



STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE IN SCHOOLS IN KENYA

The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) is alarmed by the rising cases of school unrest as reported in the recent past. Just three weeks after the re-opening of schools following their closure after the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country in March last year, there have been heightened cases of indiscipline among Primary and Secondary school students and majority of these cases are attributed to drug abuse.

Over the years, the Authority has conducted surveys in Primary and Secondary schools that has unearthed the magnitude of drug abuse in these learning institutions. In a national survey carried out in June 2018 on the “**Status of Drugs and Substance Abuse among Primary School Pupils in Kenya**”, it was found that 20.2% of primary school pupils have ever used at least one drug or substance of abuse in their lifetime. The survey shows 16.9% of primary school pupils are currently using at least one drug or substance of abuse. It further reveals that 3.2% of primary school pupils are currently using tobacco, 2.6% are currently using alcohol and 2.3% are currently using *miraa/ muguka*.

The common sources of drugs and substance of abuse mentioned by students include kiosks or shops near school (28.6%); bar near school (25.7%); friends (19.3%); bought from other students (13.7%); and school workers (13.6%).

This data points to the need for urgent concerted effort aimed at preventing additional statistics among school-going children as one of the ways through which to curb this menace.

NACADA offers School-based programs which are currently being implemented in some learning institutions. The program has resulted to tremendous improvement in awareness levels on the dangers of drug abuse and a reduction in drug-related disciplinary cases. Furthermore, NACADA runs family programs focusing on positive parenting and strengthened communities.

In line with the COVID-19 prevention protocols established by Ministry of Health, we have embarked on media-driven campaigns to reach out to schools and engage them on prevention initiatives. We call upon School’s Board of Management (BoMs) to enhance efforts towards ensuring that their institutions establish Guidance and Counselling departments or have Chaplains that can address issues affecting learners and therefore, deter their initiation into drug use.

In the meantime, we invite affected schools, churches and other institutions to liaise with us through our Regional Offices for support and inclusion into our school-based programs. We are ready to work with and support any institutions requiring support in alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment.



Tackling alcohol and drug abuse in the country should include a comprehensive collaborative approach involving both state and non-state actors key among them Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, NACADA, County Governments, parents and guardians.

Parents have a responsibility to nurture their children positively and those who choose to raise their children in a home where addiction is prevalent, and even considered normal, can end up harming them in various ways.

Children look up to their parents for guidance in all ways and when a parent's judgment is affected by substance abuse, they can not only cause mental, physical, and emotional disturbance, but they can also severely alter or hamper their child's development in all these stages.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Imbuga', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Prof. Mabel O. Imbuga, PhD
Board Chair