

## A consortium of local schools would like to issue the following statement:

As the school holidays approach we would like to raise awareness of potential risk-taking behaviours of young people and highlight drug-related issues within our local communities, both in and outside of school.

Through our continued work in partnership with the Merseyside Police, Wirral Youth Service and the Wirral Schools Drugs Adviser, we have received further information that **ecstasy** tablets called '**Smarties**' are being used by young people. It has been reported that these come in a range of different colours and vary in strength. Feedback from front line workers suggests that they are being used in a lucky dip style. If taken, there could be a significant impact on the individual that is difficult to gauge due to the variation. Young people are unlikely to monitor their intake.

As you will be aware, all schools have undergone an education programme with students recently. Whilst we believe that our students are sensible and have some knowledge and understanding of the risks and dangers associated with substance misuse, it's important to acknowledge that some young people may face greater exposure to vulnerability and risks during the holiday period.

### **Signs and Symptoms to look out for are as follows:**

Ecstasy makes users feel energised, alert and alive.

Ecstasy makes people feel 'in tune' with their surroundings and can make music and colours more intense.

Users often have temporary feelings of love and affection for the people they're with and strangers around them.

Short-term effects of use can include anxiety, panic attacks, confused episodes, paranoia and even psychosis.

They may feel really chatty (these chats don't always make sense to people who aren't on E)  
Physical side effects can include dilated pupils, a tingling feeling, tightening of the jaw muscles, raised body temperature and the heart beating faster.

### **Our advice for parents:**

- If your child presents under the influence of a substance including alcohol and you have concerns, please do not hesitate to seek expert advice and call England NHS helpline on 111.
- If your child is unresponsive or presents as a risk to themselves, call emergency services on 999 immediately.

### **Where to go for help?**

- **Response** – Wirral Children & Young People's Department. The agency offers advice, guidance and support to young people aged 13 - 19. Please call 0151 666 – 4385 or visit their website [www.teenwirral.com](http://www.teenwirral.com)
- **Adfam** is the national charity working to improve life for families affected by drugs and alcohol. Please visit [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)
- **GP** – Contact your Doctor

