

- How might different people understand:  
The Message differently from me?  
What is left out of this message?  
What is the real message behind this message?  
In what ways is this a healthy or unhealthy media message?

(Adapted from [www.medialiteracy.com](http://www.medialiteracy.com))

The ultimate aim is to recognize how media messages influence us. Then we can use these skills to identify messages about drugs or negative lifestyle choices in a healthy way. These are unavoidably embedded in every form of media around us.  
Drug and alcohol addiction can look cool on TV. In reality it is anything but cool. And it is our duty to educate ourselves and our children as to the reality of things.

(Compiled by Antonio Olivari Consultancy: Grace Attard)

**Here are some websites you can consult about substance abuse and media literacy:**

[www.fadaa.org](http://www.fadaa.org)  
The Florida Alcohol & Drug Abuse Association

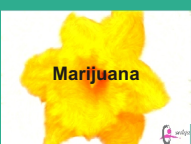
[www.mediacampaign.org](http://www.mediacampaign.org)  
The website of the Office of National Drug Control Policy's drug prevention programs. (U.S.A.)

[www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org)

[www.medialiteracy.com](http://www.medialiteracy.com)

For more information (and material) regarding substance misuse, as well as preventive services offered to the general public, please call our Prevention Team on 21 244 226 or e-mail on: [prevention@waldonet.net.mt](mailto:prevention@waldonet.net.mt)

Some of the informative postcards and leaflets recently published



**Here are some useful Telephone Numbers:**

**Sedqa**

<b>Sedqa Head Office:</b>	<b>21 441 014</b>
<b>Substance Misuse Out-Patient</b>	<b>21 255 096</b>
<b>Drugs Community Team</b>	<b>21 487 697</b>
<b>Alcohol Community Team</b>	<b>21 487 697</b>
<b>Family Team</b>	<b>21 421 193</b>
<b>Primary Prevention Team</b>	<b>21 244 226</b>
<b>Secondary Prevention Team</b>	<b>21 441 215</b>

**Other Agencies**

<b>Alcoholics Anonymous</b>	<b>21 239264</b>
<b>Appogg</b>	<b>21 226 066</b>
<b>Caritas (Malta)</b>	<b>21 245 358</b>
<b>Gamblers Anonymous</b>	<b>21 233 933</b>
<b>Health Promotion Dept.</b>	<b>21 245 524</b>
<b>Narcotics Anonymous</b>	<b>21 246 478</b>

# PAPERCUT



## Quick Words



3, Braille Str. St. Venera HMR 11  
Foundation For Social Welfare Services  
[www.sedqa.org.mt](http://www.sedqa.org.mt)

Papercut is a newsletter issued by sedqa's primary prevention team in an intent to generate updated drug and alcohol prevention information for the general public. For more information check out the web addresses we have provided to useful web sites, or alternatively visit our site:

[www.sedqa.org.mt](http://www.sedqa.org.mt)

For more information, **sedqa** are @  
3, Braille Str. St. Venera HMR 11  
Tel: 21 441 014  
Or  
Primary Prevention Team  
Tel: 21 244 226

- Much of the information we receive from the media is biased, incomplete and sometimes even misleading to downright false. For example, we are surrounded with messages that alcohol is fun, sexy, desirable and harmless. No connections are ever made to wife battering, family neglect, marginalisation, unemployment and child abuse. In commercials one would not expect them to be, because their job is to erase any negative aspects and consequently enhance the positive ones.
- Statistics show that unlike what the media portrays most young people do not use illegal drugs. (ESPAD 2003).

### The Relationship between Media Information & Substance Abuse

- A media-literate person can access, analyze, evaluate, and even produce media.
- The human brain processes moving images in a different manner than text.
- Many studies suggest that such education can, in fact, produce less vulnerable children and adolescents.
- A direct correlation exists between the level of children's exposure to alcohol ads and the incidence of drinking.
- Media literacy exposes the techniques tobacco and alcohol companies use to target adolescents, therefore enhancing their resiliency.
- Providing parents and students with the media skills to *talk back* to television reduces the level underage drinking.

(adapted from [www.medialiteracy.net](http://www.medialiteracy.net))

**Sedqa helpline 151**

### For a start one has to:

- recognise that all forms of media are **constructed**. They are manufactured products, whether news broadcasts or simply billboards on the streets.
- recognise that all media use their own **unique languages**. On television for example, music heightens fear and zooming in adds impact. On newspapers, headlines signal importance.
- recognise that media have **commercial interests**. Young people are the hottest target for advertisers, and content is designed to make sure they are watching when commercials appear.
- recognise that media have embedded values and **points of view**. There's no such thing as value-free media.

### Important key-ideas used in the media related to substance abuse:

**Persuasion:** influencing a person by anything that moves him, in order to convince him to do or buy something, even if not healthy.

**Sensationalism:** intentionally presenting information in a way that is intended to arouse an emotional response in order to attract attention.

**Stereotype:** an oversimplified generalization about a person or group of people without regard for individual differences. For example: an alcoholic, a partygoer, a junkie.

### Learning about the media doesn't give you straight answers. It teaches you how to ask some helpful questions such as:

- Who is paying for this message and why are they sending it?
- Who is being targeted?
- What techniques are being used to attract my attention? (audio, visual, format)
- What lifestyles, values and points of view are represented in the message?

This issue is entirely dedicated to:

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE & THE MEDIA

Some points about the current situation:

- The ability to read and write is no longer sufficient in an age when the vast majority obtain their information from visual sources, primarily television.
- The media constantly depicts certain ideas and behaviours as *normal* or *mundane* and these are often accepted without being questioned. This becomes a problem when the ideas promoted are closely related to one of the nation's major problems: drug and alcohol use.
- Advertisers are not simply selling a product. They are selling an image, a lifestyle, a status. If their messages are effective, people will consequently purchase their product despite the negative consequences that ensue.

To further extend the services offered by sedqa prevention we also offer preventive talks to organisations upon request. Talks are tailored to the necessities of those requesting them. For more info please call:  
21 244 226