



DRUG ADDICTION - THE RUIN OF LIFE: LEGAL AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS FOR PROTECTING YOUTH FROM THE SCOURGE OF DRUG ADDICTION

Ibrokhimjonova Rukhshona Bakhromjon kizi

Andijan State University, 2nd-year student.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21936729>

Abstract: This article analyzes the negative impact of drug addiction on the health and moral development of young people, as well as on the stability of society. It examines the current legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the circulation of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the liability measures provided for in the Criminal Code and the Code of Administrative Responsibility, and recent legislative developments in this area. The article also highlights the educational tasks of the family, educational institutions, mass media, and the public in protecting youth from drug addiction, and offers recommendations for improving the prevention system.

Keywords: drug addiction, youth, legal responsibility, narcotic substances, prevention, education, healthy lifestyle, social security.

One of the most pressing problems facing humanity in today's era of globalization is drug addiction. This disease not only destroys the physical and spiritual health of an individual but also threatens the entire family, the mahalla, and, in the future, the nation's gene pool. The fact that the age of drug addiction is decreasing worldwide makes the issue of protecting young people from this vice more relevant than ever.

In recent years, new forms of drug distribution—specifically through the Internet and online communication tools—have increased the risk of this vice spreading among young people. Therefore, the leadership of the Republic of Uzbekistan has defined the fight against drug crime as one of the priority areas of state policy and is constantly improving the legislative framework.

However, legal measures alone are not enough to prevent this evil. Systematic educational work in the family, educational institutions, and society is the most important means of eradicating drug addiction. This article comprehensively examines the essence of the problem of drug addiction, its legal foundations, and educational ways to protect youth from this vice.

The essence of drug addiction and its impact on the lives of young people

Drug addiction is a chronic disease that requires treatment, resulting from the systematic use of narcotic substances that affect the human central nervous system. From a medical point of view, this condition is characterized by a physiological and psychological dependence of the individual: a person cannot function normally without a narcotic substance, is forced to increase the dose over time, and almost all systems of the body are damaged.

For young people, this vice is especially dangerous, as adolescence and youth are considered a stage of physical and mental formation of the individual. Narcotic substances negatively affect brain activity, memory, attention, and decision-making abilities, leading to serious consequences such as school dropout, refusal to acquire a profession, and the disruption of family relationships. In addition, young people who have become addicted to drugs can often commit other crimes in order to earn money.

This means that drug addiction is not just a personal problem—it becomes a social security problem at the level of the family, the mahalla, and society as a whole. Therefore, the state adopts a dual approach to this problem—both legal and educational.

Legal foundations of the fight against drug addiction

The main regulatory framework for the regulation and fight against the circulation of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the Republic of Uzbekistan is established by the Law "On Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances," adopted on August 19, 1999. This law defines the list of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, state control over their circulation, as well as the procedure for providing narcological assistance.

Articles 270–276 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan provide for criminal liability for the illegal manufacture, storage, transportation, sale, and distribution of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and their analogues. Punishments for such actions vary depending on the amount of the article, the degree of public danger of the act, and the involvement of minors—involving minors in drug use is a specific aggravating circumstance.

In recent years, legislation in this field has been actively improved. Laws No. ZRU-971 and No. ZRU-972, adopted in October 2024, introduced a number of amendments and additions to the Criminal, Criminal Procedure Codes, and the Code of Administrative Responsibility to strengthen the fight against the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, their analogues, psychotropic, potent, and toxic substances.

More importantly, according to the new law adopted on June 11, 2026, a completely new chapter titled "Crimes against public health and the nation's gene pool" is being introduced into the Criminal Code. Within the framework of these changes, separate, strict punitive measures have been established for acts such as organizing an illegal drug laboratory for the production of narcotic drugs, sponsoring illicit drug trafficking, and organizing a drug den, and direct criminal liability has been established for involving a minor in the consumption of a potent substance. This indicates a new stage of the state's legal policy aimed at protecting the health of the younger generation.

At the same time, Uzbekistan is a party to the 1988 United Nations Convention "On Combating Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances" and actively participates in the fight against drug crime together with the international community. All such legal measures are a necessary but insufficient condition for protecting young people from drug addiction—since prevention is more effective before the onset of the disease rather than after the violation of the law.

Educational foundations for protecting youth from drug addiction

While legal liability measures combat the consequences of drug addiction, upbringing fights its causes. From this perspective, the role of the family, educational institutions, and the public in the prevention system is of particular importance.

First, the family is the first and most important institution in the formation of a child's personality. Open, trusting communication with parents, attention to the feelings and problems of the child, the presence of a healthy psychological environment in the family - all this significantly reduces the likelihood of a teenager being influenced by bad influences. Conversely, a lack of family control often drags a teenager into an uncontrolled environment and dangerous influences there.

Secondly, educational institutions-schools, colleges, and higher education institutions-must become centers of spiritual and educational upbringing alongside the provision of knowledge. An important role in this is played by the effective organization of psychological service activities, a large number of educational lessons, sports clubs, and creative clubs based on the consequences of drug addiction, which are scientifically grounded and based not on fear, but on a conscious choice. Filling a teenager's free time with useful and interesting activities is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of being drawn into an uncomfortable environment.

Third, the media and social networks have become a powerful tool in shaping the consciousness of young people. Therefore, it is necessary to increase persuasive and attractive content that promotes a healthy lifestyle, while preventing the depiction of addiction in a light or "normal" way.

Finally, initiatives at the state level also play an important role. In particular, Uzbekistan is conducting practical work to join the initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) aimed at forming drug immunity among minors and youth, as well as promoting the concept of "Central Asia - a drug-free zone" in the region. Such international cooperation allows for the enrichment of the national prevention system with modern, scientifically grounded methods.

To summarize, addiction is a disease that begins with a momentary mistake and leads to the ruin of a whole life. It can be effectively eliminated not only through punitive measures, but also through a comprehensive approach to eliminating the causes—by harmonizing law and education. The consistent improvement of legislation in Uzbekistan, in particular, the introduction of new norms protecting minors into the Criminal Code, is an important step in this direction.

However, any law will not be fully effective if a healthy lifestyle is not transformed into a value in society, primarily in the family and school. Therefore, in the future, strengthening cooperation between the family, the education system, law enforcement agencies, and public institutions, as well as the further development of youth-oriented preventive programs on a scientific basis, remains an urgent task. Only such an approach will protect our youth from drug addiction and serve to raise a healthy and harmoniously developed generation.

References used:

- 1.O'zbekiston Respublikasining "Giyohvandlik vositalari va psixotrop moddalar to'g'risida"gi Qonuni, 1999-yil 19-avgust.
- 2.O'zbekiston Respublikasi Jinoyat kodeksi, 270–276-moddalar.
- 3.O'zbekiston Respublikasining 2024-yil 5-oktyabrdagi O'RQ-971-son va 7-oktyabrdagi O'RQ-972-son Qonunlari (Jinoyat, Jinoyat-protsessual kodekslari va Ma'muriy javobgarlik to'g'risidagi kodeksga o'zgartirish va qo'shimchalar kiritish haqida).
- 4.O'zbekiston Respublikasining 2026-yil 11-iyundagi O'RQ-1151-son Qonuni (Adliya vazirligi ma'lumoti, gazeta.uz, 2026-yil 12-iyun).