

УДК 316.614

## **Drug Abuse Among Young People of the Krasnoyarsk Territory and Some Recommendations on Countermeasures Against Drugs Use: Basing on the Results of Social Research in the Region**

**Vladimir E. Shinkevich\***

*Siberian Institute of Law  
of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service  
20 Rokossovskogo Str., Krasnoyarsk, 660131 Russia*

Received 24.07.2013, received in revised form 31.07.2013, accepted 04.08.2013

*The article deals with the social research results regarding the drug abuse situation among young people of the region basing on the opinion poll of secondary school pupils, students of vocational training colleges, universities and working young people of the Krasnoyarsk Territory. Special attention is paid to the fact that the age of the first trial of psychoactive substances is getting younger and that social environment in this respect is especially important. Moreover, the role of parents in teaching their under-age children the anti-drug culture is emphasized. As a result, some recommendations on countermeasures against drug abuse and development of the idea of a healthy lifestyle have been developed.*

*Keywords: drug abuse situation, drug abuse among young people, spread of drug abuse, countermeasures against illicit traffic of drugs and psychotropic substances.*

### **Introduction**

One of the main problems the Russian society faces is the problem of drug abuse as a global threat of national safety. The Chairman of the State Anti-Drug Committee, Director of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service V.P. Ivanov in his speech on February 12, 2012 at the meeting of the Supreme Courts of Republics, regional courts and courts of the same level of the Russian Federation pointed out that the increase

in drug use among the population of the country today is one of the most dangerous threats for the Russian society. The pressure on the Russian young people to use drugs does not ease, and "... creativity of death traders does not have any limits" (V.P. Ivanov, 2012).

To determine the drug abuse situation the Russian Federation Government approved the Resolution on State System of Drug Situation Monitoring in the Russian Federation.

© Siberian Federal University. All rights reserved

\* Corresponding author E-mail address: vlashink@yandex.ru, shinkevich.v@list.ru

## Research Methods

Monitoring of social phenomena, including the state of the drugs situation, in its classic version involves a comprehensive study of three types of information: statistical data, expert assessments of specialized agencies and organizations and the results of social research.

In 2012 the staff of Siberian Institute of Law of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service conducted a social study of the drug situation among young people of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, using a survey method. The research based on a specially developed sampling covered almost all categories of youth: schoolchildren, students of vocational colleges, students of vocational and higher education institutions, working young people. The following main blocks of questions were determined during construction of the questionnaire:

- determining the extent of non-medical use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances among young people, taking into account the latent component of the drug situation;
- analysis of the social environment factors contributing to the spread of non-medical use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and drug-related crime;
- analysis of the drugs demand and supply;
- analysis of the effectiveness of the prevention of non-medical use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

## Research Results

Generalization of the results of the empirical part of the research and analytical work suggest both general trends and specific features of the drug threat perception by young people. Comparison with the results of the previous years shows that the age when young people get acquainted with psychotropic substances for the first time is young – 12-16 years. This indicates

a lack of understanding of the risk to become a drug addict, an alcoholic or a smoker by young people. As a consequence, the high demand for expansion of social advertising of healthy lifestyles, formation of positive leisure skills, abilities to handle stress and street temptations to get “quick synthetic happiness” has been determined.

Analysis and generalization of the results of monitoring of the empirical data suggests that the total number of university students who use narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances remains high, according to the answers' results □ about 15 %; this factor is slightly higher for young working people – about 19 %; the most acute problem of drug addiction is determined among young people of vocational colleges – up to 21 %.

Drug experience is also frequently met among the under-age youth. About 10 % of schoolchildren and more than 15 % of students of vocational schools answered positive to the presence of such experience. At least once in their lives they have tried drugs. More than a third of students, schoolchildren and students of vocational institutions have or have had experience of tobacco use, more than two-thirds – experience of drinking alcohol.

We believe that reduction of the non-medical use of drugs, formation of the negative attitude towards illicit trafficking and drug use, and significant reduction in demand for drugs among young people of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, considering monitoring results, can be a solution to a number of problems including, in particular, overcoming of tolerant attitude among the under-age youth and students to the use of psychoactive substances in order to reduce the demand for them among the adolescent population and formation of personal responsibility for their behavior, development of socio-active lifestyle with dominating values of a healthy living, the

settings for the rejection to use psychoactive substances.

One can not deny the relevance of introduction of organizations with innovative psycho-pedagogical, including training, technologies in educational institutions and youth communities ensuring development of the healthy lifestyle values and creating conditions for the involvement of young people in creative activities, physical education, tourism and self-education .

The survey results show that early prevention of drug abuse is very important. The results of the survey of young people in older age groups suggest that most of them have received their first drug experience in school years.

The research results suggest that the main subjects of the expansion of the circle of under-age consumers of different psychoactive substances are external. Up to 70 % of the initial proposals to smoke cigarettes, 45 % of the proposals to try alcoholic beverages, as well as in the overwhelming number of cases – up to 90 % – the proposals to try the effect of drugs come from friends and acquaintances. The presence of relatively high levels of self-aspiration among students to try the effect of smoking and drinking is also noteworthy. About a quarter of the respondents have first tried alcohol, smoked their first cigarette on their personal initiative. If in case of offering their children to try tobacco or drugs parents usually are not active actors (although 3 % of the respondents among students mentioned that they were offered to try the effect of tobacco and drugs for the first time by their parents), in 30 % of cases the parents themselves offer their children to try alcohol for the first time, even if the beverages are light. That is the category of people in the social environment that is most entitled “to prohibit”, “to allow” and “to control”, to apply any sanctions from the early

days of a person's life, who are for the most part by birth respected by their children.

More than 85 % of the under-age respondents said that they are happy with their parents, feel control for the place and time they spend out, especially in the evening. At the same time, only about 40 % reported that their parents are wondering how their children spend their free time, which speaks for the lack of involvement or only formal involvement of parents in the organization and control of their children's leisure time. It is the parents who suggest emotional support to their children (80 % of cases), which indicates the great potential of the older to explain the importance of a healthy lifestyle and to develop healthy living habits in their children. This effectiveness can largely be multiplied if the parents themselves adhere such organization of their life. Consequently, in spreading of alcohol-free culture the most important place is occupied by social environment, parents and other close relatives.

Increase in the number of the under-age youth involved in drug use is largely due to insufficiently developed, inferior sense of awareness of danger and consequences of not only one-time, but regular use of any types of psychoactive substances. About 30 % of respondents from students do not consider regular smoking and drinking alcohol dangerous, they consider it more like an ordinary habit, a form of “relaxation”.

The same way the harmful effects on the body and the risk of various drugs are underestimated. Depending on the drug type the risk is estimated between 55 and 85 %, therefore the under-age young people try to differentiate this risk depending on the drug type and do not understand the danger as a complex. Most pupils are not aware that a drug addict in the search for “getting high” will strive to find new and new doses regardless of its quality, he/she won't be interested neither in speed nor results of the

possible social, psychological and physiological degradation of an individual and a body due to drug abuse. The analysis showed that the students surveyed are much better oriented in the forms of drug dependence than alcohol dependence. When considering the correlations it has been revealed that there is a clear relationship between the parameters that reflect the wrong judgment about the signs of drug addiction (euphoria from drinking, increasing tolerance, psychic and physical dependence are not marked as the signs of the disease), and the frequency of drug offers from the persons of the closest environment, as well as the presence of consumption of naswar, ecstasy and inhalants. The abovementioned is the reason to consider increasing drug use awareness among schoolchildren as a factor preventing their involvement in drug abuse.

Formation of skills of the healthy lifestyle organization among teenagers depends on the family, on the ability of the parents even in the conditions of busy working schedule to find common ground in organization of leisure time, not only as a senior by the right, but as a fellow by spirit. In order to prevent any negative behavior and to develop healthy lifestyle skills the solution of the issues of free time organization at school is extremely important on the basis of informed, willing and free choice. Parents need to be not only in their age space, but “stay young” to know the features of modern youth processes, available “fashionable” lifestyles that meet the principles of organization of a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, not all parents understand this. Most often they are concerned about solution of professional problems, implementation of production tasks, faithful performance of professional duties. They pay more attention to manufacturing and professional sector than to their own children. Unfortunately, such organization of a professional lifestyle of parents is appreciated by their chiefs, who themselves often live in such a rhythm of

life. Today one not even need to carry out any research to confirm or refute the hypothesis that the practice has no examples when for excessive efforts in professional activities at the expense of free time someone has been punished. As a rule, they are more often awarded by their chiefs for “conscientious attitude and great contribution ...” and punished by life, which “awards” them with family problems.

In the ranking of the problems that exist in the modern Russian society, both students and working young people give the first place in almost all the categories to the growth of drug and alcohol abuse in the society. These factors have a negative correlation with such values as “health”, “happy family life”, “financially secure life”, which young people determined as the most important ones, as well as with their concern with “the fate of children”, “a chance of getting a serious disease”, “a possibility of becoming a victim of a crime”, “fear of making errors”.

Consequently, young people understand the harm of drug addiction, alcoholism for realization of their life goals, as well as noting the opportunities for interesting free time, point out the need to expand the network of new sports clubs, swimming pools (15 %) and especially the yard playgrounds (up to 22 %), parks (30 % of respondents).

The majority of young people reported that there is no danger of becoming an addict for them personally, that is, they almost underestimate the environment in which they live, learn and spend their leisure time. However, 35 % of young people have such people in their social environment, including the family, who are tolerant to the use of psychoactive substances (other than alcohol and nicotine), with about 60 % of the respondents indicating that they received offers to try drugs from those with whom they have to communicate. Proposals are received in the student’s environment, and at the sites of

employment. This indirect factor indicates that the respondents themselves have at least one-time experience of drug use.

About 20 % of students and working young people reported about personal experience of drug use, with 70 % of the respondents having tried these substances before entering higher educational institution or being employed. This again points at the need to strengthen anti-drug work with teenagers in secondary schools during the period when a young person by virtue of his/her internal energy seeks to learn something new, which is not always useful.

The survey found out that the drug situation among young people shall be recognized as highly latent. Despite the fact that 20 % of young people have had the experience of using psychoactive substances other than alcohol and nicotine, only some of them indicated that they use drugs regularly or with high frequency. At the same time, about 45 % of the young people who use drugs have expressed a desire to seek help in rehabilitation centers.

We consider the results of the assessment by drug users of the prospects to overcome psychoactive substance abuse independently as alarming. Only about 12 % of the respondents in this category understand that self-healing is impossible.

Yards near houses, staircases and friends are determined by almost all categories of young people as the most likely places for drugs spreading. 60 % of the respondents mentioned these places as potentially attractive for distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The measures on expanding the possibilities for sports, active organization of free time can contribute to minimization of the

negative influence of the “yard”, “staircases”, “community of idle fellows”. Up to 55 % of the respondents indicated a lack of sports clubs, comfortable parks within walking distance and equipped sports facilities in the yard which are needed both by teenagers and young adults. In the youth community today mainly sports clubs are high in demand.

In general, the youth awareness about the kinds of drugs and their effect is combined with a tolerant attitude towards drug use by friends, that is, young people have overcome the psychological barrier in the form of a kind of taboo on drug use, there is no active psychological defense against the first trial and the subsequent use of psychoactive substances. The majority of respondents, considering the situation with the spread of psychoactive substances in the society critical (50 %) believe that they personally are protected from this problem. Only 13-17 % of young people have pointed out that for them personally the problem of drug addiction is relevant in some way.

### **Conclusions**

Today we can confidently declare that we need an integrated work to prevent the spread of drug abuse among young people, which would integrate the suppression of demand and supply of drugs, improvement of the quality of medical and psycho-social assistance to those requiring it and its availability, involvement of young people in different forms of socially useful activities, formation of the culture of healthy living. All this will contribute to a positive trend for the stabilization and improvement of the drug situation in the youth community both in one region and in Russia as a whole.

### References

1. *Vstupitel'noye slovo predsedatelya GAK direktora FSKN Rossii V.P.Ivanova na zasedanii Komiteta 26 sentyabrya 2012 g.*[Introduction by the Chairman of the State Anti-Drug Committee, Director of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service V.P.Ivanov to the Committee on September 26, 2012] // *V budushcheye s nadezhday: vystupleniya direktora FSKN Rossii V.P. Ivanova* [To the future with hope: speeches of the director of Russian Federal Drug Control Service V.P. Ivanov], July-October 2012. Moscow: Russian Federal Drug Control Service, 2012. – pp.25-31.
2. Ivanov V.P. *Narkotizatsiya naseleniya strany – odna iz naibolee opasnykh ugroz dlya Rossiyskogo obshchestva: vystupeniye predsedatelya GAK direktora FSKN Rossii na soveshchanii predsedateley Verkhovnykh sudov respublik, oblastnykh i ravnykh im sudov Rossiyskoy Federatsii 14 fevralya 2012 g.* [Drug abuse among the population as one of the most dangerous threats to the Russian society: the speech of the Chairman of the State Anti-Drug Committee, Director of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service at the meeting of Chairmen of Supreme Courts of the republics, regional and courts of the same level of the Russian Federation on February 14, 2012] // *V budushcheye s nadezhday: vystupeniya direktora FSKN Rossii V.P. Ivanova* [To the future with hope: speeches of the director of Russian Federal Drug Control Service V.P. Ivanov], February 2012. Moscow: Russian Federal Drug Control Service, pp. 4-10.
3. *Monitoring narkosituatsii i profilaktika narkopotrebleniya v molodezhnoi srede Krasnoyarskogo kraja: otchet o NIR (zaklyuchitel'nyi). № gos. registratsii 01201251736* [Monitoring and prevention of drug abuse among young people of the Krasnoyarsk Territory: report about R&D (final), No. of State Registration 01201251736] /Research supervisor D.D. Nevirko. Krasnoyarsk: Siberian Institute of Law of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service, 2012. 456 p.

**Состояние наркоситуации в молодежной среде  
Красноярского края и некоторые рекомендации  
по противодействию наркопотреблению:  
по результатам социологических исследований  
в регионе**

**В.Е. Шинкевич**

*Сибирский юридический институт ФСКН России  
Россия 660131, Красноярск, ул. Рокоссовского, 20*

---

*В статье на основании опроса учащихся средних общеобразовательных учреждений, профессионально-технических учреждений, студентов средних специальных и высших учебных заведений, работающей молодежи Красноярского края представлены результаты социологических исследований состояния наркоситуации в молодежной среде края, обращено внимание на понижение возраста первого знакомства с действием психоактивных веществ на организм, на значимость в этом социального окружения. Более того, подчеркнута роль родителей в привитии несовершеннолетним и молодежи основ антинаркотической культуры. В результате выработаны некоторые рекомендации по противодействию наркопотреблению, по формированию здорового образа жизни.*

*Ключевые слова: наркоситуация, молодежная наркомания, распространение наркомании, противодействие незаконному обороту наркотических средств и психотропных.*

---