

THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIAN TERRITORIES POSITIONAL STATEMENT

ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

The Salvation Army encourages a healthy spiritual, emotional, mental and physical Christian lifestyle, without the use of and/or dependency upon any damaging drugs, including alcohol and tobacco.

Alcohol

Recognising the dangers of the use of alcohol, a common drug of addiction, The Salvation Army requires that its soldiers and officers do not drink alcohol.

We believe the only certain guarantee against harm and addiction is total abstinence, while not condemning others who use alcohol.

We therefore actively support legislation likely to reduce the consumption of alcohol.

Social Drinking

Alcohol is accessible in many homes and at social functions. There is pressure on non-drinkers to please others by accepting a drink and also to offer alcoholic beverages in return.

Although an occasional social drink does not inevitably lead to alcoholism, alcohol always impairs judgment and is a contributing factor in many personal and social tragedies. Salvationists, whose work frequently brings them into contact with the victims of such tragedies, believe that abstinence is the most effective way to set an example of personal responsibility in their private lives.

Tobacco

The use of tobacco has always been discouraged by The Salvation Army and its soldiers may not use tobacco in any form.

The Salvation Army accepts the evidence presented by medical science of the harmful and addictive effects of tobacco on the body. This fact confirms for the soldier that this requirement is in accordance with scriptural teaching that the body is God's temple.

Other Drugs

The Salvation Army strongly opposes the misuse of mind-altering, mood-changing and/or physically damaging drugs of any kind, whether addictive or not, and whether illegal or not.

There are many drugs beneficial to health but even prescription drugs can be harmful or addictive and therefore need to be monitored by an aware physician, weighing the advantages and risks.

The Salvation Army takes a compassionate view of any persons who have become victims of any of these substances and continues to provide avenues for those people to endeavour to regain physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health with God's help.

For further reading:

Watson, Bernard: *The Salvationist in a Secular Society*; Salvationist Publishing & Supplies Ltd., 1974.

Approved by IHQ July 1992