

The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation

Drug and alcohol education for schools,
colleges, professionals and communities



DSM *foundation*

The drug education charity

2024-2025



ABOUT US

The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation is a drug and alcohol education charity founded by Tim and Fiona Spargo-Mabbs in response to the death of their 16-year-old son Daniel in January 2014 after an accidental overdose of ecstasy. Part of a loving family and the younger of two boys, Dan was bright, articulate, popular, kind, funny and talented, and one of the very last people anyone would have expected to come to harm from drugs. And yet, on 17th January 2014, Dan collapsed at an illegal rave and died three days later.

www.dsmfoundation.org.uk

The DSM Foundation believes that every young person should have access to effective, evidence-based drug and alcohol education, so that they develop the knowledge, life skills and resilience they need to make informed and safer choices when in situations involving substances. Ultimately, it is about young people getting home safely, and helping their friends to do the same. The charity is based in South London and has spread rapidly across the UK since its inception just over a decade ago, primarily through word of mouth and recommendation.



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EVIDENCE-BASED DRUG EDUCATION

The DSM Foundation's drug and alcohol education programme for students, staff and parents/caregivers is mapped to an international evidence base of what is most effective in drug and alcohol education, and to European standards of good practice. All provision is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis to ensure all content is current, relevant and addresses the priority issues for young people, and provides schools with all they need to achieve the drug education outcomes in England's Relationships, Sex and Health Education framework, and Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence. It incorporates direct delivery by specialist drug educators, planning and resources for teachers, training for staff and workshops for parents and carers, a Youth Ambassador scheme, and a play. Dan's story is woven into everything we do, as it provides relevance, context and reality for all audiences, and storytelling in this way can be an incredibly engaging and effective means of communicating important messages.



TEDx

Fiona Spargo-Mabbs OBE, founder and director of the DSM Foundation, has delivered a TEDx talk, explaining why drugs education is vital.

EDUCATION AND IMPACT

Evaluation is essential to ensure our planning, resources and delivery are as effective as they can be. Evaluation data is gathered from students, teachers, parents and caregivers, which is used to refine our provision in response to what people want and need. The DSM Foundation has been an Associate Member of Middlesex University's Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (DARC) since 2017, and their initial academic assessment of elements of our drugs and alcohol education programme can be seen at <https://tinyurl.com/DARCDSMF>.

We are also delighted to be working with Middlesex University on further evaluations of our provision under government funding, awarded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research, and with the University of Aberdeen on an evaluation of some of our work in Scotland.



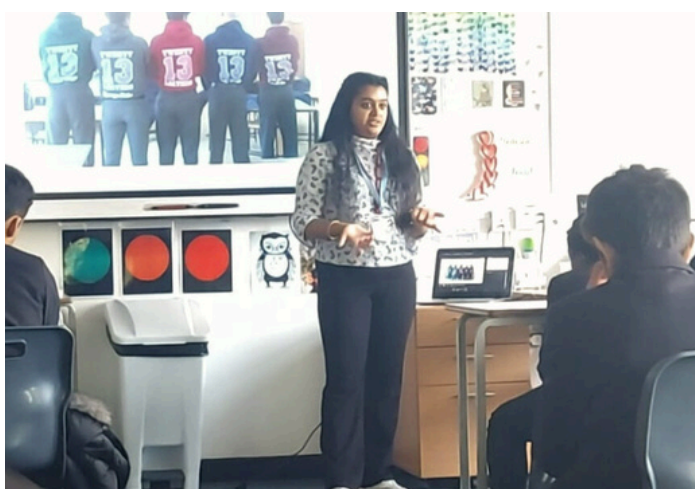
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DRUG EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

Assemblies, talks and interactive workshops can be delivered in person if within reasonable reach of our drug education team, which is based around London and the south of England, with a second base newly established in North East Scotland. Further afield, we are willing to travel if practicable, as long as the setting is prepared to cover the costs of us doing so. Our drug educators plan sessions in discussion with key staff to make sure it meets the needs of the students, and for Years 11-13/S5-6, we include feedback from a pre-workshop survey that the young people themselves complete.

Feedback from students has been extremely positive (and they are not easily pleased!). They found the session informative and engaging and liked the fact that it was interactive.

Teacher, 2023-24 academic year



We also offer bespoke live-streamed talks using a school's online platform or our own Zoom account. An edited and time-limited recording can also be provided afterwards. For some settings, live-streaming is preferable, because it allows interactive sessions to be delivered to students in classrooms or tutor groups. This format is particularly popular with FE and sixth form colleges, where a large number of young people can be reached in a single session, often around an event such as a wellbeing week. It is also a good option for settings that are further afield from our London base.

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PROVISION FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

Our Mission Transition resource pack, designed for teachers to deliver in class, builds pupils' confidence and resilience both in preparation for the transition to secondary or senior school, and in adapting to their early weeks and months there. Pupils learn about core values, decision making and carry out a research activity investigating drugs and alcohol in an age-appropriate way. The free to download pack contains PowerPoint presentations plus teacher notes, and can be delivered as a series of short sessions or in a morning or afternoon, depending on what setting feels would work best. The most common time for schools to use this is in the second half of the summer term.

MISSION TRANSITION

for age 10-12 years

TRAINING FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Every member of school staff has a duty of care for the young people in their setting, and those who have a training session from the DSM Foundation find it brings them up to date on the context young people find themselves in when it comes to alcohol and drugs. The session also arms them with tips and advice on managing conversations with their students that can feel tricky, and enables wider working with the school community to try and reduce drug-related harm. It is also invaluable for anyone looking to deliver drugs education as part of PSHE/PSE, as research shows that it is more effective when facilitators are trained in this specialist area. Sessions are tailored to what a school or college needs, where appropriate taking into account feedback from a pre-workshop survey that staff members are asked to complete.

“

This was a really informative session which had a powerful impact – I am so glad I attended as I learnt so much.

Staff member, 2023-24 academic year

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'MAKING SAFER CHOICES' DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR YEARS 7-13/S1-6

We offer a range of free resource packs for teachers to enable them to deliver effective, evidence-based, interactive drug and alcohol education as part of PSHE/PSE, either in lessons or in shorter, form time sessions. We always advise settings to follow up workshops delivered by the DSM Foundation team with these sessions, as they provide students with opportunities to further their understanding by embedding knowledge, asking questions and learning from each other.

The lessons are invaluable... lots of current up-to-date information which we really appreciate.

Teacher, 2023-24 academic year

The evidence base for drug education indicates that in order to be effective, young people need age-appropriate sessions that are reinforced and built upon as their exposure and situations change. For this reason, the DSM Foundation programme comprises a spiral curriculum, with a pack of two to three sessions for each school year. Mapping documents detail what is covered overall and per year group, enabling the slide decks and teacher notes to be used flexibly – but also easily – to suit a setting's provision. Topics include the effects and risks of drugs, the law, decision making (including motivations and influences), and practical strategies (including harm reduction for older year groups).

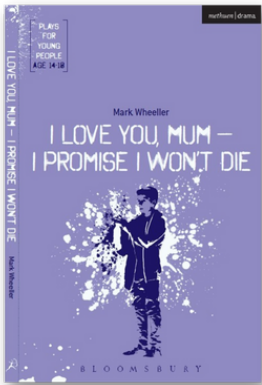


'Dan's story', a specially commissioned 10-minute docu-drama (shortlisted for a Charity Film Award), is available to show to students as an introduction to our PSHE/PSE resource packs. This is broadly suitable for Years 10-13/S3-6.

There are also substance-specific resource packs available free of charge for schools to deliver in form time or as an assembly, including underpinning knowledge for staff. Again, the slide decks and notes provided for these have been designed to be relevant for students, as well as easy to deliver for staff.

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DRAMA & DRUGS EDUCATION



In 2014 the DSM Foundation commissioned a powerful verbatim play that tells Dan's story, 'I Love You, Mum - I Promise I Won't Die', written by award-winning playwright Mark Wheeler (Bloomsbury/Methuen Drama, 2017). In September 2022 this became a GCSE drama set text on the Eduqas syllabus, and since its publication the play has been studied, taught and performed in schools and communities across the UK and around the world, including as far away as Australia and Canada.

You could have heard a pin drop throughout the entire performance. It very much resonated with our students.
Teacher, 2023-24 academic year

The professional touring Theatre in Education production of 'I Love You, Mum - I Promise I Won't Die', adapted by the playwright, has been seen by thousands of students since 2017, with performances followed by interactive workshops. This has a huge impact on all who see it, and Tie It Up Theatre will be touring schools and communities in Scotland in the autumn term of 2024, with Wizard Theatre planning a tour of London in the spring term of 2025. Both companies also offer performances outside the DSMF-commissioned tours.



There are two professional films of the play performed by Tie It Up Theatre, one for England and one for Scotland. The play film resource pack includes interviews with Dan's parents, Tim and Fiona, and follow-up workshop resources for teachers to deliver. This is a great option for schools wanting a performance outside the tours.

The play was genuinely incredible, the actors were phenomenal... I liked that the script was based off the exact words of those involved, rather than twisting the story into fiction... Seeing the photos of Dan was also very impactful.

Student, November 2023



[Click here to watch the film trailer](#)

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RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

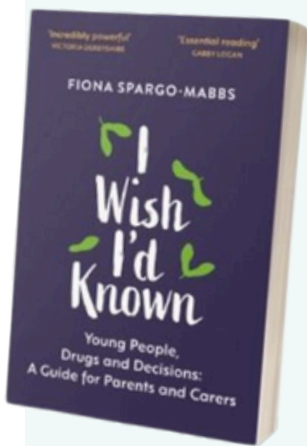
Parents and caregivers have a significant influence over their children throughout their lives, and schools working in partnership with this group are further supporting their students to stay safe. 'I Wish I'd Known' interactive workshops for parents and caregivers involve finding out about current issues for young people in relation to drugs and alcohol, adolescent brain development and decision making, practical strategies and advice, and engaging with young people in what can feel like difficult conversations, whether pre-emptive or reactive.

It was brilliantly informative, covering all aspects and delivered really well.

Parent, 2023-24 academic year

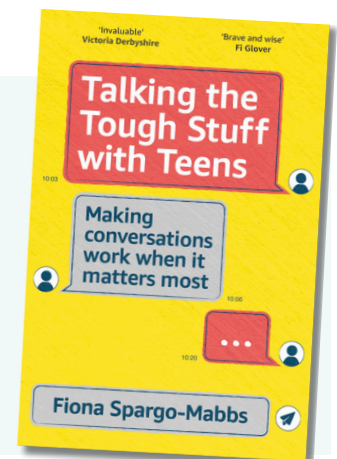
Sessions are usually delivered by webinar, which enables attendees to join from wherever they are, and also allows a recording to be made available after the session. In person sessions are also an option too.

All parents and caregivers who attend a workshop are signposted to a dedicated landing page on the DSM Foundation's website where they can access summary information and other resources that may be useful.



DSM Foundation founder and director – and Dan's mum – Fiona Spargo-Mabbs OBE, has written two books for parents. The first, 'I Wish I'd Known – Young People, Drugs and Decisions: A Guide for Parents and Carers' (Sheldon Press, 2021), weaves Dan's story through all the information, advice and practical tips Fiona wishes she'd known before he died. There are also supplementary materials available, for schools and colleges, for adults supporting neurodivergent young people, and for Christian parents and church leaders.

'Talking the Tough Stuff with Teens' (Sheldon Press, 2022) explores conversations with teenagers – what can make them work well (or not) and how to try to make sure they do – in general terms and in relation to specific areas of risk to young people such as relationships, sexuality, gender identity, mental health, eating disorders, self-harm, and suicide. This is also available as an audiobook.



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YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

Having young people at the heart of our team, as well as our work, has been a key ingredient of the DSM Foundation from its beginning. Our Youth Ambassadors' course is designed for students from Year 9 upwards and provides everything needed to equip them to be a positive influence for their peers and beyond.

The programme is a mixture of self-directed study and working with a

member of staff in their academic setting, with assessments built in to demonstrate learning and understanding. By gaining confidence and learning new skills, YAs can then use their talents and interests to benefit their setting and the DSM Foundation in whatever way works best for them as individuals and their wider lives.



WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY, BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS

In addition to our comprehensive schools' programme, we provide workshops to young people in community settings, and to parents and caregivers in workplaces as part of a wellbeing programme for their employees. We also offer training for individuals working with young people in any capacity to improve their knowledge and skills and inform their work. Sessions are bespoke and developed in discussion with our drugs education team.



EVENT SPEAKING

DSM Foundation founder and director Fiona Spargo-Mabbs OBE is an articulate and engaging speaker who delivers keynote and other addresses at a number of events.

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CONTACT US

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 www.dsmfoundation.org.uk

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