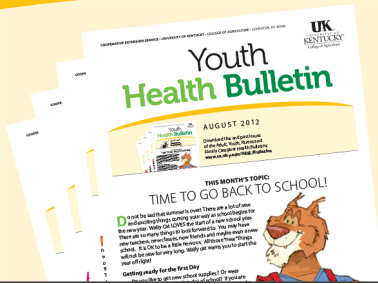


Youth Health Bulletin



OCTOBER 2014

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DRUGS

Drugs make changes to our bodies and the way our bodies work. Wally Cat is sure you have heard that drugs are bad for you and can hurt your body. But do you know what that really means? Wally Cat wants to explain some important facts about drugs.

Legal drugs

Have you ever had a fever or an ear infection and had to swallow a spoonful of a funny tasting liquid? Then you know about some drugs that are legal. Medicines doctors prescribe for us to take are legal drugs. Doctors tell us what and how much to take to help us feel better. It is not legal for us to take someone else's drugs or to take more of the drug than the doctor prescribed.



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If you think you know someone who is using illegal drugs, you should tell an adult that you trust.

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Cigarettes and alcohol are also legal drugs, when used at the proper age. In the United States, you have to be 18 to legally buy cigarettes and 21 to legally buy alcohol. Smoking and drinking a lot of alcohol can harm your body.

Illegal drugs

When people talk about drugs or a drug problem, they often mean illegal drugs. Drugs such as marijuana, Ecstasy, LSD, cocaine, methamphetamine (meth) and heroin are considered illegal. When these types of drugs are used, the body can be harmed, especially because kids' bodies are still growing. Many of these drugs can damage the organs in the body.

If a person is using illegal drugs or legal drugs in an illegal manner, he or she is often less likely to be doing well in school or sports. Drugs can make it hard to think about doing the right thing and sometimes people on drugs do some very dangerous things.

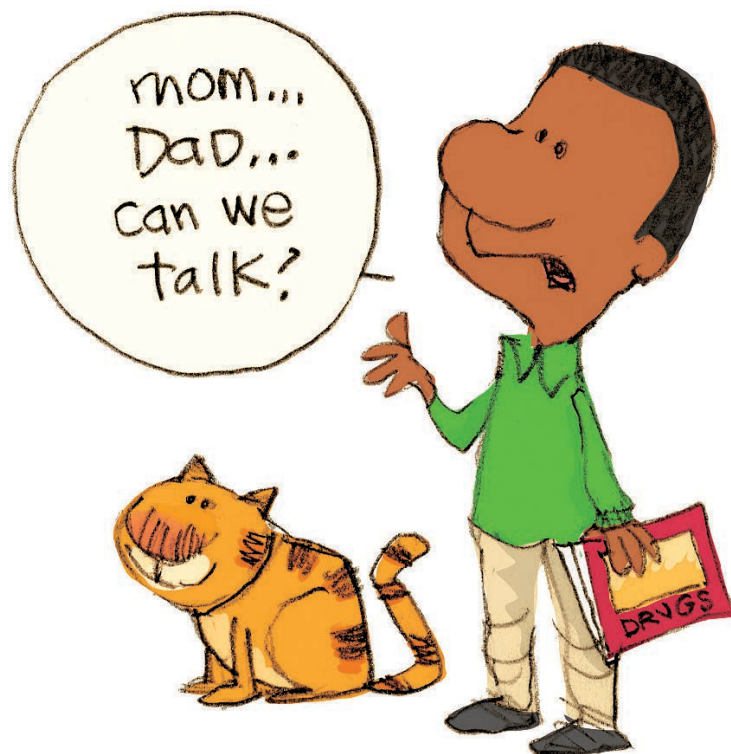
Why would someone take drugs?

There are different reasons why people use drugs. Sometimes, a person tries a drug because he or she wants to fit in with another group of people. Some people try drugs because they are "bored" or have "nothing better to do." People may also use drugs because they do not want to think about something that is bothering them. Unfortunately, doing drugs often causes even more problems.

A person who is taking a drug may become addicted to it or feel like they need it all the time. This addiction means that the body cannot do without it. Once someone is addicted to drugs it can be very hard to stop.

What if I think someone is using drugs?

If you think you know someone who is using drugs, you should tell an adult that you trust. That person may be your parent, a relative, teacher, coach or school counselor. An adult can help the person using drugs.



Wally Cat wants you to know the best way to help other kids is to encourage them not to try drugs to begin with. By sticking together with your friends, you can watch out for one another.

REFERENCE:

Nemours KidsHealth (2014) What you need to know about drugs. http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/drugs_alcohol/know_drugs.html

Unscramble this sentence:

AIGLELL RDUSG NAC ADMGAE YORU DOBY.

ANSWER: ILLLEGAL DRUGS CAN DAMAGE YOUR BODY.

Youth
Health Bulletin

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