



sas

wellbeing for
young people

CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT DRUGS

FREE SEMINAR SERIES

The 'Critical Thinking about Drugs' seminar series is an initiative of the Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS). A series of six (6) thought provoking and highly informative seminars have been developed that will offer participants an opportunity to deepen their understanding of a number of drugs and related issues. These seminars are offered free of charge.

Each seminar will be pitched at a professional level and is suitable for practitioners and policy makers in the AOD, mental health, education, criminal justice and community welfare fields.

Six (6) locations across Victoria will host the full series of six (6) seminars over several months. Each seminar will be of 2 hours duration.

The 6 seminars are:

1. Consumed with not Consuming: Becoming a Trauma Informed Service'
2. 'Inhalants: from Genteel Affair to Gutter Drug'
3. 'Reefer Madness: Exploring the Links between Cannabis and Psychosis'
4. 'Hormone Inferno: Alcohol, adolescent development and public health'
5. 'Ice: Beyond the Hype'
6. 'Journeys in Inner Space: Ketamine and the NMDA antagonists'

See over for dates, locations and further information about each seminar.

1. consumed with not consuming: becoming a trauma informed service

'It has been suggested at the very least, services need to be trauma-informed. Trauma-informed services are not directly designed to address PTSD but are based on an understanding of PTSD and the way it can impact on AOD treatment.' Mills, K. L. (2008). "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder." Of Substance 6(1).

People who have drug problems usually have other difficulties suggesting the problem is wider than simply the availability of drugs.

The Australian Treatment Outcome Study (ATOS) of heroin dependent persons entering treatment found that 25% suffer from depression, 41% PTSD while 33% have attempted suicide. In the US, a third of all treatment seeking substance users meet diagnostic criteria for attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. Do we see self-medication, dual diagnosis, or embattled individuals that have found drug use serves a purpose despite the unwanted consequences?

This seminar will review the impacts of early life experiences on brain development. Participants will consider:

- The applicability to drug use problems of the medical model with its focus on diagnosis and symptoms
- Whether the fact that an identifiable group share similar behaviours necessarily indicates either a unitary cause or a model response
- The relationship between noxious early life experience and 'at risk' behaviours
- The biology of traumatic early life experiences

3. reefer madness: exploring the links between cannabis and psychosis

This seminar aims to explore:

- The changing historical view of cannabis from the sensationalist horror stories of the 1930's (epitomized by the movie 'Reefer Madness') to its growing acceptance as a 'soft' drug in the 1960's through to the more problematic construction of the present day.
- Issues covered will include changes in cannabis potency, dependency potential, and the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of THC.
- This will be followed by a brief overview of the current observational studies linking cannabis to schizophrenia, and some analysis of the uncertainties with regard to this data along with some potentially useful suggestions for those working with cannabis using clients.

5. ice: beyond the hype

This seminar aims to:

- Clarify the differing effects of speed (amphetamine) and ice (methamphetamine) on the central nervous system through an exploration of their differing pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics.
- Examine potential harms.
- Review the changing construction of stimulants from their early origins in Chinese medicine to their everyday use as a decongestant of choice in the 1930's, to post-war weight loss panaceas and antidepressants through to current controversies regarding their use in children.

2. inhalants: from 'genteel affair' to gutter drug

Huffing, glue sniffing, paint sniffing, chroming. Regardless of descriptors and cultural and regional variations this form of drug abuse continues to come in and out of fashion.

This seminar will cover:

- A brief history of anesthetic gases
- Pharmacology and pharmacokinetics
- Aerosol related mortality and morbidity
- Research regarding neurological harms - how real is the risk?
- Minimising the risks
- Towards abstinence: the concept of recovery capital

4. hormone inferno: alcohol, adolescent development and public health

Work in the AOD and allied sectors often straddles the sticky interface where societal demands clash with the needs of clients. Current public health approaches targeting young people and their use of alcohol form a case in point.

This seminar offers participants updated information on alcohol's pharmacology and pharmacokinetics and a review of:

- Public health imperatives and variables of risk
- Information on adolescent development, hormonal and maturing pubertal brain changes
- Research aimed at aiding the development of alcohol and related strategies that target young people

6. journeys in inner space: ketamine and the NMDA antagonists

'I was no longer in my New York apartment. I was in Egypt, inside a pyramid lying inside an open sarcophagus.....'

I felt that this light which moved through me and radiated from me, connected me with everything else through space and time...'

This seminar will provide an overview of recently synthesized compounds that seldom come to the attention of AOD workers and as a result retain an air of mystery.

- Phenethylamines, tryptamines, piperazines and dissociatives
- The NMDA receptor
- Pharmacology and pharmacokinetics
- Down the K-hole: The Near Death Experience
- Minimising the risks associated with these drugs

Registration Form

To register for any of these seminars please fill in the details below and either:

Post it: Attn: Lou Vaughan, YSAS, PO Box 2950, Fitzroy Vic 3065
 Fax it: 03 9415 8279
 Enquiries: Lou Vaughan, 03 9415 8881 or lvaughan@ysas.org.au

Please circle below which seminar/s you would like to attend:

	1. Consumed with not consuming: becoming a trauma informed service	2. Inhalants: from 'gentle affair' to gutter drug	3. Reefer madness: exploring the links between cannabis & psychosis	4. Hormone inferno: alcohol, adolescent development & public health	6. Ice: beyond the hype	6. Journeys in inner space: ketamine & the NMDA antagonists
Traralgon (Gipps) Century Inn 5 Airfield Rd Traralgon	10th Nov	26th Nov	10th Dec	19th Feb	26th March	30th April
Benalla (Hume) DSE 89 Sydney Rd Benalla	12th Nov	28th Nov	12th Dec	26th Feb	16th April	21st May
Bendigo (LM) Comfort Inn Julie-Anna 268 Napier St Bendigo	14th Nov	1st Dec	15th Dec	5th March	9th April	14th May
Geelong (BSW) Geelong Conference Centre Adams Court, Eastern Park, East Geelong	19th Nov	3rd Dec	4th Feb	12th March	2nd April	7th May
Ballarat (Gramps) Sovereign Park Red Lion 217-229 Main Rd Ballarat	21st Nov	5th Dec	11th Feb	19th March	23rd April	28th May
Carlton (Metro) VicHealth 15-31 Pelham St Carlton	6th Feb	13th Feb	3rd March	17th March	6th April	20th April

All seminars will be held from 2pm - 4pm.

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Position: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Postal Address: _____

Dates are subject to change, however all effort will be made to retain original dates and location where possible.