Sharjah American International School

2026 - 2027

SAIS DRUG PREVENTION AND AWARENESS GUIDE

Abu Dhabi Branch

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This guide aims to raise awareness, prevent substance abuse, and promote the wellbeing of students, staff, and parents within the SAIS community. It outlines definitions, risk and protective factors, preventive actions, and the school's roles and responsibilities in compliance with UAE laws and ADEK policies.

2. OBJECTIVES:

1. Raise stakeholder awareness about the dangers of drug and substance abuse.
2. Misconceptions surrounding drug use.
3. Increase awareness of the protective and risk factors affecting children and adolescents.
4. Enhance stakeholders' skills in guiding children to refuse substance use and make safe choices.
5. Provide information about available treatment and rehabilitation centers in the UAE.

3. GUIDING PILLARS:

1. **Friendship and Supportive Relationships:** Building positive, trust-based relationships that encourage open communication and emotional support among students, staff, and families.
2. **Physical and Mental Health Maintenance:** Promoting healthy lifestyles, self-care habits, and balanced wellbeing to strengthen resilience against harmful behaviours.
3. **Community Awareness and Cooperation:** Fostering a shared sense of responsibility among all stakeholders to create a safe and drug-free school environment.

Maintaining strong physical and mental health is a cornerstone for both individual growth and societal development.

4. KEY DEFINITIONS:

Term	Definition
Drugs / Substances	Natural or chemical substances that negatively affect the body's functions and may cause habituation or addiction. It is prohibited to trade, cultivate, or manufacture these substances except for lawful medical or scientific purposes.
Addiction	A chronic brain disease resulting from continuous use of narcotics, leading to psychological or physical dependence. The person becomes unable to perform daily functions without substance and often requires professional treatment and rehabilitation.
Prevention	Actions and plans aimed at avoiding the use of narcotics or psychoactive substances through education, awareness, and reduction of risk factors.

5. HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG ABUSE:

Physical Health Effects:

- Heart and blood pressure disorders.
- Digestive system disorders and appetite loss.
- Chronic fatigue and physical exhaustion.
- Liver and kidney damage.
- Infections (Hepatitis B, C, HIV/AIDS).
- Chronic pneumonia and sudden death.
- Epileptic seizures and convulsions.

Psychological Health Effects:

- Anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders.
- Hallucinations and delusions.
- Schizophrenic and behavioral disorders.
- Poor concentration and logical reasoning.
- Emotional instability, isolation, and suicidal tendencies.

6. COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS AND TRUE FACTS:

Misconception	True Fact
Occasional use is harmless.	Intermittent use can quickly develop into continuous abuse and addiction.

7. AVAILABLE TREATMENT AND SUPPORT CENTERS (UAE):

Center Name	Location / Contact
Behavioral Science Pavilion – Khalifa Hospital	Abu Dhabi – Tel: 02 819 6900
National Rehabilitation Center	Abu Dhabi – Helpline: 800 2252

8. CURRICULUM INTEGRATION AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Grade Range	Learning Objective
KG-Grade 3	Understand that medicines and household substances can help but may be harmful if misused.
Grade 4 – 6	Identify risks of smoking, vaping, alcohol, and common substances; distinguish between legal and illegal substances.
Grade 7 – 12	Understand the legal, health, and social consequences of drug use; build decision-making and resilience; learn UAE laws and life impacts.

Curriculum Areas: Science, Physical Education, Psychology, English
Delivery Methods include discussions, role-play, workshops, and campaigns.

9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Role	Responsibilities
Governing Body & Senior Leadership	Oversight, review, and monitoring of the policy.
Wellbeing Lead / Social Counselors	Deliver awareness programs, staff training, and student support.
School Health and Safety officer	Handle drug-related incidents, supervise medical care, and advise on preventive education.
School Nurse	Safely administer medication, maintain health records.
Teachers	Deliver lessons, identify early warning signs, and report concerns.
Parents	Reinforce awareness at home, attend workshops, and support interventions.
Students	Engage positively and uphold the school's code of conduct.

10. STAFF TRAINING:

- Staff must not attend school under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- All staff receive training on drug awareness, safeguarding, and incident management.
- Designated personnel receive training in handling evidence and reporting.
- First aiders and medication handlers receive specialist safety training.

11. RULES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

- Any student involved in such acts may face permanent suspension, with formal notification to ADEK and SAIS Behaviour Committee.
- The Child Protection Department and Abu Dhabi Police will be informed of any violation.

12. CONCLUSION:

SAIS AUH is committed to nurture a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for all students. Through education, cooperation, and community engagement, we aim to protect our students from the dangers of drug abuse and guide them toward a successful and responsible future.