

PRE INVENTORY SALE

PO-BOX
-Drugs-

Are Drug Programs Working?

Questions should be sent to the Community Commission on Drug Abuse, P.O. Box Drugs, Livonia, 48151.

This week's column is a continuation of answers to an earlier question. The question was whether various drug programs were effective in stemming the abuse of drugs.

To solve a problem you first have to identify it - both as to its nature and extent.

Several years ago, it became apparent that there was a drug problem in most suburban communities. But no one was able to give any sort of statistical information. Today there are many unanswered questions, but some facts and trends are being discovered.

ONE OF THE ways in which such facts are established is through the "analysis anonymous" program sponsored by the Livonia Westland Community Commission on Drug Abuse. Through this program, people can submit samples of suspected drugs to certain neighborhood pharmacies for analysis without contacting the police or without revealing their own identity.

In the past year several hundred samples have been submitted for analysis and the Commission has compiled data on the results. Some revealed statistics have resulted:

- 1) Half of the samples were tested positive.
- 2) The largest percentages were amphetamines ("pep pills"). Just slightly under one-third of all positives were amphetamines.
- 3) Barbiturates (sleeping pills) accounted for almost one out of five positives.
- 4) Marijuana was less than one-third of the positives.
- 5) LSD was found very little, accounting for between seven and eight per cent of the positive tests.
- 6) Heroin showed up in small percentage (less than three percent).

WHAT CONCLUSIONS may be drawn from these statistics?

Pen pills and sleeping pills account together for more than half of the drugs of abuse in these figures. These drugs, along with alcohol, would then seem to constitute the greatest problems in these communities for both young people and adults.

LSD seems to have fallen out of disfavor, possibly because of some very unfavorable reports as to its dangers.

There is heroin present in these communities. Even the small percentage reported is cause for concern.

One of the highly visible trends is the great increase of barbiturates over the past year. In the month of November 1971, barbiturates accounted for 80 per cent of the positive tests. It should be born in mind that these drugs are both lethal and may become truly addicting.

The user himself is a hazard, and presents a serious problem to the community. His actions while under the influence of barbiturates are similar to those of a drunk: belligerence, lack of judgement, loss of coordination and greatly slowed reflexes are common effects. Behind the wheel of a car he would be as dangerous or more dangerous than one intoxicated with alcohol.

SO WE SEE that patterns seem to be developing that show relatively little presence of the exotic drugs such as LSD, mescaline etc., but a great presence of more commonplace drugs - but drugs which present very serious problems to the user and to the community.

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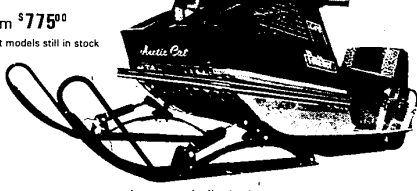
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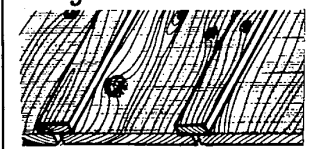
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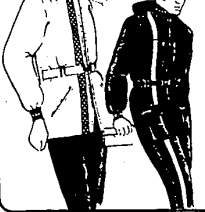
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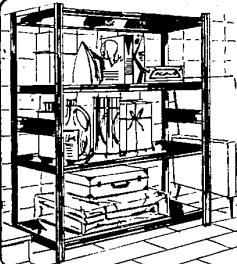
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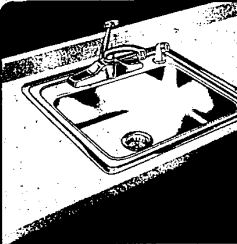


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