SCHOOL-BASED DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMS: AID TO PREVENT DRUG USE AND ABUSE AMONG STUDENTS

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Drug abuse is one of the leading health problems all over the world. The battle against illegal drugs has been traced back on the year 1870s when the first anti-opium laws were implemented because of the Chinese immigrants in the United States. It was President Nixon who declared the war on drugs and founded some agencies that will handle the problem. (Drug Policy Alliance, 2018)

In 2016, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has initiated his countrywide war on drugs to address the widespread abuse on drugs and the rampant crimes associated with it. His policy is intended to arrest and jail the illegal drug personalities from the country.

The Department of Education has found a way to prevent drug use and abuse among students; that is, the inclusion of drug education programs in schools such as symposiums through the guidance of the Philippine National Police. Hargreaves (2016) revealed in his studies that there are countries that already included drug education in their curriculum and they found it out to be effective. He also cited that support and professional trainings to teachers are found to be one of the essential ingredients in the provision of universal drug education in schools.

The Department of Education believes that if attention is given to the aspects that influence the development of children, they are unlikely to yield to illegal drugs. Since education plays a vital role in moulding a society as prescribed by norms and culture, then, functional drug education programs have a great impact especially when they are linked with effective programs in the community which deal with the same problem.
In addition to that, educating the students about the risks of engaging to drug abuse and addiction may help them decide positively. Drug education programs may give knowledge to enhance social life and intensify rejection skills towards negative influences that may lead them to drug use and eventually to drug addiction. This also encourages interactions in which learners can participate and the program may monitor students’ academic performance. Another possible benefit from this, is the regulation of external stimuli such as the different social media, internet sites and peers. Lastly, drug education program could be very effective if parents will be tasked with the activities as well.

The Department of Education, together with Philippine National Police and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency must continuously provide trainings to teachers on how to deal properly in terms of drug use and abuse. One of the programs initiated by these government agencies that must be supported by the whole community is the “Barkada Kontra Droga”. It is designed as a preventive education and information drive campaign to counter the dangers and disastrous effects of drug abuse. It aims to empower the individual to be the catalyst within his peer groups in advocating healthy and drug-free lifestyles thru involvement in various wholesome activities that would strengthen camaraderie, teamwork, solidarity and linkages in their common commitment to attain a drug-free lifestyle.

References:
