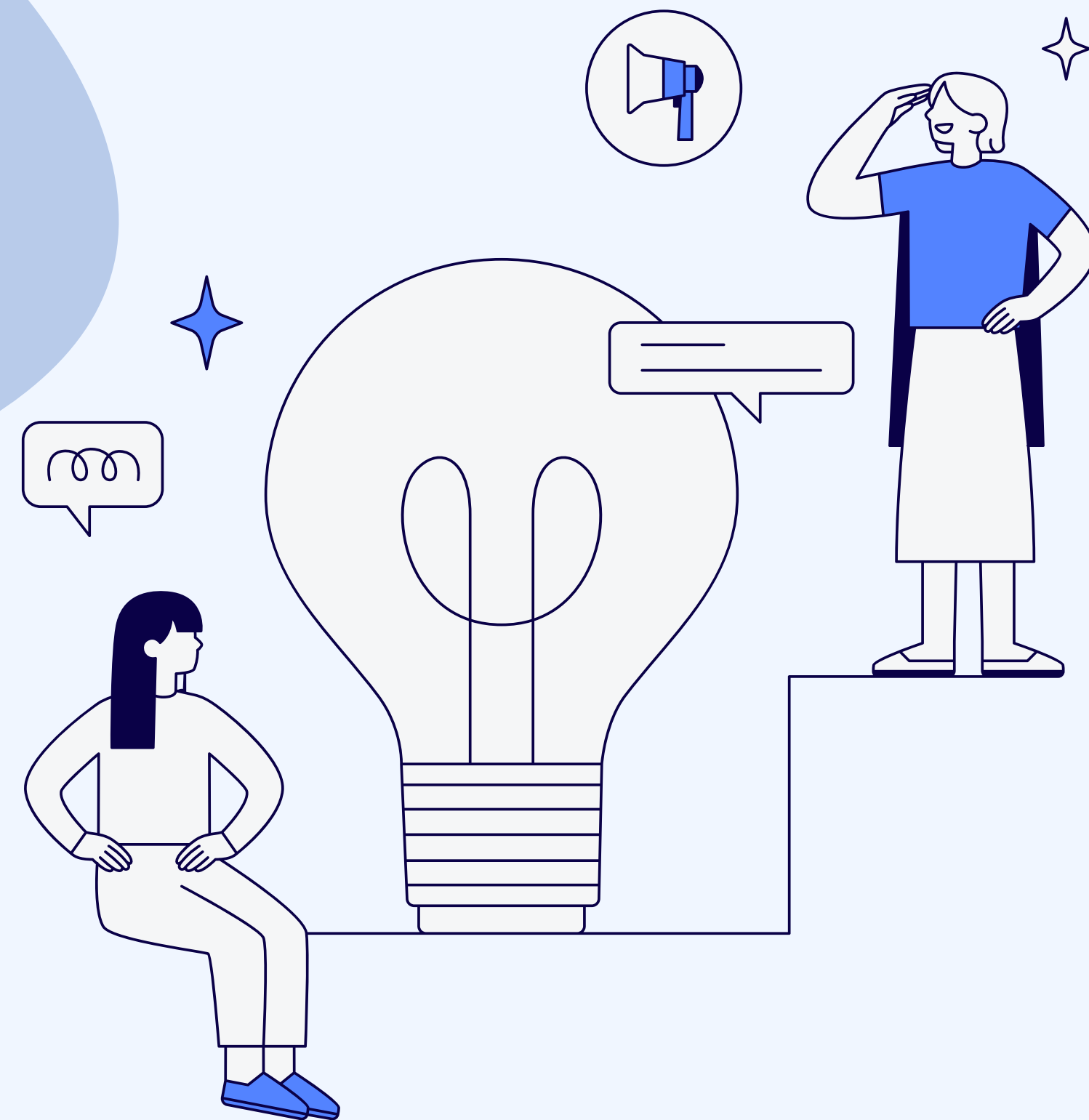


# DrugFreeSG Champions Conference 2025 Playbook: Your Guide to a DrugFreeSG



# Why This Playbook Is For You

The Inter-Ministry Committee on Drug Prevention for Youths had the privilege to have Professor Bertha K Madras as the keynote speaker for the DrugFreeSG Champions Conference on 10 March 2025. Her expert insights provided a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding drug abuse, particularly its impact on youths.

As a DrugFreeSG Champion, you play an important role in raising awareness and engaging youths, and strengthening community resilience against the dangers of drugs.

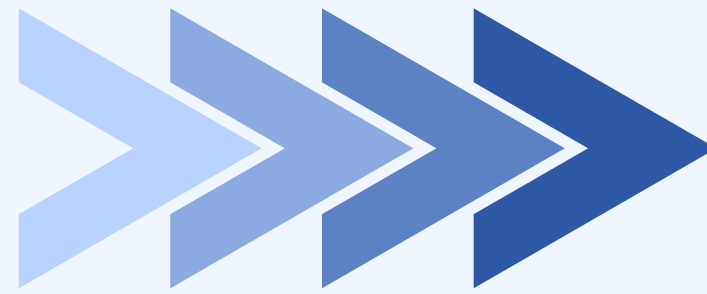
This playbook is designed to deepen your understanding of the risks associated with drug abuse and inspire meaningful action within your communities and spheres of influence. Together, we can continue our vital work advocating for a drug-free Singapore, ensuring that future generations are resilient to resist the temptations of drug abuse and lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Brought to you by:

Inter-Ministry Committee on Drug Prevention for Youths



# An Overview of What's Within



- **Using the Video**
- **Using the Deck**
- **4 Broad Topics**
- **Key Takeaways**
- **Start your Influence Today!**



# Using the Video

The video accompanying this playbook summarises Professor Madras' key points from the conference, highlighting the complexities of drug abuse, its impact on youths, and the role of parental engagement in prevention.

It serves to spark conversation and raise awareness about the harms of drugs, making it ideal for you to share on various platforms or at educational sessions to engage different audiences and promote discussion.



# Using the Deck



The presentation deck provides a comprehensive breakdown of the key insights from the conference, offering a visual and structured approach to understanding reasons for drug abuse and various prevention strategies.

The deck can be adapted for varied audiences and settings – for delivering informative presentations, hosting discussions, or developing drug prevention programmes.



# 4 Broad Topics

**Topic 1 : Understanding Risk Factors for Drug Use**

**Topic 2 : The Vulnerability of the Developing Adolescent Brain to Drug Use**

**Topic 3 : The Long-Term Risks of Adolescent Drug Use**

**Topic 4 : Preventing Adolescent Drug Use**

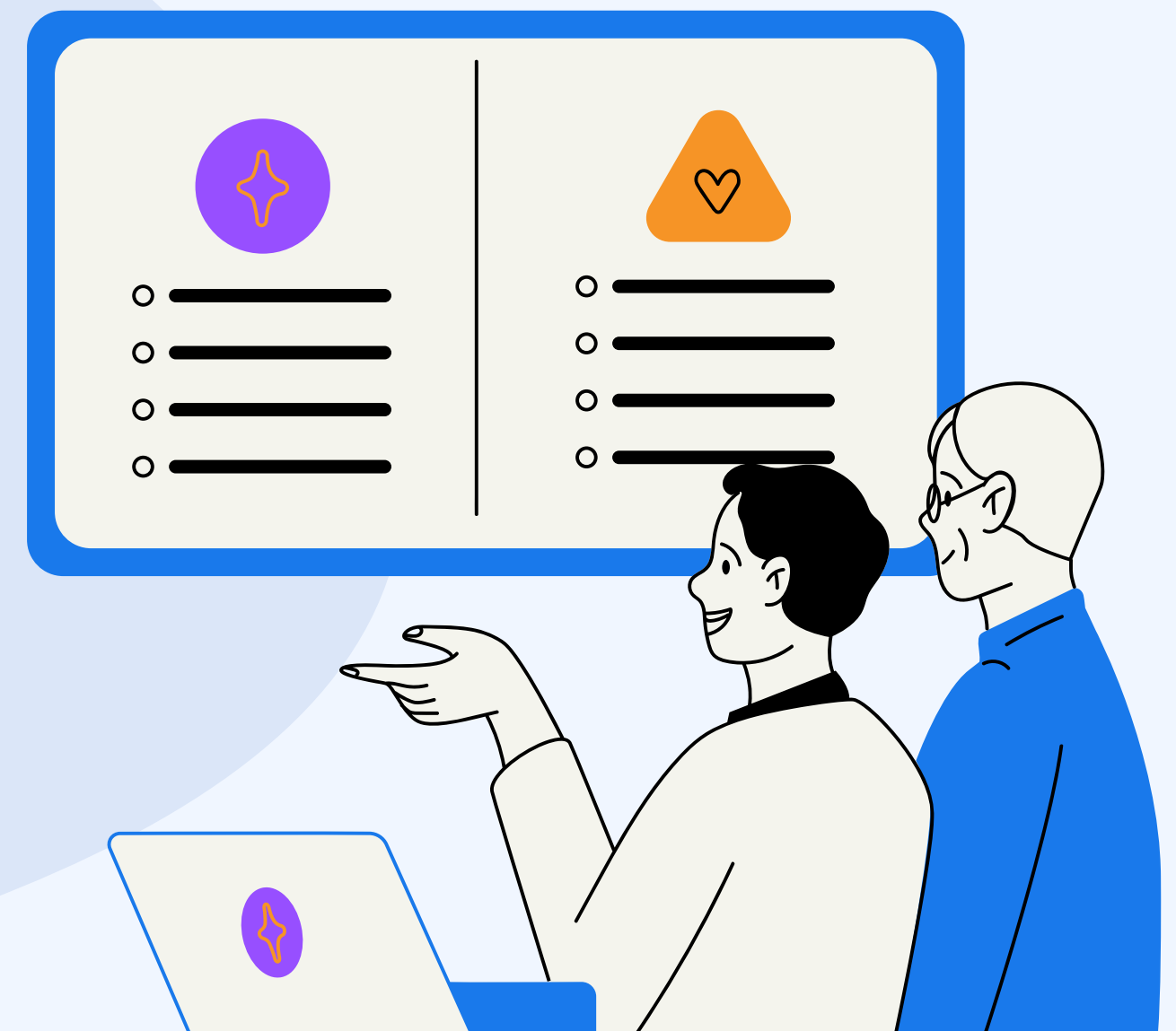




# Topic 1 : Understanding Risk Factors for Drug Use

This topic explores the key risk factors contributing to drug abuse. It examines how factors such as drug legality, alongside personal factors like genetics, and personality influence the likelihood of drug abuse. Environmental influences, including family, peers, and social media, are also discussed, highlighting how they can either protect or expose individuals to drug abuse.

- **Individual Risk Factors (7:36 – 8:39, Slide 4)**
- **Drug-Specific Risk Factors (8:39 – 10:14, Slide 4)**
- **Environmental Risk Factors (10:14 – 11:09, Slides 4 and 6)**





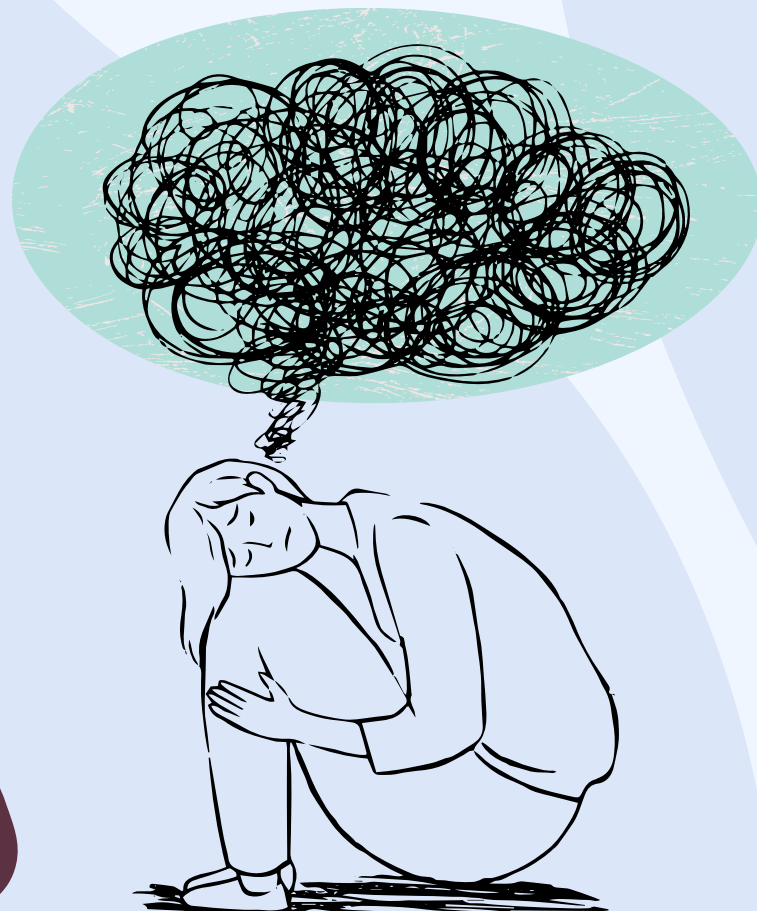
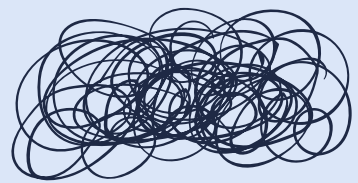
# Topic 2 : The Vulnerability of the Developing Adolescent Brain to Drug Use



Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to drug abuse due to the ongoing development of their brains, especially the frontal cortex. During this stage, the brain matures, improving cognitive abilities but it is also highly sensitive to drugs, with the reward system more reactive, promoting risk-taking behaviours.

Early drug abuse can lead to long-term consequences such as mental health issues and cognitive impairments. Adolescents who abuse drugs are more likely to develop drug use disorders, experience worse mental health outcomes, and face a higher risk of overdose.

- **The Adolescent Brain: Developmental Changes and Its Response to Drugs Compared to Adults (00:01 - 07:37, Slides 8-13)**
- **Risk of Adolescent Drug Use (07:37 - 10:40, Slide 14)**







## Topic 3 : The Long-Term Risks of Adolescent Drug Use

This topic highlights the serious long-term risks of drugs abuse, particularly when one starts abusing drugs during adolescence.

Marijuana, often considered less harmful, can lead to mental and cognitive impairment, especially with early and frequent abuse, affecting brain structures like the amygdala.

Methamphetamine causes severe physical and neurological damage raising the risk of cognitive decline and Parkinson's disease.

Opioids carry a high risk of addiction along with brain damage and infections, making them especially dangerous during adolescence.

- **Marijuana – Cognitive, Psychiatric, and Developmental Risks (00:01 – 19:19 Slides 15–66)**
- **Methamphetamine – Neurological Damage and Behavioural Consequences (19:19 – 23:06, Slides 67–75)**
- **Opioids – Addiction and Lifelong Health Impacts (23:06 – 24:42, Slides 76–79)**





# Topic 4 : Preventing Adolescent Drug Use



Preventing adolescent drug abuse requires a comprehensive approach that includes early intervention, family involvement, school programmes, and policy enforcement. Strategies such as teaching resistance to peer pressure and stress management help adolescents make informed choices, while targeted methods like SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) identify at-risk individuals early.

Parental involvement plays a key role, as adolescents are less likely to abuse drugs when parents set boundaries and maintain open communication. Additionally, a well-rounded approach includes treatment access and law enforcement to disrupt drug supply, reducing both the initiation of drug abuse and the long-term risks of addiction.

- **Prevention Strategies for Drug Use (00:01 – 05:35, Slides 80–83)**
- **The Role of the Parents in Prevention (05:35 – 12:37, Slides 84–93)**





# KEY TAKEAWAYS



## Topic 1 : Understanding Risk Factors for Drug Use

Drug abuse is shaped by factors like drug accessibility, personality traits, and environmental influences, which can either increase or reduce risk.

## Topic 2 : The Vulnerability of the Developing Adolescent Brain to Drug Use

Adolescents' developing brains make them more susceptible to drug abuse, leading to long-term cognitive and mental health issues.



## Topic 3 : The Long-Term Risks of Adolescent Drug Use

Drugs such as marijuana, methamphetamine, and opioids can affect brain function, lead to addiction, and result in long-term health consequences.



## Topic 4 : Preventing Adolescent Drug Use

Prevention involves early intervention, family support, school programs, and parental involvement, which are crucial in reducing drug abuse.





# Start Your Influence Today! ✨



Tap on the video and presentation deck in your drug prevention efforts to make a positive impact in the fight against drug abuse!



## How You Can Make a Difference



### Conduct Workshops or Training Sessions

Use the materials to run educational programmes that highlight the importance of drug prevention and equip your audience with the tools they need to make informed decisions.

### Organise Ground-Up Initiatives

Organise events or campaigns that raise awareness and engage local communities, schools, and youth groups in the fight against drug abuse.

### Inspire Personal Action

Share these resources within your organisation and spheres of influence to spark conversations and foster a collective sense of responsibility in drug prevention efforts.