

# School Drug Education Guidelines

*School Drug Education Guidelines* aim to keep young people safer and encourage a shared commitment to drug education between staff, students and parents.

Guidelines that are developed in consultation with school community members, and are clear and well communicated, are more likely to be implemented and effective.

Guidelines should:

- state the school's drug education vision and goals
- address all areas of the *Health Promoting Schools Framework*<sup>2</sup>
- highlight strategies being used to achieve drug education goals
- focus on improving the school's approach to drug education
- identify roles and responsibilities of school staff and parent groups
- identify agencies who can contribute to achieving the school's drug education vision
- provide guidance on school drug education issues
- outline *Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support* (refer to pages 28 to 29 and 43 to 63)
- align with system and sector policies
- be reviewed on a regular basis.

Guidelines need to be distributed to staff, students and parents with other opportunities used to communicate and highlight their importance, such as:

- school assemblies
- inclusion of guidelines in induction packs
- school newsletters and website
- parent information evenings
- staff meetings
- letters to parents.

*School Drug Education Guidelines* including *Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support* apply to all members of the school community while on school premises, at a school function or on excursions where there are students present.

Schools developing *School Drug Education Guidelines* may contact SDERA to receive constructive feedback and advice.

Where guidelines state the school's drug education intentions and goals, the action plan states how these goals are to be achieved.

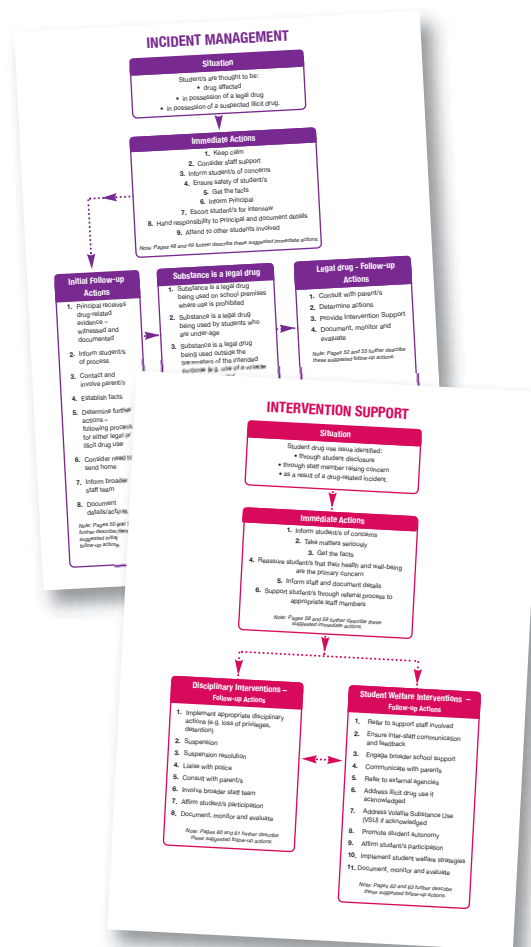


# Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support

All *School Drug Education Guidelines* should outline the procedures that exist within the school for managing issues and incidents involving possible drug use and providing support interventions. These procedures should be developed in consultation with staff, students and parents and should align with school, system and sector policies.

It is important that the procedures demonstrate a commitment to providing a consistent and considered approach that aims to promote inclusion of students whose drug use may be linked to educational, personal, social or psychological issues in their lives. By adopting an educative and supportive approach to student drug use issues, the procedures can minimise stigmatisation of students and promote a continued connection to school.

Detailed information on *Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support* is provided on pages 43 to 63 and includes flow charts illustrating suggested steps.



Incident Management and Intervention Support should be guided by purposeful processes which support students, staff and parents to work together towards fair and reasonable outcomes.





Any staff member at some time may be required to provide intervention on some level. Therefore it is essential that all staff be aware of the procedures and actions they may be required to take.

The involvement of all staff in implementing the procedures reflects a whole-school approach and promotes a sense of shared responsibility for student welfare. This can also contribute to the prevention and reduction of harm to students, staff and the wider-school community.

Procedures should:

- offer staff, students, and parents a clear outline of the actions that will be taken when drug use incidents occur or drug use issues arise
- provide clear and supportive processes to ensure consistency in the actions taken and to reduce anxiety for those involved
- be made available to staff, students and parents in the *School Drug Education Guidelines*
- be reviewed and revised regularly to ensure effectiveness.

In forming part of the *School Drug Education Guidelines*, the procedures should be communicated throughout the whole-school community. Information on the distribution of guidelines is provided on page 27.

Schools may contact SDERA to review and provide feedback on draft *Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support*. Sample *School Drug Education Guidelines* which include *Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support* are provided on pages 30 to 32.



## School Drug Education Guidelines

### Our Vision

At Healthwise College we believe that drug education is integral to the well-being of our students. We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for the school community. We endeavour to engage the whole-school community in our drug education initiatives and are committed to providing our students with drug education and necessary related intervention across all year levels.

### Our School Commitment

Our *School Drug Education Guidelines* are consistent with the *Principles for School Drug Education*. The guidelines promote a whole-school approach to drug education where school staff, students, parents and the wider-school community work together with the aim of preventing and reducing potential and existing risks of harm from drug use, to establish and maintain a safe school environment.

Our guidelines have been developed in consultation with staff, students, parents and community members to address drug education and necessary related interventions in a caring and consistent manner within the Healthwise College community.

### Curriculum

- Our three-year drug education plan identifies age-appropriate drug education content across all year levels.
- We use evidence-based drug education resources such as *Challenges and Choices* ([www.sdera.wa.edu.au](http://www.sdera.wa.edu.au)) and *REDI* resources ([www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)).
- School administration supports staff to deliver appropriate drug education by allowing in-school time for planning, providing professional development opportunities for staff and allocating funds for resources and materials.
- Classroom programs focus on skill development and develop students' knowledge and understandings, attitudes and values and promote help-seeking behaviour.
- A minimum of three hours of drug education per term is provided to all students across each school year.
- Learning is extended from the classroom to promote parent support of drug education programs (e.g. through use of take-home activities).

### Ethos and Environment

- A School Drug Education Leadership Team with representatives from the teaching and administration staff, school health service staff, students and parents is supported.
- Drug education is included in whole-school planning.
- All students have the opportunity to participate in drug education programs and initiatives.
- *School Drug Education Guidelines* are reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with the school community.
- School administration supports staff attendance at professional development to broaden their understanding and enhance their confidence in working well with drug use issues.
- We have developed and implemented *Procedures for Incident Management and Intervention Support* and these have been communicated through the whole-school community as a part of the *School Drug Education Guidelines*.

### Parents and Community

- Parents and families are involved in drug education initiatives.
- Drug education information and strategies for parents and families are provided on a regular basis through a variety of methods such as the newsletter, website and at school assemblies.
- SDERA's *Connect* ([www.sdera.wa.edu.au](http://www.sdera.wa.edu.au)), is used to identify resources and agencies that support and complement our school drug education initiatives.
- Orientation packs to new staff members and families include our *School Drug Education Guidelines*.
- A dedicated health and well-being week is held annually and includes a focus on drug education.



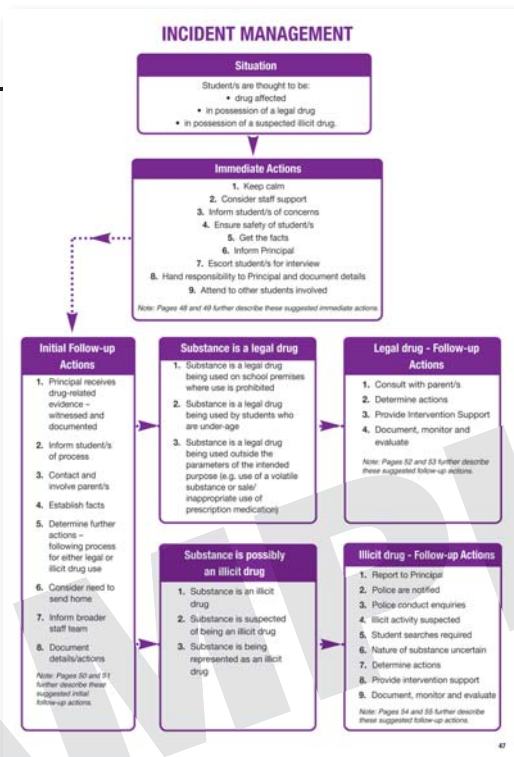


# HealthwiseCollege

## Incident Management and Intervention Support

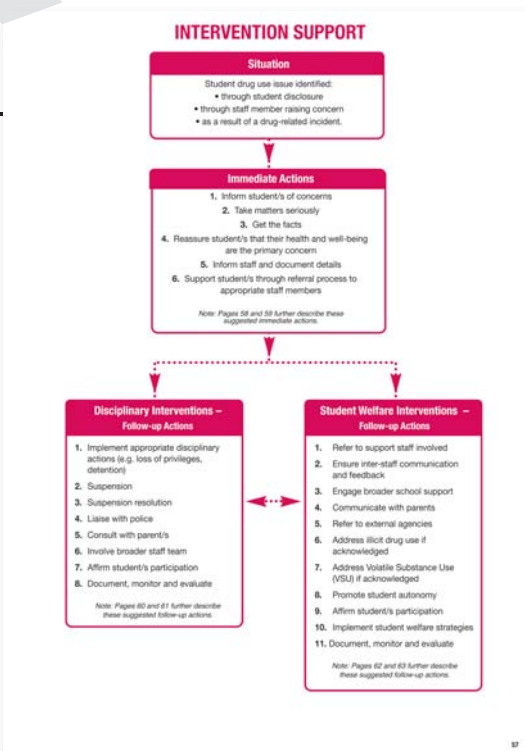
The following Incident Management and Intervention Support flow charts illustrate the steps which will be taken in the event of a drug use incident or issue. Should you wish to contact school personnel in this regard, contact details are provided.

### Incident Management Procedures to follow



**Note:** At this point, the Incident Management flow chart illustrated in this resource on page 47 should be included in the guidelines. Schools should use the flow chart provided on the CD-ROM to insert and illustrate the steps that will be taken specific to their school.

### Intervention Support Procedures to follow



**Note:** At this point, the Intervention Support flow chart illustrated in this resource on page 57 should be included in the guidelines. Schools should use the flow chart provided on the CD-ROM to insert and illustrate the steps that will be taken specific to their school.



**In the event of a drug use incident or where a student requires intervention for a drug use issue, the steps outlined in our flow charts for Incident Management and Intervention Support will be followed. In summary:**

- the parent/s will be notified by appropriate personnel
- the Principal will consider notifying police if illicit drug use is suspected
- both students and parents will be offered support through appropriate interventions
- the incident or issue will be documented and other relevant agencies involved
- respect will be given to privacy and confidentiality by and for all parties
- the health and well-being of all parties involved will be given priority.

**Healthwise College does not permit students while on school premises, at any school function, excursion or camp to:**

- smoke and/or possess tobacco products
- consume, possess or be affected by alcohol
- possess and/or use pharmaceutical drugs for non-medicinal purposes
- possess and/or use volatile substances
- possess and/or use illicit drugs
- possess and/or use drug-related equipment, with the exception of for intended legitimate medicinal use.

All school staff should confirm the procedures regarding the administration of medications.

## School contacts

Principal – Mr David Harper  
(08) 1234 5671

Deputy Principal – Mrs Kate McGregor  
(08) 1234 5672

School Health Nurse – Ms Caitlin Jack  
(08) 1234 5673

Student Services Co-ordinator –  
Mr Ben Lenton  
(08) 1234 5674

School Psychologist – Di-Ann Koh  
(08) 1234 5675

School Drug Education Leadership Team  
(08) 1234 5676

Mrs Maggie Brady  
(08) 1234 5677

Mr Drew Miller  
(08) 1234 5678

Ms Joyce Franklin  
(08) 1234 5679

Mr Anil Arumagum - First Aid qualified  
(08) 1234 5680

## Useful contacts and information

**School Drug Education and Road Aware (SDERA)**

(08) 9264 4743 [www.sdera.wa.edu.au](http://www.sdera.wa.edu.au)

**Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS)**

(08) 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (Toll Free)

**Parent Drug Information Service (PDIS)**

(08) 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (Toll Free)

**Community Drug Service**

(08) 1234 5681

**Local Police Station**

(08) 1234 5682

# What are the suggested steps for Incident Management and Intervention Support?

When student drug use, either legal or illicit, occurs or is suspected to have occurred at school, the following flow charts outline suggested steps in Incident Management and Intervention Support. Each of the steps are outlined and elaborated on through pages 47 to 63.

In the flow charts:

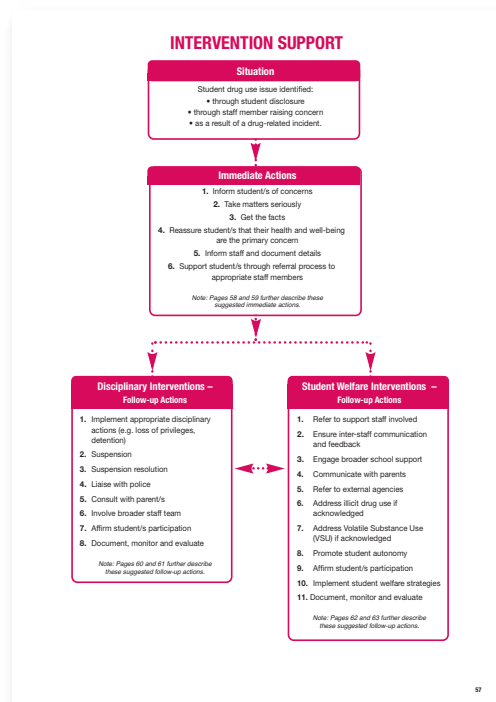
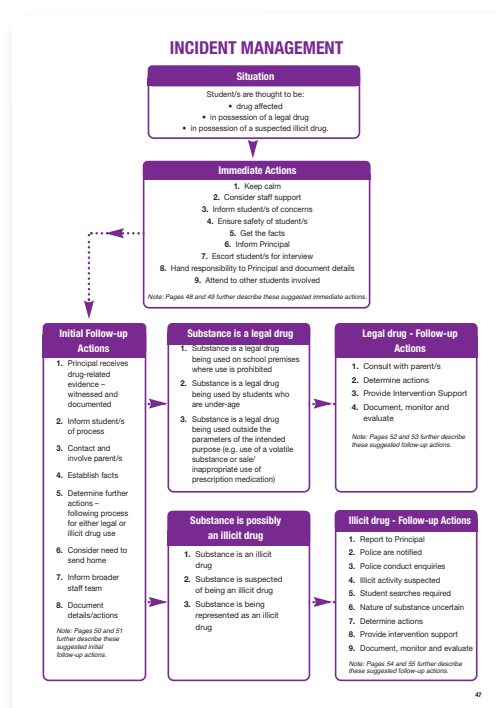
- a **legal drug** is one which is sanctioned by law and may be readily available (e.g. caffeine), may be restricted by age (e.g. tobacco, alcohol) or provided by prescription (e.g. dexamphetamine)
- an **illicit drug** is one which it is prohibited to produce, sell, possess or use (e.g. cannabis, amphetamine).

For further information around volatile substances refer to page 68.

## Using the flow charts

1. Schools should become familiar with the steps and accompanying actions outlined in each of the flow charts.
2. Schools should then identify actions specific to their school that will promote the safety and welfare of students.
3. Schools can then insert these actions, nominated staff, their logo and any other details relevant to their school community into the flow chart templates which are included on the CD-ROM with this resource.
4. It is recommended that these flow charts be included in the *School Drug Education Guidelines* (refer to pages 30 to 32).

Where the term “Principal” is used through the flow-charts that follow, this could be replaced with “nominated staff member” or “appointed staff member”.



# INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

## Situation

- Student/s are thought to be:
- drug affected
  - in possession of a legal drug
  - in possession of a suspected illicit drug.

## Immediate Actions

1. Keep calm
2. Consider staff support
3. Inform student/s of concerns
4. Ensure safety of student/s
5. Get the facts
6. Inform Principal
7. Escort student/s for interview
8. Hand responsibility to Principal and document details
9. Attend to other students involved

*Note: Pages 48 and 49 further describe these suggested immediate actions.*

## Initial Follow-up Actions

1. Principal receives drug-related evidence – witnessed and documented
2. Inform student/s of process
3. Contact and involve parent/s
4. Establish facts
5. Determine further actions – following process for either legal or illicit drug use
6. Consider need to send home
7. Inform broader staff team
8. Document details/actions

*Note: Pages 50 and 51 further describe these suggested initial follow-up actions.*

## Substance is a legal drug

1. Substance is a legal drug being used on school premises where use is prohibited
2. Substance is a legal drug being used by students who are under-age
3. Substance is a legal drug being used outside the parameters of the intended purpose (e.g. use of a volatile substance or sale/inappropriate use of prescription medication)

## Legal drug - Follow-up Actions

1. Consult with parent/s
2. Determine actions
3. Provide Intervention Support
4. Document, monitor and evaluate

*Note: Pages 52 and 53 further describe these suggested follow-up actions.*

## Substance is possibly an illicit drug

1. Substance is an illicit drug
2. Substance is suspected of being an illicit drug
3. Substance is being represented as an illicit drug

## Illicit drug - Follow-up Actions

1. Report to Principal
2. Police are notified
3. Police conduct enquiries
4. Illicit activity suspected
5. Student searches required
6. Nature of substance uncertain
7. Determine actions
8. Provide intervention support
9. Document, monitor and evaluate

*Note: Pages 54 and 55 further describe these suggested follow-up actions.*



## INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

### Situation

- Student/s are thought to be:
  - drug affected
  - in possession of a legal drug
  - in possession of a suspected illicit drug.

### Immediate Actions

1. Keep calm
2. Consider staff support
3. Inform student/s of concerns
4. Ensure safety of student/s
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*Note: Pages 48 and 49 further describe these suggested immediate actions.*

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6. Consider need to send home
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8. Document details/actions

*See: Pages 50 and 51*

### Substance is a legal drug

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### Legal drug - Follow-up Actions

1. Consult with parent/s
2. Determine actions
3. Provide Intervention Support
4. Document, monitor and evaluate

*Note: Pages 52 and 53 further describe these suggested follow-up actions.*

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1. Report to Principal
2. Police are notified
3. Police conduct enquiries
4. Illicit activity suspected
5. Student searches required
6. Nature of substance uncertain
7. Determine actions
8. Provide intervention support

## Immediate Actions

1. Keep calm
2. Consider staff support
3. Inform student/s of concerns
4. Ensure safety of student/s
5. Get the facts
6. Inform Principal
7. Escort student/s for interview
8. Hand responsibility to Principal and document details
9. Attend to other students involved

The first issue to be considered in any drug-related incident is to **address the safety and welfare needs of the student/s**. The following suggested immediate actions are recommended.

### 1 Keep calm

- Keep calm and focus on working through the steps outlined.

### 2 Consider staff support

- Decide whether or not you require support from another staff member prior to intervening.

### 3 Inform student/s of concerns

- Advise student/s of your concern around their behaviour and your suspicion of possible drug use. State the boundaries of confidentiality (refer to pages 70 and 71) and that your intervention aims to promote their safety and welfare.

### 4 Ensure safety of student/s

- Determine the need for first aid or emergency care.
- If the student/s appear physically unwell, proceed with school medical procedures and consider sending home (refer to page 51, Step 6).
- If Volatile Substance Use (VSU) is suspected, approach with caution with reassurance of intent to support. Student safety in this case is promoted by reduced agitation. To startle or give chase can exacerbate risk of Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome. (For further information about VSU refer to page 68 and page 52, Step 2.)
- Where possible, confiscate any drugs and isolate the student/s who appear to be directly involved.
- If student/s appear physically well and coherent, continue to work through the procedures that follow.

### 5 Get the facts

- Try to obtain the facts to promote the safety of the student/s involved. Was a drug used? What type of drug was used? How much was taken? When and how was it taken? Was more than one drug taken?
- Proceed in a non-threatening manner and do not make assumptions.

### 6 Inform Principal

- Ensure the Principal is informed of the situation as soon as possible. Engaging support of another staff member will assist with this. One staff member should remain with the student/s and the other should inform the Principal.

### 7 Escort student/s for interview

- Walk student/s to a private place known to be appropriate for the purpose of an interview situation.
- Ensure student/s wait under adult supervision until the Principal arrives.

### 8 Hand responsibility to Principal and document details

- Hand over all the information at your disposal as well as any drug/s or related implements confiscated from the student/s.
- Document the confiscation and exchange details in line with your school's documentation procedure.

### 9 Attend to other students involved

- Attend to the needs of all students involved to ensure their safety and welfare.
- Follow up with these students and if required consult with the Principal who may notify their parents while adhering to the school's confidentiality requirements and respecting the privacy of those directly involved.

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1. Substance is a legal drug being used on school premises where use is prohibited
2. Substance is a legal drug being used by students who are under-age
3. Substance is a legal drug being used outside the parameters of the intended purpose (e.g. use of a volatile substance or 'safe' inappropriate use of prescription medication)

### Legal drug - Follow-up Actions

1. Consult with parent/s
2. Determine actions
3. Provide Intervention Support
4. Document, monitor and evaluate

Note: Pages 52 and 53 further describe these suggested follow-up actions.

### Substance is possibly an illicit drug

1. Substance is an illicit drug
2. Substance is suspected of being an illicit drug

### Illicit drug - Follow-up Actions

1. Report to Principal
2. Police are notified
3. Police conduct enquiries
4. Illicit activity suspected
5. Student enrolment required

## Initial Follow-up Actions

1. Principal receives drug-related evidence – witnessed and documented
2. Inform student/s of process
3. Contact and involve parent/s
4. Establish facts
5. Determine further actions – following process for either legal or illicit drug use
6. Consider need to send home
7. Inform broader staff team
8. Document details/actions

Effective incident management requires that appropriate follow-up actions are implemented following immediate responses to the incident. While support of the Principal is imperative, these suggested steps can be actioned by identified personnel across the school team.

The aim of the initial follow-up actions is to clarify and address the facts around the incident and to identify incident management and intervention support strategies which will allow the problems relating to drug use to be identified and addressed while keeping the student/s connected to school. These strategies can be provided either within the school and/or through referral to an external agency (refer to *Connect* resource for a list of services).

## 1 Principal receives drug-related evidence – witnessed and documented

- The Principal should receive any suspected drug or drug-related paraphernalia.
- Receipt of this should be documented and if the substance is suspected of being an illicit drug, it should be made secure pending handover to police.
- The process of exchange and documentation should be witnessed by another staff member.

## 2 Inform student/s of process

- Inform the student/s of the process which will follow – the structure of the interview, its aim to determine what has occurred and how best to proceed for all involved.
- State the boundaries of confidentiality (refer to pages 70 and 71).

## 3 Contact and involve parent/s

- Contact the parent/s and determine if they are required to attend the school prior to the interview progressing. If a student does not choose parent attendance or their parent/s cannot attend, the parent/s should still be informed of the incident and the process which has followed, and should remain involved as the relevant intervention is determined. Where the student's parents are not in attendance, an appropriate independent staff member should be present.
- Provide the parent/s with basic information about action taken by the school while remaining aware of confidentiality and assure them that the student's welfare is the priority.
- Offer parents information about support options if required (e.g. *Parent Drug Information Service*). Refer to the *Connect* resource.

#### 4 Establish facts

- Ascertain the facts and document the information collected.

#### 5 Determine further actions

- For a legal drug, refer to pages 52 and 53.
- For an illicit drug, refer to pages 54 and 55.

#### 6 Consider need to send home

- If a student is drug affected, arrangements should be made with the parent/s to collect the student.
- If no drug is found but student behaviour may suggest drug use, the student/s should be treated as unwell and collected by their parent/s.
- Acknowledge that further actions will be determined when the student/s return to school and is/are coherent and well. These actions should be determined through use of the suggested incident management processes for managing either **legal** or **illicit** drug use incidents (refer to pages 52 and 53 or 54 and 55) depending on the type of drug found to have been involved.
- Following return to school, implement actions consistent with Disciplinary Interventions (refer to pages 60 and 61) and Student Welfare Interventions (refer to pages 62 and 63).

#### 7 Inform broader staff team

- If required, hold a staff debriefing process adhering to the school's confidentiality requirements. This will ensure staff are aware of the procedures that have been followed and the basic facts as regards the current status of the incident.
- Staff support should be offered where necessary to ensure their welfare.

#### 8 Document details/actions

- Staff involved in incident management should document their school's actions as required, in line with the school's record-keeping processes and relevant jurisdictional requirements.

**It is recommended that school assemblies are not used to highlight specific individuals or specific drug use behaviour. This would be a destructive practice which could lead to disconnection from school and may promote further drug-using behaviour.**

# INTERVENTION SUPPORT

## Situation

Student drug use issue identified:

- through student disclosure
- through staff member raising concern
- as a result of a drug-related incident.

## Immediate Actions

1. Inform student/s of concerns
2. Take matters seriously
3. Get the facts
4. Reassure student/s that their health and well-being are the primary concern
5. Inform staff and document details
6. Support student/s through referral process to appropriate staff members

*Note: Pages 58 and 59 further describe these suggested immediate actions.*

## Disciplinary Interventions – Follow-up Actions

1. Implement appropriate disciplinary actions (e.g. loss of privileges, detention)
2. Suspension
3. Suspension resolution
4. Liaise with police
5. Consult with parent/s
6. Involve broader staff team
7. Affirm student/s participation
8. Document, monitor and evaluate

*Note: Pages 60 and 61 further describe these suggested follow-up actions.*

## Student Welfare Interventions – Follow-up Actions

1. Refer to support staff involved
2. Ensure inter-staff communication and feedback
3. Engage broader school support
4. Communicate with parents
5. Refer to external agencies
6. Address illicit drug use if acknowledged
7. Address Volatile Substance Use (VSU) if acknowledged
8. Promote student autonomy
9. Affirm student/s participation
10. Implement student welfare strategies
11. Document, monitor and evaluate

*Note: Pages 62 and 63 further describe these suggested follow-up actions.*



## INTERVENTION SUPPORT

### Situation

- Student drug use issue identified:
  - through student disclosure
  - through staff member raising concern
  - as a result of a drug-related incident.

### Immediate Actions

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## Immediate Actions

1. Inform student/s of concerns
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4. Reassure student/s that their health and well-being are the primary concern
5. Inform staff and document details
6. Support student/s through referral process to appropriate staff members

The first issue to be considered when a drug use issue is acknowledged or highlighted is to **address the safety and welfare of the student/s.**

The following suggested immediate actions are recommended.

### 1 Inform student/s of concerns

- Acknowledge the student's disclosure or, if you are raising the issue, advise of your concerns about possible drug use. State the boundary of confidentiality (refer to pages 70 and 71).
- Acknowledge your designated role in providing support to the student/s if in relation to a student drug-use incident. State the boundary of confidentiality.

### 2 Take matters seriously

- When an issue is disclosed or raised by a student, a peer or a staff member, it must be taken seriously and intervention support procedures actioned.

### 3 Get the facts

- If responding to a disclosure or raising the issue, ensure privacy. Attempt to clarify the situation and provide the options for follow-up along with reassurance and encouragement.
- Apply a 'protective interrupting' strategy if disclosure is of a nature which requires this according to the jurisdictional requirements of the school. State the boundary of confidentiality. Affirm the student/s and reassure of willingness to provide support as appropriate to role and through referral to other staff.
- If a student is referred to you for intervention support following a drug-use incident, ensure you have the relevant referral information prior to engaging with the student.
- Ensure all engagements are appropriately and accurately documented.

#### **4 Reassure student/s that their health and well-being are the primary concern**

- Reassure the student/s by involving them in the process to keep them aware and explain reasons for the actions which evolve.
- Remind the student/s that the focus of any intervention is to promote their health and well-being.

#### **5 Inform staff and document details**

- Ensure appropriate staff are involved and informed to broaden the support network and to ensure diverse support options for the student/s. Know the chain of referral within your school.
- Any information shared should be offered with respect for the student/s and in line with the school's confidentiality requirements, with consideration of the roles and requirements of other staff members involved.
- Document involvement and actions taken to fit with the school's reporting and record keeping strategies and the jurisdictional requirements of the school's education system.

#### **6 Support student/s through referral process to appropriate staff members**

- If it is beyond your role to continue to address this issue with the student/s following a disclosure or following your initial awareness gained through raising this issue, acknowledge this to the student/s. Ensure appropriate referral within the school for continuing support.
- Being the initial contact person for the student/s around this issue, it is important that you remain a part of any on-going support process.
- If a student is referred to a staff member as a follow-up response to a drug-use incident, initial support should involve explanation and reassurance of what/who will be involved from here and an outline of the process which will follow.

## INTERVENTION SUPPORT

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### Immediate Actions

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4. Liaise with police
5. Consult with parent/s
6. Involve broader staff team
7. Affirm student/s participation

### Student Welfare Interventions – Follow-up Actions

1. Refer to support staff involved
2. Ensure inter-staff communication and feedback
3. Engage broader school support
4. Communicate with parents
5. Refer to external agencies
6. Address illicit drug use if acknowledged
7. Address Volatile Substance Use (VSU) if acknowledged

## Disciplinary Interventions – Follow-up Actions

1. Implement appropriate disciplinary actions (e.g. loss of privileges, detention)
2. Suspension
3. Suspension resolution
4. Liaise with police
5. Consult with parent/s
6. Involve broader staff team
7. Affirm student/s participation
8. Document, monitor and evaluate

Having clear procedures to follow where disciplinary action is required, ensures appropriate and necessary action occurs with consistency across the school community, and that the process is authoritative, transparent and regards student health and well-being as a priority. In most cases, Disciplinary Interventions should be complemented and supplemented by Student Welfare Interventions (refer to pages 62 and 63).

The aim of the follow-up actions is to clarify the student's situation, and to identify and action the most appropriate further intervention strategies. This will allow the problems relating to drug use to be highlighted and addressed while keeping the student connected to school. These can be provided either within the school and/or through referral to an external agency. (Refer to *Connect* resource for further details.)

The following suggested follow-up actions are recommended.

## 1 Implement appropriate disciplinary actions

- Implement discipline strategies appropriate to the circumstances of the student/s. These may involve loss of privileges, detention and where warranted, other deterrent practices associated with inappropriate behaviour. (Where illicit drug use is acknowledged, refer also to pages 54 and 55.)
- Disciplinary Interventions should be actioned with relevant Student Welfare Interventions (refer to pages 62 and 63).

## 2 Suspension

- Suspending a student in response to a drug-related incident or behaviour, may be a required outcome, depending on the jurisdictional requirements of the school and the educational system or sector. However, it should be noted that suspension can decrease a student's connection with school and may increase the likelihood of the student engaging in further risk-taking behaviour.
- If suspension must occur and is considered necessary as a disciplinary and deterrent response, the school should consider in-school suspension or aim to minimise the length of the suspension period. They should also activate support measures within the school and community, to retain the student's engagement with the school.

## 3 Suspension resolution

- The Principal should consult with other staff, the parent/s and the student involved to develop a plan to resolve the suspension. This may include agreed statements about short and longer-term goals, performance/attendance agreements, timeline for engagement with the targeted Student Welfare Intervention (refer to pages 62 and 63).
- All students who have been suspended for a drug-related issue should be provided an opportunity to participate in a targeted student welfare intervention program to address their drug-related behaviour/s. This may occur within the school or through referral to an external agency (refer to page 63, Step 5, and to the *Connect* resource).

#### 4 Liaise with police

- Where police action has been involved, liaise with the parties to whom the student is being referred (e.g. diversion program, external counselling program, mental health program) to see where the school can retain a support role in this process.

#### 5 Consult with parent/s

- Principal or a nominated staff member should communicate, discuss and consult with the parent/s while adhering to the school's confidentiality requirements (refer to pages 70 and 71) to develop a shared understanding of the pathways required and available for the student to meet with appropriate disciplinary procedures. Student welfare should remain a priority. Parent support in working with the school is fundamental in dealing with drug-use issues and in working to address student behaviour.
- Where suspension is required, the intention to take this action and the reasons behind this should be communicated to parents through the normal suspension procedure.

#### 6 Involve broader staff team

- Involving staff whom the student/s find approachable and to whom they relate well can encourage ongoing connection and engagement with the school in spite of the disciplinary measures. Staff roles in on-going support may vary from monitoring and awareness, to actioning discipline and support measures as part of the overall support team (refer to pages 62 and 63 for Student Welfare Interventions.) When exchanging information, do so in line with the school's confidentiality requirements (refer to pages 70 and 71).

#### 7 Affirm student/s participation

- Affirm the student/s for their commitment to the process and for appropriate behaviour/ achievements in other school contexts.

#### 8 Document, monitor and evaluate

- Document involvement and actions taken as required to meet the school's reporting and record-keeping strategies, and the jurisdictional requirements of the school's education system or sector.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the disciplinary interventions provided and the procedures followed. Where amendments are required, use the *School Drug Education Action Plan* on pages 33 and 34 to guide this process.

## INTERVENTION SUPPORT

### Situation

- Student drug use issue identified:
- through student disclosure
  - through staff member raising concern
  - as a result of a drug-related incident.

### Immediate Actions

1. Inform student/s of concerns
2. Take matters seriously
3. Get the facts
4. Reassure student/s that their health and well-being are the primary concern
5. Inform staff and document details
6. Support student/s through referral process to appropriate staff members

Note: Pages 58 and 59 further describe these suggested immediate actions.

### Disciplinary Interventions – Follow-up Actions

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7. Affirm student/s participation
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### Student Welfare Interventions – Follow-up Actions

1. Refer to support staff involved
2. Ensure inter-staff communication and feedback
3. Engage broader school support
4. Communicate with parents
5. Refer to external agencies
6. Address illicit drug use if acknowledged
7. Address Volatile Substance Use (VSU) if acknowledged
8. Promote student autonomy

## Student Welfare Interventions – Follow-up Actions

1. Refer to support staff involved
2. Ensure inter-staff communication and feedback
3. Engage broader school support
4. Communicate with parents
5. Refer to external agencies
6. Address illicit drug use if acknowledged
7. Address Volatile Substance Use (VSU) if acknowledged
8. Promote student autonomy
9. Affirm student/s participation
10. Implement student welfare strategies
11. Document, monitor and evaluate

Student welfare interventions are applicable for any student when a drug-use issue is revealed or even suspected, and can occur alongside disciplinary interventions. This represents an inclusive approach which may foster resilience by encouraging student connection to school and which moves beyond the disciplinary focus emphasising the school's intent to be a protective institution providing support as a priority.

These interventions can be provided either within the school and/or through referral to an external agency. Refer to *Connect* resource for further details.

The following suggested follow-up actions are recommended.

## 1 Refer to support staff involved

- Specialist school support staff can provide opportunities for students to be involved in exploring the factors contributing to a drug-use issue. These factors may be many and complex or they may be circumstantial.
- A targeted intervention program should be developed to identify and address triggers and potential triggers to drug use and other risk taking behaviour.
- Specialist support staff can include student services teams, school psychologist, school nurse, school chaplain, year leaders and extends to approachable staff through the school. The support role provided clearly varies in intensity (refer to Job Role Tasks page 45) while this approach allows broader school awareness, support and monitoring. A team approach is also inclusive and supportive for the staff who are providing support.

## 2 Ensure inter-staff communication and feedback

- Use or develop an inter-staff communication process to convey required information between staff involved in supporting a student through an intervention (i.e. upfront information and feedback).
- This allows those who commence the process (e.g. classroom teacher who received an initial disclosure) to remain aware of the student's needs and progress; those receiving a referral to have basic introductory information on the student's situation; and a whole-school approach to intervention support.
- Attention should be made to act with respect to the student's privacy and adhere to the school's confidentiality requirements (refer to pages 70 and 71). All parties do not require all the information so staff should report information according to their role and apply professional discretion. The student should be advised of the boundaries of confidentiality upfront to ensure understanding of the purpose of the information exchange process (i.e. to promote their health and well-being). For exceptions to this refer to pages 70 and 71.

## 3 Engage broader school support

- Link with other relevant departments and individuals who may contribute to addressing issues underlying the student's drug use (e.g. to engage support for learning difficulties, home/school liaison, school nurse for medical issues).



#### 4 Communicate with parent/s

- Involve the parent/s to support the student and the intervention process, while again respecting privacy and confidentiality.
- Level of parental involvement may be at the discretion of the staff member coordinating the support intervention and depending on the student's wants, needs and circumstances.
- Where parent drug use is acknowledged, refer to page 74.
- Parents should be made aware of support services available to them (e.g. offer details of *Alcohol and Drug Information Service*, *Parent Drug Information Service*). Refer to the *Connect* resource.
- Levels of required parental involvement may vary according to the school's education system and their jurisdictional requirements.

#### 5 Refer to external agencies

- The school's support staff may recommend referral to an external community-based agency (refer to *Connect* resource) for an appropriate level of intervention such as those involving a need for drug counselling or support with mental health, family or neglect issues.
- An appointed specialist school staff member or case manager should maintain contact with the agency and work to agree to appropriate exchange of information between agency and school while adhering to the school's confidentiality requirements. It may be of benefit to use a *Referral form for Intervention Support* (refer to page 79).
- Establishing this relationship through to community-based support agencies allows schools to ensure that they meet with required care for the student/s while they work through this process, either at school or on their return to school should the intervention have led to a period of absence.

#### 6 Address illicit drug use if acknowledged

- Where illicit drug use is acknowledged through intervention processes, refer also to pages 54 and 55, *Illicit drug – Follow-up Actions*.

#### 7 Address Volatile Substance Use if acknowledged

- If VSU is suspected, staff should seek support from an external drug counselling agency (e.g. *Community Drug Service*). Refer to *Connect* resource. Ongoing intervention support should continue to be provided by the school in consultation with this external agency. For further information on VSU refer to page 68.

#### 8 Promote student autonomy

- As far as possible, inform and involve the student/s in the processes in which they are engaged throughout the intervention period.

#### 9 Affirm student participation

- Affirm the student/s for working with the intervention.

#### 10 Implement student welfare strategies

- To support the intervention, consider using strategies such as peer support, buddy programs and mentoring programs (e.g. *The School Volunteer Program*). Refer to *Connect* resource.

#### 11 Document, monitor and evaluate

- Document involvement and actions taken as required to meet with the school's reporting and record-keeping practices and the jurisdictional requirements of the school's education system and sector.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions. Where amendments are required, use the *School Drug Education Action Plan* on pages 33 and 34 to guide this process.