



YOUTH AGAINST DRUG ADDICTION!

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Life is an incomparable blessing. It is given to us only once, and it is in our hands to protect it and live it meaningfully. In the Middle Ages, wars and various incurable diseases posed serious threats to human life. Today, however, they have been replaced by another destructive problem. This problem is drug addiction. A drug addict causes suffering not only to themselves but also to their loved ones. Children born to such parents may suffer lifelong disabilities as a consequence of a single mistake made by their parents. Indeed, only healthy parents can bring healthy generations into the world.

Today, the problem of drug addiction is causing deep concern for the entire global community. According to the World Drug Report 2024 published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the number of people who used drugs reached 292 million in 2022, which is a 20 percent increase over the last decade. Cannabis is the most commonly used substance, with 228 million users, ranking first in the statistics. It is followed by opioids (60 million), amphetamines (30 million), cocaine (23 million), and ecstasy (20 million). The World Health Organization reported in its 2024 report that deaths related to psychoactive drug use amount to 600,000 people per year. According to the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study, approximately 137,000 people die each year due to drug addiction, and the mortality rate has doubled compared to 1990.

The most tragic aspect is that the treatment rate among people suffering from drug addiction remains very low. According to UNODC data, out of 64 million people affected by drug addiction, only one out of every eleven people receives medical treatment. Scientific studies support the same conclusion: while the number of people suffering from drug addiction has increased by 45% over the last decade, the rate of treatment remains significantly low.

Drug addiction is a serious disease caused by dependence on narcotic substances. It leads to profound changes in both the physical and mental condition of a person and gradually destroys their life. At first, drugs may produce a feeling of pleasure. However, this is only a momentary illusion, hiding a deep abyss behind it. Over time, the body begins to demand more and more of these substances, and the previous doses no longer have the same effect. If the drug is not taken on time, severe withdrawal symptoms begin, bringing intense physical and psychological suffering. To escape this suffering, the person is forced to take drugs again. This becomes a vicious cycle.





Drug addiction also brings many negative consequences. For example, it leads to cardiovascular diseases, damage to the liver and kidneys, and the weakening of the immune system. In addition, it severely affects mental health, causing personality disorders, deep depression, paranoia, memory loss, and the decline of cognitive abilities. Relationships with loved ones break down, friendships are lost, and individuals become isolated from society. All of this happens in exchange for just a few minutes of artificial pleasure.

Why are young people more vulnerable to this problem? One of the main reasons is the lack of parental attention. In addition, an unhealthy environment and peer pressure play a significant role. Phrases like “just try it, it won’t harm you” or “nothing will happen if you do it once” often influence young people whose worldview is still developing and who do not yet have a full understanding of life. Such influences can easily lead them down a path with no return.

In our country, a determined fight against this problem is being carried out. According to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances” adopted on August 19, 1999, strict criminal liability is established for the illegal production, possession, distribution, and involvement of others in the use of such substances. The Youth Affairs Agency, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, and law enforcement bodies are implementing large-scale preventive programs together. Every year in February, a nationwide campaign called “Fight Against Drug Addiction Among Youth” is held.

The most effective way to combat drug addiction is not to fight its consequences, but its causes. Engaging people in sports and creative activities can serve as a strong preventive measure against drug addiction. Young people who experience real achievement and satisfaction in life will never feel the need for artificial “pleasure.”

The fight against drug addiction is the responsibility of all of us. The entire society is equally responsible for addressing this issue. As a student, I see this problem as a real threat to our future. Sometimes I hear my peers saying, “If I try it just once, nothing bad will happen.” However, in many cases, that “one time” becomes the beginning of a path from which there is no return.

“Youth Against Drug Addiction!” is not just a simple slogan for me. It represents the path of life I have chosen, the values I stand for, and the legacy I hope to leave for future generations. If each of us acts responsibly in our own place, we can build a healthy society free from drug addiction. This is our duty to the generations that will come after us!





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