

## Drug Education Policy

Craigslea has a responsibility to promote healthy lifestyles and in pursuit of this, has developed a policy and strategies to minimise harm by making students aware of the hazards of drugs as part of a comprehensive health education program.

The school's policy is designed to encourage students to view the abuse of drugs as a health issue rather than a means of illustrating defiance to authority. The policy also promotes the social responsibility of individuals towards the community.

The school wishes to provide a supportive environment which compliments this philosophy. The school policy and management practices therefore focus on addressing the cause, not just the symptoms, of drug related incidents. Students and staff have a right to feel safe in our school environment. Craigslea's policy therefore aims to protect the health of the staff, students, users of and visitors to the school.

This document sets out the philosophy of the school's management and intervention practices when dealing with the health, social and community issues related to:

- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Illicit Drugs

### Aim

To create a social environment at Craigslea that will not tolerate illicit drugs and recognises alcohol and tobacco as potentially harmful drugs. This environment will be promoted through the implementation and continued enhancement of a comprehensive package of educational support strategies.

### School Drug Strategy

The school's Drugs Strategy is based upon the principle of harm minimisation which makes the reduction of drug-related harm the ultimate objective of interventions. While consumption reduction is regarded as one important facet of our strategy for achieving this objective, it is not an end in itself.

The overall focus of the school strategy involves action in four main areas:

- Developing a healthy school policy and guidelines
- Developing personal skills
- Creating a supportive environment including management practices
- Strengthening community action

The strategies used in this comprehensive package provide for:

- Implementing policy and guidelines that address Queensland Drug Strategy
- Ensuring classroom drug education consistent with EQ curriculum and syllabus documents
- Providing mechanisms to managing cases where students are involved in drug use or found in possession of drugs
- Assisting students with drug related problems through individual education and counselling
- Providing opportunities for teachers and administrators to participate in drug education professional development
- Ensuring adequate resources are available within the school to support the teaching of drug education programs
- Providing programs to meet identified drug-related problems of students
- Connecting to the real world through guest speakers and representatives from community agencies



In general, the strategies form an action plan to:

- **Promote** health and good decision making
- **Prevent** the uptake of habits that are potentially harmful to an individual's health
- **Reinforce** consequences of having, using illicit drugs at school
- **Intervene** with students who have started unsafe and potentially harmful practices
- **Support** students who wish to change their health behaviours
- **Encourage** parents and community to take an active role

## Objectives of Strategies

### Developing a Healthy School Policy and Guidelines

- To provide guidelines on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the school community in relation to drugs
- To demonstrate the schools commitment to promoting the health of its staff, its pupils and the community it serves
- To provide a safe environment through the promotion of a drug-free and smoke free environment
- To eliminate drug possession and/or selling in the school environment

### Developing Personal Skills

- To develop a belief in students that they can take control over those things that determine their health and the health of the community
- To promote the concept of prevention rather than cure when dealing with drug related health issues
- To promote harm minimisation as a process of decision making with the purpose of reducing risk
- To increase individual skills through knowledge, awareness of sources of information by providing classroom instruction and support programs/resources within the school
- To promote activities that are aimed at developing self-concept and self-esteem of our students
- To promote programs aimed at stress management, coping with failure, relationships, dealing with change and developing resilience in our students
- To increase awareness of the law and legal consequences for being in possession of/selling illicit drugs
- To tackle health issues related to teenage behaviour e.g. binge drinking

### Creating a Supportive Environment and Management Practices

- To develop a caring environment where students care about the welfare of their peers and adopt a responsible attitude to passing on information relating to drug use and/or selling in the school
- To be vigilant in the monitoring of students within the school in relation to drug use
- To identify students with drug related problems and encourage them to seek help
- To provide a range of support structures within the school for those wishing to stop
- Set up support services within the school: peer, school-based nurse, year level coordinator, form teacher, chaplain
- To apply the consequences consistently and fairly to students identified as users or suppliers

### Strengthening Community Action

- To involve the wider community, including all stakeholders, in the decision making processes related to this policy and strategies
- To advise the wider public of our policies via the local media
- To establish working partnerships with community agencies

## Key Areas

There are several **Key Ideas** promoted within the package:

### For the Individual (as part of developing personal skills)

- We have a choice
- We have a responsibility to make informed decisions
- We need to make our own decisions
- Our behaviour can protect us from risk of potentially dangerous situations
- When we live unsafely, it can affect us and the community in which we live
- It is important to feel good about ourselves and accept who we are
- It's **Ok** to say **No**
- We need to accept responsibility for our actions

### For the Community

- An individual has the right to feel safe at school and we have a responsibility to recognise this right of others
- The use of all forms of legal or illicit drugs are not acceptable within our community
- The unlawful distribution of drugs is not acceptable and has no place in Craigslea High School
- There are consequences for being in possession of, using and/or selling drugs in our school

### For Managers of the Policy

- For the policy to be effective it must have the strong support of stakeholders, sufficient resources and in-service provisions
- For an individual to develop into accepting responsibility for their actions they must be given the opportunity to be responsible
- For an individual to change their behaviour, they need to be shown how to change and supported when making this change
- Punishment strategies are not always effective in bringing about change
- Consequences should be reinforced consistently, strongly and fairly and be appropriate to the case
- Partnerships with parents, community are an effective strategy to effect change

For the policy to be effective, a comprehensive program with a variety of strategies is required. Staff plays an integral role in this regard. The efforts of all of the staff at Craigslea should aim to:

- inform students of health consequences
- advise students of policy
- provide students with information regarding where they can access information and support structures in the school
- be vigilant of student behaviour
- act as a role model

### Rights and Responsibilities of Staff and Students

Even though students may become involved in unlawful activities, they retain certain rights as citizens. Ignoring these rights, whether for convenience or expediency, when addressing drug related incidents, may have significant implications for the school and for the individuals involved.

To ensure that any investigation is not hampered in any way it is necessary that both students and staff be made fully aware of their rights and responsibilities in these circumstances.

### Policy

- ***Smoking, alcohol or illicit drugs are not permitted in any area of the school property nor at any school related activity or function.***
- ***Intervention procedures including consequences will be adopted for students who do not comply with the school policy.***

## **Implementation of Policy**

Student drug use and the consequences of drug use, should be considered in the context of their life, family situation, mental and emotional health, intellectual ability and degree to which they may be in control of their actions and decisions.

## **Guiding Principles for Intervention Procedures**

- Consequences should be reinforced consistently, strongly and fairly
- The school will implement appropriate action based on evidence of the incident and will devise a plan appropriate for the situation. This recommended action may be counselling, partnerships with parents, loss of privileges, in school suspensions, suspensions, exclusion
- Any case of involvement with illicit drugs will be reported to the JAB
- Partnerships established - e.g. with parents - as part of the action required intervention plan

A summary of the sequence of procedural steps taken when dealing with breaches of the school's policy:

- Investigation of incident. Parent notified
- Advise parents and student of proposed school response to the incident
- Implementation of action plan

## **Advertising Policy**

All stakeholders - students, staff, parents and the wider community should be made aware of the school policy. A variety of strategies can be adopted to achieve this. These include:

- School information packages
- Signs - e.g. Welcome to a Smoke Free School
- Signs in classrooms, notice boards
- Postcards left at access points e.g. Resource Centre
- In student homework books
- School Newsletter
- Via form teachers
- Through curriculum lessons
- Focus weeks
- Guest speakers

## **Review of Drug Policy**

The school's Drug Policy will be decided after consultation with staff, students, parents and community members and in accordance with Education Queensland's Drug Policy.

The programs/strategies involved in this policy will be subject to regular review and evaluation.