



Drug Use Awareness and links to Child Exploitation

Over the recent months there has been an increase in the use of several drugs.

Drugs can:

- affect children and young peoples physical and mental well-being
- make children and young people vulnerable to harm
- expose children and young people to exploitation

Know the risks of drug use:

It is impossible to tell exactly what is in a drug just by looking at it, even if you have taken something similar before. Illicit substances have been known to hold toxic substances which increases the risk of an overdose. Opiates are often found in illicit capsules such as Pregabalin and Gabapentin. Naloxone (Opiate reversal kit) reduces the chances of an opiate overdose becoming fatal. If you have a Naloxone kit and someone is overdosing, administer it, regardless if you know if someone has taken opiates or not.

- The best way to avoid risks from drugs is to not take anything.
- If the individual chooses to, they should only take a small amount, as they don't know how it will affect them.
- Young people should not use drugs alone, particularly if it is their first time.
- They should avoid mixing with other drugs and alcohol.
- If young people or their friends become ill, call 999 and they need to be honest about what has been taken.

Not only is there a risk to a child or young person's health in taking drugs, children and young people can be at risk due to being criminally exploited to distribute drugs.

If you are concerned about young people regarding drug use, you can seek support from the following services:

Youth Substance Misuse Service Support

- South Cumbria (Barrow / South Lakes) Tim Field 07900 060645 | tim.field@cumbria.gov.uk
- North Cumbria (Carlisle / Eden) Abi Macrae 07825 340514 | abi.macrae@cumbria.gov.uk
- West Cumbria (Allerdale / Copeland) Barry Arnison 07887 947621 | barry.arnison@cumbria.gov.uk

Recovery Steps Cumbria - 01900 512300 | referrals@recoverysteps-cumbria.org.uk
Safeguarding Hub - [Cumberland](#) | [Westmorland & Furness](#)
NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000 | help@NSPCC.org.uk

If you are worried that young people are being exploited by distributing drugs or any other form of exploitation, you can seek support by emailing CERAR@cumbria.gov.uk or by following the CSCP Child Exploitation Policy and Procedure, which can be accessed via the link below.

https://cumbrialscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_ch_exploit.html

An increase in the following drugs has been seen.

Pregabalin and Gabapentin – Prescribed names: Lyrica (Pregabalin) and Neurontin (Gabapentin). They come as white, yellow or orange tablets/capsules. They are normally swallowed, although powder from the capsules may be snorted.

Street names: Pregabs, Bud and Gabbies, Gaba-P.

These drugs are prescription only but the popularity is increasing due to increase in illicit access and a clear increase in Pregabalin prescribing in the last 10 years. These may be illegally made or bought over the internet, containing dangerously toxic substances. The drugs may have been diverted from a hospital or pharmacy, or from people who have been prescribed them. It is not safe to take these drugs without them being prescribed. It is also dangerous to take pregabalin or gabapentin with alcohol or any other drugs. Using any combination of any drugs with (or without) alcohol increases the risk of overdose and death.



Ketamine

Is a white powder, usually taken by snorting, can also be used by injecting and more rarely swallowing in tablet form.

Street names: Donkey Dust, Green, Ket, Special K, Super K and Wonk.

This drug is no newcomer to the party drug scene. It has been on offer in clubs, festivals, parties, and music festivals for the past two or three decades. This relatively cheap drug is rising in popularity among festival goers especially teenagers and young adults globally and is mostly administered nasally. Ketamine is a general anaesthetic so it reduces sensations in the body. Long term Ketamine use is very risky to your physical health and has frequently seen young people suffering with long term bladder problems and other medical issues as a result of its use.