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## **Drug Policy and Family Support Seminar**

Dear scholars and experts:

Taiwan's current policy for drug prevention focuses on the reducing and balancing the suppression of drug supply and demand. Drug abuse continues to be an important issue that needs to be faced by all sectors; not only forefront narcotics agents but also professional helpers for drug abuses and addiction are all working hard to support drug users to return to their normal routine. While returning to the society after treatment, they often need help from others, especially support from their family. Family support aids and plays a big part on the psychological and physical recover.

Therefore, the goal of this seminar is designed to conduct in-depth researches, extensive discussions, and observation exchanges between two-major issues of drug policy and family support through experts and scholars, to develop a more sophisticated drug control policy.

Organizers: Academy for the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, National Policy Research Center, National Chung Cheng University, Crime Research Center, National Chung Cheng University.

Participants: Participating scholars, Professors, Graduate students, college students, and people interested in drug policy.

Time: May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Location: Classroom 336, College of Education, National Chung Cehng University

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# UNODC Reports

## **Alternative Development Project in Laos enables former opium farmers to learn about Coffee Cultivation from experts** ➤ Editorial Office

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) alternative development programme in Lao PDR helps farmers move from cultivating opium to cash crops such as coffee. As part of this effort, UNODC enabled a group of new coffee farmers from the North of the country to participate in a week-long study visit to an already established community of coffee growers in southern Laos.

The new coffee farmers come from a community of 331 families from 12 villages in the Northern province of Huaphahn, where they face issues related to opium, poverty, addiction, and the remnants of war. Located within the geographical region called the 'golden triangle', an important occupation in this area has traditionally been opium cultivation. Families have been growing poppy for generations, feeding a vicious cycle of addiction, fear for law-enforcement, poverty and food insecurity.

UNODC's alternative development project has been working with the community since 2016 to establish a sustainable solution that breaks this cycle. The families have come together in cooperation under the name "Vanmai Coffee" to grow coffee instead of poppy. Vanmai means 'new day' in the local Lao language, symbolizing the community's hopes for a prosperous, healthy and sustainable future that coffee can bring for their villages.

In the last week of November 2018, Vanmai farmers travelled to the Bolaven Plateau in southern Laos to participate in a week-long study visit and learn from coffee experts and coffee farmers in the established coffee areas of the Plateau.



From learning about the processing of coffee beans to the essentials of a successful cooperative, the farmers gained confidence and knowledge to bring back to their villages. Along with technical trainings, highlights of the week included coffee tasting, barista tips and guidance on how to establish a coffee culture in the villages of Huaphahn.

"This study trip is exactly what we needed right now. Learning from experts at the Coffee Research Institute and with established farmers and cooperatives here, I have learned so much in just five days." said Mr. Jouma, a farmer from Huay Yam village. "Study visits like this are extremely valuable. One thing is that the farmers can improve their technical knowledge on coffee, but the most important thing we see is that this really helps them get a vision and a plan for the future. Seeing with their own eyes how other smallholder farmers have taken charge of their own future by working together and focusing on value chains and quality products, is a real eye-opener," explained Erlend Audunson Falch, programmer manager at UNODC in Lao PDR. Community members from Huaphahn said they are determined to make an income from coffee, but also want to educate others on the harm that illegal opium cultivation brings to communities. Through blogs, the farmers also want to share their stories of struggle, hope, ambition and inform others about their community."

"We all want to improve our life for our families, we want to set up something that can be passed on to our children so they do not have to worry about their income. If we work together like this I am hopeful that we can achieve something good." says Mr. Jouma. Vanmai Coffee's first commercial harvest is expected after the 2019 monsoon season. The community hopes that in the coming years their cooperative can grow and reach both domestic and international coffee markets. of resilient individuals living in one of the poorest communities of the region.

*This paper is from: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*

*<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2019/January/alternative-development-project-in-laos-enables-former-opium-farmers-to-learn-about-coffee-cultivation-from-experts.html>*



# NIDA Reports

## Monitoring the Future Survey Results Show Alarming Rise in Teen Vaping

➤ Editorial Office

For four and a half decades, the NIDA-funded Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey has provided researchers and policymakers with an invaluable window into the drug use and attitudes of America’s 12th-graders, with 8th and 10th graders added to the survey in 1991. The results of the 2018 MTF survey, released today (December 17), contain a mix of encouraging news and warning signals. Notably, the survey this year contained a major shock: a stunning rise in use of nicotine in vaping devices since 2017. Although there have been few significant changes over the past few years in teen marijuana use, use of most other illicit drugs by middle and high school students is at historic lows—this includes use of opioids, at a time when the opioid crisis is ravaging older sectors of the population.

Between January 2017 and January 2018, the percentage of 12th graders who reported vaping nicotine (not flavoring or other substances) during the past 30 days nearly doubled, from 11 percent to nearly 21 percent; among 10th graders, the increase was almost as great, from 8.2 percent to 16.1 percent. These are—by far—the biggest one-year increases ever seen for any substance in the history of the MTF survey. Previously, the largest increase for any substance in 12th grade was seen between 1975 and 1976, when past-month marijuana use jumped from 27.1 to 32.2 percent. Teens report they are vaping



“flavoring only” in higher numbers as well, although it is likely that many young users do not know what is in the liquid they are vaping.

For reasons I’ve discussed before on this blog, any increase in nicotine use among adolescents is an alarming development. There is a perception, promoted by the manufacturers of vaping devices, that vaping is harmless because it does not involve the burning of tobacco—the source of carcinogenic tar in traditional cigarette smoke. However, there is mounting evidence that vaping can be harmful to the



respiratory system, potentially contributing to long-term respiratory problems as observed with tobacco cigarettes. Even more importantly, nicotine, which stimulates the firing of dopamine neurons and thus enhances the saliency of rewarding stimuli, might render the brain more sensitive to the reinforcing effects of drugs, increasing the risk for addiction. Scientific findings and epidemiological data suggest that nicotine can act as a “gateway” to other substances. Considering that the younger a person engages in repeated administration of any addictive drug, the greater the risk of them becoming addicted, preventing nicotine exposure among adolescents whether by vaping or by smoking traditional tobacco cigarettes must be a high priority.

Not only are teen users of popular vaping devices like Juul re-glamorizing a smoking-like behavior that years of prevention campaigns had effectively stigmatized, they might be paving the way for a transition to conventional cigarettes as well as other substances. (Although vaping devices are touted by marketers as smoking cessation aids, very few clinical trials have been reported that evaluate their



efficacy). It would be tragic to undo those historic declines in cigarette use because a new generation rediscovered cigarettes after being hooked on popular vaping devices. The recent decision by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to require manufacturers of vaping devices to have plans for keeping their products out of the hands of children and teens is thus an important step; only time will tell whether the increases in teen vaping can be reversed through such measures.

Rates of marijuana use by teens have been of great interest to researchers over the past decade, given major social and legislative shifts around the drug; it is now legal for adult recreational use in 10 states plus the District of Columbia, and it is available medicinally in many more. Fortunately, even as teens'



attitudes toward marijuana's harms continue to relax, they are not showing corresponding increases in marijuana use. This year, a little over a third of high school seniors (35.9 percent) and a little over a quarter of sophomores (27.5 percent) reported using marijuana in the past year. However, for the past two decades, between 5.0 and 6.6 percent of seniors have

reported using marijuana on a daily basis, and that has not changed; this year it was 5.8 percent, meaning that a significant portion of students is performing below their potential in school and thus adversely affecting their life prospects at a critical juncture. More teenagers are also reporting marijuana vaping, which for 12th graders increased from 9.5 percent for past-year use in 2017 to 13.1 percent in 2018. It is unclear if the teens who vape marijuana is also smoking it, or if they are a growing cohort of young people being exposed to marijuana for the first time through vaping.



On the brighter side, teens are using other illicit drugs at very low rates. Seniors' use of illicit drugs other than marijuana (12.4 percent in the past year; 6 percent in the past month) was the lowest in 2018 that it has been since the start of the survey. The continued declines in misuse of prescription opioids like Vicodin are particularly reassuring (only 1.7 percent of seniors used Vicodin during the previous year, down from 10.5% in 2003), as is the fact that heroin use, now resurgent among adults and young adults, remains negligible in teens. Alcohol and cigarette use are also at all-time lows. These findings point to the success of prevention efforts, such as measures aimed at protecting young people from the effects of tobacco company advertising.

Compared to other national surveys, the MTF data are analyzed and released remarkably quickly: Funded by a NIDA grant, the research team at the University of Michigan that conducts the survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders every January analyzes the results and reports on them by the end of the year, giving us a real-time picture of drug trends among America's youth. It is important to remember, however, that the MTF only captures drug use among those in school. Illicit drug use, drinking, smoking, and vaping are all likely to be higher in adolescents who have dropped out of high school.

*This paper is from: National Institute on Drug Abuse*

*<https://www.drugabuse.gov/about-nida/noras-blog/2018/12/monitoring-future-survey-results-show-alarming-rise-in-teen-vaping>*



# Taiwan Research News

## A Preliminary Study on Mixed Narcotics Package Market Dealings<sup>1</sup>

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In recent years, new psycho-active substance; NPS with alternative market names has spread rapidly in various countries and is sold in various cities in the form of coffee sachets, milk tea sachets, preserved plum slices, etc., posing serious physical and psychological harms on young people. With the support of the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Institute of the Ministry of Science and Technology, this study invited four first-line police practitioners and prosecutors in October 2018 to conduct focus group interviews, targeting market dealings, marketing modes, and crime features of mixed narcotics packages, such as coffee (Ethylone) and milk tea (ketamine/MDMA) sachets containing narcotics. The initial findings of the research are as follows:

- (1) At present, most of the mixed narcotics package abuse groups are young people, most of whom are pursuing peer recognition, novelty and the misconception that they are not breaking the law. The venues of use are mostly home, hotels, KTV, nightclubs, and so on. How to assist young people in understanding the hazards still demands strong advocacy and the clarification of concepts.
- (2) The manufacturing locations are mostly day-rent suites, motels, and residential managed buildings in the metropolitan area. The locations of drug dealings include nightclubs, KTV and other entertainment venues. The main negotiation pipeline differs from the traditional drug delivery in person and by phone. The dealing of mixed narcotics packages mostly involves the use of the Internet, communication software, online games, etc. as the bridge. Therefore, inspections of the locations and





networks should be strengthened.

- (3) The main mixed drugs contain Schedule II and Schedule III narcotic drug types, including: cathinones, ketamines, tryptamines, synthetic cannabinoids, etc., all of which have 1%-5% purity. However, since it is the drug lord that formulates narcotic drug ratios and types, the situation of mixed drug use is serious. For the above NPS, investigation and drug source control ought to be strengthened.
- (4) The contents of mixed narcotics packages primarily consist of Schedule II and Schedule III narcotic drugs. To transport illegal drugs internationally in bulk quantities, the mission may be impossible to achieve without gang support. Although there is no direct evidence at present, after the data sorting and analysis, a correlation was found, which demands the enforcement agencies to strengthen drug crackdowns.
- (5) For the illicit drug seizure part, since the contents of mixed narcotics packages may vary, it is impossible to determine at once whether or not certain contents are narcotic drugs. Hence, it is difficult to call for custody. Restricted by the existing laws, most suspects can only be dealt with by non-prosecutorial disposal, while verdicts are bound by practical legal cases, leading to improper sentencing. These issues are to be discussed and resolved through investigations done by the police, and legal experts.

<sup>1</sup>This paper is part of the “New Drug Mixed Package GIS Regional Images, Market Dealing and Problem Inspection Pre-disposing Project” of the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Institute, Ministry of Science and Technology executed by Yang Shih-Lung, Hsu Hua-Fu, etc. (2018); Project Number: MOST 107-2420-H-002-007- MY3-PA10704



# Reentry to Community from Prison-based Drug Treatment Center: The Transition Process for Drug Abusers

Tzu-Hao Wu

The purpose of this study is to explore the transition process for drug abusers who were released from drug treatment centers in Taiwan from the perspective of practitioners. Analyzing data from in-depth interviews with 7 practitioners from 3 drug treatment centers and 7 case managers in 4 drug prevention centers, this study aims to understand the practical dilemma in the transition process. It also tries to give some feasible suggestions to improve current situation. And 5 case managers in drug prevention centers participated in the second-round interview.

This study not only divided the transition process into three stages, pre-release preparation, short-term residential treatment, and aftercare, to review it deeply, but also discussed whole transition process, cooperation between treatment centers and prevention centers, and relevant policy issues from the perspective of practitioners. Result found that:

1. In the pre-release preparation stage drug treatment centers focus on the improvement in motivation and social adaption and emphasize the effect of aftercare.
2. Both treatment centers and prevention centers argued about the difficulty in referrals caused by the strict qualification for living in half-way houses and the lack of half-way houses.
3. In the aftercare stage, the most common problem is “case loss”. In order to reinforce the transition process, the frequency of aftercare should be improved and the probation should be included into the whole process.
4. Regarding to suggestions for different centers, practitioners in drug treatment centers suggested



that drug prevention centers should cooperate with employment service station and provide services actively. Besides, drug prevention centers should hold more family support projects and provide mental support to drug users' family members. Practitioners in drug prevention centers emphasized the importance of after treatment prevalence, intensify counseling effectiveness.

Take research results as a reference, this study proposed a new model for transition process, re-entry treatment model. In the new model, half-way house for drug abusers are included into compulsory rehabilitation treatment to shorten the period drug abusers stayed in treatment centers, reinforce their ability of social adaption in half-way house, and improve transition process to enhance treatment effect. Research restrictions and suggestions for future research are discussed.

**Keywords: People receiving rehabilitation treatment, compulsory rehabilitation treatment, transition process, drug treatment center, drug prevention center**



# Latest Conferences Information

➤ Editorial Office

Conference	Host Organization	Date	Location
<b>SBM's Annual Meeting &amp; Scientific Sessions</b>	<b>Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM)</b>	<b>March 06-09 2019</b>	<b>Washington, DC, USA</b> Contact: <a href="http://www.sbm.org/meetings">http://www.sbm.org/meetings</a>
<b>ASCPT Annual Meeting</b>	<b>American Society for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (ASCPT)</b>	<b>March 13-16 2018</b>	<b>Washington, DC, USA</b> Contact: <a href="https://www.issup.net/issup-events/nairobi-2018">https://www.issup.net/issup-events/nairobi-2018</a>
<b>The ASAM 50th Annual Conference - Innovations in Addiction Medicine and Science</b>	<b>American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)</b>	<b>April 04-07 2019</b>	<b>Orlando, Florida, USA</b> Contact: <a href="https://www.eventscribe.com/2019/ASAM/main.asp">https://www.eventscribe.com/2019/ASAM/main.asp</a>
<b>Rx Drug Abuse &amp; Heroin Summit</b>	<b>Rx Drug Abuse &amp; Heroin Summit</b>	<b>April 22-25 2019</b>	<b>Atlanta, Georgia, USA</b> Contact: <a href="https://www.rx-summit.com/">https://www.rx-summit.com/</a>
<b>Council Meeting Dates</b>	<b>National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse</b>	<b>May 14 2019</b>	<b>Rockville, MD</b> Contact: <a href="https://www.drugabuse.gov/">https://www.drugabuse.gov/</a>
<b>APA 2019 Annual Meeting</b>	<b>American Psychiatric Association (APA)</b>	<b>May 19-22 2019</b>	<b>San Francisco, California, USA</b> Contact: <a href="https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/meetings/annual-meeting">https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/meetings/annual-meeting</a>

