

## **Report on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2022 Webinar for Parents: Understanding Substance Use**

Adolescence is a critical period in human development and is characterised by novelty seeking and impulsivity, and significant brain growth and development. This makes teenagers uniquely at risk when it comes to substance use, abuse and addiction. Involvement and support of parents, guardians and other caregivers are critical in preventing youth substance abuse.

Therefore, the counselling department organised a webinar with a clinical psychologist to help parents of Senior School (Grades 9-12) understand Substance Use in Adolescence in a clear, relevant manner on **Saturday, 29th October 2022**. Our expert speaker was Ms. Ankita Deshmukh is a licensed clinical psychologist who runs her centre, Butterfly Psychotherapy in Pune, where she works extensively with adolescents and young adults. She works from a trauma focussed therapy perspective, and is a cultural psychiatry researcher.

The session itself was informative and insightful. Ms. Deshmukh emphasized the importance of parents entering the child's mental world, taking responsibility for their fears and anxieties, and basing preventative care on consistent positive parenting.

Effective substance use education is important because young people are faced with many influences to use both licit and illicit substances. Education can play a counterbalancing role in shaping a normative culture of safety, moderation, and informed decision making.