

Drugs in Society

Summary

Students will identify types of drugs, the short and long-term effects, and identify strategies for maintaining a drug-free lifestyle.

Main Core Tie

Health Education I (7-8)

[Strand 4: SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION \(SAP\) Standard HI.SAP.4:](#)

Materials

Worksheets: ["Tips for Being Drug-Free," "Drugs in Our Society"](#)

Resources for student reports : ["Possible Topics,"](#) plus other resources as available.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Analyze the role of drugs in our society.

Identify the types of drugs in our society and discuss the safe use of medicines.

Recognize behavior characteristics on the use/misuse continuum.

Identify the short- and long-term effects of various drugs.

Develop strategies for maintaining a drug-free lifestyle.

Instructional Procedures

Lesson at a Glance

Discuss the drug use/misuse/ abuse continuum.

Students prepare and give group reports on specific drug topics.

Complete the "My Plan for Staying Drug-Free" activity.

Discuss tips for being drug-free and complete "Tips for Being Drug-Free" worksheet.

New Vocabulary

misuse

addiction

abuse

tolerance

medicine

withdrawal

Introduction (Setting Focus)

Teachers note: The main focus of substance abuse prevention should be the gateway drugs: alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. This lesson is used to cover basic terminology and give students an overview of the safe use of medicines and the harmful effects of some of the commonly abused drugs.

Give students the "Drugs in Our Society" handout and briefly discuss common knowledge of how drugs are used in society.

Body (Strategies/Activities)

Discuss the different types of drugs used in our society: medicines (OTC and prescription drugs), natural and herbal remedies, age-restricted drugs (alcohol and tobacco), and illicit (illegal) drugs.

Discuss ways to reduce the risk of harm from medicines and herbal remedies by using them properly.

Discuss the benefits of abstaining from age-restricted and illegal drugs and thereby

eliminating the risk of harm.

Reinforce that a person can protect his/her health and wellness by using medicines properly and by avoiding illegal drug use.

Using the "Drugs in Our Society" handout, discuss where all drugs fit on the use/misuse/abuse continuum below. Give examples that explain each stage on the continuum, and illustrate how a person moves toward greater risk to his or her health and negative impact on society by moving toward the harmful side of the continuum.

USE (proper medical use)	MISUSE (inappropriate use)	ABUSE (nonmedical use)
reading and following the directions	taking too many	getting high
disposing of old medications	taking someone else's	escaping
taking only when needed	not following the directions	

Discuss how all drugs can be dangerous in different ways.

Divide the class into small groups and have each group research a drug-related topic. Provide students with a variety of resources to prepare their presentations, and use the "Possible Topics" handout for ideas.

Each group prepares and presents a three- to five-minute presentation.

Students use the "Drugs in Our Society" worksheet for note taking.

Complete the "My Plan for Staying Drug-Free" activity:

One or two volunteers complete a simple obstacle course (around tables or chairs, under a table, hop on one foot). The course represents individuals' movement through life and working toward goals.

Several students will represent the problems of substance abuse that have been discussed in the reports. Each student represents one problem. One of the first volunteers joins together with the "problem" students and the group stands close together. Wrap a rope or string loosely around the group so they can move but are bound together. This group represents an individual with drug dependencies or addictions who becomes "bound to the consequences of his or her choice," or, in other words, the consequences become part of his or her life.

The group of bound students moves through the obstacle course.

Discuss the activity using the following prompts:

How was the first time navigating the course different from the second time?

What specific examples of drug dependency can make navigating life's challenges more difficult?

How does misuse of drugs keep us from fulfilling our life's potential?

What ideas and behaviors will keep individuals away from drug misuse and abuse?

Closure (Wrap-Up and Extension)

Discuss ways in which students can have a drug-free lifestyle that promotes mental, physical, emotional and social health. Possible points of discussion:

Be prepared and practice what you will do in a situation in which drugs are offered to you.

If you are offered drugs, let your friends know that you aren't interested.

Hang around people who don't use drugs. (Remember, the majority of young people don't use drugs.)

Find positive ways to feel good about yourself and to help combat stress.

Stay away from situations where you think there may be drugs.

Think about what could happen if you give in to the pressure and use drugs.

Look at drugs as a non-choice and think of all the advantages of staying drug-free.

Enjoy life; get involved in positive activities, clubs and groups.

If you find yourself in a situation where drugs are being used, leave.

Set and work toward goals that will bring you success and happiness now and in the future.

Care about yourself and the importance of keeping your mind, body, and spirit strong and healthy.

Provide students with a "Tips for Being Drug-Free" worksheet and have them list tips that will help them stay drug-free.

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