

**Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster**

**Drugs Policy  
and Guidelines**

Last reviewed December 2006



This policy for Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster focuses on the following issues:

- 1) Attitude Of The YFCU To Drug Abuse
- 2) Rationale For Drugs Education
- 3) Aims Of The YFCU Drugs Awareness Programme
- 4) Outline Of The Drugs Education Programme
- 5) Procedures For Dealing With Drug-Related Incidents
- 6) Outline Of Sanctions
- 7) Training Of Staff And YFCU Officials In The Recognition Of  
Drugs And Their Symptoms
- 8) The Responsibilities Of The YFCU Drugs Education co-ordinator

## **1.0 Attitude of the YFCU to drug abuse**

- 1.1 The term 'drug' will be used in this policy to refer to any chemical substance which, when introduced into the body, artificially, produces, physical, emotional and mental changes and/or alters an individual's behaviour. The term will include 'legal' substances such as solvents, poppers, magic mushrooms, alcohol and cigarettes as well as illicit substances such as Ecstasy cannabis and LSD.
- 1.2 The YFCU will do everything in its power to discourage the misuse or abuse of drugs and will actively encourage Members to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- 1.3 This YFCU will encourage clubs to incorporate a Drugs Awareness in their Winter Programme which will aim to warn them of the dangers of drug misuse and to develop the values and skills necessary to resist temptation or pressure to abuse drugs. Members will also be encouraged to have a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle.

## **2.0 Rationale for Drugs Education**

Drugs Education is necessary because the evidence shows increasing abuse of drugs in the youth culture within Northern Ireland. The YFCU, in partnership with parents and other agencies, need to be proactive in combating this trend. The Drugs Awareness Programme will contribute to the work of the YFCU as a whole in empowering members to make informed choices in a society of changing values and attitudes. All YFCU Officials (Central, County and Club) and Staff will adhere to this policy in a planning and delivering the programme of events and activities.

## **3.0 Aims of the YFCU Drugs Awareness Programme**

- 3.1 To promote positive attitudes towards personal health
- 3.2 To inform Members of the effects of drug abuse
- 3.3 To build up the self-esteem of members
- 3.4 To help members to further develop decision-making skills
- 3.5 To help young people distinguish between different drug substances
- 3.6 To minimise the chances of any member abusing drugs
- 3.7 To explore healthy methods of dealing with pressures, anxieties and boredom

- 3.8 To dispel myths about drugs
- 3.9 To members with the opportunity to acquire a realistic evaluation of their own strengths and limitations, abilities, potentials, personal qualities, attitudes and values.
- 3.10 To provide members with opportunities to acquire an ability to understand and communicate their feelings.
- 3.11 To provide members with opportunities to acquire skills to avoid, pressure, exploitation and abuse.
- 3.12 To provide members with opportunities to acquire an understanding of the influence they can be on others.
- 3.13 These aims are based on the perceived needs of the members. They may in the future be altered in response to the expressed needs of the members, parents, YFCU Officials and Staff as the Drugs Awareness Programme is reviewed and monitored.

#### **4.0 Outline of the Drugs Education Programme**

- 4.1 Drugs Awareness will be promoted throughout the YFCU Programme of events and activities.
- 4.2 Clubs will be asked to include Drugs Awareness and related issues in their Winter Programme.

#### **5.0 Procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents**

- 5.1 Members of staff and YFC Officials should disclose all information on drug-related incidents to the Executive Officer.
- 5.2 In the event of an illegal substance being discovered in the possession of a member or being distributed by a member the following steps should be taken
  - (a) The Executive Officer will be informed and if in his opinion the Member may have committed an offence, the RUS Juvenile Liaison Officer will be contacted.

- (b) A report of the incident and action taken will be written and kept on file by Executive Officer.
  - (c) The YFCU Special Purposes Committee will decide on the disciplinary measures appropriate (see paragraph 6).
  - (d) The YFCU Executive will be informed.
- 5.3 In the event of a member being suspected of having taken non-prescribed drugs the members should determine whether or not he/she is conscious.
- 5.4 If the member is unconscious the following steps must be taken immediately:
  - (a) Place him in the recovery position
  - (b) Stay with the member and get someone to telephone for an ambulance
  - (c) Try to determine what substance was taken and how much
  - (d) Inform the parents and the Club Leader
- 5.5 If the member is conscious the following steps should be taken
  - (a) Inform the Club Leader
  - (b) Try to find out what substance has been taken and how much
  - (c) Bring the member to the most senior member present who will help to decide whether the member needs hospital treatment
  - (d) If the member needs to be sent to hospital inform his parents
  - (e) The member's parents will be informed about the situation
  - (f) A report of the incident and action taken will be written and forwarded to the Executive Officer.
  - (g) The YFCU Special Purposes Committee will decide on the disciplinary measures appropriate (see paragraph 6).
  - (h) The YFCU Executive will be informed.
- 5.6 In the event of a suspicious substance being found at a YFC event or club meeting the following steps should be taken
  - (a) Lift it carefully, avoiding contact with cut or scratched hands. Do not taste it
  - (b) Bring it to the most senior YFC Official or staff member present
  - (c) The substance will be passed on to the police for analysis and the YFCU will seek a report
  - (d) Action taken will be recorded and forwarded to the Executive Officer who will keep the report on file.
  - (e) The Club Committee or YFCU Executive will investigate how the substance came to be present.
  - (f) The YFCU Executive Officer must be informed.

- 5.7 Informing Headquarters in the event of a drug-related incident. YFCU Headquarters will be informed that:
- (a) a drug-related incident has happened
  - (b) various steps were taken
  - (c) the problem may be a wider one so they should be alert
  - (d) the YFCU Drugs Policy was carried out

- 5.8 Responding to the Press
- (a) YFCU Officials (Central, County, Club) and staff should make no comment
  - (b) The YFCU Executive Officer will deal with all press enquires on drug-related matters.

## **6.0 Outline of Sanctions**

- 6.1 In the event of a drug-related incident at a YFC event or club meeting there will be an investigation by the Executive Officer or by a senior member of staff appointed by him.
- 6.2 If members are found to have been in possession of an illegal or controlled substance or to have used or supplied an illegal or controlled substance, firm action will be taken.
- 6.3 Where a member has been found to have been in possession of or to have used an illegal or controlled substance the Executive Officer will recommend to the Executive Committee that he/she should be temporarily excluded from the Association.
- 6.4 Where a member has been found to have supplied an illegal or controlled substance to other members, the Executive Officer will recommend that he/she be permanently excluded from the Association.
- 6.5 If it is suspected that a member uses illegal or controlled substances outside the Club, the matter will be reported to the member's parents by the Club President. It will then be for the member's parents to take appropriate action.
- 6.6 If a member discloses that he is involved with possession or use of an illegal or controlled substance, he should be informed that in the interests of his own safety he/she should seek help from the relevant agencies. Although this information should be treated with confidentiality, the Executive Officer should be informed so that help may be provided.

**7.0 Training of Staff and YFCU Officials in the recognition of drugs and their symptoms**

- 7.1 The YFCU will provide drug awareness training for staff and officials as time and resources permit. Representative from the RUS, the Community Addiction Unit, the Health Promotion Agency and other relevant agencies will be invited to contribute to training.
- 7.2 Selected members of staff will attend Drug Awareness training courses.

**8.0 The responsibilities of the YFCU Drugs Education Co-ordinator**

- 8.1 Ensuring that this policy is being implemented
- 8.2 Liaising with other staff on drugs education matters
- 8.3 Liaising with the Executive Officer on any drug-incident at the school
- 8.4 Liaising with other bodies in relation to drugs education.