

CORINDA STATE HIGH
SCHOOL

Drug Education Policy



Background Information

The National School Drug Education Strategy demonstrates the Commonwealth Government's recognition that schools are critical places to educate young people to the harm of drug misuse. It reflects that parents and school communities clearly have a role to play in combating the growing threat to our school students of unsanctioned drug use. It also enables abstinence from illicit drugs to be promoted to our young people as a healthy lifestyle choice.

Need for school drug education initiatives.

Harmful drug use in our society continues to be a major source of concern to its members. All governments recognize that there is a clear need to provide a safe environment for young people, including school students and to address parents' concerns about the impact of drugs. It is vital that Australia's young people, and those that interact with them, have the information, strategies and skills to prevent or reduce the harm that can arise from their own drug use and the drug use of others. (National School Drug Education Strategy, 2003)

Schools acknowledge their partnership role in addressing a number of societal issues, through the provision of a safe school environment and the implementation of curriculum, policy and programs, including the provision of student welfare services. While it cannot be expected that they can work in isolation, they are clearly a critical place for drug education and, ideally, the messages delivered in schools will be reinforced and supported by parents and the wider community.

Schools, parents, related agencies, community organizations and other interested members of the wider community need to be informed and supported in this endeavor as the issue cannot be addressed alone by any one party.

Education Queensland will not accept sole responsibility for changing student health behaviours, including reducing drug use. The primary role of the

school is to impart knowledge, skills and a sound values base in relation to health and drug use, not to change behaviours that may be determined by factors beyond the influence of the school.

Drug Education should be considered in relation to:

- The formal and informal curricula in health.
- The creation of a safe and health school environment.
- The provision of appropriate health services.
- The involvement of the family and the wider community in planning and delivery of programs.

CORINDA STATE HIGH SCHOOL

DRUG EDUCATION POLICY

The purpose of Corinda State High School is to develop people who are equipped to contribute positively to society, take responsibility for stewardship of the earth, and participate in life-long learning. Corinda State High School aims to promote healthy lifestyles and the drug education policy aims to minimize harm by informing students of the hazards of drug use as part of a comprehensive health education program.

The policy is designed to encourage students to view the abuse of drugs as a health issue. The policy promotes the social responsibility of individual's towards the community and emphasizes the legal ramifications of illegal drug use. The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion should guide the ongoing development of drug policy and strategy. The charter principles emphasize the need for a structural approach that involves all elements of the community and the social infrastructure to enable people to improve and increase control over their well-being. It incorporates the harm-minimization philosophy involving investment in supply control, demand reduction and harm reduction.

Corinda State High School drug education policy and management practices aims to focus on addressing the cause, not just the symptoms, of drug related incidents.

This policy describes the school's management and intervention practices when dealing with the health, social and community issues related to:

- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Illicit Drugs

AIM

To create an environment that will not tolerate illicit drugs and recognizes alcohol and tobacco as potentially harmful drugs. The school will address issues of binge drinking, listed as a major problem with adolescents. This environment will be enhanced by drug education strategically implemented throughout the curriculum to address all relevant issues. Educational support strategies will be readily available.

SCHOOL DRUG STRATEGY

Corinda State High School's drug strategy is based upon the principle of harm minimization.

Harm Minimisation

The Queensland Government endorses harm minimization as the fundamental principle governing Australia's development of policies and programs to address the negative impact of legal and illicit drugs on our society. Supporting an individual's right to become abstinent, or to not use drugs unlawfully, is a significant component of any approach. Harm minimization approaches aim to maintain open communication about drug use with people currently using them. (Beyond a Quick Fix – Queensland Drug Strategic Framework 1999 – 2004)

Harm minimization accepts that, despite our best efforts, some young people will choose to use drugs, even some illicit drugs. It does not mean that we, as

individuals, or as a system condone that use. Within this context, however, it should be made clear to students that unlawful drug use and possession of drugs at school is not acceptable. Harm minimization does not necessarily mean approval of drug use or support for legislation. It is an approach that ***'aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of alcohol and other drugs by minimizing or limiting the harms and hazards of drug use for both the community and the individual without necessarily eliminating use'***. (CS-10 Drug Education in Schools, Department of Education Manual, 2001)

OBJECTIVES OF STRATEGY

Developing a Health School Policy and Guidelines

- To provide guidelines on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the school community in relation to drugs.
- To demonstrate the schools commitment to promoting the health of its staff, pupils and the community it serves.
- To provide a safe environment through the promotion of a drug free and smoke free environment.
- To eliminate drug possession.

Developing Personal Skills

- To develop the notion of 'Total Control' or '100% in Control' in students. Students can determine their health and the health of the community.
- To promote the concept of 'prevention is better than cure'. Students will develop decision making skills to apply when confronted with drug related issues.
- To promote harm minimization as a process of decision making with the purpose of reducing risk.
- To increase individual skills through knowledge and awareness of information providers and support services and resources within the school and the community.
- To instill awareness of the law and legal consequences for being in possession/selling illicit drugs.

- To explore health issues related to teenage behaviour such as binge drinking.
- To promote programs and alternatives aimed at stress management, coping with failure, relationships, and developing resilience in the students.

Creating a Supportive Environment and Management Practices

- To be vigilant in the monitoring of students within the school in relation to drug use.
- To identify students with drug related problems and encourage them to seek help.
- Set up support services within the school:- school based nurse, year level coordinators, form teachers, chaplain.
- To apply the consequences consistently and fairly to students identified as users or suppliers.
- To develop a supportive environment whereby students show concern about the welfare of their peers and adopt a responsible attitude to sharing information relating to drug use.

Strengthening Community Action

- To establish working partnerships with community agencies.
- To involve parents and community in information sharing evening to discuss adolescent issues relating to potential harms such as binge drinking.

PREVENTION IS VITAL

1. Prevent the uptake of illegal drugs
2. Delay the uptake of drug use
3. Increase the positive alternatives to drug use
4. Foster a community that is supportive
5. Provide educational environments that are supportive and inclusive for young people/
6. Increase community understanding of drugs.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- Inform students of health consequences
- Advise students of policy
- Provide students with information regarding where they can access information and support structures in the school
- Be vigilant of student behaviour
- Act as a role model

POLICY

Smoking, alcohol or illicit drugs are not permitted in any area of the school property nor at any school related activity or function.

Intervention procedures including consequences will be adopted for students who do not comply with the school policy.

CSHS CAN IMPLEMENT THE POLICY IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS

<i>School Role/Responsibility</i>	<i>School accountability – example of policy implementation</i>
Implement drug education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided by Principles for Drug Education in Schools (Appendix A) • Informed by a situational analysis of school community needs and review of resources • Addressing drugs young people are likely to encounter now and in the future
Incorporate statement on education and intervention in school planning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of the health curriculum • Including processes to identify and assist students with drug-related problems • Outlining intervention procedures for staff and students, including consequences for actions • Requirements for disclosure of drug information
Inform/engage the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By disseminating information about drug use • Of school programs and procedures for managing drug-related incidents at school • In planning and delivery of plans and programs
Report on policy implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By providing a framework for program planning and student assessment • Including achievement of long and short-

	<p>term program goals in the School Annual Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The achievement of education outcomes related to minimizing drug related harm
<p>Provide access to professional development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through workshops, seminars, conferences. Good practice models and networks • To reassure teachers of their central role as facilitator of drug Education Queensland on basic counselling skills for teachers

**POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENTS INVOLVED IN
DRUG RELATED ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL**

The responses outlined below are intended as a guide only. The consequences for students involved in a drug related incident should be considered in the context of the student's whole life, family situation, mental and emotional health, intellectual ability and degree to which they may have been in control of their actions and decisions. The consequences have been developed through the project '**No Deal – Minimising the presence of illicit drugs in schools**', *Education Queensland, March 1999*.

<i>Level of Involvement</i>	<i>Possible response or combination of responses</i>
1. Knowledge of drug-related activities at school not communicated to teachers or administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling by administration • Referral to parents
2. Requesting supply of an Illicit substance from another student on school premises. Request not fulfilled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling by administration • Referral to parents
3. Involvement via proximity to an activity, in the presence of others using or supplying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling by administration • Referral to parents • Detention • Withdrawal of privileges
4. Coming intoxicated onto school premises or to school functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling by administration • Referral to parents • Five-day suspension and counselling by guidance officer
5. Smoking tobacco on school premises or at school functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health warning • Warning as to breach of school rules • Suspension

6. Repeatedly smoking tobacco on school premises or at school functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to parents • Quit program and/or counselling by guidance officer • Suspension • Meeting with Principal
7. Using alcohol on school premises or at school functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to parents • Suspension and counselling by guidance officer
8. Supplying alcohol on school premises or at school functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to parents • Suspension and counselling by guidance officer
9. In possession of or using a small quantity of illicit substance on school premises or at a school function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to police • Parents notified • Suspension and counselling by guidance officer
10. Repeated possession or use of a small quantity of illicit substance on school premises or at a school function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to police • Parents notified/Counselling • Recommendation for exclusion
11. In possession of a large quantity of an illicit substance on school premises or at a school function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to police • Parents notified • Recommendation for Exclusion
12. Sale or supply of a small quantity of an illicit substance on school premises or at a school function, to minors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to police • Parents notified • Recommendation for Exclusion
13. Sale or supply of a large quantity of an illicit substance on school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and illegality warning • Referral to police

premises or at a school function, to minors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents notified• Recommendation for Exclusion
14. Repeated sale or supply of illicit substances whilst on school premises or at a school function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and illegality warning• Referral to police• Parents notified• Recommendation for Exclusion

APPENDIX A

PRINCIPLES FOR DRUG EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

1. Drug education is best taught in the context of the school health curriculum.
2. Drug education in schools should be conducted by the teacher of the health curriculum.
3. Drug education programs should have sequence, progression and continuity over time throughout schooling.
4. Drug education messages across the school environment should be consistent and coherent.
5. Drug education programs and resources should be selected to complement the role of the classroom teacher, with selected external resources enhancing, not replacing that role.
6. Approaches to drug education should address the values, attitudes and behaviours of the community and the individual.
7. Drug education needs to be based on research, effective curriculum practice and identified student needs.
8. Objectives for drug education in schools should be linked with the overall goal of harm minimization.
9. Drug education strategies should be related directly to the achievement of the program objectives.
10. The emphasis of drug education should be on drug use likely to occur in the target group, and drug use that causes the most harm to the individual and society.
11. Effective drug education should reflect an understanding of the characteristics of the individual, the social context, the drug and the interrelationship of these factors.
12. Drug education programs should respond to developmental, gender, cultural, language, socio-economic and lifestyle differences relevant to the level of student use.
13. Mechanisms should be developed to involve students, parents and the wider community in the school drug education program at both planning and implementation stages.

14. The achievement of drug education objectives, processes and outcomes should be evaluated.
15. The selection of drug education programs, activities and resources should be made on the basis of an ability to contribute to long term positive outcomes in the health curriculum and the health environment of the school.

(From: *Principles for Drug Education in Schools* – an initiative of the School development in Health Education Project, University of Canberra Faculty of Education, 1994)

REFERENCE LIST

Policy sources:

Department of Education (2001) *CS-10 Drug Education in Schools: Policy for Drug Education*

Education Queensland (1999) *Review of Drug Education in Schools*, June 1999

National School Drug Education Strategy, May 1999

National Drug Strategic Framework 1998-99 to 2002-03

Beyond a Quick Fix – Queensland Drug Strategic Framework, 1999 – 2004