irritation to the skin and eyes</li> <li>❖ talkativeness</li> <li>❖ boastfulness</li> <li>❖ slurred speech</li> <li>❖ slowed reaction time</li> <li>❖ dizziness</li> <li>❖ sightedness</li> <li>❖ reduced memory and concentration</li> <li>❖ rapid pulse</li> <li>❖ prolonged inhalation may affect behaviour the central nervous system and cause liver, kidney, lung and heart damage.</li> </ul>
5) POLISH REMOVER	ACETONE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Inhalation of vapours irritates the respiratory tract.</li> <li>❖ May cause coughing, dizziness, dullness and headaches</li> <li>❖ higher concentrations can produce central nervous system, depression narcosis and unconsciousness</li> </ul> <p><u>Ingestion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ swallowing small amounts is not likely to produce harmful effects. Ingestion of large amounts may produce abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting</li> <li>❖ Aspiration into lungs can produce severe lung damage</li> </ul> <p><u>Skin Contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Cause skin irritation, redness, pain, drying and cracking of the skin</li> </ul> <p><u>Eye Contact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ vapours are irritating to the eyes.</li> </ul>

