



**fearless**  
Part of Crimestoppers  
Fearless.org 0800 555 111

# DRUGS & ALCOHOL

# What is Fearless?

**Fearless.org** is the dedicated youth service from the independent charity Crimestoppers. Developed through consultation with young people, Fearless aims to break down any barriers that might prevent young people from reporting crime. Whether this is a fear of the process or a distrust of the police, we want to empower young people to speak out. We do this by promoting our unique service that gives anyone the opportunity to speak up to stop crime, 100% anonymously.

## How it works?

Young people can pass information about crime to Fearless 100% anonymously via an online form on the Fearless.org website or by calling our **0800 555 111** phone line, 24/7, 365 days a year. After receiving the call or a completed anonymous online form, we create a report that brings together all the information given to us. Our specially trained contact centre staff make sure it doesn't contain any information that could identify who or where the information came from, protecting anonymity. The sanitised report is then sent to the relevant authority with the legal responsibility to investigate crimes, make arrests and charge people in order to bring them to justice. This could be a local police force or an agency such as the UK Border Agency or HM Revenue & Customs.

## Anonymity promise

Anonymous means that your identity is completely unknown. Our promise of anonymity is vital to us as it is what makes our charity unique. We guarantee to young people, indeed everyone, that:

- They can give us information about crime without giving their name or any personal details.
- They will not be asked for their gender or age.
- We will not record any personal details they might mention.
- We physically cannot trace their phone number, email or IP address as our system is designed to protect their identity.



**fearlessORG**



**fearlessuk**



**fearless.org**



**fearlessORG**



**fearlessagainstcrime**

**Empowering young people to speak up about crime.**

For more information, visit  
**[www.fearless.org](http://www.fearless.org)**  
Empowering young people to speak up about crime.



# About this resource

This resource has been produced for professionals working with young people throughout the UK. It provides information about drugs and alcohol including the law, drug classification, effects of drugs, as well as clarification on cannabis edibles and nitrous oxide. You can use this resource to help you to discuss young people's

perceptions, stimulate debate and encourage conversation around crime and crime reporting.

Fearless is committed to empowering young people to make informed choices about crime that affects them and their communities.

## We hope that by using this resource with the young people you work with, they will:

# 1

Have a greater understanding of specific crimes that affect them and their peers

# 2

Have a greater awareness of safe routes to report crime and criminal behaviour

# 3

Take positive action to make their communities safer for everyone

**Note:** Using this resource for debate and conversation may lead to disclosures from young people. It is important that any disclosures made to you are managed through your local safeguarding arrangements, and that you follow your settings safeguarding policy. Fearless.org are unable to take information from victims of crime, but at the back of this booklet you will find other agencies that may be able to provide advice, support and guidance.

### With thanks to:



This resource was funded and supported by Kent and Medway VRU and Kent Police and Crime Commissioner.

For more information contact the Fearless team  
[fearless@crimestoppers-uk.org](mailto:fearless@crimestoppers-uk.org)

# Substance misuse

## What is Substance Misuse?

Substance misuse is defined as the continued abuse of any mind-altering substance that severely affects a person's physical and mental health. This can be caused by illegal or legal substances.

## The Effects of Drugs

The effects a drug may have on a person can be broken down into four main categories: depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens and opiates. The table below outlines the effect of each type of drug:

### Depressants

These are drugs that slow down your brain function. Examples include alcohol, alprazolam (Xanax), and barbiturates.

### Stimulants

These drugs elevate your mood and increase your alertness and energy. They're usually highly addictive and can cause paranoia over time. Examples include cocaine, methamphetamine, and prescription medications for ADHD.

### Hallucinogens

This type of drug alters your perception of reality by changing the way the nerve cells in your brain communicate with each other. Examples include LSD, psilocybin, and MDMA.

### Opiates

These are powerful painkillers that quickly produce feelings of euphoria. They're highly addictive and can have lasting effects on your brain. Examples include heroin, morphine, and other prescription painkillers.

These drugs all come with their own risks, but the risks can be heightened if larger amounts or mixtures of these drug types are taken.

# Drug classification

Class	Drug	Possession	Supply & production
<b>A</b>	Crack cocaine Cocaine Ecstasy (MDMA) Heroin LSD Magic mushrooms Methadone Methamphetamine (crystal meth)	Up to <b>7 years in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both	Up to <b>life in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both
<b>B</b>	Cannabis Codeine Ketamine Speed Amphetamine Mephedrone	Up to <b>5 years in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both	Up to <b>14 years in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both
<b>C</b>	Anabolic steroids Benzodiazepines (Xanax, diazepam) Gamma hydroxybutyrate (GBH) Gamma butyrolactone (GBL) Piperazines (BZP) Khat Nitrous Oxide	Up to <b>2 years in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both	Up to <b>14 years in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both
<b>Psycho-active substance</b>	<b>'Legal Highs'</b>	Depends on the substance	Up to <b>7 years in prison</b> , an unlimited fine or both
<b>Legal</b>	Caffeine Nicotine Alcohol Pain relief medication		

# Cannabis edibles & Nitrous Oxide

## Cannabis Edibles

Cannabis edibles are a 'sweet' laced with a mood altering ingredient from cannabis, THC, that are being marketed to young people. They come in the form of sweets, chocolate or drinks and will often resemble a genuine shop bought item, such as a chocolate bar. The packaging may have slight variations, such as text being removed or some slight colour changes, making them difficult to identify.

As they are illegal in the UK, cannabis edibles are regularly purchased or sold through social media apps such as Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok, so they are very easily accessible to young people.

Cannabis edibles are much stronger than other cannabis products, but their effects take longer to present themselves. This could potentially lead to young people consuming higher amounts of cannabis edibles than they would a cannabis joint, as there is not an immediate effect.

The table below helps to highlight the difference between cannabis edibles and other cannabis products in terms of strength and time it takes to feel the effects:

Comparison point	Cannabis Edibles	Cannabis Joint
<b>THC strength</b>	<b>10-15mg per sweet</b>	<b>12mg</b>
<b>Time of impact</b>	<b>30-60 minutes</b>	<b>10-15 seconds</b>
<b>Length of impact</b>	<b>Up to 3 hours</b>	<b>1-2 hours</b>

## Nitrous Oxide

According to The Crime Survey, Nitrous Oxide, often referred to as laughing gas or NOS, is the second most used drug by 16-24 year olds in the UK. It is a colourless gas used in the health, dentistry and catering industries, and is commonly found in small, silver pressurised cannisters.

Inhaling Nitrous Oxide reduces oxygen to the brain, so can produce effects such as making a person feel relaxed and giggly, but can also make someone feel anxious or paranoid and suffer from headaches. Regular inhalation of Nitrous Oxide has been proven to cause a deficiency in the vitamin B12 and can stop a person forming white blood cells as they should. As the effects of this drug only last 1-2 minutes, it can make it difficult to determine how much is a safe amount to inhale, which has sadly proved fatal in some cases.

When taken for human consumption, Nitrous Oxide is most commonly transferred into a balloon and then inhaled. However, people do also inhale nitrous oxide directly from the cannister, which is extremely dangerous as it is a pressurised gas.

# Alcohol and the law

## Buying Alcohol

It is illegal to sell alcohol to someone under 18 anywhere or for an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol for anyone under the age of 18.

If you are under 18 it is illegal to buy alcohol, attempt to buy alcohol or to be sold alcohol. There is an exception: if you are 16 or 17 years old and accompanied by an adult it is legal for you to have an alcoholic drink with a meal in a licensed premises, such as a pub or a restaurant, as long as it is purchased by an adult.

## Drinking In Public

If you are under 18 and suspected of drinking alcohol in a public place the police have the power to confiscate it. Sometimes you might face a fine.



# Support services

## Frank

Find out everything you need to know about drugs, their effects and the law. Talk to Frank for facts, support and advice on drugs and alcohol.

**[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)**

## Know the Score

For free, confidential information and advice call the Know the Score Drugs Helpline on 0800 587 5879. You'll also find links to local sources of help and support, advice on what to do if you're worried about someone and what to do in an emergency.

**[www.knowthescore.info](http://www.knowthescore.info)**

## Nacoo

Provides information, advice and support for anyone affected by a parent's drinking. **[www.nacoo.org.uk](http://www.nacoo.org.uk)**

## Re-Solv

Help, support and advice relating to solvent abuse/misuse.

**[www.re-solv.org](http://www.re-solv.org)**

## Drinkaware

Learn about the impact of alcohol on you, your family or friends.

**[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)**

## Alateen

Alateen is for teenage relatives and friends of alcoholics. Alateen is part of Al-Anon. Alateen meetings are for 12-17 year olds. They meet to share their experiences of having, or having had, a problem drinker in their lives. They help and support each other. **[www.al-anonuk.org.uk/alateen](http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk/alateen)**

## With You

Provide free, confidential support to people experiencing issues with drugs, alcohol or mental health.

**[www.wearewithyou.org.uk](http://www.wearewithyou.org.uk)**

# Are you fearless?

## It's easy to embed Fearless within your school, youth group or organisation.

Our positive call to action can be easily slotted into existing health and wellbeing topics, PHSE lessons, assemblies and awareness days.

### Fearless five top tips

1

Ask IT to add Fearless.org to the list of secure websites that staff and young people can access and add our homepage as an icon to all computer desktops/tablets.

2

Visit our website Fearless.org and request FREE posters to display in your school, youth club etc.

3

Follow us on X @Fearlessorg and retweet our campaigns.

4

Include information about our service within parent newsletters.

5

Tell young people that our service is there for them.

You can also use the Fearless Playing Cards, which can be downloaded from our website, as a prompt for having conversations with young people around knife crime.

[www.fearless.org/en/professionals/resources/downloads](http://www.fearless.org/en/professionals/resources/downloads)

We have a team of Fearless Outreach Workers across the country, delivering workshops to young people and professionals. To find out if there is a Fearless Worker in your area, please email [fearless@crimestoppers-uk.org](mailto:fearless@crimestoppers-uk.org)



#### Professionals told us:

“Fearless is a really valuable addition to our young people’s life toolkit.”

#### Young people told us:

“I’m not a grass but if I thought my mate was involved in something serious or someone was going to get hurt... I’d tell Fearless. It’s a good idea.”



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