

A9 A STUDY ON THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES REGARDING
NON-MEDICAL USE OF DEPENDENCE PRODUCING DRUGS AMONG
SCHOOL-CHILDREN IN GRADES 8-12 IN THE KALUTARA EDUCATION CIRCUIT

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Previous work on non-medical use of dependence producing drugs has been on psychiatric treatment and on the degree of risk incurred in using these drugs. This is the first survey undertaken in Sri Lanka to study this problem in schools.

A survey designed to assess knowledge, attitudes and practice regarding non medical use of dependence producing drugs among 6205 students in Grade 8 to 12, who attend schools in the Kalutara Education Circuit, was carried out in 37 schools during the first quarter of 1985. All the students in these classes were included and use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs were studied.

The findings indicate that 1.2% had used dependence producing drugs. Prevalence rate for alcohol use was 11.7% and for tobacco 9.0%. The questionnaire included questions on two inter-related problems of how and why some students came to take drugs. Another important area explored was the students beliefs about usefulness or harmfulness of dependence producing substances.

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