



ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER DEC 2023

Dear Partners and fellow Advocates

Thank you for your advocacy and support for the drug-free cause this past year. As we bid farewell to 2023, we begin this issue of the DrugFreeSG Advocacy Newsletter with a round up of the key highlights of 2023 in pictures.

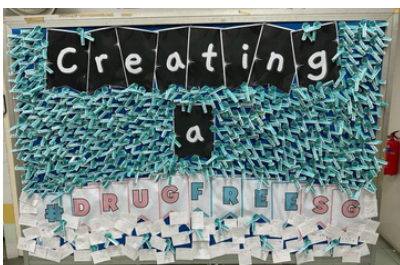
Read about the dangers of cannabis-infused edibles and, in a continuation of our collaboration with the Singapore Prison Service, a personal account from the wife of a drug abuser.

Email us at cnb_community_partnership@cnb.gov.sg if you have any feedback or questions on our programmes and activities!

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

2023 KEY MOMENTS UNWRAPPED

2023 has been a busy year as we transited back to the normalcy of pre-COVID years. Here's a look back at the key moments with our partners and advocates in 2023. We would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to all our partners and advocates supporting us in building a DrugFreeSG together.



Thank you!



The Anti-drug Ambassador Activity 2023 has come to an end! We'd like to sincerely thank all participating schools for your great support in our anti-drug initiatives.

Congratulations to the winners for the 'Top 10 Schools with Highest Participation Rate' and 'Top 10 Schools with Best Anti-drug Montage'. We received so many creative entries this year, and we're heartened by schools' wonderful effort to engage other student levels and advocate for the drug-free cause!



Thank you once again, and we look forward to your participation next year!

ADVOCACY/ COMMUNITY ROADSHOWS

Learn about the harms of drugs and pick up practical tips on drug prevention at our upcoming community roadshow. See you there!



Event	Venue	Date/Time
Kalakkal Pongal Central Plaza @ OTH	Our Tampines Hub 1 Tampines Walk Singapore 528523	Sun 21 Jan 2024 9.30am-4pm



Interested in sharing the drug prevention message? Email us at **CNB_Community_Partnership@cnb.gov.sg** if you are keen to help out at any of our roadshows and events!

"Waiting For You", an initiative by the Singapore Prison Service features a compilation of stories written from the perspectives of the drug abusers' families. In this edition, we share with you "A Wife's Wish 50/50" - a story written by a wife whose husband was incarcerated due to drug abuse.

A Wife's Wish: 50/50

Ismail is my husband. I cannot quite remember if this is the 3rd or 4th time that he has gone to prison. All I remember is that it hurt more each time it happened. Honestly, we were a close-knit family; we talked, laughed and had engaging conversations. Unfortunately, Ismail succumbed to drugs when I failed to give him the attention he needed. I realized that Ismail's behaviors started to change when I became busy with my home-based business, managing the household and tending to our two teenage boys. I felt blamed for his relapse as he repeatedly pointed out to me that I did not give him enough attention. But I wonder if it was entirely my fault.

He told me that he started taking drugs due to curiosity and peer influence. Overtime, I witnessed him becoming dependent on drugs. When he was using, he seemed to forget about the family that has been supporting him, the good times we spent enjoying our weekend meals together and the beautiful conversations we had. All he had in his mind were his friends and drugs. Really, who should we blame here? I hope there would come a time where we no longer need to accord blame or find faults with each other. Time and effort could be channelled to understanding each other; prevention is easier than cure.

It hurt me badly when he started to lie after he went back to drugs. I always believed that the last incarceration was the final one. I chose to believe him time and again because I had faith that he would not go back to his old friends and old ways. His words always felt comforting to me. However, I felt defeated whenever I found out the truth. I felt even more devastated when I saw him experiencing withdrawals. Ismail was a nice and kind man when he was sober but would become easily angered and irritable when he was on drugs. There were times when I felt like giving up, but I am still here today because I believe that with the proper care and attention, he can and will change. He just needs to fight the negative peer influence and strengthen his resilience.

I raised our sons to deeply love and respect their father no matter where he was. I also raised them to understand that they needed to take responsibility for their actions, as portrayed by their father's incarcerations. My sons understood and accepted my advice. Like me, they also believed their father can change with proper love, care and attention.

I used to think that it was all my fault that my husband behaved the way he did, but not anymore. I realised that he had to learn to be responsible for his actions too. And now I want him to take this task on, 50/50. I want him to be equally responsible for raising our children and providing financial and stable accommodation for the family in the future. I believe he can. I know that many have left their marriages because they could no longer deal with their spouse's addiction problems. Drug use affects the whole family unit. But I stay because my marriage is sacred to me as written in my religion and upbringing. No matter what, I will uphold it. My prayers have kept me going. My faith and support from my family have kept me strong. It is my opinion that with support, persons with addiction can change. And for that very reason, I will never give up on my husband. I will place full faith in our journey of 50/50.

What are cannabis infused edibles?

These are generally food products infused with cannabis. “Edibles” can come in many forms including baked goods, drinks, chocolates and candies.

Cannabis infused edibles poses a danger to many, especially children, as they may look like other products such as gummies and may be mistaken by children to be such. A study in the US reported an alarming increase in the number of children aged five and under ingesting THC[^] edibles, from 207 in 2017 to 3,054 in 2021. Many end up sick, in the emergency room, or even dying.

[^]THC stands for Tetrahydrocannabinol, which is the main psychoactive substances in cannabis that causes abusers to feel “high”.

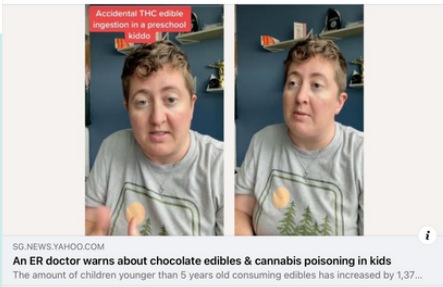
Cannabis edibles are prohibited in Singapore and have been seized by CNB. Just this month, a man was sentenced to jail and caning for importing cannabis-laced gummies and candies in the country’s first conviction involving the importation of cannabis edibles. He had reportedly purchased the cannabis edibles through a contact based in the UK on the Telegram app. The seized edibles came in various colours and looked like innocuous gummies and candies.



Cannabis edibles seized by CNB

What can parents do?

Parents play a key role in preventing drug abuse. Start having conversations with your child on the harms of drugs early. If you have young children, talk to them about not accepting items from strangers. When traveling to countries where products containing controlled drugs may be sold, be careful of what you purchase and ingest. If in doubt, do not purchase or consume the product. Parents and family members should also look out for indicators of drug abuse and intervene early. By doing so, you can lower the chances of your loved ones falling prey to drugs.



Dr Meghan Martin, an emergency room doctor in the US, warns parents about the dangers of having edibles at home, highlighting a case where a 4-year-old boy became unresponsive after consuming a THC-infused chocolate bar given to him by his sibling. Common signs of cannabis poisoning in children may also include balance issues, vomiting and excessive sleepiness. Scan the QR code below for the full story.

Scan to read the full story



ICYMI: If you are interested in the work that the National Council Against Drug Abuse does, please visit their website at www.ncada.org.sg for the NCADA Annual Report 2022.



What's Your Fix? Campaign

NCADA officially launched What's Your Fix? - our 2022-2023 media campaign on 22 September 2022. This campaign was conceptualised by NCADA's appointed creative agency, Vidiose, to spark meaningful conversations on the lived realities of drugs, and raise awareness on how members of society, especially youths, can be advocates for the anti-drug vision and support those who may be vulnerable to the influence of drugs. Through advocacy initiatives designed within the campaign, we hoped to have inspired a shared understanding in the community around the vision and purpose of a drug-free society and provided opportunities that activated intentional conversations on related issues surrounding the complex realities of drugs.

The campaign, What's Your Fix?, was titled as a question to invite people into open conversation, so that collectively, we might navigate through different points of views to find common ground. It was integral that the campaign asked questions that encouraged conversations which were not abstract, but ones that seek to verify truths, explore their implications, and what they might mean to people in real life.



Finding Juliana is a short film about a young adult who goes missing one day after supposedly stealing a bag of drugs. A friend sets out to find her, only to discover deeper problems than the first expected.

Enabling Community Advocacy

NCADA believes that community-driven advocacy will generate a multiplier and self-reinforcing effect within our community for a drug-free Singapore. Key NCADA initiatives for community advocacy include the Anti-Drug Abuse Advocacy (ADAA) network for individual volunteers and the United Against Drugs Coalition (UADC) for organisations who support our cause. All these initiatives are collaborations with CND. By enabling community advocates to come together and learn best practices, support, and encourage each other, we can build a drug-free Singapore.

In 2022, NCADA and CND supported A3 Advocates, UADC partners, and supporters in developing their advocacy capabilities through the A3 Advocacy Series and the DrugfreeSG Newsletter, and the DrugfreeSG Grant.

The A3 Advocacy Series

To enable our advocates and supporters to amplify the anti-drug message in their own spheres of influence and to the wider community, NCADA organised the A3 Advocacy Series, an engagement programme to equip and develop our anti-drug advocates. It is a combination of personal development and volunteer development capabilities, to provide our A3 Advocates with knowledge and skills to be more effective communicators and advocates. These seminars held every quarter were hosted by our Council members.

On 26 March, NCADA organised the first A3 Advocacy Series webinar hosted by Mr Audrey Ang, Secretary NCADA, with presentations from CND on the Community Approach to Drug Prevention. Participants were invited to dialogue with Mr Sing Chem Hong, Deputy Director of CND (Policy & Administration) and Mr Subany Limat, Deputy Director of Operations Division, CND on issues related to preventive drug education, the multi-faceted issues presented when tackling the youth abuser phenomena and the merits of Singapore's approach to the drug issue vis a vis those taken by different jurisdictions.



HELP US SPREAD THE ANTI-DRUG MESSAGE



The **Anti-Drug Abuse Advocacy Network (A3 Network)** is a volunteer scheme jointly administered by the NCADA and CNB. The A3 Network, which is under the umbrella of the Home Team Volunteer Network comprises various groups of people who identify with, support and promote the anti-drug cause.

Help us grow the A3 Network by telling your friends about us and the volunteering opportunities with CNB. Scan the QR codes for more information about the different schemes, or drop us an email at cnb_community_partnership@cnb.gov.sg



Scan here to find out about the A3 Network and different advocates schemes



Anti-Drug Advocate Programme for youths aged 17 - 25 years old

Scan below to find out about the **Virtual Heritage Gallery** that you can access at your convenience. Access PDE resources from our **PDE Handbook online**:



Scan here for the virtual heritage gallery



Scan here for the PDE Handbook

Drop us an email at CNB_Community_Partnership@cnb.gov.sg if you would like to unsubscribe or add your colleagues into our mailing list!

If you come across drugs, or what you suspect to be drugs, you should call CNB hotline at **1800-325-6666**

For more information, please visit the CNB website at www.cnb.gov.sg

Connect with us:

