

# "BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY"



For more information on these and other drugs refer to the following websites.

**National Institute on Drug Abuse**  
<http://www.nida.nih.gov>

**US Department of Justice**  
[www.usdoj.gov/dea](http://www.usdoj.gov/dea)

**The Vaults of Erowid**  
<http://www.erowid.org>

**US Department of Justice**  
[www.usdoj.gov/dea](http://www.usdoj.gov/dea)

The CBHATTC is funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, SAMHSA.

Many times, we are unaware of a problem until it's too late to prevent it. At other times, we just choose to ignore it. But, isn't it "better safe than sorry"?

This is a concept that especially applies when dealing with drugs and youth issues. Adolescence is an impressionable age, which usually goes with the flow of what is "in" in music, fashion, peer groups, and leaders of opinions. It is the grownups responsibility to become effective transmitters of knowledge and tools that will help adolescents make decisions.

There is a new wave going on with young kids we want to WARN you about. This phenomenon is known as designer drugs or club drugs. These drugs are developed by changing the chemical composition of existing drugs in clandestine laboratories. For example, Ketamine is a drug used by veterinarians as an anesthetic. Once baked, this drug changes into what is commonly known as "Special K". Another example are steroids and appetite suppressants which are changed into drugs such as Ecstasy and GHB. Most of these drugs affect the central nervous system and can cause hallucinations, muscle relaxation, depress blood flow and as a worst case scenario, death.

Because of their hallucinogenic effects, designer drugs are preferred in "rave parties" and discos. A rave is a party where techno music is played and special light effects are used to create an environment which entices "designer drug" use and enhances their effect on the senses. In Puerto Rico, these parties take place in private caves, boats and clubs, among others. They are advertised as harmless parties where alcohol is not sold. The liquid of preference is water do to the constant activity, which combined with these drugs, causes dehydration. But, many times, once the water runs out, alcohol is sold (this is an extremely dangerous practice). Promotions and advertisements of this parties are known for their use of futuristic symbols and cartoons as well as bright colors and psychedelic images.

Mainly, "club drug" users are young people between 15 ± and 25 ± years of age. Not much more is known in relation to demographics of users, but some observers believe they belong to high and middle-high class. These drugs' cost per unit is between \$30 and \$40.

In the next issues of INFORMA we will be presenting detailed information of the most common drugs, their origins and their short and long term effects. Also, we will provide you with a guide of the do's and don'ts when dealing with a situation in which these drugs are involved.