DARE Network

Drug & Alcohol Recovery and Education

DARE Network on the Thai/Myanmar Border

A Free Mind Cannot Be Destroyed

Website: www.darenetwork.com

Email: drugfree@darenetwork.com

MoringAid Online: www.moringaidare.com

Facebook Page: MoringAid

The DARE Network extends its heartfelt thanks to **Alex Lee & Reay McGuinness** for sponsoring 25th Anniversary Book and Celebration Event.

DARE Network 25 Years Journey

2000- 2008 The Starting Journey- CARE to DARE and Becoming

After witnessing the atrocities committed against the ethnic people of Burma and the subsequent social problems associated with alcohol and drug dependence along the Thai/Burma Border, a Canadian Addiction Recovery Specialist and the Leaders of local ethnic groups, felt compelled to make a change in the situation. Together they developed a plan to address the growing problem of substance abuse within the displaced ethnic communities of Burma. At the time DARE Network known as Community Addition Recovery and Education Project **(CARE Project)** trained Addiction Workers from Karen, Karenni, and IDP communities. This first training, in Mae Sariang, taught skills based on traditional eastern and modern western approaches to addiction to the new community Addiction Workers to treat for substance abuse while also leading prevention and education sessions, in the refugee camps. Concurrently, DARE Network built Centres in Mae La Oon, Mae Ra Moe, Mae La, Umpiem, Noe Poe camps, Karenni Camps 1 and 2, and one IDP camp. With the completion of the training and construction of the DARE Network Centres, community Addiction Workers began recovery treatment and prevention and education sessions. **In 2005,** the organization officially changed its name from **CARE Project to Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education (DARE) Network** and set up its current office in Mae Sariang. With a strong treatment program in place, the DARE Network developed the DARE for All program to promote education and prevention. DARE has operated under a Thai foundation (Ruammit - Foundation) for the purposes of complying with the Thai government, the Ministry of Interior.

2009- 2019 - Balance the Unstable and Outreach Inside Myanmar

In 2009, 60% of DARE Network's camp-based Addiction Workers were resettled to third countries. Retraining efforts became a priority to continue to offer treatment services to those left behind and the continuous stream of Burmese entering the camps from the new offensives by the Burmese Military. As a result of the resettlement, DARE reduced its scope to work in 5 refugee camps and 1 Migrant area. Treatment numbers increased, and success rates remained high and steady at ~ 63%. Sustainability tools such as the All-Burma Addiction Training Manual continue to be developed. This Manual gathers 12 years of work into a Training Manual in Karen and Burmese languages that can be used inside the camps, inside Burma, and even in 3rd countries. DARE completed the Training of Master Trainers and 20 new Trainers of Addiction Workers. DARE Network began its Karen State Program by working with Karen State local people, authorities, and social working groups. DARE built the Training and Treatment near T'ree Hpoh Kwee, in Hpa-An District, and treated clients who came from different areas such as Hpa Pun Township, Hpa-An, Hlaing Bwe Township, Yangon, Pago, Taung Goo, Myawaddy and Kya In Seik Kyi township, respectively. DARE Network works to innovate an indigenous model of addiction prevention and treatment. Since 2015, DARE Network has worked in Hpa-An District, Hlaing Bwe Sub-District, in 40 villages. The DARE Network has trained 40 Village Coordinators in Addiction Prevention and 20 Addiction Workers to provide non-medical, culturally appropriate treatment for substance abuse. The whole DARE's Core Team supported, monitored, and evaluated program outputs and coordinated with CBOs and CSOs to extend the steps in Myanmar.

2020 to Present: COVID-19, Coup in Myanmar, 3rd Country Resettlement and Beyond

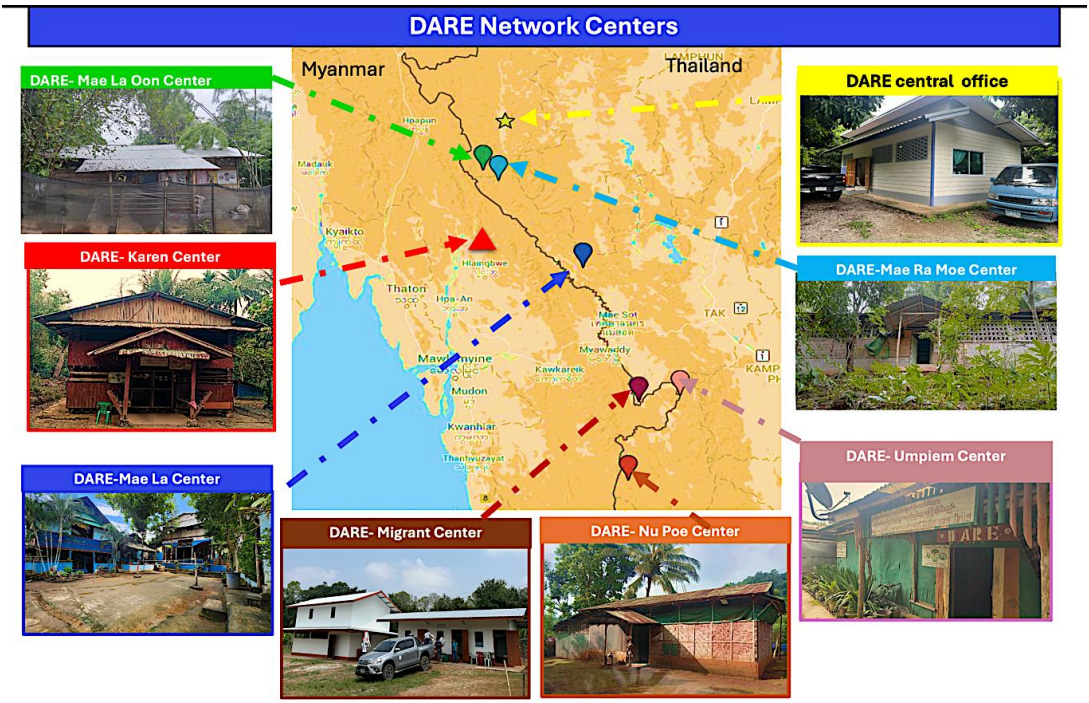
With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 and due to restrictions of COVID-19, the delay of program activities was encountered. However, the DARE Network rescheduled the activities after a few months by negotiating with the Local Based Committee and the Thai Authorities to continue the working process.

After the restriction of COVID-19 was reduced, the Myanmar military coup started unexpectedly. A coup plunged all Myanmar people into crisis and the production of illicit drugs has ramped up further in the last year, driving prices to rock bottom. There is a substantial drug trade between Myanmar and Thailand. Some of the drugs pass through the refugee camps and Migrant Worker populations on their way to their markets in Thailand and Internationally.

Again, in 2023 it was announced that UNHCR, the Royal Thai Government, and the US Government have begun the process of another round of Refugee Resettlement to the USA starting in 2024. This affected some of our workers in Karen state, who were originally from the Refugee Camps and returned to the Camps. The camp base staff also joined the verification exercise to get the chance at the 3rd country resettlement program and have enthusiasm for this program. Most of the experienced Addiction Workers are also qualified to leave. In the middle of the crisis, the DARE Network kept moving forward by using all the strength it had. DARE Network trained the new Addiction Workers to recruit them in 5 Camps, Migrant Workers in Thailand and Karen State. Currently, there are over 2 million people who have fled armed conflict and starvation into Thailand and their traumatic living conditions mean that addictions and violence are rife among Migrant Workers. To offer services to an extremely underserved community of displaced people, the DARE Network expanded a New Treatment Centre in a Migrant village, Phop Phra District. The purpose of the Phop Phra project expansion is to train Migrant Workers to offer treatment and prevention education within their communities so that they, too, can improve their well-being and their autonomy. After the Training Centre was ready, the very first training for the Migrant team started in April 2024. Concurrently, prevention education and home visits can fully operate on the Thai-Myanmar border and work to provide ongoing treatment in refugee camps: Mae La, No Pu, Umpiem, Mae La Oo. The treatment in Karen State resumed in August 2024, and the very first treatment could start in Migrant at the same time.

DARE Network Overall Performance

DARE Network is and remains the only organization to provide comprehensive addiction training, treatment, and prevention education in Myanmar and camps for displaced people along the Thai Myanmar border. DARE's recovery approach is humane, non-medical, culturally appropriate, and locally led. Our work is humanitarian, seeking to relieve the suffering for vulnerable populations. It is also cross-cutting in that it decreases poverty, increases education capacity, reduces health problems, and the impact of violence of all kinds. The overall goal of the project is to prevent and mitigate substance abuse and reduce the impact of this crisis. Treatment of drug addicts and alcoholics is at the core of the DARE Network Program.



We build community

The greatest experts are the ones with experience. No one person or group can solve a social problem alone. At DARE Network, the whole community gets involved. Everyone can learn and do something to reduce the harm of addiction in their community.

We rely on culture

Our program has taken the best knowledge of East and West to provide a unique, culturally appropriate, yet replicable program for the Indigenous people of Burma. Our services are cost-effective, culturally sensitive, and evidence-based - incorporating eastern and western practices.

The DARE Network program consists of 4 distinct priority components.

1. Treatment Program

DARE's treatment is community-based, non-medical, and culturally appropriate. It uses Burmese herbal medicines, acudetox, herbal sauna, traditional massage, education, and a variety of culturally appropriate therapies. DARE clients enter either a day treatment for the 45-day program or a residential program for 3 months, which includes detoxification, recovery, education, and relapse prevention and reintegration.

DARE Network's Staff assess the clients for substance use history and withdrawal symptoms expectations to prepare each client's treatment plan according to the results.

2. Home Visit Program

The team conduct visits regularly after the client completes the recovery program. Aside from gaining an understanding of the client's and his/her family's overall well-being, it is also an opportunity to support the client's self-esteem and place in the community. Some of our recovering clients train to become Addiction Workers and become role models in their communities.

3. Prevention Education Program

DARE provides community prevention education for families and youth to prevent substance abuse and to provide support to addicted families. DARE provides information and support to foster a substance-free environment in the camps and among Migrant populations. Normally, this activity is usually conducted 2 times per month. Sometimes, we could complete it up to 3 times per month. This activity is focused on sharing addiction knowledge and prevention strategies because it is a comprehensive approach that aims to address the root causes of drug problems in the communities. This activity is led by DARE's Staff and Addiction Workers with the cooperation of community leaders. DARE Network shares prevention education directly with clients, families, schools, youth, and local organizations.

DARE Network Teens for Kids Program creates drama at World Anti-Drug Day in one of the Burmese Refugee Camps.

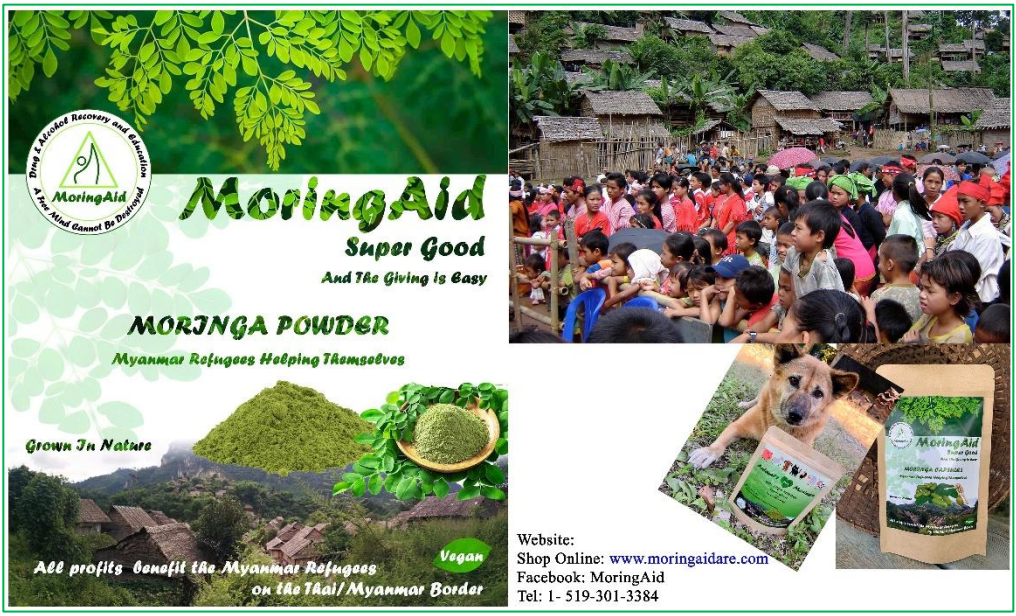
4. Training for Addiction Workers

DARE Network aims to build the capacity of the local community to respond to addiction issues. Addiction Workers receive 6-7 months of training to treat addicts in their community. The effect of this is to strengthen the working teams in the communities and to prevent attrition and loss of human resources. It also looks to the future when these teams may go back to their homes and communities, and can share their knowledge and skills, helping vulnerable people. This program is supported by the DARE FOR ALL Burma Community Addiction Manual.

Opening Ceremony of Training of Trainers (TOT) Event - 2015

5. DARE Network MoringAid Project

In the Refugee Camps, Migrant villages and in Karen State, Myanmar, one of the many ways we help our clients to heal is to use organic agriculture at our DARE Treatment Centres. DARE Network runs a Social Enterprise project called MoringAid. The purpose of this project is to help our program sustain itself for the future. The Moringa products from the DARE network can be ordered on the website: www.moringaidare.com.

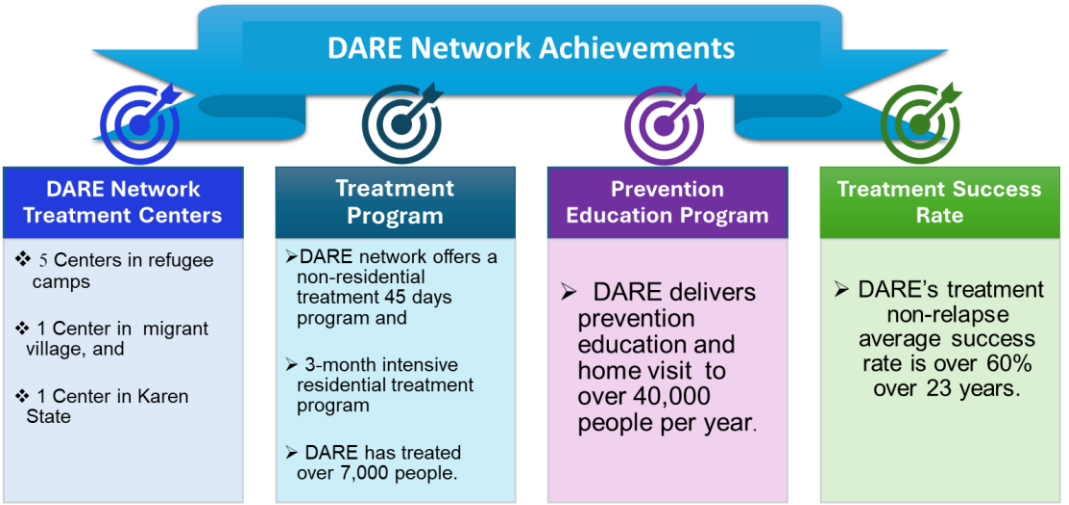


The way was not easy in the middle of the pandemic and crisis. However, the DARE Network kept moving forward by using all its strength.

Summary of DARE Network Achievements

In the field of addiction, there are several treatment approaches. One is a medical approach, using medical drugs to replace illegal chemicals. This reduces harm to the community by stopping the crime associated with illegal drug and alcohol abuse. However, it doesn't stop the addiction. The addict just substitutes a legal drug for an illegal drug. If for some reason, the addict cannot access the medical drug, he is at risk for severe and possibly unsupervised withdrawal. In countries where medical supervision of addiction treatment is not reliable, this could cause great harm.

Our program is non-medical, using materials that should be easy to find by the community to find. It is meant to treat the addiction, not just substitute and control. If people work hard and follow the program, the addicts can be restored to health and become productive members of society, free from the drugs and alcohol that control their lives.



Ruammit - Foundation DARE Network

Dr. Jaroon Jittiwutakarn

Khun Sivalee Kasemsilpa

Ruammit Foundation for Youth is the backbone of DARE Network, holding us up in Thailand with belief in our work and support of our vision. DARE Network would not be here today without the interventions and understanding of Dr. Jaroon Jittiwutakarn and Khun Sivalee Kasemsilpa of Ruammit Foundation. We extend them our gratitude and great thanks.

Group photo - After clients completed 3 months residential program in Mae La Treatment Centre

DARE Network 25 Years Journey

DARE Network Founders

Pam Rogers

Kholo Htoo

Lawla Say

DARE Network Project Managers and Leaders

Aye Min

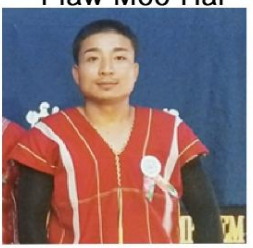
Si Thu

Ah Lay

Chit Lay

Ray Poe

Plaw Moo Hai



Lah Khu Paw

Day Law

Pler Paw

DARE Network Founders

Pam Rogers: Founder's Story

It's been 25 years since I first came to the Thai/Burma Border from Canada, where I worked at a couple of the leading Addiction Treatment Centres in Toronto. I projected only staying for 3 years to complete an addiction training project on the border, but challenges arose as they do here, and I became embedded in DARE Network's Addiction Programs.

I have had the great privilege to work with so many of the resilient people from Burma, to come to know them, their cultures, their incredible dedication to their own people who struggle everyday with generations of oppression and genocide, at the hands of the Military Junta of Burma.

Coming from a Western approach to addiction, I saw in my day-to-day frontline work in Canada, an approach that ultimately left only a minority of those in addiction treatment, truly in a lifetime of recovery. As a recovering alcoholic/addict myself, I was one of the few who made it through. But apart from my hard work on my own recovery, giving back to those who wanted to take their first steps down that road, supported my own recovery.

I had travelled to Burma before coming to the Thai/Burma Border, where I saw first-hand the cruelty of the Military Junta. It was my ongoing wish to contribute to people's struggle and working in Addictions is what I knew how to do. But I did not want to bring the failing systems of the West to a region where addiction was rife and knowledge about it hugely lacking. My belief and vision were that given knowledge and resources and structure, people could help each other recover. It was important to me to learn about how people already did this and then to take elements of tradition and culture to blend with known addiction knowledge. And so began the long journey of working with the local leaders, learning from each other and developing a program that the people could grow and own. A program that works for them, the indigenous people of Burma.

I am proud to say that as I watch our DARE Teams in the refugee camps, Migrant Worker areas, and inside Burma manage their teams, train each other, treat addicted people, work with the community leaders, families, neighbours, teachers, youth and women: my heart is full. They are successful.

When the war in Burma is over and the people end their struggle for freedom and take their destinies into their own hands, so too will DARE Network be the people's Addiction Program, reaching out to all who want freedom from addiction. Let's hope for another 25 years and beyond.

Saw Kholohtoo: Founder's Story

I am Saw Kolohtoo and have worked with DARE Network since 2002 until 2009. My journey with DARE (Drug & Alcohol Recovery & Education) began in 2002 when I joined as a translator, bridging the gap between English and Karen languages to facilitate effective communication and support for individuals seeking assistance. In 2003, I became the DARE Network trainer. In 2004, when I played a central role in organizing and overseeing various initiatives aimed at promoting recovery and education within the community. During my tenure at DARE Network, I served in various capacities, starting as a translator and addiction counselor before transitioning to roles as a trainer and project coordinator. In these roles, I had the opportunity to directly support individuals battling drug and alcohol addiction, facilitate training sessions to empower others in the field, and oversee projects aimed at promoting recovery and education within communities. I remain deeply committed to continuing to advocate for greater awareness and resources for drug and alcohol recovery and education.

Based on my experience with DARE Network, I strongly encourage DARE staff to keep continuing for organizations and individuals working in the field of drug and alcohol recovery and education: Promote Holistic Approaches, Prioritize Prevention, Foster Collaboration, Advocate for Policy Change, Support Professional Development:

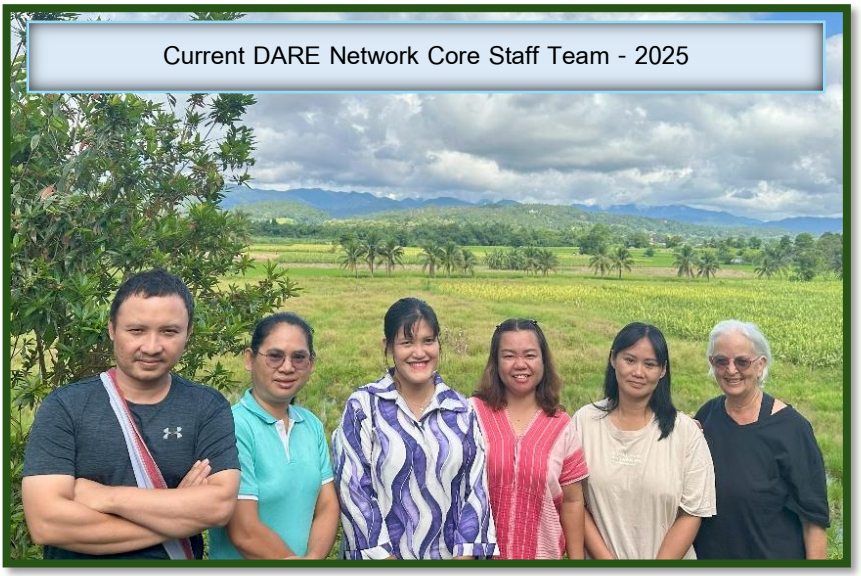
Overall, my experience with the DARE Network has been incredibly rewarding, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the important work of supporting individuals and communities affected by drug and alcohol addiction. DARE provides essential support services for individuals struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. This support can include counseling, therapy, rehabilitation programs, and access to resources for recovery. By offering a safe and supportive environment, the DARE Network helps individuals navigate the challenges of addiction and take steps toward recovery.

One of the most fulfilling aspects of my work with DARE Network was witnessing the positive impact our efforts had on individuals and communities. Whether it was seeing someone successfully complete a rehabilitation program or witnessing the collective empowerment of a

community coming together to address addiction, each experience reinforced the importance of our mission. Through my work with DARE Network, I learned several valuable lessons that have shaped my approach to addressing drug and alcohol addiction such as The Power of Empathy, Community-Centered Approaches, Continual Learning and Adaptation, and Importance of Self-Care.

Former DARE Network Core Staff Team - 2003

Current DARE Network Core Staff Team - 2025



Saw Lawla Say: Founder's Story

In this DARE Network 25th Anniversary book, I really want to share how great it is to work with DARE Network Core staff and the team in the camp, migrant area, and inside Kaw Thoo Lei. Since the beginning and till now, I've been gaining a lot of experience and having a big chance to learn from the staff and addicted people who I have met. They are the teacher of my life. Their experience and knowledge encourage me to grow up in my future life. I really enjoyed working with the DARE Network. Having a chance to help an addicted person and helping myself to recover. The message that I want to share with all staff is

"Keep going whatever you are facing"
everything put on your believer.
"I will try my best today and
prepare for tomorrow and
thank my believer for today."

Core Staff Bimonthly Monitoring Trip to the DARE Network treatment Centre

DARE Network Project Managers and Leaders

Aye Min - Project Manager (Karen State)

To become an Addiction Worker in the DARE Network, I attended 6 months of course training in 2014. After receiving a training program to gain more experience, I joined the Treatment Centre in Mae La Camp for three months. In 2015, I moved to Mae La Oon camp and worked as an addiction worker. At that time, a new DARE Treatment Centre was expanded in Karen State in 2016. They needed more Addiction Workers, so I returned to Karen State. I felt happy to serve my people inside Karen State. Later, I took responsibility for Burma – Liaison to deal with community and local leaders so our work would go smoothly. In 2023, I became the program coordinator to take care of work because the one who took the role for the management site in Karen State resettled to a third country. I was not an educated person, but I tried my best. The Treatment Centre in Karen State was my second place to work with the DARE Network for a long time, almost 10 years. I am very happy to work with DARE Network and happy to serve my Karen people to be free from substance abuse for their future lives. The DARE Network activities are very useful for villagers. Especially for drug users can have a special privilege to get treatment without any cost. Moreover, after they recover it will bring back happiness in their families.

"The most happiness for me is when you see the clients who are recovered from the addict life, it's encouraged you to work hard for the future"

Si Thu - Manager (Pho Phra, Migrant)

Before I joined DARE, I was a migrant worker and spent my time at the farm. I attended the training related to health and community. I choose to work at DARE because I am sure that this could be the way to work for the migrant community effectively. In June 2009, I attended Training of Trainers (TOT) at Mae La camp. Since I completed the training, I started working with DARE, and it has been 15 years. I enjoyed every single moment because I could help my community by giving prevention education to migrant schools. By working with DARE, I could improve my communication skills because for prevention education I always have to

deal with community leaders and cooperate with schoolteachers. I could improve my computer skills. One of the best things is I can get the knowledge about how to support addicts in their recovery way.

Because of prevention education and awareness of drug issues, we could improve the understanding of drug abuse to make a difference in the community. Through cooperation with the community leaders, some families send their drug-addict family members to the DARE Treatment Centre. Some students could protect themselves from the dangers of drugs because of knowledge prevention education. Expect the dealers or people who make money from drugs, everyone likes our activities. have to work in the community very flexibly. We may need to extend our prevention education because of the consequences of the conflict in Myanmar. Presently, people are trying to relieve their trauma with alcohol and drugs without thinking about their future. In this situation, the DARE organization could become the key problem solver to prevent and support the victims of drugs and alcohol.

Ah Lay – Addiction Service Director, Former Client

If I look back to my past and talk about my addiction story, it will start with playing computer games. At that time chewing artificial betel packages called "Shikhar" and playing games together gave me a nice feeling. Later I tried the stronger package called RhaJa, an India Smuggled food product. I didn't know how much I used it. I used it all day and night, I drank beer with friends together. After days, I wanted to taste another stronger, so I mixed whisky with beer. I liked it more. For my income, I traded jade. For daring in communication, I used Formula (this is a local name. It includes opium and cough syrup). It gave me a stable emotion and feeling happy so, I used it. But I was craving it all the time. I increased the amount gradually and later I focused only on how to get it. In the daytime, I used drugs (opium and heroin alternatively), and I drank alcohol at night. Sometimes, I mixed it all and used it also. I had an insatiable desire for drugs as I was a greedy addict. I used it until I was unconscious. I didn't create any problems because I liked to feel it after used it. However, at home, I argued with my siblings and my sister didn't talk to me for a year. Probably, my family didn't want to say any more about my use. As far as I could drink a lot, people gave me the name 'A rat hole

of drug'. Later whenever people visited me, I invited them to drink non-stop, so my name changed to 'Infinity Hole of drug'. While I was at Mae La camp, my sister encouraged me to get treatment at the DARE, so I joined 3-months of treatment.

After treatment, I travelled to another village with my brother-in-law for work. At work, I craved again and reused it. This use was worse than before. I had a big conflict with my brother-in-law and then I returned to my hometown again. According to my aunt's suggestion, I went to China for work. All my salary had gone with drugs. I came back to my hometown again, joined the gemstone mine, and reattached with drugs again. At that time, my sister phoned me to say that I needed to register my name on UN, so I came back to Mae La again. From my hometown (Kachin) to Myawaddy, I had Diarrhea along the way nearly dying. As soon as I arrived at Myawaddy, I immediately searched and took methamphetamine 24 pills, so I felt better. Within 3-4 days I continued to use methamphetamine until all money was gone. When I noticed all my money was gone, I called my Mom again to send me money as soon as possible. At that time, my mom was in the hospital for a neck dissection. My mom sent the money, so I could come to Mae La camp again. In camp, I had to find money for my use. As I used it a lot. I didn't have enough money to cover my use, so I had to replace it with Tramadol, marijuana, and alcohol. I can't be satisfied with it. I went to work every day to get money. Before work, I took 24 bottles of alcohol every day and then went to the workplace. At work hours I used marijuana and at night I drank alcohol again. My brother-in-law blamed my sister because of me so my sister often cried. It made me so painful when I noticed people got in trouble because of my character. I enrolled my name for the treatment again. On the first day of the treatment cycle, John (An addiction Manager) came and brought me to the Centre. When I arrived at the DARE Centre gate, I threw my cigarette butt away. After that, I felt regret seriously as I craved it. Following that day, I saw different kinds of withdrawal symptoms. Some clients were running around the campus because of unstable minds. I was shocked and a little worried about seeing their situation. I wanted to run away but I had to be patient with it because I did not want to become an addict again. I often cried on my bed. I also had a language barrier in communication. I am Kachin and I did not understand the Karen Language. One of my teachers, Tharamu Chaw Su helped to understand the lesson

and I tried to learn by myself as well. I was an opium and heroin user, so I had body pain and muscle cramps. Moreover, I felt depressed and had some problems communicating with others. It was not an easy time, but my target was to be free from drugs. After receiving the treatment, I gradually felt better both physically and mentally. After three months of treatment, I decided to stay at the DARE centre to help other addicts as much as I could.

I had an awful long travel way that I don't want to look back. To get the drugs I did everything. I tried to steal other users' opium pipes that included mucous and saliva to use it. Sometimes I stole the gold- sand from my uncle's project site and sold it. I became a useless person, and I concentrated only on getting money for drugs. But I am blessed. My Mom took care of and fed me with good food and medicine every day. My health was not as bad as others, however I excessively used drugs. As soon as I stopped using drugs, I could love myself more. I got back a better skin and gained weight. People trust in me, and I become a valuable person in my community. As a significant milestone, I could make friends with respectful religious leaders. I can have a business trip with a flight two times. I am working in my community like a new person. I am so satisfied with my life now. One thing is I could not support my family yet. I tried to visit my hometown once a year. It gives me happiness whenever I go back home because people come and give their respects to me. It has already 9 years since I have been living without any drugs. I know the value of self-worth. I hate my previous life. For the rest of my life, I will try to become a better version of myself and live for my family and the people who need me. With the change in my life, I have confidence in myself, and the community trust in me as well. I love to work at the DARE Centre because I want to become the bridge for people who are going through similar issues as me. I want to tell my addict's friends that "using drugs is not an innate problem so we can solve it anytime. It all will depend on your willingness and decision". As long as I have worked with the DARE team, I have seen many benefits to our community. Some clients become role models with better lives in their community. We can make a better network and we can change the perspective of the community about drug issues. Some families always open the door of help for our DARE team and give their helping hands whenever we need it. Our team is always

working to support people with drug issues. I am satisfied with what I can do. It would not be an easy problem to solve but we are trying our best.

Chit Lay – Trainer – Former Client (Mae La Camp)

I started using drugs when I was 20 years old. I used methamphetamine, marijuana, and alcohol for 10 years. Using drugs created a lot of trouble such as violence within communities, assaults, or fights among each other. Because of a drug-related problem, I was detained in the detention place once. What a worse was I was arrested and brought into the special recidivist zone because I fought and beat the camp security. However, because of a message from my sister, I decided to go to DARE to stop the drug. I decided to come by myself but the first time at the Treatment Centre it was not comfortable. My mind was always thinking about things outside and the ways to escape. While I stayed in the Treatment Centre, I received the proper treatment and we also had daily lessons topic according to the scheduled plan. Both treatment and education helped me a lot to amend my mental and physical problems. Previously, I thought drugs would make me happy but after assessment, I realized that I am a patient who urgently needs treatment and I need to stop using. I heard a clear sound from my soul "There is nothing good with drugs, try to stop thinking about it". Since I finished my treatment cycle, I continued working with the DARE network. It is the only way for me to stay away from drugs and to help others who are facing the same problem as me. Being a long-term recovery client, sometimes I was invited to share my life experience with others. As far as I know, my family members are happy to see me working at DARE. As I work with DARE, I deal with clients and their families all the time. We are happy to see people free from drugs. My life, I will always be proud of what I have done with the DARE team. With both, I can be free, and I can help others to be free.

Naw Ray Poe – Treatment in Charge (Mae La Camp)

My name is Naw Ray Poe. I live in a refugee camp and work with the DARE Network organization. Before I joined DARE Network, I came to Mae La Camp in July 2007. During that time, I heard from a friend that an organization was looking to recruit new staff. She asked

me if I was willing to join their training program. I asked her, "What kind of training do they provide?" She explained that the training focused on helping people recover from addiction. I became very interested in this kind of work because some of my own family members used alcohol, smoked tobacco, and chewed betel nut. I felt that by joining the organization, I would have a chance to help them and others who suffer with addiction problems too.

So, I filled out the application form and submitted it to DARE Network. I waited for a month without any response. During that time, another organization invited me to work with them. Just as I was considering their offer, I finally received a response from DARE Network accepting me to work with them. I only had one day to make a decision, and I chose to join DARE Network because that was my first choice and the reason, I had submitted the application. In the beginning, I faced a language barrier with Karen language, but I tried my best. In 2009, I officially started working with DARE Network in Mae La Camp. I received a six-month Training of Trainers (TOT) course to become an addiction worker. After graduating, I was given the responsibility of overseeing the treatment program. In 2013, I got married, but I continued to work with DARE. In both 2013 and 2015, DARE conducted six-month TOT programs again, and I was selected as one of the trainers.

Sadly, in 2016, my husband passed away. Around that time, DARE Network expanded its work into Karen State, and I joined the team there from 2016 until 2023. After 2023, I returned to Mae La Camp to serve as the treatment in-charge and trainer.

I feel happy and grateful to be able to help families and neighbours affected by addiction. I am deeply thankful to DARE Network and all the Addiction Workers for giving me the opportunity to work with them.

Saw Plaw Moo Hai – Manager - Former Client (Umpiem Camp)

The bad feelings such as boundaries and bias between me and my siblings were the key reasons that led me to become an addicted person. Because of my disappointing relationship with my family, I started day/night out with my friends and searched for my happiness area which guided me to become an addicted person. When I started using drugs, I was only 16

years old in grade 10 student in Myanmar high school. I used to smoke cigars, marijuana, methamphetamine, and alcohol and I used them until I addicted to them. I never created problems in the community when I was an addict person. But sometimes when other groups fought with my friends I usually joined and fought back. I started to know the DARE network and its activities when Addiction Workers provided awareness education and reached the home visit at my home. Whenever I saw DARE Addiction Workers providing prevention education in the section and schools, I was willing to quit substance abuse after listening to the sharing. So, I contacted DARE Addiction Workers and later I got treatment at the DARE Centre. No one encouraged me. I just decided myself for the reason of only to stay away from dangerous things in my life. At 21 years old age, I got the opportunity to get a treatment program in the Umpiem camp. I have been addicted for 6 years and got the chance for treatment from the DARE, and right now I have already recovered from substance abuse for almost 11 years. First time during in treatment period, I suffered from withdrawal symptoms and cravings all the time. Another problem that I faced frequently was my old friend continued inviting me to use it again with them after go back to my home. But we have different concepts about drugs already so, later I decided to avoid from them. When I was in the treatment Centre, I could make new friends. We had the same version to get treatment and then to recover/ be free from substance abuse. So, my friends encouraged me eagerly to be strong and stay free from substance abuse. Moreover, DARE Addiction Workers took care of us very well and supported us to try our best as well as we could and become valuable people in our community. Before I came to the DARE treatment Centre, I didn't have any plans for my future. My life is almost like a people who walk around in a dark place without knowing the direction to drive my life. However, after I got a full treatment program, I learned how to have a plan for my future to get back my dignity and be a useful person in my community. When I back to the community, I threw away all things related to drugs materials, avoided old friends, changed the place that I usually go, and rebuilt new life again. DARE Addiction Workers visited my home to follow up with me and ask me some questions about my situation such as "How did you feel after completing treatment, and do you need any help both physical and mental? I was satisfied with this performance even when I went back to the community,

they kept visiting to take care of me well. Moreover, after I was free from substance abuse, I fervently wanted to work with the DARE Network to help people who related to substance abuse. Now I am a camp base staff of the DARE. For my old friends, without forcing them, I just gave some suggestions to think about their future lives or provided them with addiction knowledge to imagine more about the reality of life to divide good and bad things. This is something I am doing now. I have always believed that it can help the community and people who cannot think about their future because of drugs. I would like to encourage addicted people, "When you still have time don't hesitate, now is the right time to be away from drugs, and never too late for you to quit". The whole program of the DARE Network is so beneficial to our community. They provided awareness education to all people who are addicted or not. They never discriminate against anyone and treat everyone equally. Their message is very useful to everyone to know how to protect themselves and stay away from the dangers of substance abuse. I will always rate the excellent for working at DARE because I am satisfied that people who are willing to get treatment are all welcome to access the same opportunity to get a better life again. We are treating them nicely as much as we can during the treatment period and hope the best for each one life in the future.

Naw Lah Khu Paw – Manager (Nu Poe Camp)

To be honest I started to know DARE when they provided awareness education in the community. So later when DARE announced that they needed new Addiction Workers, I started to join them. I started to work with DARE on May 10, 2011until now and it has been 13 years. Being 13 years, I got a lot of experience, and it taught me to be mature in the organization. During my work with DARE, I have seen many benefits such as treatment programs and awareness prevention education to the community.

The benefit of the treatment program, I have seen the clients recover for their use because they got treatment from DARE Addiction Workers such as herbal medicine, acudetox and addiction knowledge. Those things help them to stay away from substance abuse and not relapse again. To provide prevention education to the public, youth people, teenagers, school and to other organizations it was a strong point to reduce substance abuse in our community

for the future. Additionally, while I worked, I knew more about drug information that provided the problems and could damage people's health so that was dangerous things to the people. The knowledge was very useful for me, moreover, I could share awareness with my family so the benefit that I have seen, they are free of dangerous things too. I would like to encourage my colleagues not to give up and to work hard, be humble, peaceful and save people's lives from the craving of drugs & alcohol as well as we could until we do not have dangerous things in our community.

Day Law- Manager (Mae La Oon Camp)

My name is Saw Day Law. I came and stayed in the Mae La Oo refugee Camp since 1994. I finished high school in 2010 in camp. I joined the DARE Network in 2011. I joined as an addiction worker and later became the team manager. It has been 14 years working with DARE. I also noticed that the DARE activities greatly benefit our camp community. The treatment helps long-term addicts' people not only to recover but also to change their manners and become good people for their family and community. I always believe that the DARE network is an essential organization that can help people in need (especially to escape from the stick of drug problems) in our community – for our Karen people. I hope the DARE network will run its activities because the camp community can access knowledge of drug problems only by the DARE organization.

Naw Pler Paw- Manager (Mae Ra Moe Camp)

I attended TOT in Mae La Camp in 2013. It took 6 months to finish the course. After TOT training, I worked at Mae La Camp for 2 years. In 2016, I returned to Karen State and worked with the DARE Network there. In 2018, I came to Mae Ra Moe Camp and joined as a DARE staff in Mae Ra Moe Camp. In September 2020, I became the Camp Manager at Mae Ra Moe Camp, and work until now. It's been 10 years as a DARE addiction worker. I chose to work with DARE because of many reasons.

1. DARE Network always supports the hopeless people or drug addicts by giving them treatment and helps the community through home visits and prevention education

2. By working with the DARE Network, I can improve my skills. In addition, I can see many direct and indirect benefits to my neighbor friend.
3. My family members love and respect my work by avoiding using drugs.
4. Before working at DARE, I was addicted to chewing betel nut, but now I can stop chewing it. I see a lot of benefits, so I keep working with the DARE team till today.

Refresher training course at Refugee Camp

Frisbee is a fun and uplifting game that builds teamwork, sharpens focus, brings people together through joyful play, and celebrates freedom where players themselves decide the results without any judges.

A mother's love is the gentlest guidance — her calming presence can reach her son even when he's lost in the shadows of addiction.

A joyful family reunion after completing treatment at the center - a beautiful reminder of healing, hope, and the power of love.

Drug prevention education in the community plays a vital role in reducing and addressing gender-based violence (GBV)

DARE Network Client Stories

DARE Team – My Darkness Shifter

I was working at a gas station where heroin/opium could be bought easily. I stayed there with my mother and stepfather until I was 15 years old. My stepfather was always drinking alcohol and then bullied and scolded my mother every day. Sometimes, he started the problem intentionally and then beat me. My mother took pity on me a lot. So, my mother asked me to go and stay in a refugee Camp for learning purposes. Since that time, I started using alcohol because I remembered my mother. Very often, I created problems and yelled at night. Sometimes, I drank until I overdosed and passed out. However, I could not remember what I was doing in the morning. Sometimes, I drank it until I passed out. It took nearly 23 years as an addict. One day, the section leader came and asked me whether I was willing to stop using drugs. Then, he requested the addiction worker from the DARE to visit my house. I came to know some information about the DARE's activity through the Home Visit Program. I decided to accept the treatment. As soon as I took the treatment and stopped using alcohol, withdrawal symptoms started happening. Within 3 to 4 days, I suffered from alcohol withdrawal symptoms, and I could not remember anything. This was the most difficult time to overcome. I wanted to run away from DARE. After taking 3-month treatment, I could escape from the drug cycle.

Life changed a lot with better health conditions now. As a new life has begun, I will be valuing my time and enjoying each gift of my life. In my own opinion, each activity of the DARE network is very effective. There would be many good things that I did not know about DARE. However, especially for those drug addicts like me, DARE is the best place for restoring our life.

My Recovery Story

"When I was young, I liked going to gambling places. It was so much fun to play with friends. Unfortunately, this was the gate that introduced me to the drugs. When I was 32 years old, I wanted to have experience using methamphetamine pills, so I started using them. I knew the pills only had negative impacts, but I was addicted and kept using them for two years. My

Aunt encouraged me to go to DARE to stop drugs. So, I decided to go DARE. Treatment methods are simple but very effective. Because of Acudetox, my mind does not feel full of thoughts like before, remarkably. Now, I am free from drugs. In my daily life, I choose to eat healthy food that is good for my body instead of using addictive drugs. I usually take time for praying and meditation to stay away from temptation. I sometimes come to the DARE Network Centre and share my life experience to encourage other drug addict friends. Now I am in good health. My family trusts me and loves me. I can feel their caring and support whenever I need it.

Family Members Testimony

Having a drug addict at home is so stressful. And all the time we are full of worry about him. We hoped to see him as a good person. So, we encouraged and luckily, he decided to get treatment. Because of the help from DARE, our family can have a happy time again. After he had recovered, he could build up his life again. We can say that our family income has also increased because of his work hard.

My University Student Life
After the Military Coup in Myanmar

I was a university student in Hpa-An University in Karen State. Because of the Myanmar military coup in 2021 February, I stopped attending school. Since the Military coup, I felt like I would have no hope in my future. So, I started playing the PUBG Game all day and night. At the same time, to wake up at night, I started using the drug called “Ya Ba methamphetamine pill”. Firstly, I started with the experimental use of 3 pills then increased to 15 pills. Finally, I was addicted. Even though I knew drugs only could hurt my life or cause physical or psychological harm, I continued to use the drug for 2 years. Later, the whisper in my ears, I often felt people blame me and I assumed that everyone talked about me behind my back. So, I began to fight with my family and sometimes created problems in the community too.

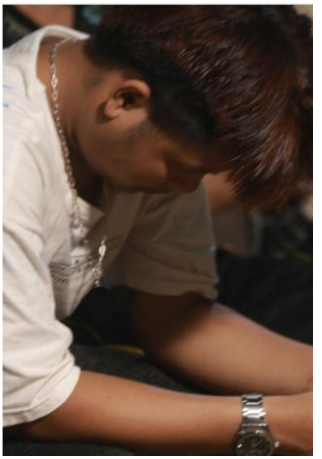
I have a brother who is working at DARE Mae La Camp. He often called me and gave me suggestions to get treatment. I knew that drugs were not good for my life, so finally, I decided to go to the camp. At the Treatment Centre, I got treatment methods such as acudetox, sauna, yoga, NA, time for healing cycle, counseling, and prevention education according to the schedules. I met with many other types of clients, such as opium users and alcoholics. While my body was getting used to functioning without the drug, I experienced a range of symptoms, from minor to serious. On the other hand, the Addiction Workers were helping me by providing me with both mental and physical treatment during my withdrawal period. ***DARE Network is a functional organization, and it is a very effective place for students who accidentally become an addict like me.*** Before, I thought it would not be easy to stop using drugs because I dealt with the inability to think clearly. It's hard to relate to myself, and I had extreme mood swings. Sometimes, I felt a surge of anxiety and fear for no reason. But after treatment, I have every confidence in my ability to see my future again. In short, after I had completed treatment, I came back to Hlaing Bwe. Now, I am helping my father in his small business, and at the same time, I am training myself not to use the drug again. Staff from DARE (especially my brother follow up with the phone often and do counseling twice a week.

Worthless to Priceless

I started to use drugs and alcohol when I was 17 years old. I didn't want to help my house with anything; I just wanted to spend my time outside. Every day, I went outside with my friends to drink alcohol and sometimes we used drugs such as methamphetamine, smoked cigarettes, and chewed betel nuts. Whenever I used drugs, I was ready to start domestic violence and tried to fight with others. People mocked me because of my behavior. I never thought that one day, drugs would give me problems. My health began to be horribly weak. At that time, I didn't even have money to buy food and medicine. I realized that if I continued using drugs and alcohol, my life would be controlled by drugs, and I would be worthless. Therefore, to stop it, I decided to come to the DARE. Cravings were a difficult time, but the DARE worker helped me patiently. I will never forget their great effort. Now, I have recovered. When I went back to my home, my old friends visited and persuaded me in many ways to use drugs again. But I controlled myself well.

His Wife's Testimony

I faced many kinds of problems because my husband was an addict. I was worrying about my children. I didn't have enough money to buy food and send them to school. Because of his aggressive behavior, our family was always arguing and clashing with him. Later, because of his health, he went to the DARE Centre. Without him, my home was quiet, and there was no more fighting. During his treatment period, my neighbor took care of and encouraged me, supporting me with the materials that I needed. After treatment, when he came back, I noticed his behavior had totally changed. I was very happy now. He is trying his best. Now, he has become a valuable person and a good role model to addicts in the community. Our family can have unity and a peaceful life again. I am very happy to see my husband recover. Thank you so much, DARE Network, for saving my husband and other addictions from the danger of drugs.



The first 10 days during the drug and alcohol withdrawal symptoms is the hardest to overcome but this is the worth to be patient on it.

DARE was My Last Hope - Heroin Addiction Story

At my 15-year-old age, to have a fun time with friends, I started to smoke heroin and sometimes drink alcohol. But later, I stuck to heroin, and I constantly used it. I thought I could not live without heroin. While using heroin, I was totally out of control and came to become a problem-maker in my family. My family tried after years of attempting to help me to stop drugs but eventually gave up trying. Despite the destruction I had given up on life, I was given the final opportunity to go to DARE. I started to know about the DARE network through the Home Visit Program. I decided to accept the treatment as my last try to stop heroin. At first, I was very defensive and angry at everyone around me. I could not eat or sleep and was incapable of standing and communicating. Water treatment and Sauna were very effective for detoxification from drugs. Through the fantastic program and support from the team, I gradually started to come around to the idea that recovery might be possible.

After treatment, I can build up confidence. Previously, using heroin was my world, and I didn't want to have good communication with others. But now I do love to have good communication with family and friends. I can be a good son, a beloved brother, and a nice friend. Without hope, I had already given up my life once. But now I have many ideas to do for my community and people who have the same situation as me. As the number of drug users in our community is increasing, they need help from us a lot. Nothing is impossible if we work together.

His Brother's Testimony

If you have one drug user at home, you have to deal with arguments and quarrels all the time. Neighbors will look down on you because of the bad character of the addict while he was in his madness. I was upset about having a drug-user brother. I love him so much. I support and encourage him because I don't want his life useless by drugs. I tried a lot; however, I couldn't stop it. It took 20 years of using heroin. One day he decided to go to DARE. He completed the treatment successfully with the kind support from the DARE team and his friend's encouragement. After he had got a full treatment program, his behavior changed, and his life improved. We noticed he is trying his best in his daily life. Our community still needs prevention education and awareness about drugs. It is said that "Prevention is better

than cure". I am happy for my brothers' recovery, but I don't want to see people are suffering by substance abuse for a long time and meaningless in the community.

I Abandoned my First Love

I started tasting drugs when I was a high school student, and being addicted took 10 years. I mostly used alcohol. However, when I had money, I used methamphetamine, marijuana, opium, and diazepam sometimes. My younger brother and elder sister are working at the DARE. So, I was quite familiar with the DARE activities. Moreover, one of my friends wanted to get treatment at DARE so he encouraged me to follow with him. I finally decided to go to the DARE together with our families. Along the way, I held my alcohol bottle tightly; I drank it without ceasing because this was the last day to drink alcohol. I continued all the rest of the alcohol, and, at that time, I lost consciousness. When I opened my eyes, people looked like aliens in my view, and I was unconscious again. When I woke up, it was the most difficult time because of withdrawal symptoms. I talked to myself, "I was the one who started drinking alcohol, so I must stop it by myself." Gradually, I realized that each lesson/activity was helping me to build up my physical and mental again. What I noticed significantly was I could take out alcohol in my mind. Before treatment, drinking alcohol was the most important part of my life. I love alcohol the most. But by learning about drugs, I was sure that alcohol was the killer of my body and soul. Since I stopped alcohol, I got back to my healthy life. Except for memory impairments, everything is going well now.

After treatment, I always learn how to love myself. My daily life become a good message to others. Once, I chose the wrong thing to harm myself. I lost my property, including a breeding pond and one estate. Moreover, I can build up confidence again. I often take time to worship. I am thankful for having teachers (Addiction Workers) who saved me from dangerous drugs. Once, alcohol looked like my first love. She was so attractive, and I fell in love with her with all my heart. But now our relationship had broken. In my old life, nobody didn't like me or invite me because of my bad body odor (the smell of alcohol). But now I can participate in community events and worship services. Since I stopped alcohol, I have been staying in the DARE Centre until now. Once, I was addicted, so I wanted to help others with the DARE team together. I don't have words to say

enough thanks to the DARE team. I want to encourage everyone to make a decision now. There are no drugs that have advantages for you. For your recovery, please come to the Treatment Centre now.

Acudetox is used to decrease withdrawal symptoms and prevent relapse

Yoga is a holistic exercise that enhances flexibility, strengthens the body, calms the mind, and promotes overall physical and mental well-being.

Role play and games create engaging, interactive experiences that build skills, boost confidence, enhance communication, and improve knowledge retention through active, hands-on learning

After sauna (A herbal sauna is a natural therapy that combines the healing steam of herbs to detoxify the body, improve circulation, ease respiratory issues, relax the mind, and refresh the skin.)

Healing circle time, especially for a friend recovering from drug use, helps rebuild the body, clear the mind, and restore hope and balance step by step.

I was an Addict Mom- It is Different Now

I used to drink alcohol, smoked cigarettes, and chewed betel nuts with tobacco. It took 30 years as an addict. As a mother, sometimes I thought about the future of my children. Their future would be full of obstacles. Life is full of problems in my family. Drugs were the root causes of the problems. I thought that if I could cut off drugs, most of the problems could be auto-solved. So, I decided to go to the DARE Network Treatment Centre to stop and be free from substance abuse. I could complete the 3 months program. After treatment, the persuasion for social drinking from the old drinking buddies was the bigger challenge. They constantly invited me because stopping alcohol was unbelievable for them. For any invitation, I could neglect them by having a reasonable excuse. At the Treatment Centre, I had faced severe withdrawal symptoms, but the Addiction Workers took care of and gave me effective treatments such as acudetox, herbal medicine and sauna accordingly. I promised myself and the DARE team that I won't never use alcohol again. Till today, I could overcome all temptations. Now, I have good health, both mental and physical. I became a good mother to my kids. Looking back to my past, I just see only the negative impact of using drugs. I would like to encourage young people and drug users to keep away from drugs and alcohol. There is no benefit to using it; it can only damage your body, making your future dark and full of problems.

Family Member Testimony

It was a long uncomfortable time because she often came back with her drinking friends to enjoy at the house. She got a scolding for doing that and our home was full of quarreling and fighting in between. It took a long journey with a heavy burden for 30 years. When she decided to go to the DARE, it seemed a big burden immediately faded away. We hope that if she could stop alcohol, it would be our happiness. After she had arrived home, we requested her old drinking friends not to come and persuade her again. In this way, she could stay away from the drug. Our hopes came true because now she is free from substance abuse. It is my turn again to help our neighbours by encouraging them to go and get treatment at the DARE whenever treatment is opened

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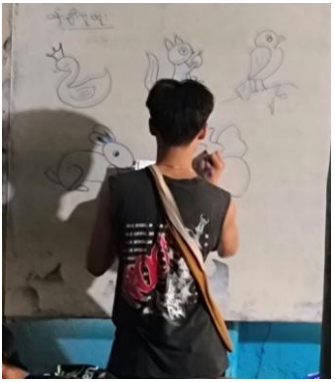
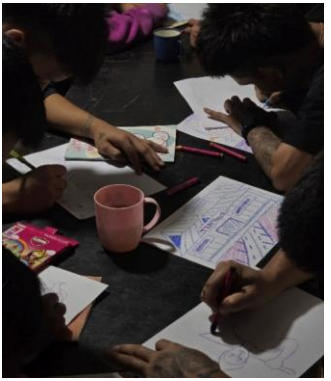



Art Therapy

Clients take part in drawing therapy, each illustrating their vision of a better future as a step toward healing and self-discovery.

Counseling Session

Counseling typically involves one-on-one sessions with an experienced Addiction Worker. These sessions focus on the root causes of the client's addiction, including identifying triggers, learning healthy coping mechanisms, and effectively individualize treatment as a means of assisting each client in gaining intrinsic motivation in order to effectively follow a path toward successful recovery.

A recovery journey as a woman alcoholic

To relax my stress and forget my bad feelings, I used alcohol for 5- 6 years. I bought it by myself, and I used it as needed. Whenever I got drunk, I started blaming and attacking my husband, and then we argued with each other. Even without drinking Alcohol, if I heard someone tease me, I got angry quickly and fought them back. It meant I was so sensitive. Because of using alcohol for the long term, sometimes, I encountered mental abnormalities such as breaking material at the office, taking other clothes from others, and wearing other people's pants and shirts. I often yell and swear loudly, and my personality was so aggressive that it was hard to communicate. When my mind returned to normal, I felt ashamed all about it. One day, my daughter got information about DARE addiction treatment from the Mae Tao clinic. She shared it with my family. So, they encouraged me to go there because they believed that the treatment could help me in some way to recover from my abnormal behaviors. Treatment methods in DARE were the pillars that showed me the way to escape from the addiction world. Moreover, I felt like all the written lessons were based on my life. As a consequence, I could reflect on myself clearly and realize how to change my life to a better one. At first, I could not eat or sleep. My body was quite weak; however, Addiction Workers fed me and supported me to follow my daily activities. By following treatment activities accordingly, my health conditions come back with a stable mind, eating regularly, and sleeping at night very well.

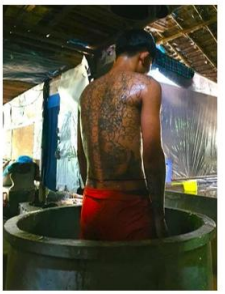
I have been free from alcohol for more than 7 years. Now, my grandkids don't fear or stay away from me like before. They love me. I can visit my neighbor's house because they are warmly welcome. Sometimes, drinking buddies invite me to join their parties but I make excuses that I am not in good health. After treatment, on the first day at home. My daughter tracked my every step and followed me wherever I did because she couldn't believe it. But now she has truly believed that I am free from it. Because of alcohol, I was a totally bad person because it took all my energy and conscience. As I stop it, every good thing comes back. ***So, I want to encourage drug users: "If you value your life, please go to DARE for your recovery. Among lifelong learning lessons, deciding to quit alcohol is one of the choices I have ever made in my life.***

A Mad Man was Healed

DARE treatment programs and activities were very popular in my camp. When I saw a mad addict could recover after receiving the treatment, I was really surprised. My life experience became one of the pieces of evidence of the DARE. I used many kinds of drugs, such as alcohol, opium, marijuana, tobacco, and also methamphetamine. When I started using drugs, I was only 20 years old. It took 19 years as an addict. I was strongly hooked on drugs. I had no way to escape from this deep attachment. The local leader and my family gave me hope that if I were treated at the DARE Treatment Centre, I could be free from substance abuse. So, I decided to try it. After treatment, I reached my goal of sobriety from drugs for a couple of months. As I gained a healthy life, I went to the camp outside for work. Then, I drank again. A healthy life was lost again, and the situation was getting worse. Then, UNHCR and other CBOs sent me to the hospital, but I couldn't recover. So, they decided to send me to the DARE again. DARE gave me another chance. I took full treatment again. Many things were happening because of my wrong choice. I repeated the full treatment program twice. The DARE team is doing their best especially when we need them most.

Family Member Testimony (Client's Wife)

It was a terrible experience that substance abuse is deeply linked to violence. Our family was suffering from severe trauma because he used domestic violence at home all the time. Moreover, I couldn't afford the cost of buying nutritious food, sending the kids to school, and taking care of him. I tried my best to overcome it all. I also encouraged him to go to DARE to stop drugs. I hoped that if he recovered, he would do something good for us. It was not easy to pass through it. After receiving the treatment from the DARE, he could stop it all. With his healthy life, our family can have a happy life. My hope was built.



Water Treatment Therapy

"Clients recovering especially from opium addiction participate in water immersion therapy, where soothing water helps to relieve physical pain and muscle tension, reduce stress, and promote emotional calm. This therapeutic process supports detoxification and fosters relaxation, aiding in their overall healing and recovery journey."

Traditional Massage Therapy

Traditional massage therapy is also one of the DARE Network's effective complementary therapies. It helps reduce stress, ease withdrawal symptoms.

With Gardening or Horticulture Therapy

Nature-based approach to support individuals in drug and alcohol recovery. Clients engage in gardening therapy, growing organic fruits and vegetables together to foster healing, connection, and healthy living.

Problem Solver Became Problem Maker

Whenever I saw people use drugs & alcohol, it looked too cool to me. In addition, culturally, we used alcohol, but I didn't use it properly. I imitated it, and finally, I became an addict. I used marijuana, methamphetamine, alcohol, and chewing betel nut. These drugs damaged my physical and mental health. Because of overused drugs, it gave me health problems to get the troubles. I became the problem maker in the community. Whenever I remember my addict's life, I suddenly felt very ashamed for my behavior. I am thankful for having a supportive family and local leaders who encourage me and show me good ways to stay away from substance abuse. For the first time at the DARE Centre, I seriously encountered withdrawal symptoms. I also had cravings. The Addiction Workers provided me acudetox to my ears for a week, so I felt better. If I compare the differences, before going to the DARE Centre, my family was full of fighting, and we didn't have unity. Moreover, people look down on me, and from their view, I can only make existing problems worse. However, after getting the full treatment, I can swift their views upon me. In the past time if I asked for money from my wife, she got angry because she knew, I would buy drugs and alcohol. But now if I asked for some money, she gave me nicely because she believed me. My neighbor admired and appreciated me as I could change my life. I processed back my dignity and built good relationships with others. I could say, "If you become an addiction of drugs, your life will be in a dangerous way. You will lose your value, and then no one wouldn't respect you. So, you should think about it. If you are using it now, you still have time to quit substance abuse now". DARE Addiction Workers sometimes visited my home to follow up with me. Honestly, I have been alive because of people's encouragement and show me good ways to stay free from drugs & alcohol. I really appreciate it. I am so satisfied with their wonderful work in the community. I would like to say thanks to DARE for its excellent work.

Life Has Changed at the DARE Network Centre

I wanted to try every new thing together with friends. This could be the nature of young people. With my friends, I tried different kinds of drugs such as marijuana, homebrew alcohol,

tobacco, betel nut, and methamphetamine pills. While I used the methamphetamine, I felt better, but my throat was drying. I lost my appetite and insomnia. When I used marijuana, all my thinking and my mind were like flying in space. My family encouraged me to get treatment at DARE. With their love and support, I finally decided to receive the treatment. During the treatment period, we know each other and share our experiences regarding substance. I could make new friends at the DARE Centre. Addiction Workers were very kind, and they treated us the same with no discrimination. Every week, we have the sauna program once, which helps me to take out the detox in my body. Before I came to the DARE Centre, I was not healthy and craving all the time. After getting the full treatment, I felt better and could eat and sleep again as normally. DARE is the only platform for those who have the willingness to be free from the drugs & alcohol. Now, I have recovered. And I am so proud to say that once I was an addict but now, I am free from all kinds of drugs.

His Wife's Sharing

While he used drugs, I felt like my life was quite different from others. Other families were full of peace and happiness, while my family was full of fighting. I didn't want to stay together with him anymore. While he was drunk, he created trouble and destroyed things in the house. He sometimes yelled at midnight, and I felt so ashamed. I tried to encourage him to get treatment. He went to the DARE to stop drugs. Now, he had recovered. His Lifestyle and the way his thoughts have changed. We can have a lovely family, and we can restore happiness again. Now he is taking every responsibility and always cares for us with love.

Abandoning My Past

To alleviate stress and to enjoy my time with friends I started using drugs. Trying drugs as an experiment led my life to addiction. I came to use it when I was 25 years old. Later, I used opium, alcohol, beer, and other substances. Sometimes I can't afford the cost, so I chewed betel nuts or smoked cigarettes. I continued using it for 25 years. When I was at the hospital, in the psychology department, my family members, and leaders encouraged me to get treatment at the DARE, so I decided to try it.

When I arrived at the Treatment Centre, I had serious withdrawal symptoms. However, friends and Addiction Workers took care of me. After completing the treatment, physical and mental gradually changed day by day. Living a new life like a new person with a fresh mind and new heart – I feel happy! With better health conditions, I can make plans about what I can do in my community and for my family in the future. To stay away from drugs, instead of using drugs, I went to the tea shop, I sometimes went down to a stream in camp for swimming, and sometimes I played football. Sometimes, I visited the DARE Centre again to share knowledge and life experiences as well. I can get a better life. I am satisfied with all the activities in the DARE Centre. DARE's work is very useful for our camp community. Among the activities, prevention education and treatment are the most effective programs.

A Decision

It took 6 years as an addict. I used opium, methamphetamine, marijuana, and many kinds of alcohol. In the past, I was an unreliable person. While I got drunk, my personality changed to aggressive types. I used it until I had a stroke and became a disabled person. Even in my worst situation, I didn't listen to other people's suggestions. Family and friends forced me to go to the DARE. It could be the only way in my worst situation. Firstly, I do not agree with them. I could not stop using drugs because of intense cravings. Finally, everyone gave up on me and let me do everything whatever I wanted. Later, I noticed no one didn't listen to me whenever I asked for help. I was sure that if I followed my desire, I would die soon. So, I requested my family to take me to the DARE Centre. In the first days, I started experiencing cravings and withdrawal symptoms with various physical and emotional unstable problems. However, treatments were very helpful in relieving the symptoms. The addiction knowledge from the treatment program also helped me how to prevent myself from relapsing again. After ten days, I felt better.

If I hadn't decided to come to the DARE, I would be with my chronic disease or already died. But now, I can have a healthy life and be part of my community. I want to encourage addicts that becoming an addict is so easy but stopping drugs needs sacrifice. You can't do it alone. The DARE team can help you. You just need a decision to obey it.

Reforming my Life Again for a Better Future

I started to use drugs when I was 15 years old. It took 15 years as an addict. I used methamphetamine, marijuana, and sometimes sniffing the glue. I nearly died because of an overdose. Domestic violence, fighting with other people, destroying things, yelling in the camp, and stealing things from other people's houses often happened because of drug madness. At that time, my Aunty told our family that “we do have one place that accepts addicts and could treat them to recover from substance abuse”. My family encouraged me and I decided to go to the DARE Treatment Centre. During the first ten days at DARE, I had cravings, hallucinations, feelings of anger, hands shaking, insomnia, and appetite. Once I was unconscious. Before I came, I was always craving drugs, however, after finishing the treatment, all the desire for drugs was lost. DARE Network activities have always been a real supporter for drug addicts because I have seen the huge changes in addicts’ lives after getting a full treatment program from DARE. Some clients get jobs; some become leaders, some continue as Addiction Workers at DARE, etc. At the DARE treatment program, we do not need to pay any cost for the whole treatment program. We noticed that the DARE team was trying their best, but there were many places that DARE’s activities couldn’t reach because of conflict and security issues in Karen State. But without giving up, we encourage DARE to continue to do their great job.

The Snare of Methamphetamine

Once, I was a logger. I often left the camp and worked in the jungle. I had been using alcohol and methamphetamine for 30 years. Mostly, I drank alcohol. The purpose of using methamphetamine was to work restlessly. I started it because I thought it would give me energy for my work. But I had never thought that it would damage me with many negative consequences. Later my whole body got pain, my skin was not fresh, and I felt weak. My neighbor and my son encouraged me to go and get treatment at the DARE Centre. During the treatment period, I lost my appetite, insomnia, and cravings all the time. DARE Addiction Workers tried their best to help me. Each activity helps me to recover properly. DARE

Addiction Workers take care of all the addicted people well and treat them all equally. If we follow what they say, I guarantee 100% that our community will be free from substance abuse. DARE can help us 20%, the community 30%, and our own self 50%. We can understand clearly that our self-control is very important to addicted people. If we can control, we will be free, if not, we will relapse again. DARE treats us for free and there is no need to pay anything during the treatment period. If I am not wrong in other places such as Myanmar and Thailand, if you go to get a treatment program, you have to pay a lot for the treatment fee. I encourage DARE Network to never give up on your great work in the community and try the best for our new generation to be free from substance abuse in the future

To Our Donors

&

Individual Donors

Your support is the foundation upon which DARE Network Stands

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO YOU ALL

My Feedback and Comments for the DARE Network

Community Leader

DARE Network is an essential place for addicts and could help the camp community to be free from substance abuse. Moreover, presently drug issues are increasing, so prevention education, and awareness are the most important.

Camp Youth

DARE Network keeps doing great work with the camp leaders, camp youth, schools and other CBO organizations closely. They are providing the schools and the whole community with prevention education. Therefore, it is a practical program for teenagers to know how to protect and value their lives by avoiding substance abuse.

Community-Based Organization

The activities of the DARE Network have a lot of benefits in our community. Because of prevention education and home visits, I noticed some teenagers changed their behaviors. Now, many kinds of drugs and alcohol are entering to our camp. Therefore, we still need the DARE organization to continue its work in our community.

Client – Long Term Recovery

My feedback for the DARE team is “DARE Network is doing its best. Every activity is vital. For addicts like me, we can get effective treatment, without any cost at Treatment Centres is the strong point”. We can have a better future to restart our new life again.

Addiction Worker in camp

Helping our camp resident people to free from drug give me happiness. Whenever I see a client has recovered from substance abuse, I am so satisfied. People in the camp need our help because they still have addiction related people. So, we are continuing to work with DARE. And we wanted to become good role models for other people too. So, I love to continue to work with DARE.

DARE Network: Winner of the 2024

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No matter how the military junta tries to control, silence, or weaken us - even by using drugs as a weapon of war- they cannot own our thoughts, our spirit, or our will to fight for freedom. Our bodies can suffer, but a mind that stays aware, strong, and free from drug and alcohol will always resist.

A Free Mind Cannot Be Destroyed