

High Schools are facing a new drugs epidemic in many nations - 1.5 million pupils in the UK have already taken drugs - 300,000 will try them this year. Statistics in the US are even worse (see free online book below). Over 700,000 starting UK High School this week will find ready access to every illegal drug - from friends. More than 10% will have tried them by the Summer. And drug abuse is often linked to violence and physical abuse by pupils. That's according to a new book, *The Truth about Drugs*, by Dr Patrick Dixon - 1998. (Note - this book turned out to contain a huge number of accurate predictions.)

"Every High School has a drugs problem. Every classroom is affected whether teachers realise it or not. Some pupils are suffering after effects of drug-taking almost every day. Drug-dealing leads to violence: pupils are scared to inform teachers, afraid of being beaten up, knifed or killed. The "pusher at the gate" is a myth. Pupils usually get drugs from friends.

"The good news is that most pupils are non-users - however drug-users make them feel minority freaks for abstaining. Non-users need urgent help to create their own, powerful anti-drugs culture at school, so they feel good about saying "no". Too many schools lessons on drugs actually encourage use because they give facts in a moral vaccuum."

Dr Dixon proposes a new Drugs Charter for parents, teachers and pupils, with a range of "drug-free" measures including random hair-testing on a voluntary basis in return for privileges.

- 14% of 15-16 year old boys have taken drugs in the previous week, 11% of girls
- 10% of older US pupils take drugs every day
- 8% of all men in Britain are dependent on alcohol or drugs, 2% of women
- 80% of all large US companies now randomly test workers for drugs
- 8% of all international trade is illegal drugs

The book contains a 10 point plan for government and a 10 point plan for worried parents

Dr Patrick Dixon is a well known author, broadcaster and lecturer on global trends. Other books include *Futurewise*, *The Genetic Revolution*, *The Truth about AIDS*, *The Rising Price of Love* and *the Truth about Westminster*.

Interviews / review copies: Eleanor Goody, Hodder 0171 873 6044 or Dr Patrick Dixon 0181 567 9824, 0468 511 390 (mobile)