



Substance abuse is often a coping mechanism to deal with stress and pressure at work or at home. Whatever the reasons, every area of a person's life is affected.

EVERYBODY HURTS

Our modern convenience culture has made it easier to go out for a drink, light a cigarette or turn into the 24-hour drive-through lane, than to go to gym or stick to a healthy eating plan. That's why FNB has a range of measures in place to help you live a healthy life. There are exercise programmes and meal plans available from a network of biokineticists across the country. And you'll be able to read more on this in future issues of *Siyasiza*.

The use and sale of illegal drugs at work – including for customary, religious or traditional purposes – is not allowed. So not only could it impact your health, it could ruin your career. If things have gotten out of hand, there are consultants to talk to who will handle your case in strictest confidence, to help you find a solution, without judging or reprimanding you. This is backed up by the 24-hour LifeAssist Employee Wellbeing Programme and allowances for rehabilitation on certain Bankmed plans.

TOP 10 REASONS FOR ABUSE

- Coping mechanism to deal with stress
- Low job satisfaction
- Long or irregular working hours
- Fatigue
- Isolation and boredom
- Repetitive work
- Lack of supervision
- Easy access to substances
- Peer pressure from colleagues
- Peer pressure from friends

NOT WORKING

There are four indicators that you can use to tell if a colleague is struggling with substance abuse, and to assist them in getting help:

- **Performance** – excessive absenteeism or tardiness; drop in productivity and deteriorating quality of work; missing deadlines; poor morale; increased number of minor accidents; reports of theft or personal items missing
- **Behaviour** – sudden changes in attitude, work or behaviour; sudden deterioration in relationships with friends, family and colleagues; being 'edgy' or short-tempered; frequent hangover symptoms; starting to use drug culture jargon; secretive behaviour or avoidance; erratic behaviour; hyperactive, restless or anxious; financial problems
- **Physical** – unkempt appearance; speech patterns changing or becoming impaired; faint skin odour; bloodshot or watery eyes, dilated pupils; frequent scratching; runny nose or constant sniffing; spots or bruises; headaches
- **Paraphernalia** – possession of hypodermic needles, balloons, foil, mirrors, short straws or glass pipes and non-smokers carrying cigarette lighters

On a high

- Consumption of cannabis and cocaine in SA is twice the world norm, and the use of these two substances has shot up 20% in two years, according to a report by the South African Central Drugs Authority (CDA), published in September last year.
- The CDA says the recession has little impact on drug use as users merely change their drug of choice, or there's an increase in the crime rate to sustain their habits.

Impact on FNB

Make healthy life change before it's too late. Remember, if you're struggling with substance abuse your work will suffer, which in turn affects the bank. There may be a drop in productivity, concentration and attention, delays in work or meeting of targets, increased health insurance claims, more injuries at work, a rise in absenteeism, and a negative impact on the general work environment because of the psychological and stress-related effects of substance abuse.

GET HELP

→ The **FNB LifeAssist Employee Wellbeing Programme** is available to you 24/7. Call 086 187 2862, email help@lifeassist.co.za or go to www.lifeassist.co.za.

- **Bankmed** covers the cost of rehabilitation, but it's usually a one-off arrangement and plan-specific in some cases. Call 0800 226 5633 (toll-free from a landline) or email enquiries@bankmed.co.za.
- **Drug & Alcohol Abuse Line** – call 0800 12 13 14 or SMS 32312
- **South African Depression and Anxiety Group** – call 011 262 6396 or go to www.sadag.org.



Where there's smoke ...

The age at which children are being exposed to drugs and alcohol is dropping. With these substances often easily accessible, resistance is extremely difficult.

The results of a recent study by the Youth Research Unit (YRU) of the Bureau for Market Research at Unisa, into the extent and effect of drug and alcohol use among high school learners, make for alarming reading.

26.9%

ARE USING ILLICIT DRUGS OF WHICH 95.4% USE DAGGA

79.4%

REGULARLY CONSUME ALCOHOL OF WHICH 66.6% HAVE BEEN DRUNK AND 44.8% HAVE ENGAGED IN BINGE DRINKING

53.8%

OF LEARNERS TRUST THEIR PARENTS FOR ADVICE ON DRUG AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

41.3%

ARE AWARE OF INITIATIVES AIMED AT PREVENTING DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE AMONG THE YOUTH **S**

DID YOU KNOW?

Hubbly bubbly and cigarettes are becoming more popular among high school learners, especially girls. Hubbly bubbly are often viewed as entertainment, but they pose a serious health risk and could contribute to heart disease and cancer.



SOURCE: YOUTH RESEARCH UNIT OF THE BUREAU OF MARKET RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGE OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES AT UNISA • IMAGES: GALLO IMAGES/ISTOCK PHOTOS, GALLO IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES