



### Personal information on the author

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Position Associate Professor of Criminal Justice  
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### Most important career path

Currently, I feel that further promoting a public health approach towards high-risk youth, particularly those involved in gangs and substance abuse, are my most important career objectives.

### Title of presentation

The Illicit Use of Legal Substances

### Description of your contribution (max. 250 Words)

The first decade of the new millennium witnessed the emergence of what may best be described as the illicit use of legal substances. Such behaviours include: 1) the abuse of over the counter medications, particularly cough suppressants containing a version of morphine; 2) the non-medical use of prescription drugs, including opiates, stimulants and benzodiazepines; and 3) the use of hallucinogens known as tryptamines and phenethylamines that legal are in some countries, but chemically analogous to illegal substances, such as LSD and 'ecstasy'. The term 'illicit' use, in these cases, refers not to law breaking, but for the use of a substance outside its original intention. What is interesting about such substance use behaviours, in part, is their transcendence beyond race, class and gender; everyone appears to use such substances. Moreover, the use of such substances is reflected in youth culture, particularly music, fashion, and clubbing. The presentation first offers an overview of the illicit use of legal drugs in various countries, including available epidemiological data. From here, data on the use of these substances within particular groups of high-risk youth (e.g. homeless; injection drug users; gang members) are presented. From here, the use of these substances within club environments is examined. Finally, an overview of public health and criminal justice-sponsored approaches towards the illicit use of these legal substances is provided.