

DRUG PREVENTION AWARENESS ACTIVITIES 2011/12

Timetables: At the start of the school year ADAG provided timetables to 3rd year students in schools in Moate and Athlone. The timetables were for students to use for their class times for the coming year.

Junior Cert Disco: On Wednesday the 14th of September our Youth Disco was held. This alcohol free event was run for Junior Cert Students from the five schools in the Athlone area. The Disco was well attended and a great night was had by all.

Education Initiative: In October 2011 ADAG in conjunction with Westmeath Community Development funded two community activists to participate on a FETAC level 5 Drug and Alcohol addiction course. We linked in with community groups and requested them to nominate an individual that was active in their area. Two participants were selected and successfully participated on the course. These participants were nominated by organisations in the Rapid areas of Athlone. The course was run by the Learning Curve Institute.

Vocal Mania: In conjunction with the Andante School of Music a highly successful concert 'Vocal Mania' was staged in the Radisson Hotel on 24th November 2011. The performers were Transition year students from the five schools in Athlone. The concert was a huge success. The TY students sang their hearts out and preformed magnificently. Well done to all.



Network Chart: In January 2012 ADAG produced a Network Chart containing contact numbers and information regarding services for individuals and families affected by drug and Alcohol misuse. Two volunteers, Marie Reddin and Deirdre Lennon willingly gave their time to help design this useful chart. The chart was kindly co funded by the MRDTF & Rapid.

We Launched our Chart on the 16th of

Feb 2012 Community organisations, members of Local residents committees, local representatives and services depicted on the chart all attended this successful launch. The Gateway Project, which is co-ordinated by Ms Delores Crear, kindly hosted the event in their newly refurbished facility in St Mary's Hall.

We can't thank Delores and her team enough for their generous assistance in the organisation and presentation of this event. The posters have been distributed and are currently on display in local facilities.



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Church gate Collection: Our church gate collection was held on March the 17th and 18th 2012. The monies raised help to fund the activities of Athlone Drug Awareness group. We would sincerely like to thank all those that contributed to our cause and express our gratitude to the volunteers who willingly gave their time to man the stands.

Alkermes: On March 27th ADAG in conjunction with GDA Andy Haran, facilitated an Alcohol and Drug Awareness session for employees of Alkermes. This was a joint project between Athlone Site CSR Team, Athlone Well-being Group and Athlone Drug Awareness Group. Sessions were excellently organised by Mr Ruari Fitzmaurice and were well attended by the hard workers of ALkermes.

Ashdale/Woodlands Residents Fun and Fitness Day: ADAG were delighted to fund the Ashdale / Woodlands fun and fitness day which was held on Friday the 13th. Paul Ozman and John Stacey FAI kindly gave their time to teach the boys and girls some soccer skills. Marie Reddin (Ashdale Residents) organised the fun and games, including egg and spoon race, statues, skipping etc. Gda Breda Smyth and Ms Tina Adapun (Athlone Women's Forum - African Connection) assisted in the games and of course the all-important distribution of the refreshments to all the participants. Frankie Keena and Carmel Cummins attended on behalf of ADAG.



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Drugs HIV Helpline 1800 459 459 Website www.drugs.ie Email drugshiv@hse.ie

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pink Elephant

FEATURING Cannabis



Athlone Drug Awareness Group

Featured Drug CANNABIS

CATEGORY: HALLUCINOGENS SEDATIVES

Also Called hash, hashhish, blow, pot, ganja, majuana, grass, joint, THC, bhang, black, blast, blunts, Bob Hope, bush, draw, hemp, herb, puff, northern lights, resin, sensi, shit, smoke, soap, spliff, wacky backy, zero, afgan, morrocan.

HOW IT'S USED

Cannabis usually comes as a dried resin (hash) or dried leaves (grass or weed). You can smoke it with tobacco in a joint or inhale through a pipe or bong or make into a tea or food. Skunk is herbal cannabis which is much stronger than regular hash or grass.



OTHER DANGERS

As with tobacco smoking hash may cause cancer.

Cannabis psychosis - when you disconnect from reality and start showing symptoms such as delusions & hallucinations when you are not using drugs.



IF YOU ARE PREGNANT

If you smoke cannabis and tobacco while you are pregnant the risk to you baby is the same as smoking- smaller birth weight, higher risk of premature birth, higher risk of miscarriage, your baby may get less oxygen through the placenta. After the birth your baby is at more risk of cot death and early health problems such as asthma.

ADDICTIVE

You can get psychologically addicted to cannabis, in this case, you might find it hard to cope without it. If you smoke it with tobacco you may get physically addicted to tobacco.

WITHDRAWAL

- Anxiety, irritability.
- Urge or cravings to smoke.
- Sleep problems, restlessness.
- Loss of appetite.

HOW LONG DOES IT STAY IN YOUR SYSTEM

Cannabis will show up in your urine test for 2-28 days. (The length of time depends on the test used, the amount you take, if you have other medical conditions and your own metabolism. Please use this figure as a guide only).

WHAT HELP IS AVAILABLE

- Self-Help support group such as Narcotics Anonymous.
- Counselling or psychotherapy.
- Complimentary therapies such as acupuncture.
- Residential treatment programmes (clinics).
- Aftercare.
- One to one or group family support.
- Contact drugs helpline

1800 459 459

to find out more about the options in your area.

HEADSHOP ALTERNATIVES

DANGER ALERT

How it's used

These are mixtures of herbs which are sold as an alternative to cannabis. Previous to the recent government ban on a number of substances sold in head shops, many had been found to be laced with synthetic cannabinoids, which are compounds like cannabis. One of these, JHW-018, was found in some legal highs in Ireland and other European countries. The list of ingredients on the package has not always been found to be the same as the contents found in lab tests. The effects listed below are known to be associated with 'smoke' type substances sold in head shops.

Short-term effects

- Effects are similar to cannabis but not the same.
- Effects can vary

Long-term effects

- If you have underlying mental health problems, any drug can trigger them.
- Because we don't know what's in these drugs, you are not fully informed about the risks

Other dangers

- You risk overdose from some of these drugs as they are so strong.
- Psychosis, panic attacks.
- May cause cancer.
- Heart and circulatory problems
- If you have a mental health condition, it may get worse
- If you are pregnant - Do not use if you are pregnant as we don't know enough about the risks to your baby.

DANGER ALERT

Addictive

You can become addicted to these.

How long does it stay in your system?

There is no urine test for these yet.

DANGER ALERT

Contact the Drugs Helpline **1800 459 459** to find out about supports in your area!
drugshiv@hse.ie

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LATE NIGHT LEAGUE

A late night league was held in Athlone last November and December under the floodlights at Willowpark F.C. The league was run by the F.A.I in conjunction with Athlone Drug Awareness.

Six teams from around the town took part in the competition which was open to males over the age of 16. The tournament took place between 9p.m and 10.30p.m every Friday night over a period of six weeks.

The eventual winners were the team from The Batteries who played excellent football throughout the tournament.

It is hoped that this will become an annual event and hopefully the number of teams will grow this year. Special thanks must be given to the Athlone Gardai who made the community bus available for the duration of the tournament to transport the participants to and from the venue.