Broxbourne Pastoral Lead Network

Termly Newsletter Issue 1

Every term we will be producing a newsletter which will focus on pulling together all of the key local issues, information and support that is being shared across Broxbourne and Hertfordshire.

Current Local Issues

Nitrous Oxide

Currently in the Broxbourne area there has been a highlighted rise in the use of legal highs, in particular nitrous oxide canisters.

In response to feedback Adash has produced an information sheet and will be attending the next network meeting. The information sheet is attached. See Appendix 1

A presentation made to Broxbourne Children's trust Partnership on Nitrous Oxide is available for dissemination to staff. Please contact Julie Cottenden at CHEXS for a copy to be sent at juliec@chexs.co.uk

Mental Health

Self-harm amongst young people has also been highlighted and support for this is through CAMHS with a target of 6 weeks from referral to treatment dependent on severity of need. A coded system is in place to triage the cases ensuring a timely response.

Tools for Schools is a resource to support schools and other universal Professionals to establish cause for concern, assess the risk, identify needs and relevant provision for pupils and families. A range of assessment, recording and referral tools are provided along with a directory of relevant services and another to support signposting to sources of support. More information can be found at;
http://www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/hwb/ewb/tools/index.shtml

Many issues and resources linked to mental health are addressed in the termly School Mental Health Newsletter by Deborah Shepherd on behalf of Hertfordshire CAMHS. The newsletter is sent out to all mental health leads who are registered on their database. If you would like to

register yourself or a colleague, please email Shelley.taylor@hertfordshire.gov.uk with your name, job title, school and email address.

The MindEd e-portal has been commissioned by the Department of Health to improve the children and young people's workforce knowledge and understanding of mental health issues. It provides 20-30 minute e-learning sessions on a range of topics. It is free to register and use. More information can be found at;
https://www.minded.org.uk/
There will be free training sessions on the resource in Broxbourne in the next few months.

The next Penn Resilience Programme (PRP) teacher training will be held on the 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 30th June and the 1st of July at Hertfordshire Development Centre. More information on the course can be found at;
http://www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/hwb/ewb/prp/training/index.shtml

The Five Ways to Wellbeing is an evidenced based set of actions, that when adopted are proven to improve wellbeing. A toolkit for those working with young people has been developed by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). There is free training available in March facilitated by How to Thrive who have extensive experience in the practical skills and habits required to build emotional resilience and improve wellbeing. More information on the free training can be found at;
http://www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/hwb/news/documents/toolkit_training_five_ways.pdf

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a behaviour that is tragically becoming prominent in many parts of the county, impacting on children and young people .

CSE can affect young people from all social and ethnic backgrounds. Similarly, offenders come from many different backgrounds - but they all have one thing in common. They are abusing young people and are using their status or position to exploit vulnerable victims.
More information can be found at
http://www.thegrid.org.uk/leadership/safeguarding/news.shtml

Broxbourne Council have information and resource to help combat this issue that can be found on
http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/healthsoc/childfam/childprotection/hertssafboard/childexplo/

Vulnerable Students

Supporting vulnerable students is vital in ensuring that barriers to learning are removed in order that the vulnerable students are making progress. This will be a key area for discussion at the next Pastoral Network meeting. Sarah Speller will be sharing Goffs good practice of how all vulnerable students at Goffs are monitored and supported to ensure they make good progress.

Next Meeting

25th March, 2015 at 3.30pm - 4.45pm

Venue; Goff School, Goffs Lane, Cheshunt, Herts, EN7 5QW

Guest Speaker: Reena Devi, Young Person's Drug and Alcohol Worker (A-DASH)

Appendices

Appendix 1

ADASH - Draft Briefing Nitrous Oxide

History

Nitrous oxide (N2O), also known as laughing gas, was first discovered in 1772 by Joseph Priestley. it's primary medical use is sedative and analgesic, nitrous oxide is used as an anaesthetic in dentistry and sometimes in surgery. Nitrous oxide is also used in the dairy industry, in car racing, in welding and in rocket engines.

It was Humphrey Davy who investigated the effects of breathing nitrous oxide and reported sensations of 'thrilling and pleasure' of varying intensities. He found himself seduced into frequent recreational use of the gas.

Laughing gas parties become an immediate success among the British upper classes in the early 1800s. Euphoria and mild hallucinations were the principal attractions, with cost the main drawback.

Several films titled Laughing Gas were made between 1907 and 1920 based on dental use/misuse of nitrous oxide, one featuring Charlie Chaplin. The top-grossing film of 1959 in the UK was Carry On Nurse, in which the cast is somewhat improbably overcome by nitrous oxide in the operating theatre, with hilarious results.

The recreational use of nitrous oxide gained popularity again in the 'noughties', when it became fashionable in the club scene. Statistics from the home office suggest 470,000 people aged 16-59 used nitrous oxide in the past year, up 100,000 from 2013. First reports of its use on Hertfordshire were made in 2013 after reports of the canisters and balloons being found in woods.

Street Names - Nitrous, laughing gas, NOS, hippie crack, etc.

The Law

If it is sold as a medical product it is restricted under the Human Medicines Regulations Act (HMRA) of 2012. However, if it is sold for catering purposes (kitchens need the capsules called whippets to create whipped cream) it’s not covered under this legislation.
If someone is found with large amounts of whippets without a valid reason, they could be charged with intending to supply it for inhalation particularly if they have balloons.
Cost

If bought in bulk they can cost as little as 30 pence. At raves and other events they can cost anywhere between £2 or 3 for £5 when supplied in a balloon.

Form

Nitrous Oxide is a gas but under high pressure will form a very cold gas that can cause burns. Different sources of nitrous oxide may contain harmful contaminants. Automotive grade nitrous oxide (NOS, NX) is contaminated with sulphur dioxide and should not be inhaled. Food grade nitrous oxide from whippets may contain oily residues, which may be harmful if inhaled. Medical grade nitrous oxide is the highest purity of nitrous oxide available, as it is specifically produced for human consumption.

Modes of Action

It is a dissociative drug. Nitrous oxide quickly enters the bloodstream through the alveoli in the lungs. Nitrous oxide is fat soluble, being quickly distributed in the whole body, including synapses in the brain. Nitrous oxide is an uncompetitive NMDA channel blocker, which explains its effects.

The effects of a single inhalation of nitrous oxide start almost instantly, usually a few seconds after inhaling. The effects peak about 10-20 seconds after inhalation, and they diminish as quickly as they began. If nitrous oxide administration is prolonged, the effects reach a plateau about 30-60 seconds after the first breath, and diminish a few seconds after nitrous oxide is no longer administered. Mild sedation, feeling of well-being and sometimes headache (especially with prolonged administration) can be felt up to 30 minutes after coming down.

Only a very small amount of nitrous Oxide is broken down by the body.

Dose and Effects

When someone inhales nitrous oxide, the gas rapidly dissolves into the bloodstream, and hits the brain within seconds. Nitrous oxide can produce the following effects: giggling, euphoria, auditive distortions (flanging of sound), analgesia (pain relief, sometimes numbing), loss of balance, tingling or numbing in extremities, dissociation (detaching from reality, out-of-body experiences) and dream-like states. When nitrous oxide administration is excessive, the user usually falls unconscious and can experience dreams and visions, out-of-body experiences and sometimes mystical and religious experiences. Altered thought patterns (usually involving strange arrangements of words) are sometimes observed.

If people are using excessively then they may feel no discomfort right up to the moment when they black out. Brain damage and death can occur soon after.

Case Study

Two patients presented with walking problems (gait disorders) after abuse of nitrous oxide. Physical examination revealed poor coordination of their arms and legs and loss of sense of positioning (pyramidal syndrome and abnormal proprioception), consistent with chronic damage the nerves in the spine. Vitamin B12 level was extremely low. The patients improved with injections of B12. It was concluded that use of nitrous oxide may induce nerve damage even in patients with no preliminary vitamin B12 deficiency.

Harm Reduction Information (People cannot use drugs without a risk of being harmed. Some drugs have the potential to kill the first time. A-DASH cannot be held responsible for any harm, however it occurs, in connection with information provided.)

Don’t use on your own and choose a safe environment.

If you are or could be pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant do not use
Don't use if you have a history of epilepsy, asthma or if you are on any medication from the Dr or Pharmacy.
Nitrous oxide is colourless and has a slightly sweet taste. Anything that smells strong or has an unusual taste is either contaminated nitrous oxide or not nitrous oxide at all and should not be inhaled.

People have died thinking other gases they are using are Nitrous oxide.

If an oily residue is present in the balloon do not continue to use

Alcohol and other depressant drugs should be avoided. Alcohol in particular can result in sickness with the risk of choking or inhalation pneumonia.

If nitrous oxide is used frequently (although this is not recommended), consuming supplements containing vitamin B12 and folic acid may reduce the long-term risks of chronic nitrous oxide use.
Nitrous oxide should be avoided by pregnant women. High doses of nitrous oxide have been proven to be tetrogenic for example chronic use of nitrous oxide with vitamin B12 depletion, (hyperhomocysteinemia) can result in malformations if the user is pregnant. There are also concerns that there is an increase in miscarriages.

If the user of nitrous oxide is in good health, understands the risks, and avoids dangerous methods, nitrous oxide is one of the least risky drugs. However, people have died from oxygen starvation when using unsafe methods to try to breathe large amounts of nitrous oxide for extended periods of time. Inhaling nitrous oxide in a dangerous way will not cause any warning symptoms until the user suddenly becomes unconscious. Then brain damage, followed by death, can occur within minutes.

These risks are unlikely with the common balloon method.

Sources

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