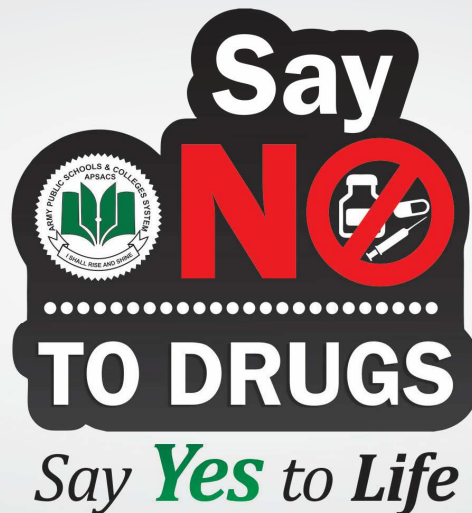


SOPs
APSACS ANTI-DRUGS AWARENESS
PROGRAMME



ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOLS & COLLEGES SYSTEM SECRETARIAT

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INTRODUCTION

APSACS adopts a child-centered approach as a key priority in Whole School Programmes as children are our most valuable asset. Children should be enabled to grow intellectually and emotionally through structured and appropriate psychosocial learning activities. It can directly influence emotional well-being and health, as well as academic outcomes. It is one of the major variables influencing the effectiveness of anti - drugs awareness. APSACS initiated Anti-Drugs Awareness Programme in Schools since its inception. Schools are instructed to foster an environment that protects children from all sorts of abuse and make an effort in particular regarding drug abuse.

Pakistan is geographically vulnerable to narcotics consumption due to its porous borders. Resultantly, drug abuse is a social and emotional problem on a very steep rise. Adolescents today are prone to more risks than ever before. Continuous efforts are required to understand the severity of the issue. The APSACS symbol is supported by rationalization, reasoning with solutions taught through Modeling, Assertiveness, Communication and Problem Solving

How can children be taught to avoid the addictive process when everything around them exhibits a compulsive attitude i.e. high life, cell phone, internet, e-gadgets, frivolous behavior and junk food propagated on media? Children need to be guided at home and school to replace aimless activities with personal, medium to long term goals in their studies, hobbies, future career and life.

RATIONALE

Schools, as institutions for children in their formative years, are strategic settings for advancing holistic development policies and practices. The educational ecosystem directly influences health and emotional well-being along with academic outcomes.

APSACS has already enforced Anti-Drugs Awareness SOPs to educate, inform and empower schools for drug abuse prevention. These SOPs are based on the input of the Schools themselves as well as organizations like ANF and UNODC with whom APSACS has formal collaboration. Anti-Drugs Awareness SOPs provide a set of practices to achieve the goal of safer, healthier and drug-free APS&Cs. The broader framework provided in this document may be further developed and upgraded by schools as per available school resources.

ETIOLOGY OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Causation and relationship of substance abuse has mainly been developed from neurobiological evidences. Depending upon their socio-economic background, students indulge in drugs for various **reasons** e.g.:

- euphoria
- stress
- trauma
- excitement
- depression
- pressure
- negligence
- glamorization
- escapism
- peer pressure
- desire to fit in
- experimentation
- sense of boredom
- relaxation & pleasure
- attention seeking attitude
- easy availability & access
- unsupervised internet
- use of stimulants to deal with exam stress
- domestic violence
- parental oversight, lack of supervision & support

Signs & Symptoms

- lethargy
- violence
- aggression
- sleeplessness
- erratic behavior
- emotional outbursts
- redness of the eyes
- absenteeism
- depression & withdrawal
- marked personality change
- change in physical appearance
- change in school performance
- unaccounted sources and spending
- increased need for or supply of money
- increased secretive nature & activities
- secretive use of cell phone or e-gadgets
- sudden friendships with unfamiliar/unknown people

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

APSACS Anti-Drugs Awareness Programme is not only about:

‘Say No to Drugs’ but also ‘Say Yes to Life’.

Preventive measures taken by schools against drug abuse mitigate risk factors and result in positive youth development. Parents and School education must stress on the underlying causes and work on prevention; they must empathize not ostracize. Children must be guided and provided better, higher, meaningful and worthwhile hobbies and

activities. They must be taught to seek refuge in faith, family and friends: to cherish and celebrate life.

Strict surveillance & random checks on the following must be ensured in Schools:

- students' bags and personal belongings/random body check
- school canteens
- internet cafés in close vicinity
- vendors at school closure
- identify penetration points in schools
- develop e-safety (Ref APSACS Cyber Crime Awareness Programme)
- access to an emotional health counsellor
- impact of social media to spiral the spread of drugs
- demand and supply reduction strategies
- information and support for parents
- publicise school drug policy

HOME SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The Home-School partnership has emerged as a pivotal point of curricular and co-curricular features of APSACS education policies. Home environment plays a significant difference in a child's personality development. There must be a strong communication between the teachers and students: between the parents and children. Home and School must strive towards the elimination of the shame and stigma attached to drugs. Parents find it hard to come to terms with reality and adopt a dismissive attitude and complete denial of the situation. It is difficult for parents to admit or even accept the fact that their child is into drugs. Unfortunately, there is no shying away from addressing the issue head-on and seek professional assistance.

Parents must instill a positive values system in their children to be good human beings. They must be made to understand that life is too precious to be wasted. They should teach their children to resist temptation and negative peer influence. They cannot absolve themselves of this duty. They must help their children improve their life skills and form healthy routines, develop self-control, self-confidence and self-management. Parents must listen to the child's fears, cares and worries. They must understand their role in drug abuse prevention and as primary educators. Parents can have a significant influence by modelling responsible behaviour, in stating family rules, recognising the early signs of drug use and by maintaining communication within the family and school.

Schools and parents should recognize that drug use is a transient behaviour among young people. Parents and Teachers must form a relationship of trust with children so as to encourage open discussion, empathy and sharing. There should not be hesitation or reluctance to divulge and reveal personal failings and mistakes. Schools can influence students' behaviour and help in the development of knowledge and skills and the cultivation of values in their students. They have a tremendous responsibility to purge their premises of the menace of drugs as they are the prime target areas of drug peddlers.

Following School routines must be established:

- all APS&Cs must be declared '*smoke-free schools*'
- students' random searches, drug tests and recourse with parental consent
- surveillance of school premises and personnel
- surprise/random checks of students belongings
- install CCTV cameras
- biometric attendance system

SDG 3 AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE

APSACS Anti-Drugs Awareness Programme is in tandem with Target 3.5 (Target 3.5: Strengthen the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse, including narcotic drug abuse); of UN's SDG 3 which is employed as Guiding Principles of the Programme.

The purpose of the 'guiding principles for school-based education for anti-drugs awareness' is to help Policy Makers, Regional Directors, Principals and Staff about school-based education and drug prevention.

CONSULTATION PHASE

APSACS consultation and discourse involved external bodies i.e. Narcotics Bodies, CMHs, UN Agencies etc. as well as internal senior management. To chalk out up-to-date, well-informed and rationalized framework; APSACS held a series of sectoral consultations with:

- Experts from Military Hospitals and experts from reputable Narcotic Bodies on various national and international platforms (meetings, trainings, seminars etc.) to design school based interventions.
- Regional Directors to collect and share ground realities of school resources.

PARAMETERS OF FRAMEWORK IN APS&Cs

- **Anti – Drugs Awareness Administrative Committee**

The Committee will comprise of the Principal, Adm Offr, Snr Section Head

- **Curriculum**

Curriculum strand of 'Say No To Drugs' embedded in syllabus breakups of senior classes make teachers aware of the early warning signs

- **Co-Curricular Activities**

CCAs positively influence and improve life skills, social competencies and school performance.

- **Emotional Health Counsellor**

The office should be utilized to its full potential for updated knowledge, booster sessions and availability of relevant literature.

- **Code of Conduct**

Mention of Punitive Action/Zero Tolerance in APSACS Handbooks, Academic Package and Student Diary (ref Pg 9) emphasize institutional abhorrence for drugs.

Early Years – Junior School:

In today's world, there is an endless list of oral drugs that are completely undetectable. Children may be allergic or intolerant to foods and would have no way of making deliberate choices. Teaching them to be alert and use proper judgment will help them protect themselves. Teachers and parents should make a combined effort to help children understand not to accept any eatables/gifts from strangers without asking their parents or other trusted adults for permission. (Ref Tarbiat Programme).

CI IV – V: Physical Health and Sensitization

Following strategies may be applied for students (lvl wise):

Academic Strategies:

- Teachers to plan and execute lessons related to the impact of drugs on physical and emotional health. They must provide students with scientific facts and engage them in critical thinking about how drugs affect the human body, in particular the brain as well as the emotional effects on their lives.

Co-Curricular Strategies:

- educational pamphlets and other printed materials to be prepared during Club activities.

- screening informational documentaries about different types of drugs highlighting the negative consequences.
- maximum utilization of the platform provided by Dramatics, Debates, Media, Arts & Crafts, Digital Literacy Clubs (short video clips) educating children about participating in co-curricular activities and sports.

MODALITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

CI VI- XII: 3 Pronged Approach

It is the responsibility of the School to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all students. Behaviors that impede the learning process cannot be allowed. To achieve a healthy environment schools needs to incorporate the following principles:

- Emphasis on Discipline
- Education: sensitize, develop skills and attitudes to refrain from drugs
- Exposure to anti-drugs awareness and training programmes

The success of the Programme will depend entirely upon consistent implementation, which includes application of rules, consequences and rewards by the teacher and parents.

CAPACITY BUILDING MEASURES

- robust and aggressive awareness campaign
- training for teaching and para-teaching staff
- awareness sessions for parents and students
- extensive training and monitoring should be carried out for the ancillary staff
- booster sessions to provide a sense of purpose and direction to shun aimlessness

School - Level Standard Operating Procedures:

Following functions and duties to be formulated by Schools in consultation with Fmns/Local Governing Body and in line with available resources:

- Modalities for Implementation
- Parameters of Framework in APS&Cs
- Capacity Building Measures

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