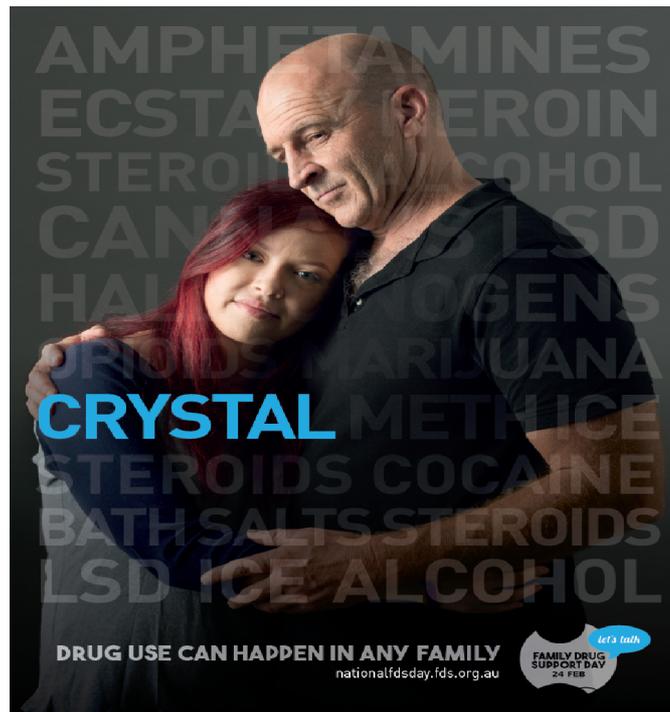




MEDIA RELEASE

“Drug Use Can Happen in Any Family”

27TH January 2016



“No matter how strong our desire for people not to use drugs or our efforts at education and prevention, people will use drugs. Yet for far too many people that will mean encountering many unnecessary harms. First and foremost, families want people they know using drugs to be safe.”

Tony Trimingham, CEO and Founder of Family Drug Support and organiser of the National Family Drug Support Day on the 24th February said today.

Recent statistics show that the estimated number of the Australian population aged 15 years or over who have recently used illicit drugs is almost 3 million people.

(Source Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013 National Household Survey)

The breakdown of drug use across the country showing the vast number of people in Australia reporting drug use is as follows:

NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
867,562	682,452	587,076	353,962	217,978	63,443	47,961	42,018

Mr Trimingham pointed out that *“the families living with someone who uses drugs often find the situation very confronting, stressful and difficult. The constant concerns about the impacts on their behaviour, health, mental well-being, employment, study, relationships, children, finances and future prospects take their toll. Yet we know that much like the drug called alcohol, the millions of people that are using illicit drugs in this country don’t all have problems from their drug use. However, the added worry that because their family member is using a substance that is illegal it means they could be arrested, charged and criminalised is an unnecessary and cruel additional burden. It is not only the person using drugs who is being punished – it is the whole family who suffer.”*

“Criminal convictions for drug use can leave ongoing and permanent stains on people’s lives. They can put an end to career prospects and severely restrict overseas travel. Imagine the chaos that would ensue if we actually arrested and charged every person that ever used an illegal drug.”

“In tackling the problems of drugs we should emphasise the health, well-being and human rights of the person using drugs and focus on supporting their families.”

February 24 each year is the date for families and to recognise the day.

For details of the event and registration go to <http://nationalfdsday.fds.org.au>

For enquiries please contact FDS on 02 47829222 or Tony Trimingham on 0412 414 444

We would also like to acknowledge the vital support of our sponsors and supporters.

- ❖ Indivior
- ❖ Australian Drug Foundation (ADF)
- ❖ We Help Ourselves (WHOS)
- ❖ Ogilvy CommonHealth
- ❖ Damien Trimingham Foundation (DTF)
- ❖ Queensland Government – Mental Health Commission
- ❖ Alcohol & Other Drugs Peak National Network
- ❖ Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA)
- ❖ Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association (AIDA)
- ❖ Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL)
- ❖ Drug & Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre (DAMEC)
- ❖ Harm Reduction Australia (HRA)
- ❖ National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)
- ❖ National Indigenous Substance Misuse Council (NISMIC)
- ❖ Pharmacy Guild of Australia (PGA)
- ❖ Scriptwise
- ❖ Palmerston Association
- ❖ Narrabri Shire Council