

## Say No to Drugs: Empowering Adolescent Resilience Through Knowledge Transfer Programme

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### **Abstract**

Drug threats do not discriminate by age, affecting children, adolescents, youth, and the elderly. In Malaysia, the increasing involvement of children under 12 years old in drug abuse cases is a cause for concern. Although the number of cases remains relatively low, without early prevention and intervention this trend could jeopardize the nation's future. Contributing factors such as neglect, abandonment, poverty, and family problems highlight the inability of adults to consistently safeguard children from harm, including the dangers of drugs. Hence, adolescents must be empowered with the ability to protect themselves. This study employed a qualitative approach through focus group discussions (FGDs) involving 44 adolescents aged 10 to 12 years old. The FGDs were conducted after participants attended a knowledge transfer program on the dangers of drug abuse. Data were analysed thematically using NVivo software. The findings reveal three stages of empowerment among adolescents: (1) early exposure (knowledge and awareness), (2) continuous learning (risk identification), and (3) building resilience (prevention). The study concludes that efforts to combat drug issues in Malaysia should begin at an early age. Adolescents must cultivate resilience to safeguard themselves, supported by parents, guardians, teachers, and the wider community.

### **Keywords**

Empowerment, adolescent, drug threats, resilience, prevention.