



## Overview

'Listen First' is an initiative to increase support for prevention of drug use that is based on science and is thus an effective investment in the well-being of children and youth, their families and their communities. Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe.

Listen First was launched in 2016 during the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem. It began as a campaign on science-based drug prevention to raise awareness around listening to children and youth as the first step to help them grow healthy and safe. The campaign targets parents, teachers, policy makers, health workers and prevention workers particularly, as well as the wider public.

The global campaign - using the hashtag #ListenFirst - aims to increasing support for science-based drug use prevention. In order to illustrate this important issue to a diverse audience, public service announcements, videos and fact sheets have been developed for use by health workers, parents, teachers, prevention workers and policy makers.

Prevention of substance abuse is a key target under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 on Health. 'Listen First', seeks to raise awareness of the fact that drug use prevention based on science is an effective investment in a healthy future.

During the global pandemic in 2020, UNODC focused the Listen First materials to increase support for prevention of drug use that is based on science and is thus an effective investment in the well-being of children and youth, their families and their communities, specifically during times of isolation and physical distancing.

The key messages of the campaign are:

- Core of science-based prevention is listening.
- Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them stay healthy and safe.
- Evidence-based science to prevent drug use in children and youth is an effective investment in the global health and well-being of communities.

Materials are currently available in English, French and Spanish and will be launched in other official languages at a later stage.

### Multi-Phased Dissemination Timeline

Each one of the 10 sets of materials comprises a video and a factsheet, illustrating a different aspect of parenting and the science behind it. The sets will be launched according to the following schedule.

10 November 2020	Launch: <b><i>Science of Affection</i></b> and <b><i>Science of Family Activities</i></b>
20 November 2020	Launch linked to World's Children Day: <b><i>Science of Active Listening</i></b> and <b><i>Science of Play</i></b>
10 December 2020	Launch linked to Human Rights Day: <b><i>Science of Patience</i></b>
15 January 2021	Launch: <b><i>Science of Praise</i></b> and <b><i>Science of Physical Activity</i></b>
11 February 2021	Launch linked to Women and Girls in Science: <b><i>Science of Information</i></b>
20 February 2021	Launch linked to World Day of Social Justice: <b><i>Science of Routines</i></b>
08 March 2021	Launch linked to International Women's Day: <b><i>Science of Staying Busy</i></b>

### Dissemination activities

The launch on 10 November will be marked by a web-story on the main website of UNODC ([www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org)) and posts on Twitter and Facebook, all linking to the relevant sets of materials (video and factsheet) on the website of the campaign ([www.unodc.org/listenfirst](http://www.unodc.org/listenfirst)).

As per the timeline above, on 10 November there will be two sets of materials featured: the Science of Affection and the Science of Family Activities. The launch will be followed by daily posts further highlighting the significance of the sets. This will be repeated at each of the dates above: initial posts followed by daily posts for a week on the relevant set(s). Sample messages are attached as ANNEX A.

UNODC is reaching out to a large variety of partners in advance, including Member States, other international and regional organizations, the youth connected globally through the Youth Initiative, scientists and research institutions, civil society organizations, etc.

Partners are encouraged to find the campaign on social media and forward the posts from their accounts and/or use the sample messages to post independently and/or in their own language.

This initiative is made possible with the support of France.

Please contact Elizabeth Mattfeld at [Elizabeth.mattfeld@un.org](mailto:Elizabeth.mattfeld@un.org) for further information.

### **THE SCIENCE OF AFFECTION**

#Parents and #families can be powerful protective factors in the lives of #children and #youth.

@UNODC\_PTRS is launching #Listen First #ScienceofCare to support parents, families and caregivers worldwide with #Ethan Films and the support of France.

Did you know that #science proves that being warm, loving and responsive are some of the most important actions parents can take to help the development of their children? #itsscientific #scienceofcare

*#Listen First/ #ScienceofCare is a @UNODC initiative to support drug use prevention based on #science worldwide.*

Watch the video on 'Affection' here: <https://youtu.be/EvcRwZF-TsA>

For more information visit our #ListenFirst Website: <https://www.unodc.org/listenfirst>

Talking Points:

- Affection can help children grow smarter, healthier, happier, and more resilient.
- Human touch is essential for brain development and physical growth.
- Physical affection such as hugs and smiles releases oxytocin, also known as the love hormone.
- Oxytocin can stimulate growth, strengthen the immune system and even help wounds to heal faster.
- Oxytocin/physical affection can reduce stress, relieve anxiety, and even lower blood pressure.
- Affection makes children feel loved, builds up resilience and makes them stronger.
- Affection builds trust and helps parents bond with their children.
- The more affection a child gets, the more their confidence and desire to explore the world grows.

### **THE SCIENCE OF FAMILY ACTIVITIES**

Did you know that children who spend more quality time with their families are less likely to get involved in substance abuse and other risky behaviour?

Watch the video on "Family Activities" here: <https://youtu.be/54DBqCkE38s>

For more information visit our #ListenFirst Website: <https://www.unodc.org/listenfirst>

*#Listen First/ #The Science of Care is a #UNODC initiative to support drug use prevention based on #science worldwide.*

Talking Points:

- Family activities stimulate infants and children neuronal development. Each new experience prompts positive change in children's brain structure, function, or both.
- Quality family time fosters an open communication. Children who spend more active time with their parents are less likely to get involved in risky behaviour and substance use.
- Social studies show children that do household tasks grow into happier, healthier, more generous partners and well-adjusted adults.
- Children learn by touching, tasting, feeling, smelling, and listening. Cooking together is a creative, rewarding activity that promote autonomy.
- Studies link family dinners to increased resiliency and self-esteem in children, higher academic achievement, improved mental and physical health and even reduced risk of substance abuse and eating disorders.