



Göteborgs  
Stad

# Dear parent,

- what are your thoughts on your teenager and drugs?



You receive this brochure so you, as a parent or guardian, can learn more about alcohol, drugs, tobacco and gambling.

Here you can find out how we work to promote a drug-free school. You will also find information on where and how you can get advice and support.

## **You are the most important person in your child's life**

As a parent or guardian, you are important and have a great opportunity to influence your child's attitude towards alcohol and drugs.



One of the main reasons why children and young people refrain from tobacco, alcohol and drugs is that they do not want to disappoint you as their guardian or other adults close to them. If you are clear about your attitude, there is a greater chance that your child will refrain from using drugs if they come into contact with them.

Research shows that young people who do well and enjoy school, have structured leisure activities and spend time with their families are less likely to start using alcohol and other drugs.

### **Schools also play an important role**

Primary school administration in Gothenburg has zero tolerance for alcohol, nicotine, tobacco and drugs in school. The school shall promote the health of children and young people. The school shall also work to prevent children and young people from being recruited to sell and use drugs.

The school has a duty to act on suspicion of use or handling of alcohol, nicotine, tobacco and drugs. All staff at the school have a duty to report any suspicion of drug activity to the social services.

If there is suspicion of the sale of narcotics or doping substances, the school will always report this to the police. If you have any questions, concerns or worries about your child, you can always contact the school's student health team.



## **Tobacco and tobacco products**

Nine out of ten people who start smoking or using snuff do so before they turn 18. Research shows that children and young people who refrain from tobacco are at much lower risk of trying other drugs.

A new trend among young people is to use white snuff, which is marketed as tobacco-free but contains nicotine. Another trend is vaping e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes do not contain tobacco, but rather a liquid with chemicals, flavourings and usually nicotine that is vaporised. The vapour that is inhaled into the lungs is a health risk, and e-cigarettes can be a gateway to cigarette smoking.



## **Alcohol**

Since the brain continues to develop until the age of 25, alcohol is particularly harmful to young people. Consequences that young people report experiencing in connection with alcohol intoxication include getting into fights more easily, experiencing memory loss or being subjected to rumours.

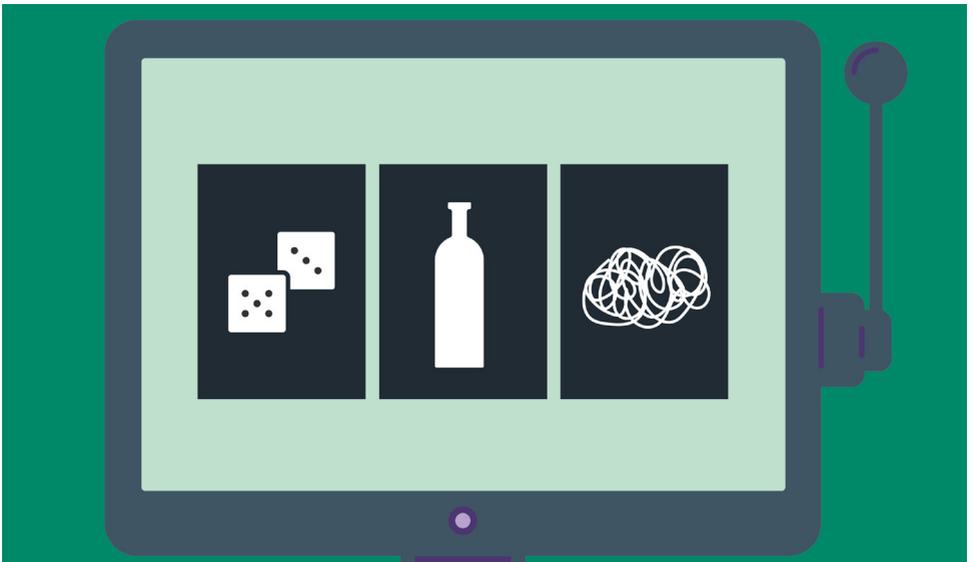
There are children and young people who have been victims of or have themselves committed serious crimes. These may include unauthorised driving, robbery or sexual abuse, assault or offensive images on social media.

## **Nitrous oxide and medicines**

It has become more common for young people to use nitrous oxide as an intoxicant at parties. There are medicinal products that are not classified as narcotics but which, when combined with other drugs, such as alcohol, can have serious consequences.

## Drugs

Drugs can be tablets, powder, or something young people smoke or drink. Some examples are cannabis, amphetamines, heroin, ecstasy, and khat. Some strong painkillers and sleeping pills are considered drugs, for example tramadol. When it comes to drugs, the most common substance among young people is cannabis. Cannabis affects attention, decision-making, motivation and memory. Both hashish and marijuana are significantly stronger today than in the past because the potency of the drug has increased through refinement.



## Gambling

Gambling for money at a young age increases the risk of developing problems associated with gambling addiction. Gambling problems can affect important aspects of children's and young people's lives, such as relationships with friends and family, school attendance and finances. It is therefore important to consider gambling for money as a risk factor.

## **Hold on and stay tuned**

Be curious, ask questions and talk to your teenager, even about issues such as tobacco, alcohol, drugs and gambling. Stay informed about where your teenager is and which friends they hang out with. Talk to the parents of your teenager's friends. It is common for parents to let go of their teenagers during the period of their lives when they need their parents the most, so hold on a little longer.

## **Be alert to changes**

Be alert to changes in your teenager's behaviour. These could include truancy, a decline in school performance, your teenager losing interest in things that used to be fun, or withdrawing in a way that worries you. Trust your gut feeling; it's usually right.

If your teenager tells you that 'everyone' is experimenting with drugs in their social circle, it is important to react. It is easier to get someone to stop using drugs in the early stages. Remember that it is never too late to seek help.

Research shows that the earlier the teenage brain is exposed to nicotine, alcohol and drugs, the greater the risk of developing an addiction.

## **Seek help**

If you are concerned about your child or their friends, help is available. You are not alone. On the next page, you can read more about where you can turn for help. It is also important to talk to the school and other organisations where your child spends time.

## **Here you can get support and advice**

### **Mini-Maria Göteborg**

For young people up to the age of 21, as well as their guardians and relatives. You can contact us if you have any questions or concerns related to drugs and alcohol. Mini-Maria also offers parent education on cannabis and drug awareness. The consultations are free of charge and the staff are bound by confidentiality. [www.minimaria.se](http://www.minimaria.se)

### **Support from Gothenburg City**

You can find various types of parental support at [www.goteborg.se/foraldrastod](http://www.goteborg.se/foraldrastod)

Here you can get help with individual support, parent training and more.

If you need someone to talk to, you can call the [youth unit's parent helpline](tel:031-3679614): 031-367 96 14

### **Parents' Association Against Drugs FMN**

FMN offers counselling, self-help groups, testing and more. [www.fmngoteborg.com/vi-kan-erbjuda.html](http://www.fmngoteborg.com/vi-kan-erbjuda.html)

### **Healthcare**

1177

<https://www.1177.se/sjukdomar--besvar/Beroende-och-skadligt-bruk/>

### **Advice and support for gambling addiction**

#### **Support line**

[www.stodlinjen.se/om-stodlinjen](http://www.stodlinjen.se/om-stodlinjen)



You can use the QR code to find out more about how the school functions to promote a drug-free environment.



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