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Getting High in Schools



GETTING HIGH IN SCHOOLS

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› **ALARMING:**
825
secondary students nationwide
tested positive for drugs between
January and March.

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› **SICKENING:**
Some confessed taking syabu, ganja
and designer pills in school toilets or
secluded areas.

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› **WORRYING:**
Student-counsellor ratio of
500-1
hard to contain delinquents.

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Kedah recorded the highest number of students, aged 13 to 17, taking drugs.

Agency worried over students hooked on drugs

By Danial Dzulkifly
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KAJANG — The number of drug users among school students is a major concern which the National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK) aims to tackle.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamad said that out of 29,583 students vetted from January to March, 825 were detected to have used drugs.

Drugs like ganja and syabu were found to be the most commonly used among the students.

"Kedah had the highest number of students detected for the month of January to March, with 218 from 2,762 students in 159 schools," he said at the National Anti-Drug Agency headquarters here yesterday after awarding 467 officers for excellent service.

"There were cases of the students themselves becoming drug pushers."

The agency's director-general Datuk Abd Halim Mohd Hussin said although the numbers of school children using drugs was increasing, he could release the exact data yet.

"This is due to the risk factor which we are looking into," he said.

Nur Jazlan said the National Anti-Drug Agency could not effectively operate without proper intelligence from stakeholders.

"There must be increased cooperation between the education and higher education ministries. This is so we can carry out enforcement and education activities on information received," he said.

"AADK also cannot simply enter school grounds as it is not within our jurisdiction.

"Concerned parties also can talk to AADK pertaining to drug users or addicts, while they can report drug pushers to the police. We will meet the Department of Education to discuss the issue soon."



Nur Jazlan also said the agency was looking to build its own lockups to enhance its enforcement activities as it was now responsible for drug abusers.

"They have taken that responsibility from the police. AADK is now working on gazetting its own lockups to better carry out its duties," he said.

He said budget cuts were temporary for this year and possibly next year but the government expected the economic situation to improve and to grant extra allocation for the agency.

Earlier, in his opening remarks at

the awards ceremony, Nur Jazlan said although the agency's budget had been reduced by RM30 million for this year, he hoped it would utilise its assets to the fullest.

"I'm confident that AADK can give its commitment to continue the fight against drugs, which is the nation's number one enemy," he said.

"However, for the agency to remain effective and relevant, you must maintain dynamic strategic planning that can adapt and be up to date with the ever-changing landscape of drug offences in the country."

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- Nur Jazlan