What is Purple Drank?

Sometimes called “Lean”, Purple Drank is a name used to describe a recreational drink made and used by young people locally. It combines over the counter medicines, like codeine – based cough syrup, promethazine or dextromethorphan, with soft drinks or fruit-flavoured sweets.

What are the effects of Purple Drank?

These will vary. However, users have reported euphoric and dissociative effects. Other effects may include constricted pupils, slow/slurred speech, uncontrolled eye movement, droopy eyes, slowed heart rate, drowsiness, loss of balance, loss of co-ordination and paleness. There is a risk of overdose particularly because of the codeine, and this will be increased when taken in conjunction with alcohol.

What advice should you give?

Our best advice is, wherever possible, to avoid using Purple Drank completely. However, if someone says they will be using Purple Drank anyway, the following harm-reduction advice should be given:

1. You should say that there is a risk of overdose attached to Purple Drank, especially when used with alcohol.
2. You should never use Purple Drank – or other drugs – when you are on your own.
3. If someone becomes ill or unconscious having used Purple Drank – or other drugs – you should ring 999 immediately and ask for an ambulance.
4. Even though the ingredients can be legally bought without a prescription, they can be very damaging when used above the recommended levels.

For more information please contact the Young Persons Substance Misuse Service on Email: YouthServices@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Phone: 07766 628970