

Young People, drugs & Alcohol

Drugs in schools are not a new event: students are in fact an easy market for big and small pushers.

Sometimes the police blitz schools. In fact, a small marijuana plant was found in a school garden. In a recent blitz, police found a little bit of hashish in a student's flat in Trieste. He was arrested.

In Italy we have a new law about drugs: "light drugs", for example cannabis, become "heavy drugs". Under this law the use of drugs is also forbidden. Sometimes these rules are not respected and the sanctions are strong: the transgressors are arrested. We think that drugs are a big problem, but fortunately school helps us to fight against it.

School helps young people with particular lessons where the problems and the risks which the drugs cause are explained. The schools call qualified people who work in special rehabilitation centres for drug addicts.

In Trieste one of the most important problems is alcohol; people start drinking when they are very young and this is a very dangerous thing. In Italy you can sell alcohol also to the under-age while in the other European states you can't do that and this is one of the reasons why people begin to drink early.

That's why there are many rescue centers for alcoholics; they are very well equipped and use modern techniques.

Sometimes experts go to schools to speak with the students about this subject and its consequences, and these meetings are very interesting and useful for the students.

Another problem is that Saturday night there are many road accidents because people get drunk before driving. This year the law about how much alcohol you can drink before driving has changed and the new law is more severe than the old one.

If the police stop you and see you are drunk they take your drive license and it's possible you have to stay some nights in jail.

The following information is about the use of alcohol and drugs from students in Italy:

Drugs in Italy 2002: Espad research - "Use of different substances"				
Use in the life	1999	2000	2001	2002
	<i>v. %</i>	<i>v. %</i>	<i>v. %</i>	<i>v. %</i>
Alcoholic drinks	86,5	89,4	87,4	89,0
Tobacco	70,4	67,9	67,8	68,1
Get drunk	52,7	55,0	55,2	54,6
Cannabis	33,3	30,9	32,7	33,5
Alcohol and cannabis	32,0	30,9	22,1	21,6
Sedatives and tranquillizers	7,4	7,5	6,5	6,0
Inhaled	6,4	6,1	5,1	6,6
Cocaine	4,8	4,2	4,1	5,1
Alcohol with pills	3,9	2,5	2,0	2,4
Lsd	3,4	2,7	2,2	2,3
Amphetamine	3,1	1,5	2,0	2,0
Ecstasy	3,1	3,1	2,6	2,7
Smoked Heroin	3,1	4,2	2,0	3,8
Mushrooms	1,6	1,4	1,4	2,1
Not smoked Heroin	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,7
Anabolic steroids	0,7	1,1	0,6	0,7
Crack	0,7	0,9	0,6	1,4

Injected drug	0,2	0,3	0,4	0,5
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From this table you can see that alcohol is the most widely used substance by students.