

*ILLEGAL, ILLICIT AND
UNSANCTIONED USE OF
SUBSTANCES BY STUDENTS
(SCHOOLS)*

POLICY 10

St Francis Xavier Province of the
Christian Brothers
(Queensland and Northern Territory)

MAY 2002

1. INTRODUCTION

In working to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our students, Edmund Rice Schools face many challenges. None of our Schools is isolated from the effects of substance abuse. In reality, substance abuse can and does occur both directly and indirectly within our schools and school environment.

The following document will be followed by all schools and will provide guidance, support and resources to assist in appropriate responses to incidents involving substance abuse.

Whilst we strive with educational programs, pastoral care and the raising of awareness to promote an environment free from illegal substances, the following document also recognises the complexity of many situations facing principals, staff, students and family.

2. PURPOSE

This document has been prepared in order to:

- express the Policy and Procedures for Edmund Rice schools in Xavier Province regarding illegal substances in the school context;
- reflect the National School Drug Education Strategy and National Framework for Protocols for Managing Illicit and Other Unsanctioned Drugs in Schools (June 2000); and
- provide clear guidance in relation to legal and pastoral responsibilities in the management of illicit and other unsanctioned drug use by students.

3. RATIONALE

Edmund Rice schools are guided not only by common and statute law, but also by those values which characterise the Reign of God as exemplified in the life and charism of our founder, Edmund Rice.

All students in our schools have the right to attend a school where their safety and welfare is positively promoted. Because our schools value the worth of each child, responses to individual situations need to be made in the light of gospel values of justice, compassion and forgiveness.

4. PRINCIPLES

- All citizens have the responsibility to uphold the law.
- The safety and welfare of each student is paramount.
- Schools have educational and pastoral responsibilities towards all students and their families in addressing these areas.

5. EDMUND RICE SCHOOLS' POLICY – ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

5.1 Upon enrolment, all students shall sign an agreement to comply with this policy.

5.2 A student at a school, in the vicinity of the school, travelling to and from school, at school events or events related to, or interpreted as being under school control, shall not:

- a) knowingly have in his/her possession a drug of dependence, other than that for which they hold a current prescription prescribed by a registered medical practitioner, or a prohibited substance, supply and/or administer to himself/herself, or permit another person to administer/supply to himself/herself, a drug of dependence or a prohibited substance; and/or

- b) have in his/her possession any piece of equipment for use in connection with the smoking or consumption or administration of such a drug or substance or the preparation of such a drug or substance, for smoking, consumption or administration.

5.3 In the event that a student breaches this prohibition, paragraphs 7 and 8 of this policy will be followed.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 This policy and these procedures are designed for use in situations where there are reasonable grounds to believe that:

- a) illegal drugs have been brought into the school, its immediate vicinity, and/or school events; and/or
- b) students at school, in the immediate vicinity, or at school events are affected by illegal drugs.

6.2 School Events include those events directly under the control of the school as well as those events which may be interpreted as being under school control. Such events may include:

- a) travelling to and from school; and
- b) situations where school uniform is worn.

6.3 Additionally, where the school Principal/delegate believes that events outside of school hours have impacted, or will impact, on students at school, the school can offer, as part of its pastoral care, appropriate support to parents of students involved or likely to be involved.

7. ILLICIT SUBSTANCES – WHEN MUST POLICE BE NOTIFIED

7.1 In any circumstances where a student is found to be in possession of an illicit substance or a thing used in connection with the use of an illicit substance (eg pipe, used hypodermic syringe), the illicit substance and/or thing must be delivered immediately into the custody of the Principal/delegate. The Police (and parents) must be contacted immediately and the Principal/delegate shall then hand the relevant item to Police. The Police may then determine whether further Police action or investigation is necessary.

7.2 In any circumstances where an item referred to in paragraph 5.2 above is found in the locker and/or bag of the student, the illicit substance and/or thing must be delivered immediately into the custody of the Principal/delegate. The Police (and parents) must be contacted immediately and the Principal/delegate shall then hand the relevant item to Police. The Police may then determine whether further Police action or investigation is necessary.

8. USE OF DISCRETION

In any circumstances where information is received that a student has been seen to have in their possession or have used an illicit substance and/or thing used in connection with the use of an illicit substance, the Principal/delegate must exercise his discretion as to whether to report such information to Police, having regard to the following factors:

- a) whether there is any substantial evidence to support the allegations;
- b) the type of drug allegedly used and/or possessed;
- c) the quantity of drug allegedly used and/or possessed;
- d) whether the student has been observed supplying the drug to others; and
- e) whether the individual has previously been observed and/or reported to have used, possessed and/or supplied another, an illicit substance.

9. CONSEQUENCES FOR BREACH OF POLICY

9.1 Disciplinary Options for Breach

- 9.1.1 Notwithstanding Police action which may be taken pursuant to paragraph 7 above, disciplinary action must be taken in accordance with the school's behaviour management policy and the Province Policy on Suspension and Exclusion of Students.
- 9.1.2 In the event a student is excluded from the school as a result of a breach of this policy, the Principal/delegate shall make every reasonable effort to source a suitable alternative educational facility for the student and to assist with the student's integration into that facility.
- 9.1.3 In the case of section 9.1.2, the Director, Edmund Rice Schools must be informed.

9.2 Pastoral Responses

- 9.2.1 Notwithstanding any Police or disciplinary action which may be taken in relation to a student found to be in breach of this policy, pastoral support must be provided to the student in accordance with pastoral care initiatives within and beyond the school, with a view to providing counselling or rehabilitation to the student.
- 9.2.2 The Principal/delegate shall, in consultation with appropriate internal or external advisors within the school, develop a pastoral care program, including appropriate internal or external counselling for the student and shall write to the student and his parent/guardian advising of that pastoral care program. The Principal/delegate shall monitor the progress of that program in consultation with the student, parent/guardian and counsellors.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 *Edmund Rice Education Directorate (ERED)* is responsible for the provision of:

- a) provision of the Illegal, Illicit and Unsanctioned Drugs Policy to all educational institutions of St Francis Xavier Province and to non-school ministries and initiatives;
- b) training courses and other opportunity for staff to develop skills and understanding of the policy and process;
- c) a range of consequences/disciplinary measures in relation to handling breaches in a suggested uniform manner; and
- d) review of the policy.

10.2 The *Principal* of each school or *Co-ordinator* of the non-school ministry shall be responsible for:

- a) informing students, parents and staff of the existence of this policy;
- b) monitoring and ensuring compliance with this policy;
- c) keeping proper records of all reports made or disciplinary or pastoral action taken in relation to a breach of this policy;
- d) liaising with appropriate internal and external service providers in order to coordinate effective pastoral responses to breaches of this policy; and
- e) liaising where appropriate with Police.

10.3 *Employees and Voluntary Workers* have a responsibility to:

- a) promote the policy; and
- b) to report any incidence of breach of the policy to the Principal/Co-ordinator of the non-school ministry.

ANNEXURE A

INFORMATION SERVICES

Queensland

Alcohol and Drug Information Service
270 Roma Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
Services:

Telephone 07 3236 2414
Toll Free 1800 177 833
24 Hr Service
Information, Counselling, Referral

Queensland Ambulance Service
Emergency Services Complex
Cnr Park and Kedron Park Roads
Kedron Qld 4031

Northern Territory

Amity House
Community Drug and Alcohol Service
GPO Box 3628

Darwin NT 0801

Telephone 08 8981 7516
Toll Free 1800 629 682
(Business hours only unless
arranged.)