



THE TRUTH ABOUT

# HEROIN

Flirting with the forbidden  
brings the kiss of death.

Smack  
Skag  
Junk  
Horse

“SAY NO TO DRUGS, SAY YES TO LIFE”



## Why this booklet was produced

**D**rugs destroy millions of lives every year. The most disturbing aspect of this problem is the damage drug abuse does to our young people — and the threat this represents to the future of every country. With more and more young people being introduced to drugs, it is vital to provide educational materials with factual information about their dangers.

This booklet is dedicated to those individuals and organizations working to salvage others from the ravages of drug abuse. Society owes them a debt of gratitude for their cooperative efforts and we hope this booklet will assist them.

Sadly, some in society seek to promote and spread drug use for profit or gain — a fact that has been exposed too many times for anyone to be fooled.

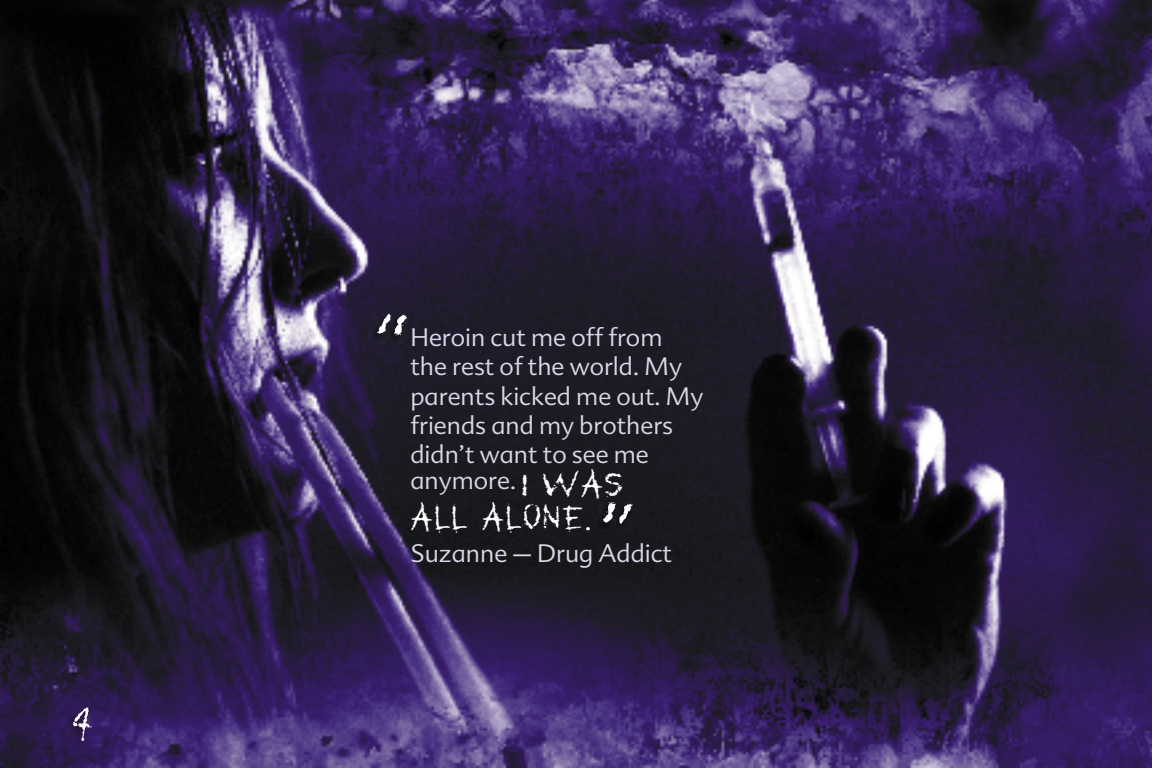
# HEROIN: WHAT IS IT?

**H**eroin is a highly addictive, illegal drug. It is used by millions of addicts around the world who are unable to overcome the devastating urge to continue taking this drug every day of their lives — knowing that if they stop, they will face the horror of withdrawal.

Heroin (like opium and morphine) is made from the resin of poppy plants. Milky, sap-like opium, is first removed from the pod of the poppy flower. This opium is refined to make

morphine, then further refined into different forms of heroin.

Most heroin is injected, creating additional risks for the user, who faces the prospect of HIV or other infection on top of the pain of addiction.



“Heroin cut me off from the rest of the world. My parents kicked me out. My friends and my brothers didn’t want to see me anymore. **I WAS ALL ALONE.**”  
Suzanne — Drug Addict



# THE ORIGINS OF HEROIN

Heroin was first manufactured in 1898 by the Bayer pharmaceutical company of Germany and marketed as a treatment for tuberculosis as well as a remedy for morphine addiction. The mortality rate of heroin addicts has been estimated to be as high as 20 times greater than the rest of the population.


## A VICIOUS CIRCLE

During the 1850s, opium addiction was a major problem in the United States. The “solution” was to provide opium addicts with a less potent and

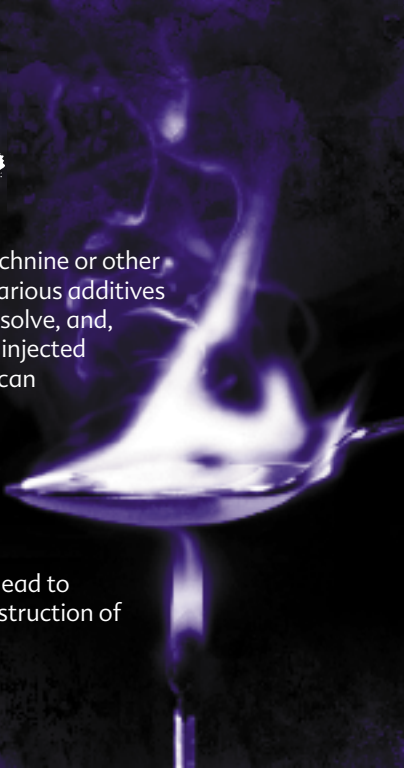
supposedly “non-addictive” substitute — morphine. Morphine addiction soon became a bigger problem than opium addiction.

As with opium, the morphine problem was solved by another “non-addictive” substitute — heroin, which proved to be even more addictive than morphine. With the heroin problem came yet another “non-addictive” substitute—the drug now known as methadone. First developed in 1937 by German scientists searching for a surgical painkiller, it was exported to the U.S. and given the trade name “Dolophine” in 1947. Renamed methadone, the drug was soon being widely used as a treatment for heroin addiction. Unfortunately, it proved to be even more addictive than heroin.

# WHAT DOES HEROIN LOOK LIKE?



In its purest form, heroin is a fine white powder. But more often, it is found to be rose gray, brown or black in color. The coloring comes from additives which have been used to dilute it, which can include sugar, caffeine or other substances. Street heroin is sometimes



“cut” with strychnine or other poisons. The various additives do not fully dissolve, and, when they are injected into the body, can clog the blood vessels that lead to the lungs, kidneys or brain. This itself can lead to infection or destruction of vital organs.

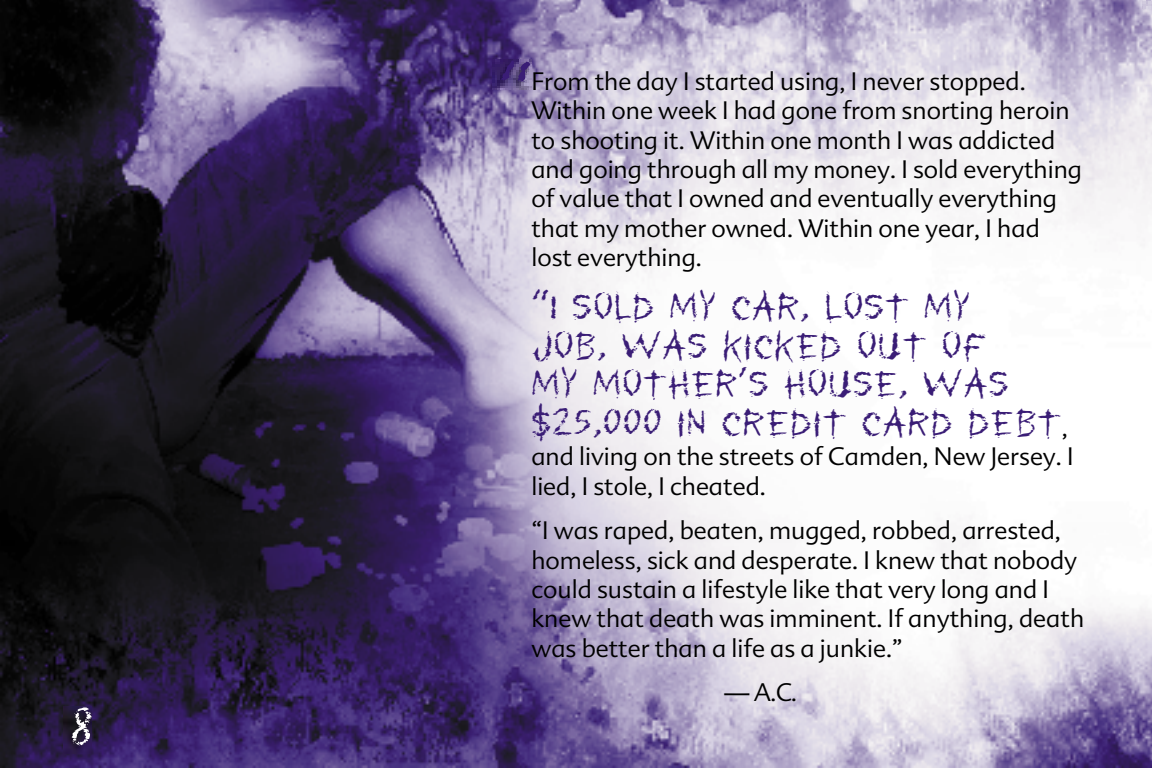
The user buying heroin on the street never knows the actual strength of the drug in that particular packet. Thus, users are constantly at risk of an overdose.

Heroin can be injected, smoked or sniffed. The first time it is used, the drug creates a sensation of being high. A person can feel extroverted, able to communicate easily with others and may experience a sensation of heightened sexual performance — but not for long.

Heroin is highly addictive and withdrawal extremely painful. The drug quickly breaks down the immune system, finally leaving one sickly, gaunt, and, ultimately dead.

## STREET NAMES FOR HEROIN

- **Big H**
- **H**
- **Junk**
- **Skag**
- **Horse**
- **Smack**
- **Thunder**
- **Hell Dust**
- **Nose Drops**



From the day I started using, I never stopped. Within one week I had gone from snorting heroin to shooting it. Within one month I was addicted and going through all my money. I sold everything of value that I owned and eventually everything that my mother owned. Within one year, I had lost everything.

"I SOLD MY CAR, LOST MY JOB, WAS KICKED OUT OF MY MOTHER'S HOUSE, WAS \$25,000 IN CREDIT CARD DEBT, and living on the streets of Camden, New Jersey. I lied, I stole, I cheated.

"I was raped, beaten, mugged, robbed, arrested, homeless, sick and desperate. I knew that nobody could sustain a lifestyle like that very long and I knew that death was imminent. If anything, death was better than a life as a junkie."

— A.C.



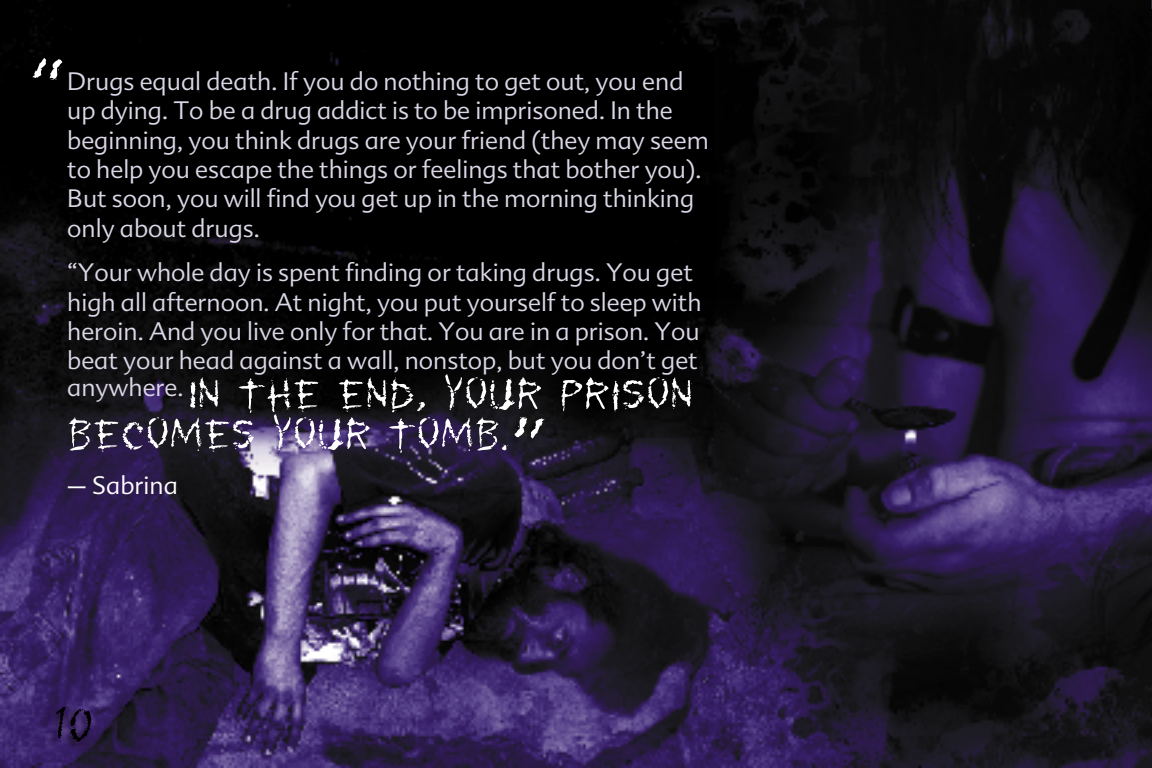
# INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS

The United Nations estimates that there are over 10 million people who use heroin in the world today. Out of every 1,000 opiate users, 2.6 will die this year.

- Over 85 percent of the world's production of opium comes from Afghanistan, a \$600 million-per-year crop.
- In the United States there are nearly 900,000 current heroin addicts, while 3.7 million Americans have used heroin at some time in their lives.
- Heroin and morphine are listed among the four most frequently mentioned drugs in reports of drug-related death cases.

- A survey of 31 nations by the World Health Organization, released in February 2001, found that 41 percent of 10th graders in the United States had tried marijuana, while another 23 percent of the American students surveyed said they had tried illicit drugs such as heroin and cocaine.





“ Drugs equal death. If you do nothing to get out, you end up dying. To be a drug addict is to be imprisoned. In the beginning, you think drugs are your friend (they may seem to help you escape the things or feelings that bother you). But soon, you will find you get up in the morning thinking only about drugs.

“Your whole day is spent finding or taking drugs. You get high all afternoon. At night, you put yourself to sleep with heroin. And you live only for that. You are in a prison. You beat your head against a wall, nonstop, but you don’t get anywhere. **IN THE END, YOUR PRISON BECOMES YOUR TOMB.**”

— Sabrina

# THE DESTRUCTIVE AND DEADLY EFFECTS OF HEROIN

**Immediate harm:** The initial effects of heroin include a surge of sensation — a “rush.” This is often accompanied by a warm feeling of the skin and a dry mouth. Sometimes, the initial reaction can include vomiting or severe itching.

After these initial effects fade, the user becomes drowsy for several hours. The basic body functions such as breathing and heartbeat slow down.

Within hours after the drug effects have reduced, the addict’s body begins to crave more. If he does not get another fix, he will begin to experience withdrawal. Withdrawal includes the extreme physical and mental symptoms which are experienced if the body is not supplied again with

the next dose of heroin. Withdrawal symptoms include restlessness, aches and pains in the bones, diarrhea, vomiting and severe discomfort.

The intense high a user seeks lasts only a few minutes. With continued use, he needs increasing amounts of the drug just to feel “normal.”

## SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

- “Rush”
- Depressed respiration
- Clouded mental functioning
- Nausea and vomiting

# LONG-TERM EFFECTS

The effects on the body from continued use of this drug are devastating. Frequent injections can cause collapsed veins, and can lead to infections of the blood vessels and heart valves.

Tuberculosis can result from the general poor condition of the body.

Arthritis is another long-term result of heroin addiction.

**Heroin withdrawal is a terrifying experience that begins to torture the body within hours of the last fix.**

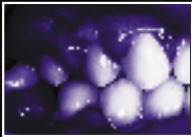
The addict lifestyle — where heroin users often share their needles with one another — leads to HIV and other contagious infections. It is estimated that of the 35,000 new hepatitis C infections each year in the United States, over 70 percent are from drug users who use needles.

“People believe that heroin is super, but you lose everything: job, parents, friends, confidence, your home. Lying and stealing become a habit. You no longer respect anyone or anything.” — Pete

## LONG-TERM EFFECTS

- Bad teeth
- Inflammation of the gums
- Constipation
- Cold sweats
- Itching
- Weakening of the immune system
- Coma
- Respiratory illnesses
- Paralysis (paresis)
- Reduced sexual capacity and long-term impotence in men
- Menstrual disturbance in women
- Inability to achieve orgasm (women and men)
- Loss of memory and intellectual performance
- Introversion
- Depression
- Pustules on the face
- Loss of appetite
- Insomnia

**Abscesses from use of hypodermic needles pockmark the body of a sixteen-year-old addict**



**HEROIN ABUSE** unleashes a gamut of physical and mental destruction — all leading to death.



# "I'LL JUST TRY IT ONCE."

WARNING: EVEN A SINGLE DOSE OF HEROIN CAN START  
A PERSON ON THE ROAD TO ADDICTION.

**M**any people experiment with heroin thinking, "I'll try it once or twice. I can always stop." But those who start down that road find it nearly impossible to turn back. Consider the words of Sam, a 15-year-old addict: "When you first shoot up, you will most likely puke and feel repelled, but soon you'll try it again. It will cling to you like an obsessed lover. The rush of the hit and the way you'll want more, as if you were being deprived of air — that's how it will trap you."

The threat of addiction is not the worst consequence of experimenting with heroin. Jim was 21 years old and usually spent his evenings drinking beer with friends. He had already experimented with heroin so when friends offered him a line to sniff, he accepted. Fifteen minutes after inhaling, he passed out, then dropped into a deep coma which lasted more than two months. Today, he is confined to a wheelchair, unable to write, barely able to read. Whatever dreams and aspirations he once had are gone.



# HEROIN CHIC

Once heroin frightened people. More recently, some people have tried to make heroin use “fashionable.”

In the past decade, the “heroin addict look” — blank expression, waxy complexion, dark circles under the eyes, sunken cheeks, excessive thinness, greasy hair — was promoted in popular magazine and fashion circles as “chic.”

Just as rock stars helped popularize LSD during the 1960s, so have some fashion designers, photographers and advertising people of today influenced an entire generation of youth, by portraying heroin use in magazines and music videos as in vogue and even desirable.

It is grimly ironic that Davide Sorrenti (right) — the fashion photographer whose work was synonymous with “heroin chic” — reportedly died at the age of 20 from heroin overdose.



# A VERY SLIPPERY SLOPE

Some children smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol when still very young. By the time they graduate high school, nearly 40 percent of all teens will have tried marijuana. Some later move on to more addictive substances.

We cannot assume that all children who smoke marijuana today will become heroin addicts tomorrow. But the danger does exist. And long-term studies of high school students show that few young people use other drugs without first having tried marijuana. Once a person can no longer get the initial “rush” he seeks, he begins to increase drug consumption or to look for something stronger.

## LET'S FACE REALITY

Children increasingly are coming into contact with illegal drugs.

The 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that more than 7.5 million youths (aged 12 to 17) in the U.S. reported illicit drug use at least once in their life, while 5.3 million used an illicit drug in the past year. In 2005, the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse decried the “relatively high rates of [heroin] abuse, especially among school-age youth.”

The U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime reported in 2005, “the main problem drugs at the global level continue to be the opiates (notably heroin)....”

# THE NEW FACE OF HEROIN

The image of a listless young heroin addict collapsed in a filthy, dark alley is obsolete. Today, the young addict could be 12 years old, play video games and enjoy the music of his generation. He could appear smart, stylish and bear none of the common traces of heroin use, such as needle marks on his arm.

Because it is available in various forms that are easier to consume and more affordable, heroin today is more tempting than ever. Between 1995 and 2002, the number of teenagers in America, aged 12 to 17, who used heroin at some point in their lives increased by 300 percent.

A young person who might think twice about putting a needle in his arm may more readily smoke or sniff the same drug. But this is falsely reassuring and may give one the idea that there is less risk. The truth is that heroin in all its forms is dangerous and addictive.

# OVERCOMING THE ATTRACTION OF DRUGS

To conquer his addiction, the drug user must first learn to face the difficulties in life which led him to start taking drugs in the first place. He must recover his self-respect and self-worth and be prepared to start living life without drugs. Without this first step, all efforts to free himself from addiction are likely to fail.

And the solution is not another drug. The real answer is total independence from any form of narcotic. Only then will a person be able to successfully live life.



It is possible to educate young people about the dangers and to keep them from taking the first steps down the deadly road to drug use. For parents, these guidelines may help:

- Spend time with your children. Enjoy positive and constructive activities together.
- Give your children love and affection. Show them you care and that they can count on you.
- Increase their power of choice and self-determinism by allowing them to make decisions about their own lives.
- Encourage open communication. Talk to them, listen to them, create an atmosphere of confidence.

- Set a good example. Act and talk as you would like your children to.

- Let your children learn from their mistakes and discover for themselves how best to act.

### **GOOD TO KNOW:**

Children who have learned about the dangers of drugs at home are less likely to try drugs. Talk to your children about drugs and see that they get the truth.

# Drugs and Their Effects on the Mind

**D**rugs are essentially poisons. How much is taken determines the effect. A small amount serves as a stimulant (increases activity). A greater amount acts as a sedative (suppresses activity). A still larger amount acts as a poison and can kill one.

This is true of any drug. Each requires a different amount.

But many drugs have another liability: they directly affect the mind. They affect the mind by reactivating incidents from a person's past, below his conscious

awareness. This can distort the drug user's perception of what is happening around him. As a result, the person's actions may appear very odd or irrational.

Drugs block off all sensations, the desirable ones with the unwanted. And while drugs might be of short-term value in the relief of pain, they wipe out ability and alertness, and muddy one's thinking.

One has a choice between being dead with drugs or being alive without them. Drugs rob life of the sensations and joys which are the only reasons for living anyhow.

**The real solution, however,  
is not to begin using  
drugs in the first place.  
Taking drugs is not  
an answer.**



In the end, one has a choice between being dead with drugs or being alive without them.

As terrifying as the consequences of drug use are and as hopeless as they can seem to the addict, there are solutions to the drug problem and, on a broader scale, the war on drugs can be won.

The first step is to understand why a person becomes trapped by drugs. In May 1969, when the international drug crisis was reaching its peak, author and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard wrote "When a person is depressed or in pain and where he finds no physical relief from treatment, he will eventually discover for himself that drugs remove his symptoms.

"In almost all cases of psychosomatic pain, malaise or discomfort, the person has sought some cure for the upset.

"When he at last finds that only drugs give him relief, he will surrender to them and become dependent upon them often to the point of addiction."

Growing up and living in this world can be very

hard. Simply taking a long walk to look at things until one can focus one's attention outward and again feel relaxed can work wonders. Talking problems over with a friend or a minister or trusted family member can also help.

And for the person with a drug problem, there are also real solutions to their addiction. Narconon, a drug rehabilitation program that utilizes the methods of L. Ron Hubbard has a success rate of more than 75 percent. ([www.narconon.org](http://www.narconon.org))

The best solution, however, is not to begin using drugs in the first place. Taking drugs is not an answer. As difficult as it can be to confront one's problems, the consequences that come with drug use are always worse than the problem one is trying to avoid when he or she begins to take drugs.

And the long slide into hell that comes as a result of taking drugs is even worse.

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Alamy/teeth/depressed man/depressed  
girl; Page 13: U.S. Treasury Department,  
Bureau of Narcotics/heroin addict; Page  
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**“Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Life”** is a community drug education and drug prevention program initiated by the Church of Scientology International. It educates children and youth about the dangers of drugs and challenges them to remain drug-free and to set a good example to their friends and family.

The program acts through clubs run by and for young people. These clubs reinforce a positive message of drug-free living through the distribution of educational literature that provides facts about illicit drug use and the effects of drugs on the spirit, mind and body, through group activities to popularize drug-free living, and through the support of civic leaders and members of other groups with similar aims.

Experience has taught us that people in general, and youth in particular, when they understand the destructive effects of drugs, and when they are provided with positive role models and the support of their peers to remain drug free, they inevitably come to the conclusion: “I don’t want to take drugs” — which is of course the ultimate purpose of the program.



# “**SAY NO TO DRUGS, SAY YES TO LIFE**”

This booklet is presented as a public service by the Church of Scientology International. It is part of a series of booklets to educate young people on the truth about drugs. The booklets in this series provide the facts about cannabis, crack and cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, prescription painkillers and other addictive drugs, allowing the reader to decide for himself to live a drug-free life.

To obtain more copies of this or the other booklets in this series, or to learn more about the discoveries of L. Ron Hubbard and his workable technologies that rid people of the harmful effects of drugs, visit or contact:



## [www.notodrugs-yestolife.org](http://www.notodrugs-yestolife.org)

Or Contact:

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