



DANIEL
SPARGO
-MABBS
foundation



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Why is drug and alcohol education important?

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Owen Bowden-Jones

Consultant Psychiatrist, CNWL Club Drug Clinic

About me

- Addiction psychiatrist
- Researcher and educator on emerging drug harms
- Founder of Club Drug Clinic
- Author of The Drug Conversation
- National clinical adviser to Public Health England
- Review clinical information on 'FRANK' website
- Chair, Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

Who needs educating?

People using
drugs/alcohol

People who may
consider using
drugs/alcohol

Families and
carers

School staff

Community e.g.
youth clubs

Health staff

Social care staff

Police

General public

Media

Researchers

Policy makers

Why do these groups need educating?

Exaggerated or false claims about

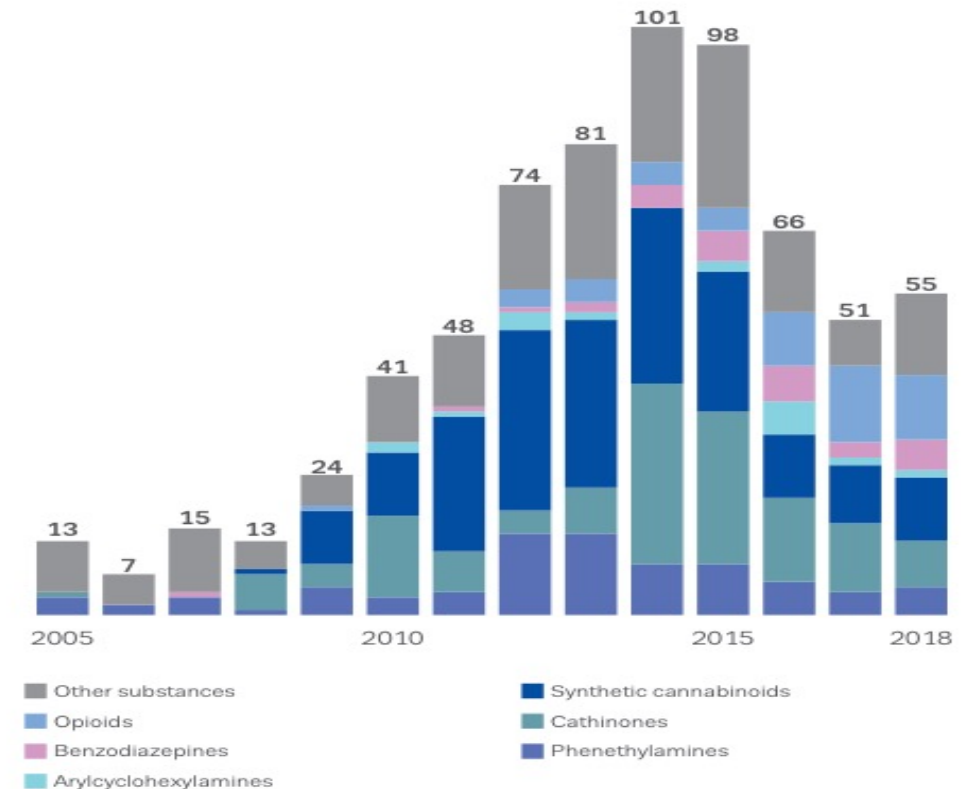
- benefits of particular drugs or drug combinations
- ways to reduce risks of using drugs
- normalisation of drug use – “everyone does it”
- Also applies to alcohol and nicotine products



- Drugs markets change quickly, as can the harms
- New ways of buying drugs – internet, social media, post, home delivery
- Young people are sometimes surprisingly poorly informed about drugs and don't know where to find accurate information

- **Information influences choice**

Number and categories of new psychoactive substances notified to the EU Early Warning System for the first time, 2005-18



Stigma

What should be the content of
drug and alcohol education?

Drugs and associated harms





3 units

PINT LAGER
ABV 5.2%



3 units

PINT CIDER
ABV 5.3%



2.3 units

PINT BITTER
ABV 4%



2.3 units

WHITE WINE
(175ml) ABV 13%



1.6 units

RED WINE
(125ML) ABV 13%



1.7 units

BOTTLE LAGER
ABV 5.2%



1.4 units

ALCOPOP
ABV 5%



1 unit

SINGLE GIN & TONIC
ABV 40%



1 unit

SAMBUCA SHOT
ABV 42%



2 units

DOUBLE WHISKY
ABV 40%



2 units

CHAMPAGNE
(175ml) ABV 11.5%



2 units

COSMOPOLITAN
ABV 26%



1.3 units

PIMMS
ABV 25%



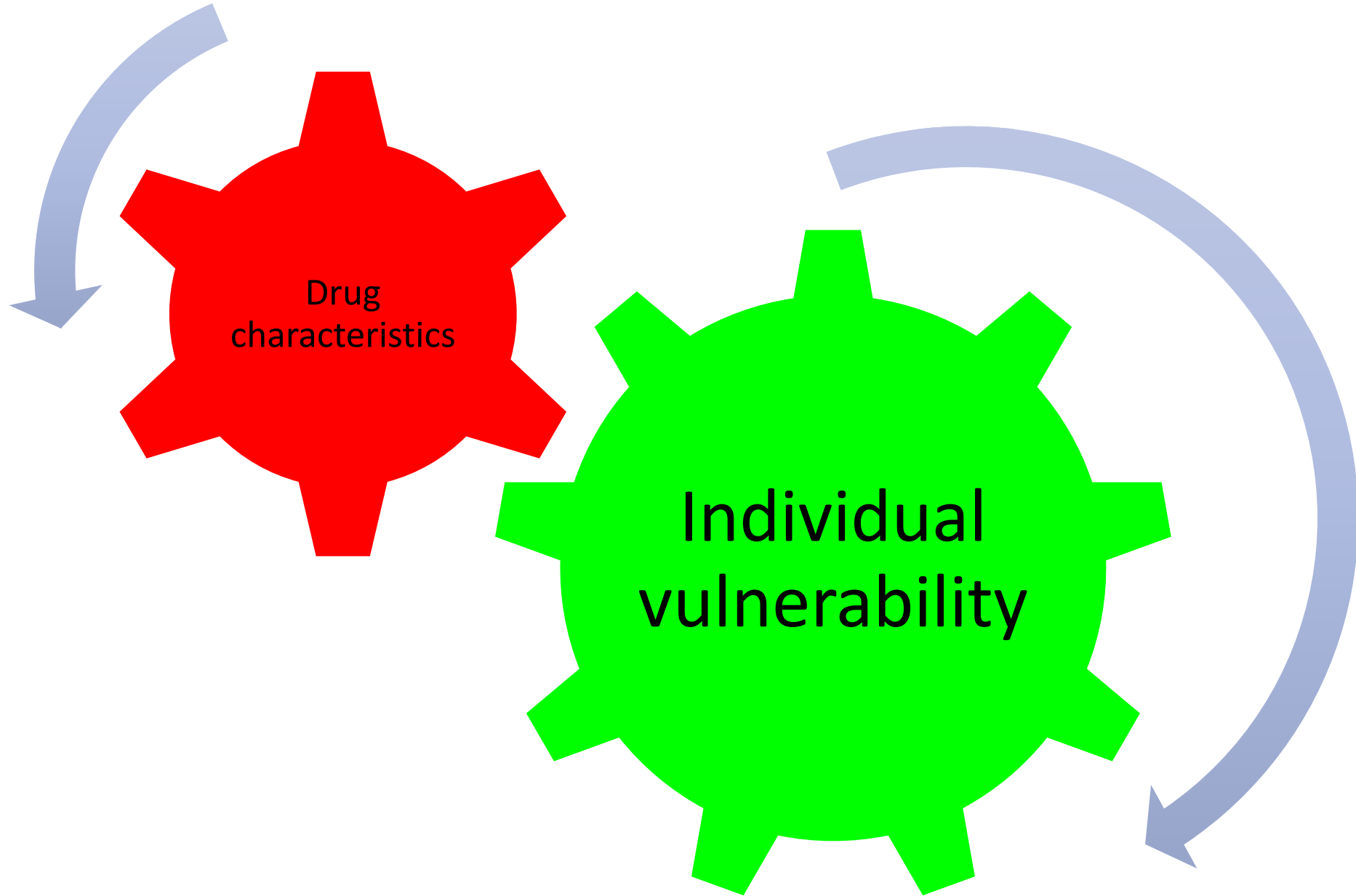
2 units

DOUBLE COGNAC
ABV 40%



10 units

BOTTLE OF WINE
ABV 13.5%

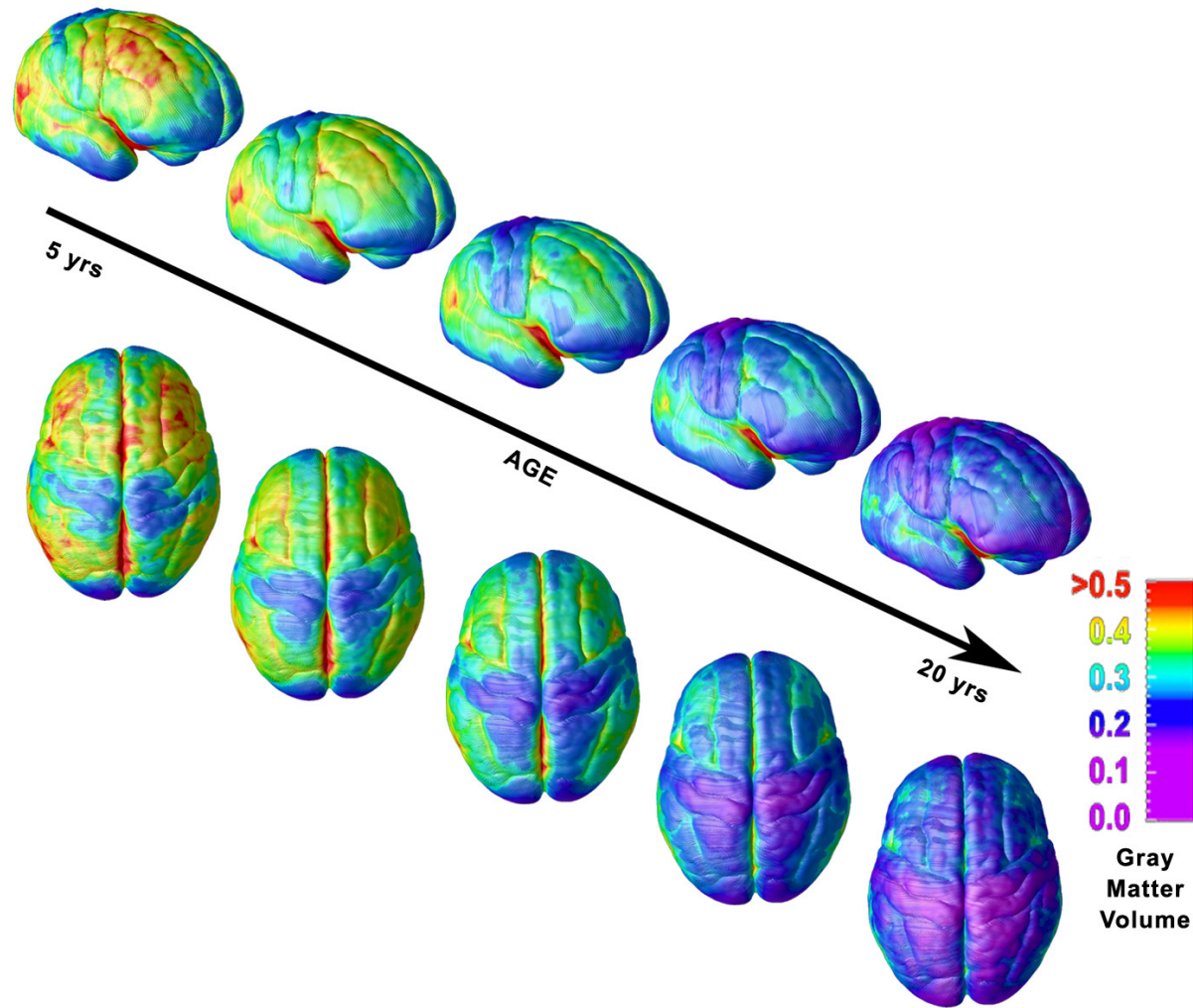


Individual vulnerability

- **Genetic** make-up
Family history?
- **Emotional** health
- **Physical** health
- **Social** health



Drugs and young adults



Electronic cigarettes



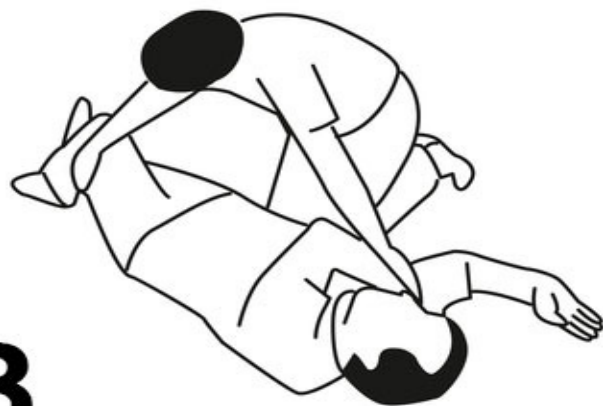
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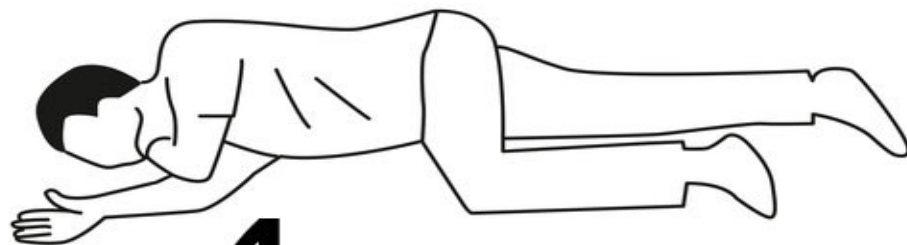
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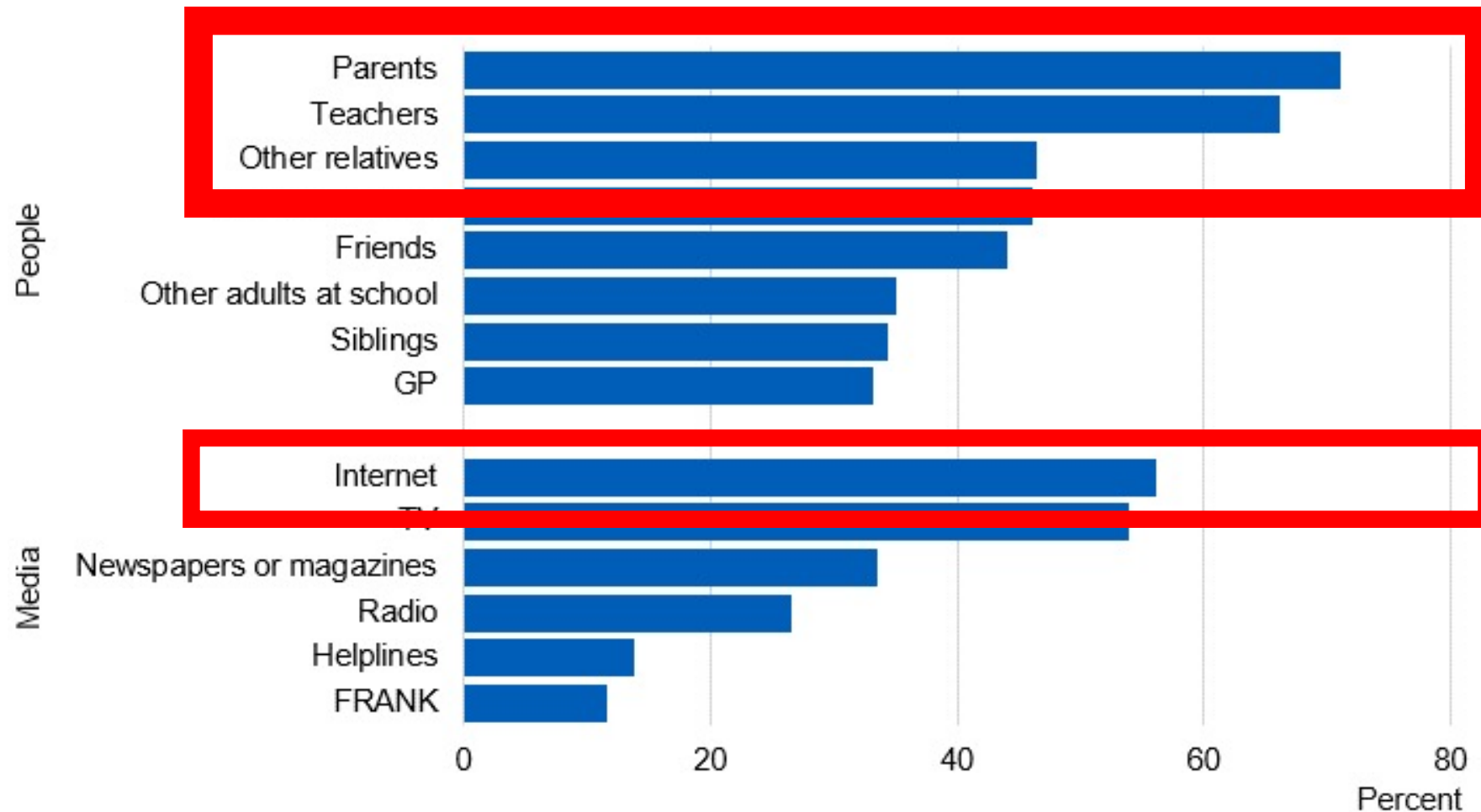
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4



Where do young people report seeking information about drugs?





[Drugs A-Z](#) [News](#) [▼ Help and advice](#) [Contact](#)

Search 

0300 1236600

Honest information about drugs

Search for any drug...

What about education for
others?

Two groups of parents

- Child is not using drugs

- Parents want
- **good information**
- **educate themselves** about (new) drugs

- Child is using drugs (or suspected)

- Parents **worried**
- **Not sure** what to do
- Urgently seeking knowledge and **advice**

Why encourage parents to talk to their children about drugs?

Parents views **matter** to children

Information influences choice

Huge amount of **misinformation**

De-stigmatizing issues if there is a problem later

Could early/earlier conversations be **preventative?**



When to start the drug conversation?

- Ideally start **before** the child has been exposed to drugs or people who are using drugs
- **10-12 years?**
- This is around the time they will be hearing about drugs in school lessons

Questions