

How to Use This Document

The lessons and materials in this prevention unit are designed to be used together and in order.

Lessons: Each lesson contains ice breakers, a video explaining each health topic, a review for students to strengthen their understanding, and a slide for parents.

Materials: The materials provided in each lesson are designed to reinforce the main idea of each topic. These materials can be used in a whole class setting, in small groups, or individually.

Parent Post: Each lesson has a Parent Post created to keep grown-ups at home involved in what their student is learning! The posts include key topics and vocabulary that was used.

Connecticut State Standards

Standards: Healthy & Balanced Living Curriculum Framework Health Education & Physical Education

Standard 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

- ANOD 1.1.8 Identify healthy coping mechanisms and alternatives to substance use.
- ANOD 1.3.8 Summarize the negative consequences of using alcohol and other drugs.
- ANOD 1.4.8 Describe situations that could lead to the first time use of alcohol and other drugs.
- ANOD 1.5.8 Explain why using alcohol or other drugs is an unhealthy way to manage stress.
- ANOD 1.6.8 Explain school policies and community laws about alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs.
- ANOD 1.7.8 Determine the benefits of being alcohol, nicotine and other drug-free.
- ANOD 1.8.8 Explain the risks associated with riding in a motor vehicle with someone who is under the influence of alcohol and other drugs and explore safe options.
- ANOD 1.9.8 Describe short- and long-term physical, social and emotional effects of using ANOD's (e.g., effects on organs, including brain, peer relationships, family relationships, self-esteem).

What is
Alcohol?

Would You Rather



OR



**Only eat foods that are
very spicy**

**Only eat foods that are
very sour**

Would You Rather



OR



**Spend all week alone in
the woods**

**Stay one night in a
haunted house**

What do we know about alcohol?

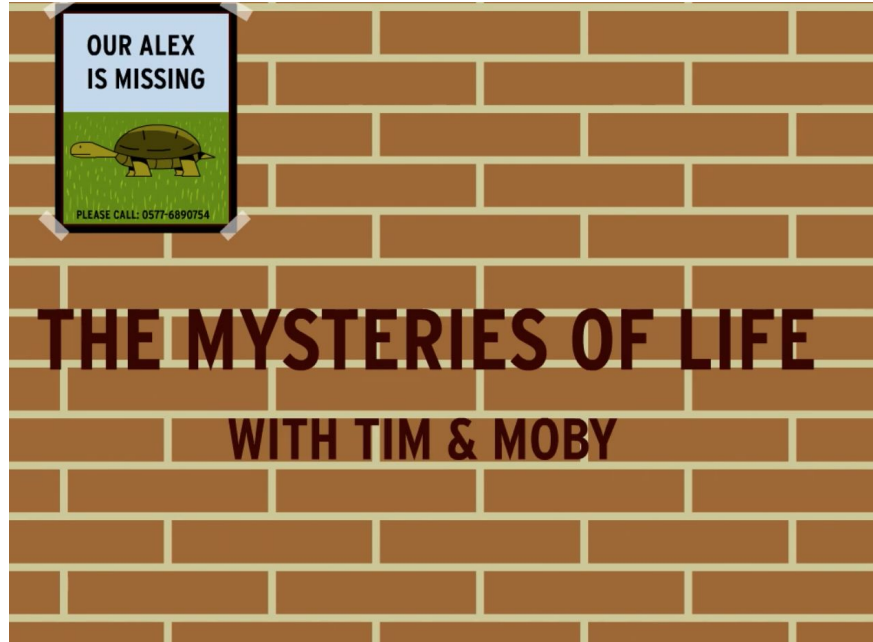
What is alcohol? What are examples you know?

Why do people drink alcohol?
When do people drink alcohol?

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Alcohol is...



Alcohol is...

Alcohol

Getting the Right Message

"Hey, who wants a drink?"

"Oh, come on, just one drink won't hurt you. It's fun."

"It's cool. Everybody drinks, right?"

Wrong.

Drinking alcohol is dangerous for kids and teens and sometimes for adults, too. Alcohol is a drug, and it is the drug most abused by teens. Many kids have their first drink at an early age, as young as 10 or 11 or even younger.

It's easy for kids to get the wrong message about alcohol. They might see their parents drink or watch TV commercials that make drinking look like a lot of fun. You might see people drinking and watching sports together or having a big party.

But alcohol is actually a depressant. That means it's a drug that slows down or depresses the brain. Like many drugs, alcohol changes a person's ability to think, speak, and see things as they really are. A person might lose his or her balance and have trouble walking properly. The person might feel relaxed and happy and later start crying or get in an argument.

What Happens When People Drink?

When people drink too much, they might do or say things they don't mean. They might hurt themselves or other people, especially if they drive a car. Someone who drinks too much also might throw up and could wake up the next day feeling awful — that's called a hangover.

Drinking too much alcohol can lead to alcohol poisoning, which can kill a person. Over time, people who abuse alcohol can do serious damage to their bodies. The liver, which removes poisons from the blood, is especially at risk.

Because alcohol can cause such problems, the citizens and government leaders in the United States decided that kids shouldn't be allowed to buy or use alcohol. By setting the drinking age at 21, they hope older people will be able to make good decisions about alcohol. For instance, they don't want people to drink alcohol and drive cars because that's how many accidents occur.

What is alcohol?

A drug is any substance that alters how your body functions. Alcohol is a drug- it changes how your brain and body works. It is found in drinks like beer, wine, and liquor.



Alcohol Affects the Body & Brain

Alcohol slows down the central nervous system, creating a sedative, sleep-like effect.

Since alcohol slows the central nervous system, it has a big effect on how a person acts and feels. All senses can become impaired.



Alcohol Affects the Body & Brain

Adolescents, with developing brains and bodies, should not be drinking alcohol. It is illegal and dangerous. Starting to drink early makes it more likely to develop alcohol problems as an adult. Alcohol can be physically addictive, addiction to alcohol is a disease called alcoholism.



Risks & Consequences

Drinking too much can make someone sick, pass out or even die (alcohol poisoning). It can cause health problems, including:

- Cancer, high blood pressure, brain damage and cirrhosis of the liver.

Alcohol makes it harder to think clearly or make safe choices- which can lead to risky behaviors.

Drinking underage can lead to legal trouble, school consequences, and safety risks (like accidents or fights).

Peer Pressure & Choices

Its okay to say no!

Refusal skills, like:

- "No thanks, I'm good",
- "I don't want to get in trouble",
- "I've got a game tomorrow"



Safety and Getting Help

Never get in a car with someone who has been drinking!
If someone passes out after drinking, get an adult or call 911 immediately.
Talk to a trusted adult, counselor or nurse if you're worried about someone or feeling pressured.



Let's Review!

Why is alcohol dangerous?	What can you do if you are offered alcohol?
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Parents!

- Grades 6-8 is often when kids first encounter alcohol, either through friends or family events. This is an important time to communicate with children about the facts and dangers of alcohol at a young age.
- Children's brains are still developing, alcohol affects memory, learning and decision-making more strongly in young teens than in adults.
- Communicate clear rules and expectations with alcohol.
- Discuss peer pressure and practice responses to say "no".