



DRUGFREE SG ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER

JAN 2025

Dear Partners and fellow Advocates

As we embark on a new year, let us take a moment to celebrate the achievements we accomplished together in 2024, and look forward to the opportunities that 2025 brings. Have a read of our Preventive Drug Education (PDE) highlights from 2024, and on our upcoming initiatives under the Dadah Itu Haram (DIH) campaign.

Keen to start on a project that contributes to the vision of a drug-free Singapore? Read more about the National Council Against Drug Abuse (NCADA)'s DrugFreeSG (DFSG) Fund in this issue of our newsletter.

We continue to bring you winning entries from the DrugFreeSG essay competition and an excerpt from "Waiting For You", an initiative by the Singapore Prison Service featuring a compilation of real-life stories written from the perspectives of the drug abusers' families.

Happy reading!

We value your feedback and inquiries on our programmes and activities. Please feel free to reach out to us at cnb_community_partnership@cnb.gov.sg.

Thank you for your unwavering support in our shared mission for a drug-free society.



2024 PDE HIGHLIGHTS

AT A GLANCE...

As we kick start the new year, CNB would like to take this time to reflect on the efforts of the past year that have gone into the commitment towards a drug-free Singapore.

We are pleased to share some of the incredible work accomplished with the help of all our dedicated volunteers, partners, and advocates, and are grateful for everyone's support in educating and equipping our communities to live drug-free.

Here's how you were involved and made a difference in 2024!

To our volunteers

We would like to extend our thanks to all volunteers who have been instrumental in providing aid and support towards the making of the following programmes, for your tireless hard work in facilitating the conviction to live drug-free in Singapore, without which it would not have been possible to do so.

With our volunteers from under the Bothaiporulai Ethirthu Nirpom (BEN) and Dadah Itu Haram (DIH) campaigns, CNB organised and held several key events to reinforce and promote the importance of living drug-free lifestyles.

With the Singapore Indian Development Association



Sharing session with youths by a former drug abuser (left), CNB volunteer engaging visitors at the CNB booth (right)

In partnership with the SINDA Football Club, youths in the Indian community were educated on the harms and consequences of drugs and empowered to make informed decisions through sharing sessions by our CNB officer and a former drug abuser.

The Project Give campaign, themed “Community for Community”, also had us setting up an educational booth at the Indian Heritage Centre to spread awareness on the detrimental effects that drugs can have on our society. CNB officers and DrugFreeSG volunteers were on hand to engage the visitors to the booth and join the younger ones in a colouring activity.

To our partners

Partnerships have always been essential in expanding the impact of drug-free messages on our communities, and we thank all our partners in your continuation to develop and maintain a network of support with us in bringing the necessary drug prevention resources to our society. Our work together is significant and necessary to building a drug-free future, and we are grateful to be able to receive your support!

DrugFreeSG Light-Up



The annual DrugFreeSG Light-Up had its 7th iteration on 26 June 2024, and it emphasised once more our nation’s collective commitment towards a drug-free Singapore. 48 partners participated and pledged their support by illuminating their buildings in the colours of the Anti-Drug Ribbon, in green and/or white!

PDE and Youth Engagement in Schools

CNB continued collaborating with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to educate and equip youths through infusing Preventive Drug Education (PDE) messages in the school curricula and school-based programmes.

In 2024, 100% of students from MOE Primary, Secondary, and Post-Secondary schools had attended at least one PDE activity. All of this is testament to our ongoing efforts to shape our youths for the future together.

PREVENTIVE DRUG EDUCATION (PDE) COVERAGE IN SCHOOLS 2024

100% OF STUDENTS*
have attended at least one PDE activity in 2024

*from MOE primary, secondary and post-secondary schools

STATIC EXHIBITIONS

The educational display features interactive elements and informative content on the personal and social impacts of drug abuse, while providing students with tools for recognising problems and initiating conversations highlighting the harms of drug abuse.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS INVOLVED

Primary	Secondary	Post-Secondary
22	15	9

RADIO ROADSHOWS

Instilled public speaking skills and raise students' awareness on the dangers of drug abuse. Anti-drug script reading contest winners recorded their script at the radio station and had them broadcasted on Kiss92 FM for a month.

~4500 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED:

MAY New Town Secondary School
JUN Dunman Secondary School
JUL School of the Arts
AUG Kent Ridge Secondary School

ANTI-DRUG AMBASSADOR ACTIVITY

Activity booklets were developed for Primary 4 and 5 students. Schools created montages as part of a competition to raise students' awareness on the harms of drugs.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS INVOLVED

Activity	Montage Competition
151	73

DRUG VICTIMS REMEMBRANCE DAY

CNB worked with MOE to produce activity packages and exhibitions for the various school levels:

100% of primary schools, secondary schools and junior colleges conducted the Remembrance Day lessons / assembly sessions

100% of Institutes of Higher Learning* hosted Remembrance Day mini exhibitions

*Excludes specialised independent schools



To our advocates

A little goes a long way in encouragement. Our advocates play an invaluable role in shaping and influencing perspectives to be more resilient against drug abuse, and we thank you for being an active voice in championing and amplifying the drug-free message to individuals around you and your communities!

DrugFreeSG Advocacy Network – Youth Advocates



At Anglo-Chinese Junior College, youth advocates Jaylen Chua and Anne Megan Kong have initiated an anti-drug project with fellow schoolmates that spreads awareness about the importance of staying drug-free. Through pop-up booths, a school-wide anti-drug poster design competition, and collaborations with tutors to integrate drug issue discussions into school curriculum, students are engaged with to delve into meaningful conversations on the topic.

Thank you once more to every volunteer, partner, and advocate—the coming year promises more opportunities to expand our efforts and progress in the future we are building, and we look forward to doing it together with you!



DADAH ITU HARAM (DIH) CAMPAIGN

AT A GLANCE...

“Date Your Loved Ones Today!” (DYLOT!) is an anchor event of CNB’s outreach during Ramadan under the Dadah Itu Haram campaign. Read more on what this meaningful initiative is about!

A key initiative in CNB’s outreach efforts during Ramadan, “Date Your Loved Ones Today!” (DYLOT!), held in partnership with Sultan Mosque, Kampong Glam Café, Geylang International Legends, and GoodWheelz Bikerz, saw the involvement of volunteers in distributing dates and porridge to congregants and members of public at the Wisma Geylang Serai and Kampong Glam Bazaars. By doing so, DYLOT! serves to remind families to spend time with their loved ones to strengthen family relationships and resilience, which are crucial in the fight against drugs.



Packed dates and porridge bearing drug-free messages (left), DYLOT! partnership with GoodWheelz Bikerz (right)

This year, DYLOT! will continue its meaningful tradition, bringing together volunteers and community partners to spread anti-drug messages while sharing the spirit of Ramadan. Ramadan 2025 would be the eighth iteration of this annual event which started in 2018. Do join us in this meaningful cause on 23rd March (more details below)!



FEATURED DRUGFREESG PROJECT

AT A GLANCE...

The DrugFreeSG (DFSG) Fund is a grant scheme administered by NCADA. It supports individuals and organisations with projects that have preventive drug education and anti-drug advocacy outcomes. Read more on a recently concluded project below, and how you can apply for the DFSG Fund!



Organised by NTU Cultural Activities Club (CAC) Dragon & Lion Dance (DLD), the NTU Institutional Lion Dance Competition has been an annual tradition since 2000. Leveraging the platform provided by NTU CAC DLD, the competition served to engage the Chinese community of youths, parents, supporters, friends, and individuals interested in Chinese arts, culture, and heritage. The event aimed to raise awareness about the perils of drug abuse, featuring a special Lion Dance performance with a tailored anti-drug message created specifically for the occasion.



Tailored anti-drug messages created specifically for the NTU Institutional Lion Dance Competition to raise awareness about the perils of drug abuse. Source: National Council Against Drug Abuse (NCADA) & NTU CAC

Are you interested in starting a project and contributing to a drug-free Singapore too? Visit NCADA's [website](#), or scan the QR code below, to access the application form and for more information on eligibility, application process, and previously funded projects.





DrugFreeSG

FUND

APPLICATIONS OPEN

The DrugFreeSG (DFSG) Fund is a grant for supporting ground-up, not-for-profit initiatives which contribute to the vision of a drug-free Singapore with projects that can:

- Raise awareness of preventive drug education
- Build resilience in individuals and communities to be drug free
- Develop capabilities in individuals and communities; or
- Ignite conversations on the harms of drugs

ELIGIBILITY

Beneficiaries of grant projects should be Singaporeans, Permanent Residents, or communities or groups based in Singapore.

GRANT RECOVERY

Up to 100% reimbursement with full attainment of mutually-agreed upon Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

TIMELINE

Kindly provide appropriate lead time for discussion and processing of application. Ongoing projects will not be considered.

Interested applicants may email us at:
secretariat@ncada.org.sg



DRUGFREESG ADVOCACY NETWORK WHATSAPP CHANNEL

AT A GLANCE...

Stay connected with us on the new DrugFreeSG Advocacy Network WhatsApp Channel (launching in Feb 2025) to receive the latest news, events and opportunities in our fight against drug abuse!

Want to stay updated on our latest events and happening? Scan the QR code to join our brand new WhatsApp Channel now!





WINNING ENTRY FROM THE DRUGFREESG ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION 2024

AT A GLANCE...

In May 2024, CNB organised the DrugFreeSG Essay Competition, which concluded in Aug 2024, to encourage conversations and reflections on the multifaceted impact of drug abuse. There were a total of 283 entries from various schools.

This month's winning essay shares the far-reaching impacts of drug addiction on families and communities.

The Invisible Shrapnel: A Reflection on the Costs of Drug Abuse

The rhythmic thud of the front door slamming shut used to be a welcome sound, a signal that Dad was home. Now, it sends a jolt of fear through me. Each thud carries the weight of uncertainty: Will he be lucid, the loving father I remember, or a hollow shell consumed by the invisible monster gripping him – drug addiction.

My childhood friend, Aniq, understands this uncertainty all too well. His mother, once a vibrant artist, retreated within herself, her canvases gathering dust as her dependence on prescription painkillers grew. Witnessing this firsthand shattered his once carefree spirit, leaving a residue of anger and confusion. These are just two examples of the countless ways drug abuse casts a long shadow, its effects rippling far beyond the individual user. The cost of this epidemic is borne not just by the abusers, but by their families, communities, and ultimately, by society as a whole.

The psychological and social effects of drug abuse are like a silent bomb, detonating within the abuser's mind and sending shrapnel tearing through the lives of those closest to them. My father, Danish, who used to be a pillar of strength, transformed into a stranger. Paranoia and mood swings became his constant companions. The joy in his eyes dimmed, replaced by a hollowness that mirrored the despair he must have felt inside. Our once vibrant family meals became tense battles, punctuated by accusations and disappointments. The laughter that once filled our home was replaced by the crushing silence of a love suffocated by addiction.

Drug abuse disrupts the very fabric of family dynamics. Trust, the foundation of any healthy relationship, crumbles under the weight of broken promises and erratic behavior. Communication, once a bridge connecting us, became a minefield of accusations and unspoken resentments. My mother, once Danish's partner in everything, became a weary soldier, constantly on guard, her love slowly morphing into a desperate plea for the man she knew to return.

For children of drug abusers, the cost is even steeper. We become unwilling participants in a chaotic drama, our childhoods robbed of the stability and security every child deserves. Khairie, the son of a recovering addict, spoke of nights spent worrying about where his next meal would come from, of witnessing his father's violent outbursts, and the constant fear of abandonment. The emotional scars he carries are a stark reminder of the enduring impact of addiction on those who have no choice but to stand by and watch.

The impact extends beyond the family unit, reaching into the very heart of communities. Drug abuse fuels crime, creating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. Abandoned needles become a hazard in playgrounds, and petty thefts to fund addictions become commonplace. Aniq's once idyllic neighborhood, known for its friendly faces and lively street markets, has become a shadow of its former self. The vibrant tapestry of community life has been frayed by the ever-present threat of drug-related violence.

The societal costs are staggering. Productivity plummets as addicts struggle to hold down jobs, healthcare systems become burdened by addiction-related illnesses, and resources that could have been used for education or infrastructure are diverted towards fighting the drug trade.

Yet, amidst the devastation, there are glimmers of hope. Support groups offer a lifeline to families struggling to cope, while rehabilitation programs provide a path to recovery for some. Khairie's father, with unwavering support from his family, managed to get clean, reclaiming his life and rebuilding his relationship with his son. Aniq's mother, inspired by his unwavering love, embarked on a long journey towards recovery.

The road to healing is long and arduous, but these stories remind us that addiction is not a death sentence. It is a disease, and like any disease, it can be treated. By openly discussing the multifaceted impacts of drug abuse, by fostering understanding and empathy, we can break the silence that allows this epidemic to thrive.

By actively engaging in prevention programs, offering support to families, and promoting access to rehabilitation, we can create a society where the invisible shrapnel of addiction no longer tears at the fabric of our communities. We owe it to the countless families shattered by addiction, to the children robbed of their childhoods, and to ourselves, to build a future free from the devastating grip of drugs.



EXCERPT FROM “WAITING FOR YOU”

AT A GLANCE...

“Waiting For You”, an initiative by the Singapore Prison Service features a compilation of real-life stories written from the perspectives of the drug abusers’ family members and loved ones.

In this edition, we share with you “Journal of My Life” – a woman’s personal reflection on her life, focusing on her relationship with her elder brother Tony, who has struggled with drug addiction for over 40 years.

Journal of My Life

I was reflecting on my life. Over the past 70 years, I have been through various ups and downs. I realised that I could not share my "downs" with others, and especially not my family since we are all bogged down with our own problems.

I will attempt to share some of my experiences here. I have an elder brother whom we call Tony for short. As a child, I did not spend much time with my family, neither did I play with Tony and my 3 younger brothers. I am the only girl and my brothers hung out with their friends most of the time. My parents were busy working to make ends meet and had little time for us. We were not a close-knit family, but we got by. Little did I know that things were about to get more challenging. My father passed away shortly, and my mother became a widow at the young age of thirty. As the sole breadwinner, she worked long hours as a fishmonger. We were left to our own devices most of the time. During this period, I noticed that Tony started playing truant frequently and he eventually dropped out of primary school. He then started working and made occasional financial contributions to the household.

Things spiraled out of control when Tony began to socialise with the wrong company in his early twenties. He was mostly absent from our lives and was hardly concerned about what was happening at home. Tony could go for several days without returning home. When he did, he came back disheveled with poor hygiene. He looked grossly different from his previous clean and tidy self. We were shocked when we discovered that he was on drugs and pleaded with him to stop. Sadly, our pleas fell on deaf ears and that marked the beginning of his prison life over the last 40 years. In the blink of an eye, he is already 72 and yet, he still has not changed.

I was already married when my brother was arrested for drug consumption. Despite having to work and care for my young children, I would take leave to accompany my mother on regular visits to prison. I could not bear for her to travel the distance by herself, and I also wanted to provide her with emotional support. Imagine how heart-wrenching it is to visit your loved one in prison. We felt so helpless and could only advise him to change. I kept wondering what else the family could have done to support him. Gradually, I realised the onus to change fell mainly on my brother. Ultimately, it was his choice as to how he wanted to lead his life. However, I wanted him to know that although it was his personal choice, he was not the only one who had to face the consequences. As a family, we have been vastly affected with a high price to pay for his bad choices.

Throughout these years, I had suffered several losses. My mother and two younger brothers are no longer around. Losing loved ones was painful, but at least I could be by their side during their final moments. I wonder how it had been like for Tony as he was in prison when they passed on. Despite the short amount of time he had spent with them, it was apparent that he cared for them. If not, why would he work so hard as a cleaner to help our youngest brother clear his gambling debts? If not, why would he agree to be escorted in handcuffs to their funerals to be ridiculed by others? He cried at their funerals too. What did his tears mean? Was he crying because he felt guilty for not being able to spend time with them, or for not fulfilling his responsibilities as a son and elder brother? Did he feel bad for failing to deliver his promises to change? But why was his care and concern for this family not enough to warrant a change in him?

I only have Tony and my third brother left. These two seem to come across like enemies when they argue. I am always caught in the middle of their storms. My third brother dislikes and disrespects Tony for his selfishness; he cannot fathom why Tony would repeatedly choose drugs over everything else. If only Tony could show some determination towards change. If only my third brother could communicate better. If only we could be more intact as a family. Drug addiction has such an immense power to tear families apart.

Looking back, I have made uncountable trips to different prisons to visit Tony. I persisted even after Mom had passed on. I have told Tony how mentally and physically challenging it has been for me. I expected words of gratitude, but what I received from him instead was disheartening. Tony told me to give up on him and to stop visiting. If only it was that easy. Where has all the time gone? I have been visiting him since I was a young adult. I am an elderly person now. I depend on a walking stick to move around. The short walk to the bus stop takes me 20 minutes. My whole journey to and from Changi prison takes me 3 hours. You must be thinking why I would waste 3 hours each time to see him for 20 minutes? I suppose this is the sacrifice I am willing to make to keep our blood ties. I dare not tell my children about my struggles because of their utter disdain for my brother. For as long as I am alive, I will continue to care for Tony despite how exhausting this has been for me.

Penning down my thoughts made me realise that my brother's addiction has impacted a major part of my life, even though he has been absent most of the time. I am not sure how he would live out the final phase of his life, but I hope he can do a little better this time. I only know it feels great to be able to pour out all my pent-up thoughts and emotions that have been eating me inside.

Note: Names and locales have been changed to protect the identities of family members.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Curious to learn more about the harms of drugs and our drug prevention efforts as well as how you can contribute to it? Join us at the upcoming community roadshows!

Event Name	Date/Time	Venue
Mawar Community Services Official Opening	1 Feb, 12.30-3.30pm	69A Onan Road S(426846)
Dribble Against Drugs	22 Feb, 9am-5pm	Kovan Kick Off, 60 Hougang St 21, S(538738)
Date Your Loved Ones Today!	23 Mar, 3.30-8.30pm	Kampong Glam (Meeting point TBC)



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Interested in sharing the drug preventive message at the following event? Email us at:

 CNB_Community_Partnership@cnb.gov.sg

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR PARTNERS



The **National Council Against Drug Abuse (NCADA)** was formed in January 1995. As the advisory council to the Minister and the Ministry of Home Affairs, NCADA's mission is to serve as an effective conduit between the Government and the public by championing -

1. Advocacy on policies and measures against drug abuse
2. Community engagements and outreach to public to promote Singapore's zero drug tolerance stance with the support of community partners



DrugFreeSG Champions are appointed by the Minister for Home Affairs who chairs the Inter-Ministry Committee on Drug Prevention for Youths to amplify drug-free messages to our youths through their respective networks. They comprise educators, student leaders, counsellors, youth workers, NS and healthcare communities, who seek to promote the #DrugFreeSG message within their spheres of influence. They are empowered to engage and safeguard our community, particularly youths, against the harms of drugs to keep Singapore drug-free.



The **DrugFreeSG Advocacy Network** brings together volunteers who identify with and promote the drug-free cause. Our DrugFreeSG Advocates play a vital role by being active voices in amplifying anti-drug messages within their spheres of influence, inspiring others to take a firm stand against drugs. Be part of the movement for a Singapore without drugs, where everyone can live, work and play safely.

Help us grow the Network by telling your friends about us and the volunteering opportunities with CNB. Drop us an email at cnb_community_partnership@cnb.gov.sg for more information about the Network or if you are keen to sign up as a volunteer.

**Volunteers under the Network do not represent CNB and NCADA, nor are they spokespersons of CNB and NCADA during or outside the term of deployment.*

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

If you come across drugs, or what you suspect to be drugs, you should call CNB hotline at **1800-325-6666**. Kindly note that airtime charges apply for mobile calls to 1800 service lines and calls are free of charge only if made from regular land lines. For more information, please visit the CNB website at www.cnb.gov.sg

Connect with us:



@cnb.drugfreesg