

Ethical and Legal Aspects of Testing for Addictive Substances in the School Environment



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SUMMARY: *The article presents an analysis of the current issue of testing children and adolescents in schools when the use of addictive substances is suspected. Final recommendations are articulated on the basis of such analysis. Four main perspectives on this important procedure are accentuated: legal, psychological, educational, and medical. The legal perspective suggests an analysis of international, national, and intradepartmental legislative instruments pertaining to children, adolescents, and educational facilities and substance abuse and options for intervening and protecting their rights. It further recommends an appropriate procedure which provides legal security for both the testees and the testers. It provides information about the impact and risks of restricting and intervening in their natural rights on the basis of legal instruments, work with young people during their adolescence, and attitudes towards cases of suspected substance abuse. The educational perspective presents schools and educational facilities as among the most important settings for health promotion and prevention activities aimed at children in this area. Equally, it points out the obligation of the school to ensure a relatively safe environment for the proper mental and physical development of children and the possibility of education professionals taking measures in relation to the issue of substance abuse, including testing for the presence of drugs. The medical section deals with the possibility of having an adolescent examined in a healthcare facility or collecting blood or urine samples from those who are reasonably suspected of having used an addictive substance. The text provides no clear-cut and dogmatic procedures. Instead, it offers variable options and recommendations intended to help educational facilities and their professional staff in working with children.*

KEY WORDS: ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCE – CHILD – TESTING – RISK BEHAVIOUR – SCHOOL – EDUCATIONAL FACILITY

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