

affecting the ability to see the road clearly. This linked to the lack of accurate judgement can be lethal for all road users.

Cocaine will make the user think they are the best, be it as a pedestrian, cyclist or driver. The over-confidence it produces can lead to the taking of unnecessary risks and possible long term consequences. Cocaine can have the opposite effect to Cannabis and can 'speed the user up'.



Amphetamines can lead to excitability, risk taking, aggression or panic. As a road user any of these reactions are dangerous and can have consequences for the user and others around them.

The effects of drug use on drivers can be devastating for the driver and other road users.

- Slower reaction times
- Poor concentration
- Sleepiness or fatigue
- Confused thinking
- Distorted perception
- Over-confidence leading to the taking of unnecessary risks
- Impaired co-ordination
- Erratic behaviour

- Nausea
- Hallucinations
- Blurred vision and abnormal pupil dilation
- Aggression
- Panic attacks and paranoia
- Tremors
- Dizziness
- Cramps

Did you know that the police have the power to stop road users they think are using the roads under the influence of drugs? Many think there are no tests for drugs but the Police have the power to conduct a Field Impairment Test (FIT). This requires the person to undertake a series of divided attention tasks to find out if they are impaired.

Find out more

The following web sites will be able to provide you with detailed information.

www.talktofrank.com

www.drugdrive.com

www.drugdrivinglondon.com

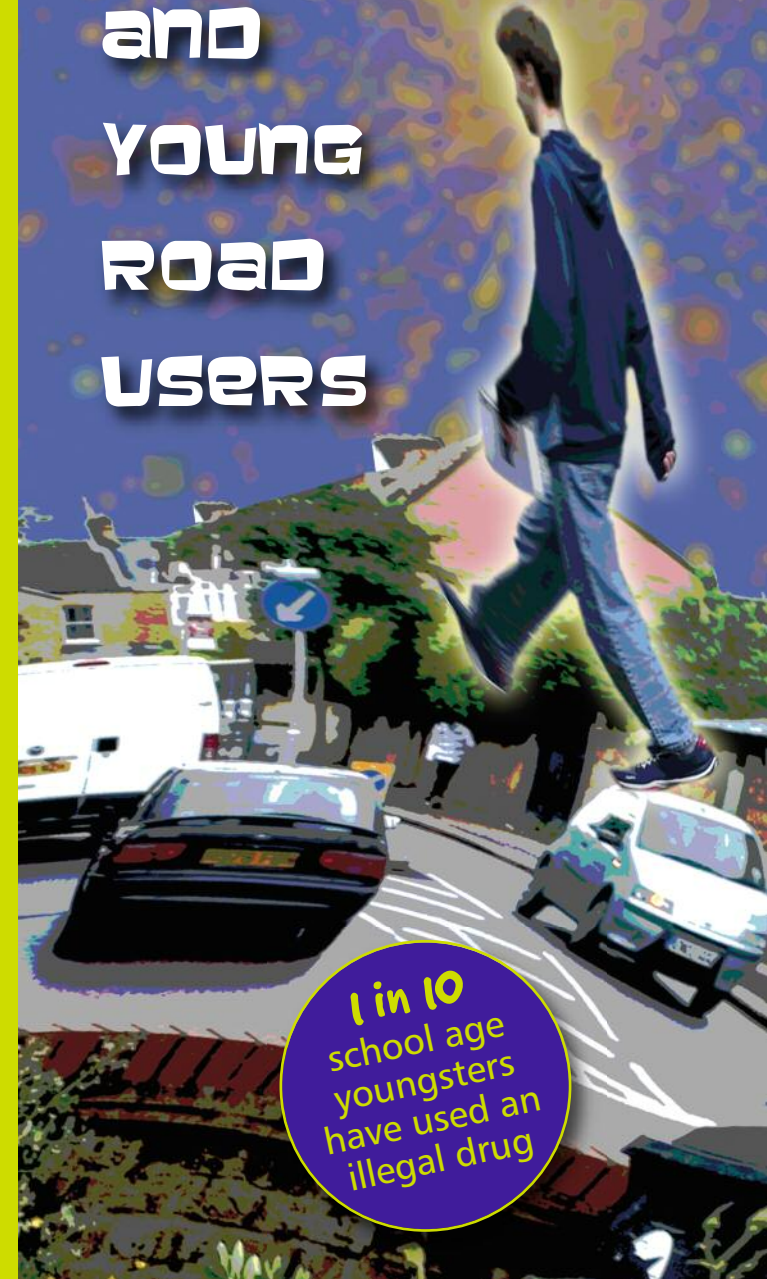
or contact the Road Safety Officer at your local council offices.

published by:-



© 2008 www.lapc.org.uk

DRUGS and YOUNG ROAD USERS



1 in 10
school age
youngsters
have used an
illegal drug

Know the risk

It's a startling fact that one in ten students of secondary school age are approached to take drugs.

Regrettably many of them do not have the confidence to say no. If your child was to become involved in drug use would you as a parent know what to look out for, and would you know how it could affect your child as a road user?

The biggest single cause of death and serious injury to young people are road traffic incidents. Most people start the day thinking that a road traffic incident will never happen to them.

Sadly across the UK, too many parents get the dreaded knock on the door telling them that their child has been hurt on our roads. Pedestrians, cyclists, passengers and drivers are more vulnerable to serious injury when drug use is involved. With so many drugs and other substances being used by this age group, the chances are that someone in their peer group will have tried them.

So what are the signs to look out for?

Know the signs

Many of the commonly recognised signs are similar to those of regular teenagers so you need to consider the wider aspects and not take the following points in isolation.

Do they seem to want more privacy and spend more time in the loo?

Have their sleep patterns changed?

Have they become more secretive or have they been telling lies?

Have they become more insular and lost interest in their hobbies, friends and appearance?

Are the teenage mood swings more than you would normally expect?

Sudden weight loss and lack of interest in food?

Are they always short of money?

Have things gone missing from home, perhaps being sold?

Does their breath or clothing smell differently?

Has their attitude to school changed?

Have they developed unexplained rashes?

Do their eyes look red and has the dilation of their pupils changed?

Know the drugs

The type of substance being used will directly affect their capabilities as road users.

Here are a few of the most common drugs used by dealers to hook in young people.

Cannabis in general will slow down the reactions of the user. As a pedestrian this can mean that they think they have time to cross the road when they do not. As cyclists it can result in them cycling in a slow and dangerous style. As a driver they may be driving very slowly, often below the average speed of the road. In general, usage of cannabis will mean that the user is more 'laid back' in their approach, and reactions are much slower.



Ecstasy directly affects the ability of the user to accurately judge the speed and distance of on-coming traffic.

This is relevant to pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. Vision can become blurred thus



The biggest single cause of death and serious injury to young people - road traffic incidents