



CPD TOPIC

Safeguarding Students - A School based Approach to Prevention of Substance Misuse

TRAINER

Dr. Tulika Shukla

VENUE

Zoom (Online)

DEPARTMENT

Well-being Department

ATTENDEES

233

ACADEMIC YEAR

2026 – 2027

POINTS DISCUSSED

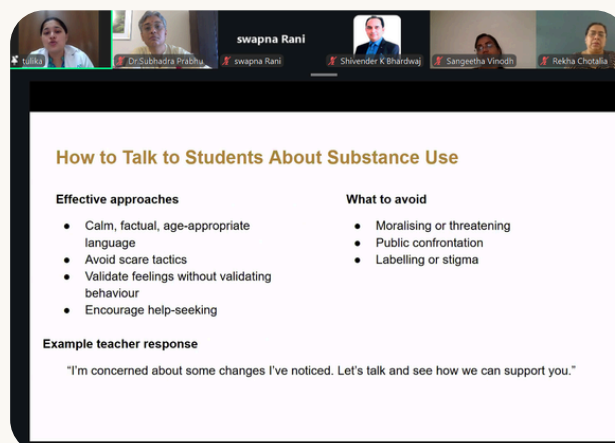
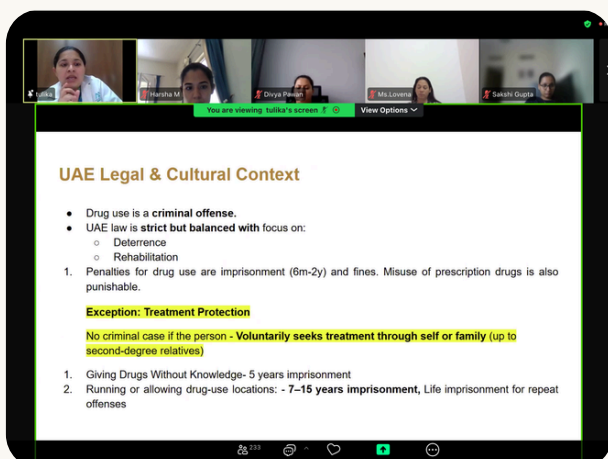
- Awareness & Identification - Understanding substance misuse, myths, warning signs and risk factors
- Impact & Causes - Effects on student health, behaviour and possible underlying causes
- Action & Prevention - Teachers' role in Recognize – Respond – Refer and promoting safe choices

OBJECTIVE

- Understand the importance of early prevention
- Recognise warning signs and risk factors
- Differentiate between behavioural and safeguarding concerns
- Follow appropriate response and referral procedures
- Promote protective factors and student awareness

INTENT

To equip teachers with the knowledge, awareness and practical strategies required to identify and prevent substance misuse among students, while fostering a safe and supportive school environment. Additionally, to strengthen staff capacity to effectively recognize early warning signs, respond with appropriate care and sensitivity and refer students to relevant support systems in a timely and responsible manner.





EXPERIENCE

Session Opening

The session began with welcoming staff and outlining the importance of safeguarding students through early prevention and awareness of substance misuse. The focus was on the critical role teachers play in ensuring student safety and wellbeing within the school environment.

Introduction

An overview of substance misuse (vaping, alcohol, drugs) was provided, focusing on early identification and prevention. Common myths—such as vaping being harmless and misuse affecting only certain students—were addressed. Risk factors across developmental stages were highlighted, from curiosity in early years to peer pressure and risk-taking in adolescence.

Policy Orientation

The session provided staff with a comprehensive orientation on the UAE National Drug Prevention Program – SIRAJ, alongside the school's overarching policies for Substance abuse prevention, including anti-vaping, anti-smoking and drug-use protocols.

Protocols

Teachers were guided on clear procedures for safeguarding students, aligned with the UAE National Drug Prevention Program – SIRAJ, including recognizing warning signs of substance misuse, responding calmly and professionally, documenting incidents accurately and referring concerns through the correct channels to ensure student safety and wellbeing.

INSIGHTS

Interactive Activities

The session featured an open question-and-answer segment, allowing teachers to discuss concerns, share experiences, and gain clarity on handling substance misuse cases while applying school safeguarding protocols effectively.

Role-Playing Scenarios

Teachers engaged with life examples, scenario discussions, and a Q&A session. This allowed participants to reflect on possible responses, discuss challenges, and explore effective ways to support students while following school safeguarding protocols.

Teacher Feedback

Post-session feedback indicated that staff found the session informative and practical, strengthening their confidence in:

- Identifying potential substance misuse concerns
- Responding appropriately within school protocols
- Supporting students through a safeguarding lens

Key Takeaway

- Prevention is everyone's responsibility
- Early relationships protect more than rules
- Skills > fear
- Observe, don't diagnose
- Refer early, document clearly
- A supported student is a safer student

FACILITATOR'S REFLECTION / NEXT STEPS

