



YSO Policy: Substance Use

This policy is from a YSO that serves high-school aged youth. There are many ways to compose a substance use policy, depending on the perspective of your agency. Different organizations have different values and beliefs about youth and alcohol, for example. If you suspect youth are using substances while attending the program or outside the program, *safety* is the most important consideration. For this policy, BE SAFE recommends the following:

- Be aware of how your personal beliefs about substance use among youth aligns with the values of your agency;
- Understand the spectrum of substance use among youth, and learn to identify when substance use is unhealthy or abusive.

Policy:

Agency U strives to promote a healthy and secure environment for everyone. Part of promoting a healthy environment includes but is not limited to prohibition of substances, illegal or otherwise, that alter one's mental and/or physical state. Absolutely no illicit substances or alcohol will be allowed on the premises. This includes illicit and illegal drugs such as cocaine, marijuana, tobacco, heroin, etc. Over-the-counter medicine, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, will not be consumed at the program without the permission of staff.

If prescription medicine needs to be taken during the hours at Agency U, the youth must have a signed form from their doctor explaining the condition for the medicine, the time to be taken, and the proper dosage. Only then can the prescription medicine be taken, and must be administered by a staff member (*See Medicine Distribution Policy*).

In addition, no one will be allowed to be under the influence of any substance upon entering the facility. If someone is suspected of being under the influence upon arriving, they will be confronted about the situation and then asked to leave. The youth's guardian will be contacted by the program director. The youth will be given an opportunity to explain to inform the parent before making the Agency U staff talks to the parent.

Procedure:

- 1) If a youth is suspected to have illicit drugs on them, he/she will be asked to meet with a staff member and youth leader to discuss the issue.
- 2) This discussion will go over why the staff member believes the youth is in possession of drugs and will ask them whether or not they brought drugs to the Agency U center.
- 3) If the youth denies possession, but the staff member still has a strong suspicion that the youth has drugs on them, they may still ask the youth to leave and notify their guardian.
- 4) If staff discovers illicit substances, the youth will be asked to leave the premises. Staff will call the parents to pick up the student.
- 5) Staff will inform the Program director of the incident and will file a report documenting the events of the incident. This report will be signed by all parties involved.
- 6) The program director will then notify the youth's parents or guardians of the incident and if incident occurs a second time, a meeting with all parties will be set up to discuss the incident, the overall health and wellbeing of the youth, as well as their future in the program.

