Listen FIRST

Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe

FACTS FOR POLICY MAKERS

Childhood is a period of significant development and great **opportunity**.

As children advance through **adolescence**, they grow, explore, and have the chance to realize their individual unique **potential**.

This also makes them vulnerable to unhealthy behaviours, including using drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Most children and adolescents will never use drugs, and those who do are often **affected by vulnerabilities** beyond their control.

- Poverty and exposure to violence.
- Not benefiting from warm and supporting parenting.
- Engaging with peers themselves at risk.

Of these, at least **1 out of 10** will suffer immediate or long-term consequences to their physical or mental health.

The earlier children start to experiment with drugs, the more likely they are to develop drug dependence later in life.

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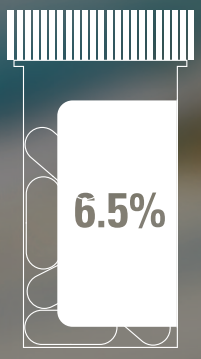
Children and youth need you to listen to them with **warmth and care**

Provide children and youth with skills and opportunities.

Support **science-based prevention** to make them **happy and resilient**.



Offering parenting skills programs to families and teaching social skills at school to **elementary school children**, can prevent **2/3** of the cases of **non-medical use of prescription drugs at age 21**.

Resilient children and supportive environments result in:

Positive families, schools and communities.

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Less drug use and risky behaviours

Some evidence-based programmes provide teachers with interactive tools to promote positive behaviour whilst they teach their normal programme. This not only improves the behaviour of the children in class and helps them learn better. It has been shown to have a significant impact up to the age of 21.

When reaching adulthood, **boys** that had shown signs of aggressive behaviour in the first year of primary school

83% 40% 50% in the control group

29% 0% 34% among those participating in this prevention program during first school year

will suffer from drug dependency disorders

will smoke

will show violent or criminal behavior

AND

20% in the control group will graduate from high school

75% among those taking part in this program will graduate from high school

Saving social and health care costs

Saving up to 30 times the amount of funds invested in prevention

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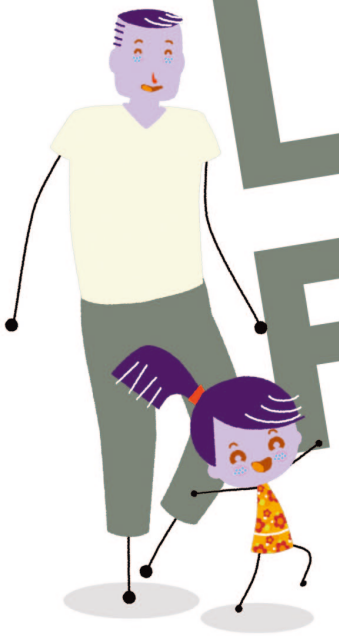
Support evidence-based prevention programmes:



Listen FIRST

www.unodc.org/listenfirst

"Listen FIRST"
is open to all interested Member States, civil society, academic and international organizations.

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Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Chile, China, CICAD, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, EMCDDA, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mentor International, Mexico, Myanmar,Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Peru, the Philippines, the Pompidou Group, Portugal, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, UNODC, Uzbekistan, WHO.

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