

WHAT IS YAD?

YAD is a Finnish non-profit civil association that started out in 1988 as a small civil movement of young people aiming to influence and prevent the drug abuse. From the very beginning young volunteers have been the base of the organisation. YAD practises peer group work by the means of drug-education and giving example of drug free lifestyle, providing reliable information and simply being around and interacting with young people in different environments.

YAD is also about helping out and providing support to those who want to quit taking drugs. Nowadays YAD is more involved with projects that are developing relevant and up-to-date means to do the drug prevention work with different target groups and contexts. YAD has some 200 volunteer members on lists and a staff of 10 workers, working in 2 cities. YAD Street Team has over 2000 registered members, performing different assignments around their own neighbourhood. So the activities of YAD are provided nationwide.



CONTACTS

Offices: Jyväskylä and Tampere. Local teams all over Finland. Check out the websites for more info.

www.yad.fi

www.kiinnostaakohuumeet.fi

www.yad.fi/streetteam

Although YAD is "against drugs" it still respects and understands different points of views within the drug debate. The way of thinking can't be black and white. YAD isn't about judging anyone but simply offering one perspective or choice to the issue and many alternative activities to participate. YAD is also pro different means of harm reduction and humane approaches.

What makes YAD different from the other civil organisations in Finland is that YAD is the one with young volunteers and YAD is available in places and events of young people's spare time like rock -festivals, rave/techno -parties, youth centres and so on. YAD also gives the subjectivity for young people or recovering addicts themselves, so that instead of being objects they are the active subjects of prevention work and different activities.

INFORMATION ON DRUGS

YAD is providing information on drugs so that people can make their choices with awareness of probable risks. In drug education YAD's goal is to make people think the drug and alcohol issues from many different perspectives in order to see the big picture involved. YAD also encourages people to consider the choices that they make and helps them to see the typical

underlying reasons and consequences of drug or alcohol (ab)use. YAD uses interactive practises to raise conversation. The idea is to empower people to find some healthy choices for problem solving as well as for needs of feeling pleasure, excitement or experimenting new things.

YAD has different approaches for different target groups depending whether it is about general prevention or risk group prevention. YAD also publishes some material on drug prevention and drug information, books, booklets and flyers. YAD is also hosting 4 different websites, blog and numerous facebook-pages and other social media channels.

SUPPORT & EXPERIENCE BASED KNOWLEDGE AS A TOOL

Secondly YAD wants to help those who are already experiencing the downsides of their drug abuse and want to quit or who are returning from treatment and need support systems to stay clean. Participating the YAD's activities gives the ex-addicts a chance to turn their experience to strength and also enables one to find new

drug free social contacts and friends. This is called communal support. In some cities YAD has specific support groups for the recovering young addicts and also individual support practised by educated volunteers. After a while ex-addicts can become active agents of drug prevention and use their experience based knowledge as a tool. YAD also employs recovering addicts.

DRUG FREE CHOICES AND ALTERNATIVES

Third basic idea is to provide alternatives to drug and alcohol use. These alternatives include alcohol and drug free events like rock concerts, raves, camps, sports... whatever can give positive experiences or help one to stay sober over weekends or holidays when it's easy to relapse. Participating or organizing these activities can lead to learning new skills and improve one's self- image. Target is to respect yourself enough and optimize your well being. Most of the activities are aimed for teenagers or young adults.

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