

# MODULE #8: Substance Abuse Awareness and Prevention

## Objectives

- Participants will learn how alcohol and other depressant drugs slow down the thinking process.
- Participants will be able to measure the frequency in which youth use alcohol/drugs.
- Participants will learn about the health effects of the Marijuana.

## Context



*This workshop is intended to demonstrate the connection between HIV infection and the use of Alcohol, Heroin, Cocaine, Marijuana, Ecstasy, OxyContin, and Inhalants. Participants will also examine risky situations that can lead to HIV infection, including being under the influence of alcohol and drugs.*

## Handouts & Resources Needed:

Handout 8.1: The Truth about Alcohol, Heroin, Cocaine, Marijuana, Ecstasy, OxyContin, and Inhalants

Handout 8.2: Alcohol Usage

Handout 8.3: Alphabet Soup

Handout 8.4: Quiz

Handout 8.4B: Pens/pencils

Sheet of paper – one for each participant

Journals – one per students

## Activity#1: Icebreaker-Defining Drugs (55 min)

### Procedure:

- This icebreaker will open up a discussion and give the facilitator an opportunity to dispel myths about drugs. The facilitator can also clarify the difference between legal drugs and illegal (illicit) drugs.
- Tell participants that during this activity they discuss how alcohol and other drug consumption can lead to devastating consequences such as acquiring HIV infection, having a car crash, etc. They will recognize how using drugs or alcohol can sometimes make it hard to control what we do and say.
- Ask participants to choose a partner and have each pair share with each other their definition of a drug and what they have heard about different kinds of drugs. Each person should record this information.

- After five minutes ask participants to share with the larger group what they heard their partner say. Make sure to take notes on the flip chart or blackboard.
- Provide Handout 8.1 entitled, “The Truth about Alcohol, Heroin, Cocaine, Marijuana, Ecstasy, OxyContin, and Inhalants”, and review with participants.
- Debriefing

#### Activity#2: Alcohol Usage (30 min)

##### Procedure:

- Icebreaker
- Tell participants that one of the most widely used drugs is alcohol and have them complete Handout 8.2: “Alcohol Usage”
- Once the six questions are completed, review each question with the participants and encourage them to stay alcohol and drug free.
- Debriefing

#### Activity#3: Alphabet Soup (30 min)

##### Procedure:

- Icebreaker
- Have participants get a partner to work with (Handout 8.3).
- Facilitator will call out a letter of the alphabet.
- Each participant will compete against his or her partner to see who can say the next letter of the alphabet first.
- The first person that says the next letter will receive five points.
- Quickly repeat this about ten times using different letters each time.
- Then, participants must say the letter that comes before the letter the facilitator calls out.
- Repeat this about five times using different letters each time.
- Have participants engage in discussion about the activity and the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Ask participants to answer “What” Questions and “So What” Questions in the “Alphabet Soup” (Handout 8.3).
- Debriefing

## Handout 8.1

### **The Truth about**

**Instructions to the facilitator**—Review the following drugs: Alcohol, Heroin, Cocaine, Marijuana, Ecstasy, OxyContin, and Inhalants

**Common names for Alcohol:** booze, beer, wine, liquor

#### **What does it do?**

Alcohol affects the central nervous system and brain. It can make you feel like loosening up and relaxing, or it can make you aggressive. It also lowers your inhibitions, which can set you up for dangerous or embarrassing behavior. As the alcohol leaves your system you may feel drowsy and sleepy. This can lead you to drinking more alcohol to keep your "buzz" or relaxed feeling going.

A problem with alcohol is that it affects your ability to control your muscles, mind, and mouth. It blocks messages going through your brain, and changes your perceptions and emotions. It affects your eyesight, hearing, coordination, and reactions, making it difficult to act normally. Many people also experience a hangover after drinking; hangovers result from your body being dehydrated by alcohol.

#### **How does alcohol work?**

Alcohol affects every part of the body—it is carried through the bloodstream to the brain, stomach, internal organs, liver, kidneys and muscles. It can be absorbed very quickly (as quickly as 5-10 minutes) and can stay in the body for several hours.

Bingeing occurs among younger drinkers when they try to drink too much, too fast. For some, this has resulted in alcohol poisoning. When alcohol poisoning occurs, the person may pass out and get sick. Alcohol poisoning can be fatal.

Long-term effects of alcohol include vitamin deficiencies, stomach problems, liver and kidney damage, heart problems, impotence, and brain problems such as memory loss.

#### **What about alcohol and HIV infection?**

Alcohol interferes with the ability to make sound decisions. Youth under the influence of alcohol are much more likely to participate in risky sexual behavior, which can lead to HIV infection, STD's or pregnancy.

**Know the law**—It is illegal to buy or possess alcohol if you are under 21.

## **Heroin**

**Common names:** smack, junk, horse, H, tar

### **What is it? What does it do?**

Heroin is a depressant. It makes you feel mellow, dreamy, or euphoric, but also tired and nauseous. Breathing slows down and pupils contract into pinpoints. Shortly thereafter, you experience watery eyes, runny nose, yawning, loss of appetite, tremors, panic, chills, sweating, nausea, muscle cramps, and insomnia.

Heroin is very addictive. As soon as users come down, they want another fix. The more Heroin you do, the stronger the desire for another fix. Many addicts feel helpless and may resort to stealing from friends and family or participating in illegal activity (like selling drugs or prostitution) for drug money.

### **What about using needles?**

IV drug users can easily become infected with HIV while they are high on heroin or craving the next fix because their judgment is impaired. They often share unclean needles with other users, increasing their risk for HIV infection and Hepatitis.

### **What are some other problems with heroin?**

Heroin is illegal and expensive; dealers often "cut" it with similar-looking powders, like cocaine, or even baking soda. Users never know how pure their drug is, so every dose is different. This means that a major overdose could happen at any time; even one hit can result in coma or death. Other signs of an overdose include difficulty breathing, clammy skin, tiny pupils and convulsions.

Individuals addicted to heroin face serious obstacles when they quit using. Withdrawal is the most common symptom and includes watery eyes, runny nose, no appetite, tremors, panic, chills, sweating, vomiting, and muscle cramps. Addicts can't sleep, and their body temperatures and blood pressure rise.

### **What about Heroin and HIV Infection?**

Heroin interferes with the ability to make sound decisions. Injecting Heroin with unclean needles can lead to Hepatitis and HIV infection. Individuals under the influence of Heroin are much more likely to participate in risky behaviors, which can lead to HIV infection.

**Know the law-** It is illegal to buy, sell, or possess Heroin.

## **Cocaine**

**Common names:** coke, snow, blow, toot, nose candy, flake, the lady

### **What does it do?**

At first, Cocaine makes you feel energetic and powerful. However, as these feelings wear off, you quickly become depressed and edgy—and start really craving more in order to get your high back.

Cocaine and Crack are among the most addictive drugs on the streets. Not only can these drugs harm your body, they can affect your life negatively to the point that your only concern is your next fix. Being high on cocaine and crack, or pursuing the next hit often results in violence, car crashes, falls, burns, drowning, and lowered inhibitions that can put you at risk for contracting HIV.

### **What does cocaine do to your body?**

It speeds up your heart rate and increases your blood pressure. Your breathing becomes much faster. This can lead to heart attacks, strokes, and respiratory failure. Brain seizures, which occur when the oxygen supply to the brain is cut off, have been known to occur. Even one hit of Crack or Cocaine can be fatal.

### **What does cocaine do to your brain?**

High doses of cocaine or prolonged use can trigger paranoia. Users may put themselves at risk when looking for more drugs. Eventually, prolonged use can cause the user to lose touch with reality and stop talking to friends and family. When addicted individuals stop using Cocaine, they often become depressed. This can lead to further Cocaine use to alleviate the depression. Smoking crack cocaine can produce a particularly aggressive paranoid behavior in users. Users will also do anything to find more drugs.

### **What about Cocaine and HIV Infection?**

Cocaine interferes with the ability to make sound decisions. Youth under the influence of Cocaine are much more likely to participate in risky sexual behaviors that may lead to HIV infection, STD's, or pregnancy. Injecting cocaine with unclean needles can lead to Hepatitis and HIV infection.

**Know the law-**Cocaine and crack are illegal substances.

## **Marijuana**

**Common names:** pot, dope, grass, weed, Mary Jane, chronic, reefer, ganja, kaya, doobie

### **What does it do?**

The effects of Marijuana vary for every individual depending on how strong the marijuana is, how often it is taken, and whether other drugs or alcohol are involved. Marijuana can make you feel relaxed, in a good mood and even silly. However, Marijuana users also experience dry mouth, rapid heartbeat, some loss of coordination, poor sense of balance, and slower reaction times. Blood vessels in the eye will expand causing the red-eye effect.

Smoking marijuana can impair short-term memory. This happens because the active ingredient in Marijuana is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol), which alters the way the brain works. After a few minutes, paranoia or anxiousness may set in, then intense hunger (a.k.a. the munchies). Finally, the user becomes very sleepy and tired.

For some people, marijuana raises blood pressure slightly and can double the normal heart rate. This effect can be greater when other drugs are mixed with marijuana.

**What does it do to your body?** Marijuana is linked to many behaviors that can have serious consequences. Marijuana affects memory, judgment, and perception. It can cause you to perform poorly in school, in sports or clubs, or with your friends. If you're high on marijuana, you are more likely to make mistakes that could embarrass or hurt you. If you smoke often, you could start to lose interest in your appearance, schoolwork and in life. Athletes could find their performance is off; timing, movement and coordination are all affected.

### **What about Marijuana and HIV Infection?**

The use of Marijuana also affects thinking and judgment. Youth under the influence of Marijuana are much more likely to participate in risky sexual behaviors which can lead to HIV infection.

**Know the law-**Marijuana is an illegal substance.

## **Ecstasy (MDMA)**

**Common names:** E, X, XTC, Doves, Rave Energy, Cloud 9

### **What does it do?**

It is often reported that Ecstasy can lower inhibitions, break down barriers between friends, and enhance feelings of love and affection. Ecstasy has several bad effects. Ecstasy's effects on the brain can include confusion, depression, sleep problems, anxiety, and paranoia. These effects sometimes continue after other effects have worn off.

Physical effects can include muscle tension, involuntary teeth-clenching, nausea, blurred vision, faintness, and chills or sweating.

The stimulant effects of the drug can enable the user to dance for extended periods. Combined with the hot, crowded conditions usually found at “rave” parties and dance clubs, Ecstasy can lead to dehydration, hypothermia and heart or kidney failure.

### **What about Ecstasy and HIV Infection?**

Ecstasy affects thinking and judgment. Youth under the influence of Ecstasy are much more likely to participate in risky sexual behaviors that can lead to HIV infection.

**Know the law**—Ecstasy is an illegal substance.

## **OxyContin**

**Common names:** oxy, oxies, oxycotton, oc, killer, oxycoffins

### **What does it do?**

OxyContin or Oxycodone is a powerful pain killer and is highly addictive. It is a derivative of opium and the effects are similar to heroin. OxyContin is designed to slowly release Oxycodone over a 12-hour period. If the tablets are chewed, break or crushed, then the entire dose of Oxycodone is released all at once, causing a sudden, intense high.

### **What does it do to your body?**

Use of OxyContin can be extremely dangerous, especially if it is combined with other drugs used for recreational purposes. If the user’s body cannot tolerate the powerful effect, it can cause fatal respiratory problems. Overdose can cause convulsions, coma, and death. Symptoms of overdose are slow breathing, seizures, dizziness, weakness, loss of consciousness, confusion, tiredness, cold and clammy skin, and small pupils.

### **What about OxyContin and HIV Infection?**

The use of OxyContin interferes with your ability to do certain things that require your full attention. Youth who combine OxyContin with other drugs are much more likely to participate in risky behaviors that can lead to HIV infection.

**Know the law**—The use of OxyContin for recreational purposes is illegal.

**Inhalants Common names:** poppers, whippets, laughing gas, amyl nitrite, butyl nitrite, nitrous oxide, rush

**What do inhalants do?**

Inhalants are cheap and readily available. Inhalant users may feel stimulated and uninhibited, but, within a minute or two, a major headache comes on (the first indication that this is a bad idea). Hallucinations and numb hands and feet are often the most common symptoms. Suffocation and sudden death can occur even during the first use.

**What about using inhalants over time?**

Inhalants can cause permanent damage, including hearing loss, limb spasms, and damage to bone marrow, liver and kidneys, and the central nervous system.

**What about inhalants and HIV infection?**

The use of Inhalants affects thinking and judgment. Youth under the influence of Inhalants are much more likely to participate in risky sexual behaviors that can lead to HIV infection.

**Know the law**—the use of Inhalants for recreational purposes is illegal.



## Handout 8.2: Open Discussion: Alcohol Usage

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is alcohol?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does alcohol do to the human body?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are some reasons people may want to drink alcohol?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Why wouldn't you want to drink alcohol?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. If someone you know came up to you and asked you to drink some beer, what would your response be?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What are some other activities or hobbies you can tell your friend to do instead of drinking alcohol?

## ALPHABET SOUP

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X *y* Z

**? CONCEPT:** Alcohol and other depressant drugs slow down the thinking process, impairing decision-making and reaction time. This impairment can lead to problems when encountering complex situations or when quick reactions are required. For example, let's look at driving a car.



Traveling at 60 miles per hour, a car will cover 88 feet in one second. If the driver has been impaired by alcohol or another depressant drug and takes an extra second to move his or her foot from the accelerator to the brake then they have increased their risk of hitting another car or object by 88 feet. This is an unacceptable risk on today's crowded highways. It also points out why an impaired driver is at much greater risk to be in an accident as compared with the average driver. Driving is just one example. Any task that requires making quick decisions or fast reaction time will be similarly affected.

✓ **ACTIVITY:** Have everyone get with a partner. Explain that you are going to call out a letter of the alphabet. Each person will compete against his or her partner to see who can say the next letter of the alphabet first. For example, call out the letter "g". The first person in each pair that says "h" will receive five points. If they tie, no points are awarded. Stop long enough after you call out each number so the pair can keep track of their score. Keeping a quick pace, repeat this about ten times using different letters each time. Now, explain that the rules are changing. Instead of saying the letter that comes after the letter that you call out, they must say the letter that comes before the letter you call out. For example, call out the letter "g". The first person in each pair that says "f" will receive the five points. Repeat this about five times using different letters each time.

### DISCUSSION IDEAS:

#### Review:

- How well did you do in round one?
- How well did you do in round two?
- What was your total score?
- Why was round one easy?
- What made round two more difficult?

#### So What?

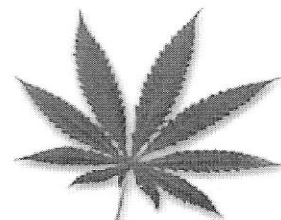
- How can we compare this activity to doing something while under the influence of alcohol or drugs? What types of actions do you do everyday that would be affected by alcohol or other drugs?
- How would being impaired by alcohol or other drugs affect you if you were driving a car?
- What occupations would be dangerous if you were doing them while impaired?

## **Marijuana: Facts for Teens**

### **What Is It?**

Marijuana is a mixture of the dried and shredded leaves, stems, seeds, and flowers of the hemp plant. The mixture can be green, brown, or gray. Hemp's scientific name is *Cannabis sativa*.

A bunch of leaves seems harmless, right? But think again. Marijuana has a chemical in it called tetrahydrocannabinol. Better known as THC. A lot of other chemicals are found in marijuana too—about 400 of them, some of which can cause lung cancer. But THC is the main active ingredient.



### **What Are the Common Street Names?**

There are more than 200 slang terms for marijuana from city to city and from neighborhood to neighborhood. Some common names are: pot, grass, herb, weed, Mary Jane, reefer, skunk, boom, gangster, chronic, and ganja.

### **How Is It Used?**

Marijuana is used in many ways. Some users brew it as tea or mix it with food. Others smoke blunts—cigars hollowed out and filled with the drug. And sometimes marijuana is smoked through a water pipe called a bong. The most common method is smoking loose marijuana rolled into a cigarette called a joint or nail.

### **How Many Teens Use Marijuana?**

Ever heard that lame line "everybody's doing it?" Tell that person to check the facts. As part of a 2002 NIDA-funded study, researchers asked teens if they had used marijuana or hashish (another form of marijuana) in the past month. Of all the 8th graders surveyed, only 8.3% said yes; only 17.8% of 10th graders had used the drug in the past month; and just 21.5% of 12th graders.

### **What Are the Common Effects?**

Imagine this: You're in a ball game, playing out in left field. An easy fly ball comes your way, and you're psyched. When that ball lands in your glove your team will win, and you'll be a hero. But, you're a little off. The ball grazes your glove and hits dirt. So much for your dreams of glory.



### Quiz: Marijuana

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**Instructions:** take this short quiz to test your knowledge.

1. Marijuana is made up of parts of a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) Hemp plant
  - b) Fern
  - c) Ivy plant
2. The chemical in marijuana that causes the user to feel "high" is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) Dopamine
  - b) Cannabis sativa
  - c) Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)
3. Pot, grass, chronic, and Mary Jane are all slang terms for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) The effects of marijuana
  - b) Marijuana
  - c) Methods of smoking marijuana
4. How many teens smoke marijuana regularly?
  - a) More than half
  - b) Fewer than 25%
  - c) Fewer than 1%
5. Marijuana users experience short-term memory loss because of the drug's effect on.
  - a) The heart
  - b) The hippocampus
  - c) The basal ganglia
6. Which of the following is an accurate description of marijuana?
  - a) The dried, shredded leaves, stems, flowers, and seeds of the hemp plant
  - b) Juice extracted from the hemp plant
  - c) The roots of the hemp plant
7. Tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient in marijuana, acts on the brain by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) Coating the skull
  - b) Binding to specific receptors
  - c) Causing brain tissue to grow
8. While pot, grass, chronic, and Mary Jane are slang terms for marijuana, the term for loose marijuana rolled into a cigarette is a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) Joint
  - b) Blunt
  - c) Bong

## Handout 8.4A

9. It's easy to see why fewer than 25% of today's teens are choosing to smoke marijuana. In addition to causing trouble in the brain, smoking marijuana may increase the risk of \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) Amputation and obesity
  - b) Kidney stones and ruptured appendix
  - c) Heart attacks and lung cancer
10. Memory problems associated with marijuana use are due to THC's actions in which part of the brain?
- a) Cerebellum
  - b) Hippocampus
  - c) Dopamine

Source: NIDA for Teens Web Site Quiz: Marijuana National Institutes of Health - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

### Answer Key: Marijuana Quiz

1. **A:** Marijuana is made up of parts of a hemp plant. It's a mixture of the dried, shredded leaves, seeds, flowers, and stems of this plant.
2. **C:** The chemical in marijuana that causes the user to feel "high" is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). There are more than 400 chemicals in marijuana, but THC is the active ingredient responsible for increasing dopamine levels, the chemical in the brain, which produces feelings of pleasure. It causes problems in parts of the brain that deal with important functions like learning, remembering, concentrating, and moving.
3. **B:** Pot, grass, chronic, and Mary Jane are all slang terms for marijuana. Other street names are reefer, skunk, boom, gangster, and weed.
4. **B:** Fewer than 25% of teens smoke marijuana regularly. It may be the most commonly abused drug, but the majority of your peers aren't smoking marijuana.
5. **B:** Marijuana users experience short-term memory loss because of the drug's effect on the hippocampus. The hippocampus is the part of the brain involved in learning and memory. The basal ganglia, on the other hand, is an area of the brain that helps control movement.
6. **A:** Marijuana is the dried, shredded leaves, stems, flowers, and seeds of the hemp plant. The scientific name for this plant is *cannabis sativa*.  
NIDA for Teens Web Site Quiz: Marijuana National Institutes of Health • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 4
7. **B:** Tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient in marijuana, acts on the brain by binding to specific receptors. These receptors are called cannabinoid receptors.
8. **A:** While pot, grass, chronic, and Mary Jane are slang terms for marijuana, the term for loose marijuana rolled into a cigarette is a joint. These marijuana cigarettes are also called nails. A blunt is a hollowed out cigar filled with marijuana, and a bong is a water pipe.
9. **C:** In addition to causing trouble in the brain, smoking marijuana may increase the risk of heart attacks and lung cancer. Marijuana has some of the same cancer-causing substances as tobacco. In fact, puff for puff, smoking marijuana may increase the risk of cancer more than smoking cigarettes does.
10. **B:** The hippocampus is a part of the brain involved in memory. When THC interferes with its normal functioning, trouble recalling recent events can be the result. The cerebellum is involved in balance and coordination. Dopamine isn't a section of the brain, it's a chemical that creates good feelings for a short time.

Source: NIDA for Teens Web Site Quiz: Marijuana National Institutes of Health - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services