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Ministry tackles drug abuse among students

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PETALING JAYA: The Education Ministry has initiated proactive measures to curb drug abuse among school children, said Education Ministry Director General Datuk Seri Dr Khair Mohamad Yusof yesterday.

"The ministry is cooperating with other agencies including the National Anti-drug Agency (AADK), the police and Health Ministry, as well as NGOs like the Malaysian Drug Prevention Association (Pemadam), parents and the local community to carry out these activities," he said in a statement.

He said the prevention programmes and activities carried out includes drug prevention campaigns at the school, district and state levels, exhibitions, talks on the dangers of drug abuse, Five-minute Anti-drug messages, Anti-drug Badge Scheme (led by uniform bodies in schools to share information to peers), and Drug Prevention Education Corners in schools.

For intervention programmes, Khair said that high-risk students will be identified through initial drug screenings, questioning, arrest by police outside the school compound, and observation by teachers in classrooms.

"Between 2013 and 2015, 117,562 students had their urine screened for drug usage - and based on the test, an average of 3.35% tested positive for drugs," he said.

He added that these students were observed closely through school counseling, periodical meetings with their parents and were directed to attend the National Child Intervention Camp (Intan - Kem Intervensi Anak Negara).

"Through these programmes and cooperation among the agencies, the ministry is confident that this issue will not escalate to a serious level," he said.