

Activity: Session 5

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO PREVENTION

Objective: Change participants' beliefs and attitudes by discussing and clearing up the myths and misconceptions about drugs, alcohol, and tobacco

Materials Needed

- 4x6 note cards or large sheets of stock paper
- Masking Tape
- Pens/Pencils for each person
- Myth/Fact Signs
- Drugs Myth/Fact Question Sheet

Sign In and Welcome

Have mentors greet their protégés and sign in together or separately as they come in.

Introduce Topic and Discussion

- Do any of you know someone who uses drugs, alcohol or tobacco?
- Have any of you ever been offered drugs, alcohol or tobacco? How did it feel to be pressured? How did you respond?
- Why do you think people use drugs, alcohol or smoke? Explain.

Activity: Drug Myth/Fact

See Drug Myth/Fact Question sheet (attached.)

Put up [Myth] and [Fact] signs at opposite ends of the room

- Explain, today we are going to test our knowledge about marijuana and other drugs. We are going to read a number of statements. If you think the statement is a myth or untrue go stand by the [Myth] sign. If you think it is a fact or true go stand by the [Fact] sign. Be prepared to explain your answer.

One-on-One Time

Discuss the following questions:

- Have you ever felt pressured to use drugs, alcohol or tobacco?
- Share how drugs affect your life either directly or indirectly.
- How do the media (movies, TV, commercials, advertisements) affect your outlook on drugs, alcohol or tobacco? Explain.

Activity: Self Esteem

Explain purpose: To build up each person's self esteem, to make each person feel valued enough to know they are cool and special without using drugs.

- Give everyone a note card or piece of thick paper
- Each person writes "You shouldn't do drugs because..." at the top of each note card or paper
- Tape note card or piece of paper to each person's back.
- Have group share a couple examples of what to say, for example: "You shouldn't do drugs because I like being your friend or I don't want you to get hurt."
- Everyone goes around the room and writes a response to the question on each person's back.
- At the end of the activity, each person can unstick their note card and read what the others have written.
- Encourage students to keep the note card and remember what was written when they are in a tough situation.

Wrap up Discussion and Closure

- What was something you learned from today's session?
- How will you use what you learned later?
- Ask if there are any final questions.
- Thank everyone for coming and actively participating.

Optional Activities/Discussions

Counter Advertising - used as a way to creatively discuss advertising and it's effects on young people

Materials Needed

- Alcohol/drug/ tobacco magazine or news advertisements
- Markers and pens

Directions:

- Clip alcohol/tobacco magazine or news advertisements from magazines.
- Work in teams and write a "counter advertisement". For example Virginia Slims "You've come a long way baby" could be changed to "You've got a lot to learn baby, if you choose to smoke."

Drugs Myths and Facts

Myth or Fact?

Presenters take turn reading each statement below. Give a minute for people to move to the [Myth] or [Fact] sign. Ask people to explain why they think the statement is a myth or fact and then read the answer.

- Remember no put downs or negative comments if someone is wrong.
1. Popular music, movies and TV shows often portray marijuana and other drug use as fun, cool and acceptable.
Answer: FACT
State: Many movies, music and TV shows do portray drug use a fun, glamorous or cool. However, there is a growing trend by movies, TV, and music artists to show drug use as harmful and demonstrate the serious consequences. Some of these include the TV shows "ER" and "Dawson's Creek", and rapper Will Smith.
 2. Marijuana is a harmless or "soft drug".
Answer: MYTH
State: Some people view marijuana this way, but in fact marijuana is a harmful, addictive drug.
 3. Smoking cigarettes is more damaging to the respiratory system than smoking marijuana.
Answer: MYTH
State: Although used in lower amounts than tobacco, marijuana is more damaging to the respiratory system. Smoking marijuana can deliver three times more tar than smoking tobacco. Marijuana decreases the body's ability to exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide in the lungs and increases the users risk for respiratory infections like bronchitis.
 4. Marijuana is the most complex of all illegal drugs.
Answer: FACT
Marijuana contains over 400 chemicals that transform into 2,000 compounds when burned or smoked.
 5. "Ecstasy" and other club drugs are safer than "hard" drugs like cocaine.
Answer: MYTH
"Ecstasy", "GHB", and "Ketamine" (all club drugs) are as potentially harmful as any other drug. Effects of using these drugs can include vomiting, blurred vision, convulsions, paranoid

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or violent behaviors, and sometimes death. Many times these drugs are “made” in someone’s garage with other harmful or deadly chemicals being mixed in.

6. THC (delta 9-tetrahydrocannabinol), the main ingredient in marijuana, can be traced in the urine for 30 days after smoking just one marijuana cigarette.

Answer: FACT

THC is absorbed into the blood stream through the lungs and dissolves in the fatty tissues of the brain. As a result THC can be traced in the urine for up to 30 days.

7. People who wear hemp clothing or use hemp products smoke marijuana.

Answer: MYTH

People who use hemp products do not necessarily smoke marijuana. Hemp is a crop that comes from the same plant family as marijuana. It is used to make paper, clothing, pain, and other products. It is a very environmentally friendly and cheap crop to grow. It is illegal to grow in the US however; it can be imported from other countries.

8. The marijuana smoked today is exactly the same as the marijuana smoked 10 years ago.

Answer: MYTH

Today’s marijuana is 600 -700% more powerful than the marijuana smoked 10 years ago. This is due to changes in how marijuana is grown.

Have people return to their seats and debrief questions.

- Did you learn anything from this activity?
- What surprised you the most?
- Ask for any final comments or questions and move to the next activity.

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