



13th March 2023

RSIPF and RAPPP rolls out copen awareness program in Honiara

The Royal Solomon Island Police Force (RSIPF) and the RSIPF-Australian Federal Police (AFP) Policing Partnership Program (RAPPP) in cooperation with the National Community Police Department of the RSIPF has rolled out copen awareness programs in Honiara schools.

The awareness program, which comes under the RAPPP Health and Wellbeing and jointly driven by RSIPF, targets primary and secondary schools and the surrounding communities in Honiara. The first program was delivered to Koloale Community High School (KCHS) on 1 March 2023.

RAPPP members were joined by RSIPF and SIAF officers, staff from the Honiara City Council (HCC)'s Health Division and Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) and an athlete from Solomon Island National Institute of Sport (SINIS).

The program involves interaction between facilitators and students and informative presentations aimed at educating students about the dangers of copen, how to identify risks and protective factors and how to deal with peer pressure.

Copen is a new drug with potential harmful effects that is becoming popular in schools and youths in communities in Honiara and the provinces.

Copen is a mixture of tobacco and other substances like Colgate toothpaste and coral lime which creates a "high" effect. Users often experience vomiting and headaches after its use.

RAPPP locally engaged member, Roy Kimisi, said a survey conducted in schools, on children between the ages of 8 to 20-years-old, revealed that Copen use is highly prevalent in teens and is becoming a serious concern in schools. He said users can be addicted to the drug. The effects can make users unable to concentrate on their studies in school.

Kimisi said Copen has already been shown to be risky to the body with some users collapsing after having swallowed the Copen "juice" which forms in the mouth.

The Deputy Principal of KCHS thanked the visiting team for bringing the awareness about Copen to their students.

"Copen is a big problem in our school. It's high time that students are made aware of this issue," the deputy principal said.

She said their school will continue to remind students about the dangers of this drug and is pleased that the community engagement team is highlighting concerns about the impacts.

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For any media inquiries

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The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. Its mission is 'To provide a safe, secure and peaceful Solomon Islands'. The RSIPF strive to provide efficient, capable and responsive policing service and expect RSIPF officers to adhere to the RSIPF values.

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