



National Council on Substance Abuse

# MATTERS OF substance

Volume #8 Issue #2  
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## The Barbados Drug Information Network “A Decade of Valid & Reliable Information”



**Mrs. Laura Lee Foster**  
Research and Information Officer

**O**n May 30, 2022, the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) released the findings from the 2020 Barbados Drug Information Network

(BARDIN) Report during a virtual session attended by stakeholders in the demand reduction and supply control sectors as well as representatives from regional drug councils and international partner agencies.

The 2020 report is the 10th in the BARDIN series and therefore marks an important milestone in NCSA’s efforts to monitor the local drug situation. Its publication means that the NCSA, and by extension Barbados, now has a decade of valid and reliable information on which to base policy and programming decisions. A summary of key points is highlighted on the back page along with a gro

The findings and emerging key issues were presented by Mrs. Laura Foster, Research and Information Officer, who also proposed a number of recommendations for the way forward. Other speakers included: the Minister of Home Affairs and Information, Hon. Wilfred Abrahams, M.P., and Chairman of the NCSA Board of Directors, Mr. Hadford Howell.

### Celebrating Our Network Members

As part of the celebrations to mark the 10th BARDIN publication, the Council also hosted an awards ceremony to honour active Network members. The ceremony took place on Friday June 3, 2022, in the Conference Room at the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information.

It was opened by NCSA’s Deputy Manager, Mr. Troy Wickham, who underscored the importance of partnerships and highlighted the critical role which the contributing agencies had played in helping BARDIN to evolve into its current state as one of the oldest and most well-established Drug Information Networks in the region.

Minister Abrahams presented the awards to representatives from the various agencies. But before doing so, he lauded the NCSA and all contributors for providing information which can be used at the national level.

#### Awards were presented to:

- ◆ The Edna Nicholls Centre
- ◆ The Psychiatric Hospital
- ◆ The Substance Abuse Foundation, The Centre for Counselling Addiction Support Alternatives
- ◆ The Barbados Police Service
- ◆ The Barbados Prison Service
- ◆ The Government Industrial School
- ◆ The Financial Intelligence Unit
- ◆ The Criminal Justice Research and Planning Unit.

*The Chairman of NCSA’s Board of Directors also presented an award to Minister Abrahams in recognition of the Ministry’s support as the Council worked towards establishing a national database on drug-related activities.*



## Secondary School Survey On Its Way



**Dr. Johnathan Yearwood**  
Research and Information Officer

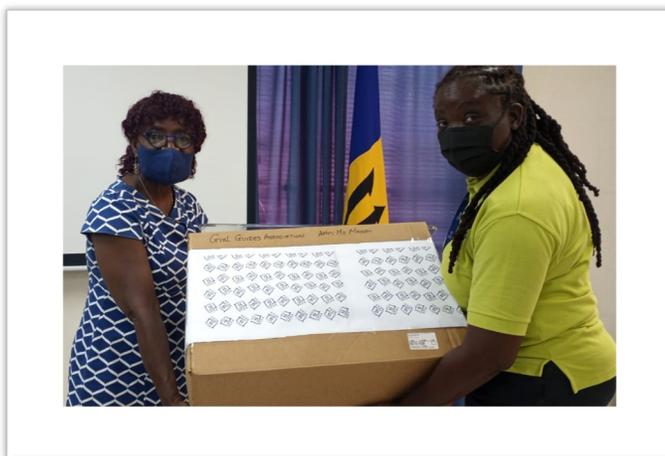
**T**eenage use of legal and illegal drugs is linked to poor school performance and retention, early and unplanned pregnancy and various mental health problems. Using these substances at an early age also increases the likelihood of having an adult alcohol and drug use disorder. However, all adolescents who use legal and illegal drugs do not experience long-term problems, but the significant risks associated with drug use during adolescence warrant early intervention.

A vital component of the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) mandate is to deter substance abuse through evidence-based drug education services to children and adolescents. To execute this mandate, the NCSA relies on information collected from surveys to inform the design and implementation of initiatives to deter the consumption of licit and illicit substances. In 2022, The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) hopes to conduct its fourth secondary school drug survey in the first term of the school's academic year drawn from students in the 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 6th forms.

Information collected will include students' demographic profile, use of legal and illegal drugs, perceptions of harm associated with drug use, attitudes towards drugs and access to legal and illicit substances. The 2022 secondary school survey forms part of a broader comprehensive study in select countries across the region, and Barbados' inclusion in this study is not only beneficial but timely for the following reasons:

- \* *Allows for collecting much-needed, current data on the Barbadian secondary school population regarding drug use.*
- \* *Provide information on changing drug use patterns and trends.*
- \* *Inform the development of drug prevention and substance abuse programmes and policies towards reducing drug use among adolescents in Barbados.*

The successful completion of the secondary school survey draws on the commitment and expertise of key stakeholders who have a role in the delivery of drug education to young people in Barbados. In this light, the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) will collaborate with the Ministry of Education, Principals and teachers of public and private secondary schools and parents of public and private secondary school students. However, existing national protocols during the survey and the subsequent feedback from stakeholders will guide the implementation of the study.



### Presentation To The Girl Guides Association

**Ms Pauline Forte receiving NCSA branded Promotional Items from NCSA Substance Abuse Prevention Officer Mrs. Wendy Greenidge, on behalf of The Girl Guides Association. The Association participated in the Barbados Substance Abuse Badge for Organised Youth Groups.**

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## Substance Abuse & The Impact On Families



Mrs. Natalia Corbin Ifill & Mr. Mosiah Hoyte  
NCSA Counsellors

ing or addicted to a substance may steal from family members, this can result in trust issues and financial challenges.

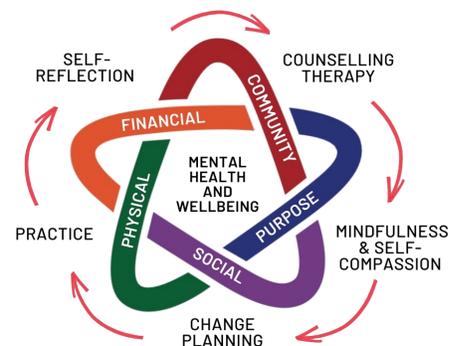
Consequently, when a person in a family is abusing a substance or has a substance use disorder, this situation changes the family system because the elements of the family and the functions of the family are affected.



He/she feels left out. He/she is not involved in the family relationships as the others and tries not to produce problems. This person sticks to him/herself and tries not to be noticed.

Dealing with addiction in the family is not an easy task. Getting help can help family members cope better, acquire skills to improve their emotional and physical health even if the family member is not ready to get professional help. The healthier one is emotionally and physically better to support his/her family member when or if they are ready to make that change.

When the family member with the addiction has made the decision to get professional help, support of family is critical in the recovery process of rehabilitation. Therapy and significant familial involvement in treatment increase the likelihood of positive outcomes. Let children, parents and other supportive family members be part and parcel of the process of identifying the problem and seeking solutions.



**I** think most of us may be aware that substance abuse is an individual disease; however, if we look at this situation closely, it not only affects the individual using the substance.

Substance abuse is also called a Family disease, because the family experiences the effects of substance abuse and in some cases, there is a genetic link. For some, growing up in a home or an environment where parents are abusing substances or have an addiction, is also linked to substance abuse or addiction among the children. This may occur due to the influence of what they observed and experienced as children.

The experiences of substance abuse affect the family in a number of ways such as feelings of shame, emotional distress, insomnia and depression.

In situations where family members are abusing or are even addicted to substances, and other family members are not in agreement with this behaviour, conflict in the family can occur and family relationships can become disrupted and strained. A breakdown in communication occurs. In some cases, the person abus-

Family members take on particular roles to make this adjustment and according to addiction literature, the roles that family members take on include: **The Caretaker, The Hero, The Scapegoat, The Mascot, and The Lost Child.**

**As the Caretaker**, this family member, also known as the enabler, tries to protect the person using the substance. The caretaker is in denial that the person has an addiction and makes excuses for the behaviour of the person using the substance.

**The Hero** presents things in a positive manner while ignoring the problem. They like the enabler, cover up the substance use. The hero is usually the first born child and they are the successful person in the family.

**The Scapegoat** is seen as the problem child in the family and is blamed for most of the family problems. This person acts out trying to shift attention away from the person with the addiction

**The Mascot** just like the name suggests, is like the clown in the family whose job is to entertain and jokes around to lessen attention on the substance use in the family.

Finally, there is the **Lost Child**.

# Alcohol & Energy Drinks: A Dangerous Mixture



**Ms. Jennifer Baptiste**

**Substance Abuse Prevention Officer**

**W**e outside!!

It's crop-over time again after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. There is an air of anticipation as locals and tourists will have the opportunity to mingle with family and friends, dance to sweet soca music,

eat delicious local dishes and drink their beverage of choice while adhering to the COVID 19 protocols.

It is not unusual for alcoholic beverages to be served at social events. However, when used indiscriminately, alcohol affects the mood and cognitive abilities of the user. Furthermore, there is also a worrying practice where persons are mixing alcohol with energy drinks. These energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine and sugar and as the name suggests, are designed to boost energy levels, and enhance alertness.

In contrast, alcohol depresses the bodily functions of the user and induces a feeling of relaxation. The combination

of these two substances can create opposing physiological and psychological effects within the user. Alcohol mixed with energy drinks masks the depressant (drowsiness) effects of alcohol, making the drinker feel more alert.

Drinkers can sometimes tend to lose track of how many alcoholic beverages they have consumed and as a result may not realize how intoxicated they really are which could potentially lead to alcohol poisoning. Additionally, the false perception of alertness places the drinker at greater risk of engaging in risky behaviours like drunk driving which could result in road fatalities or long-term injuries.



We at the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) encourage you to enjoy the upcoming festivities responsibly! If you plan to attend any of the events and as Bajans would say

“partake of a bit of libation” (alcohol), be responsible and make arrangements ahead of time for a designated driver to get you home safely – and remember **“none for the road!!”**

## Healthy Eating On A Budget

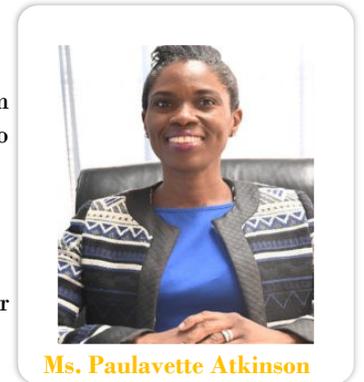
**T**he National Council on Substance Abuse collaborated with counterparts from The National Nutrition Centre (NCC) of The Ministry of Health and Wellness to facilitate a webinar which addressed “Healthy Eating On A Budget.”

This webinar formed part of the NNC month of activities.

The aim of the webinar was to emphasize the value of healthy eating as well as your budget allows, as an alternative to consuming mind-altering substances.

In delivering the NCSA presentation: **Mind Altering SUBSTANCES: Healthy or Harmful?** it was critical for this Prevention Officer to illustrate these facts:

- ◆ Alcohol / ethanol is harmful to persons’ mental and physical health,
- ◆ Nicotine is an addictive chemical,
- ◆ Alcohol / ethanol and nicotine do not provide any nutritional benefits,
- ◆ High cost of habitual consumption of alcoholic beverages (approx. \$100 – \$500 monthly), High cost of habitual consumption of tobacco / vape products (approx. \$120 – \$750 monthly) and
- ◆ Purchasing healthy foods is a better alternative and viable use of limited finances.



**Ms. Paulavette Atkinson**

**Substance Abuse Prevention Officer**

Thanks To The 115 Participants Who Attended The Webinar.

## Stay Healthy - Avoid Alcohol



**Dr. C.V. Alert, MB BS DM.**  
Family Physician

As Crop Over approaches, the experience of the last few calypso seasons suggests that our airways will soon be bombarded with songs that implore us to drink ‘nuff’ liquor: after all, the songs suggest that we should all aspire to become ‘professional drinkers’.

In Barbados, alcohol is legal and freely available to persons over 18 years old. In fact, many alcohol use is associated with various rites of passage and it is considered mainly to be able to hold your liquor”. The experiences of many families, medical and psychiatric officials paint a different picture.

The developing brain is particularly vulnerable to effects of alcohol. Drinking alcohol during childhood or adolescence alters brain development, which can result in irreversible changes in brain structure and function. Young people should not be allowed to drink alcohol.

Other ill effects can include blackouts, which are gaps in a person’s memory for events that occur while that person is intoxicated. These gaps happen when he/she drinks enough alcohol to temporarily block the transfer of memories from short-term to long-term storage in the brain. Drunken persons simply do not remember what hap-

pened when they were drinking.

An alcohol overdose occurs when there is so much alcohol in the bloodstream that areas of the brain controlling basic functions such as breathing, brain functions and heart beating, begin to shut down. Symptoms of alcohol overdose include mental confusion, difficulty remaining conscious, vomiting, seizures, trouble breathing, slow heart rate, and extremely low body temperature. Alcohol overdose can lead to permanent brain damage or even death.

Some other long term effects of alcohol use include motor-vehicle accidents and other injuries; violence and antisocial behavior; unplanned sexual activity, leading to unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs); loss of personal possessions; and disruption of school, work and family life.

Some of the medical and psychiatric problems associated with alcohol use include high blood pressure, strokes, depression and dementia; stomach ulcers, a variety of cancers including head and neck, liver, stomach, pancreas and bladder; and sexual problems such as infertility and impotence.

Beware alcohol. While adults may experience a ‘dizzy and delightful’ sensation after the first drink, subsequent drinks can lead to more serious health challenges includ-



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## Tips : Drinking & Driving

### Compliments Co-operators General Insurance

- ⇒ Do not drive whilst under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- ⇒ Always have a non-drinking designated driver each time you go out. If you go out alone, do not drink alcohol or use drugs.
- ⇒ Put aside money in the event that you need to take a taxi.
- ⇒ Safe driving requires the ability to concentrate, make good judgments and quickly react to situations.
- ⇒ When alcohol is in your system, it slows your response time and affects how quickly you're able to respond to different situations. Therefore, if the car in front of you brakes suddenly or a pedestrian crosses the street, it will take longer for your brain to process the situation and prevent an accident.
- ⇒ Drinking affects your motor skills such as eye, hand and foot coordination. Without crucial coordination skills, you may be unable to avoid causing an accident. Some signs of reduced coordination include trouble walking, swaying, blurry vision, the inability to stand straight or remain steady.
- ⇒ After drinking, you may notice that your vision is blurred. Impaired vision can affect how you judge the distance between your car and other vehicles on the road.
- ⇒ Did you know, that drinking and driving results in slower reflexes which then contribute to accidents?
- ⇒ Driving under the influence, increases the frequency of motor accidents which can result in injury to persons or death. This results in hardships to families as the injured person may be the breadwinner.
- ⇒ Driving under the influence, increases the frequency of motor accidents, oftentimes resulting in injuries which then puts additional strain on our health care system.

### We want to encourage persons to take the Co-operators General Insurance Drivers Pledge:

1. I will not drive whilst under the influence of drugs and alcohol.
2. I will not text and drive.
3. I will do everything possible to avoid a vehicular accident.
4. I will not drive my vehicle without insurance coverage.
5. I will not drive my vehicle with an expired Driver's License.
6. I will drive with due care and consideration for other road users.



## Prevention First Parents Online Programme

The National Council on Substance hosted its second online Prevention First Parents Programme coordinated by Mrs. Makeada Bourne, Substance Abuse Prevention Officer. This year the programme attracted 174 registrants compared to the 150 last year. The five-week sessions covered the following topics by specialists in their area:

1. **Helping your family through loss - Ms. Laurel Springer, Juvenile Justice Specialist, Social Worker**
2. **Managing stress & pain through therapeutic strategies - Ms. Lystra Sargeant, Massage Therapist,**
3. **Managing your monies - Mr. Stephen Bishop, Assistant Accountant, NCSA**
4. **You may be breaking the Law and do not Know! - Mr. Corey Beckles, Attorney at Law and**
5. **The Impact of Stress on your wellness/health - Dr. Colin Alert.**



**Mrs. Makeada Bourne**  
Substance Abuse Prevention Officer

For the first time, three sponsors came on board donating gifts for the participants.

### Sponsors:

Shani's Health Shop – two detox packages: won by Angelina Small and Kim Bushell

Rhea's Place – two full body massages: won by Ms. Phylcia Devonish and Rev. Cheryl Trotman

Nature by Raina - Natural Skin Care Basket: won by Ms. Francene Rowe.



## In The Community



**Ms. Deanzer Roberts**  
**PR Consultant**

The message was clear on Friday, July 1st, 2022, when the team from the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA), adorned in bright orange shirts, took to communities sharing messages with persons to "Know Their Limit" during the Crop Over Season.

"The Community Drive Through" was part of NCSA's observation of World Drug Day 2022.

The first stop was at the Barbados Licensing Authority in the Pine where the team met and greeted people and shared important facts regarding the prevalence of the drug situation in Barbados. This provided a wonderful opportunity to share drug education tips of the dangers of legal and illegal drugs and drinking excessively especially with the upcoming activities during the Crop Over Season, with existing and potential drivers and other road users.

From there, the team disembarked at their parent Ministry where they shared paraphernalia and distributed branded NCSA promotional items and also shared information with them.

NCSA's Deputy Manager Mr. Troy Wickham said the exercise was timely since the NCSA continues to advocate that people make healthy and informed choices.

"Our recently concluded BARDIN report shows that traditional substances such as marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco remain problematic for the 13–40-year-old age group, predominantly males, so it is important that we give people sound information that is based on our research," he explained.



The team also visited the Bonnets area and did house-to-house calls that were well received. This according to Manager Mrs. Betty Hunte was indeed pleasing as the team not only got to share information but was able to get feedback from those in the community.

She says the NCSA will continue during this year to go into communities and share information as well as to reach out to stakeholders and others who want to partner with them for this important drug prevention education community intervention.

# COMMUNITY *outreach*



# World No Tobacco Day 2022

**E**very year, World No Tobacco Day is recognized globally on 31st May.

The World Health Organization (WHO) released the theme for 2022 as “Protect the Environment - Tobacco is killing us and our planet”. While drug prevention educators are encouraged to continue to share the harmful effects of Tobacco use on the individual, WHO wants organizations to also highlight the impact of the tobacco industry and their by-products on the environment.

**Tobacco is a plant whose leaves are dried and processed to be consumed in various ways. Some forms of tobacco can include cigarettes, fanta (dried brown leaves), cigars, bidis, kreteks, electronic nicotine delivery systems, chewing tobacco, and snuff. Tobacco contains over 600 ingredients including tar, carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, and nicotine. Nicotine is the drug that causes the user to be addicted to the product.**

Moreover, when tobacco is lit, the smoke contains 7,000 toxic chemicals with 69 of those chemicals known to cause cancer. Smoking is known to cause cancers of the lung, mouth, tongue, and throat. It also causes heart disease, stroke, and weakens the immune system. An author stated that the tobacco epidemic is one of the world’s biggest public health threats ever faced. Why? Because tobacco kills more than 8million people a year around the world, with 1.2 million being non-smokers who were exposed to second-hand smoke (World Health Organization). Second-hand smoke is the smoke-cloud exhaled by a user, while the smoke coming directly from the lit cigarette is sidestream.

It is reported by the World Health Organization that “tobacco growing, manufacturing, and the use of tobacco poison our water, soil, beaches and city streets with chemicals, toxic waste, cigarette butts, including microplastics, and e-cigarette waste.

They also reported that the tobacco industry has contributed to over 600,000,000 trees being cut down to make cigarettes and 84,000,000 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide is released in the air contributing to global warming.

It is therefore commendable that wonder Barbados has taken the position to protect its citizens and visitors through the Health Service Regulation Acts 2017. These Acts protect minors from using, selling, or being sold tobacco products; prohibits smoking in public places; and regulates the packaging and labelling of tobacco products.



## Did You Know?

At least 19 different types of cancer-causing materials are found in tobacco products.

Oral cancer is serious and can spread to other parts of the neck and body. Oral cancer is dangerous; only half those with this cancer will be alive in five years. Smokeless tobacco should not be used as alternative to smoking cigarettes as it can be just as or even more dangerous.

# LIGHTS CAMERA ACTION

## World No Tobacco Day 2022 Community Outreach



# "BARDIN A Decade of Valid and Reliable Information"



## BARDIN

### Key findings from the 2020 Barbados Drug Information Network (BARDIN) Report.



1

The majority of drug offenders and persons seeking treatment are male and/or 40 years of age and under.



2

Alcohol, marijuana and cocaine continue to be the main drugs motivating the need for treatment.



3

Cannabis offences continue to outnumber all other drug offences on record.



4

Police seizures of non-traditional drugs/ non-traditional forms of cannabis and persons seeking treatment for non-traditional drugs suggest the continued slow diversification of the drug situation.



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