

Designer drugs among the suds

Another World has found a way to stay on top of current controversy and feature younger characters.

The NBC soap is already into a story line involving "designer drugs" — new synthetic (and, for the moment, legal) compounds that have the effects of heroin. Producer Steven Schenkel says the show will develop the theme "as part of our regular story."

Even though Another World will not play lecturer, the show will let young viewers "see peers who are under some tremendous pressures."

One of the plot twists, beginning in July, will involve Ecstasy, the controversial heroin substitute just banned by the federal government.

The Ecstasy victim is Nancy McGowan (Jane Cameron), who is described as a "high-spirited, head-strong kid." She shakes up Bay City in her effort to cope with the death of her first real love.

A doctor discovers Nancy's growing addiction to Ecstasy during a "personal relationship. He is a real classy act."

Schenkel is confident viewers will learn about some of the "harsh realities" of drug abuse.

"We're developing the twists and turns of . . . a serious subject, and a damn good story, too."

By Richard Laermer