

Fighting drug abuse is everybody's responsibility

The National Drug Authority and *New Vision* yesterday rewarded 20 winners of the essay competition against drug and substance abuse. The awards were a culmination of a long campaign period where the two partner institutions sensitised schools and communities on the dangers of drugs and substance abuse.

The initiative is certainly a great move towards having a country free of drug abusers.

Drugs, including tobacco and alcohol, are easily available to children. Because the negative

effects of drugs has wide-ranging implications on society, it should be a collective responsibility to ensure it does not take root in the communities. The fight against drugs and substance abuse should start from the parents since they have the greatest influence on their children.

Drug abuse prevention starts with parents learning how to talk with their children about difficult topics. The initiatives and programmes offered by schools, sports and other groups should only come in to supplement what parents have already started.

While there is no guarantee that your child will not turn into a drug abuser, the vice is much less likely to happen in a situation where a parent provides proper guidance with clear rules. The parents should, of course, lead by example, spending quality time with their children. That way, we can have a society free of drug abusers, with the attendant negative effects on society.

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