

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 1.2.8 Distinguish between proper use and abuse of over the-counter and prescription medicines.
- 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 Substance Abuse?

Would You Rather



OR



**Be able to speak to
animals**

**Be able to speak any
language**

Would You Rather



OR



Have a pet dinosaur

Have a pet unicorn

What do we know about substance abuse?

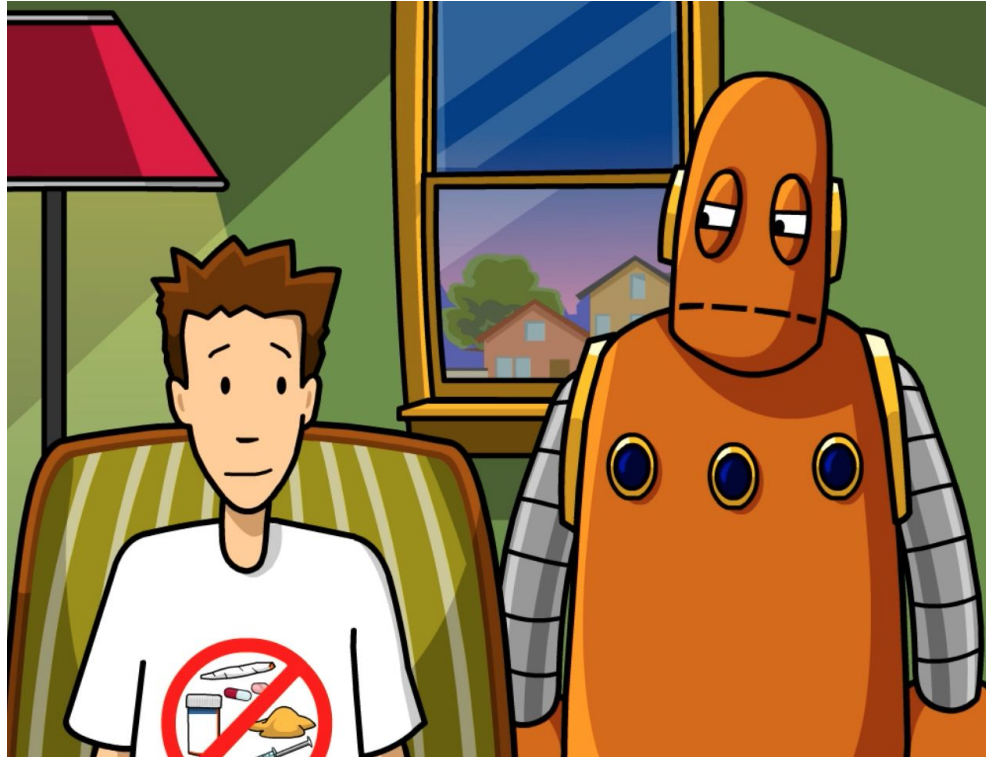
What are illegal substances? Do you know any examples of substances?

Why are these substances illegal? Why are they dangerous?

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Substance Abuse is...



Substance Abuse is...

Dealing With Addiction

What Do Substance Abuse and Addiction Mean?

The difference between substance abuse and addiction is very slight. **Substance abuse** means using an illegal substance or misusing a legal substance. **Addiction** begins as abuse, or using a substance like marijuana or cocaine.

You can abuse a drug (or alcohol) without having an addiction. For example, just because someone smoked pot a few times doesn't mean that they have an addiction, but it could lead to one.

People can get addicted to all sorts of substances. When we think of addiction, we usually think of alcohol or street drugs. But people become addicted to prescription medicines, cigarettes, even sniffing glue.

Some substances are more addictive than others: Drugs like crack or heroin are so addictive that they might only be used once or twice before the user loses control.

Addiction means a person needs a drug, even if they know it has bad consequences. Addiction can be physical, psychological, or both.

What is Substance Abuse?

Any substance that changes how your brain or body function is a drug. Over the counter medicines and prescription medicines that are only legal under a doctor's care, are drugs.



What is Substance Abuse?

Every medicine has a correct dose, the amount you're supposed to take at once. The dose is prescribed to get the effects you want, but lessen the side effects. Taking drugs for the side effects, or taking any drug illegally, is substance abuse.

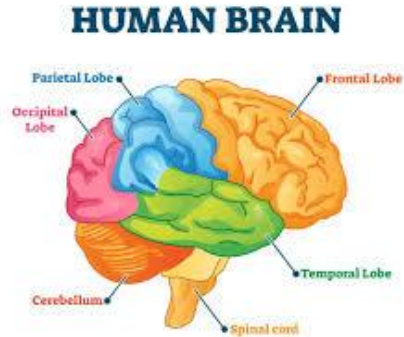


What is Substance Abuse?

Substance abuse is when someone uses drugs, alcohol, nicotine, or medications in a way that is unsafe or harmful to their body and brain. It often means using a substance to feel a certain way or taking more than they should, which can lead to serious health and safety problems

Substances Affect Your Brain

Once blood enters your bloodstream, it changes how your body works. The wrong dose of drugs can cause dangerous side effects and can be addictive.



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Substances Affect Your Brain

Young adults, under the age of 18, brains are still developing, especially the parts responsible for:

- Decision- making
- Memory
- Impulse control

Drugs at a young age can interfere with brain communication. Teenagers get addicted faster than adults because the developing brain is more sensitive to substances.

Short & Long Term Effects

Short-Term Effects

- Trouble thinking clearly
- Poor judgement and risky behavior
- Changes in emotions or mood swings
- Nausea, dizziness, or passing out
- Difficulty in school or sports performance

Long-Term Effects

- Addiction and cravings
- Damage to the heart, lungs, liver and brain
- Anxiety, depression, or difficulty coping with stress
- Impact on future goals (ex. Sports, driving, school opportunities)

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

There are some warning signs of someone using drugs, including:

- sudden mood swings,
- losing interest in hobbies,
- staying away from friends.



If you know someone you know is abusing substances, tell a parent, teacher, nurse, or adult you trust.

Let's Review!

What are substances? What are examples of legal and non legal drugs?

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What can you do if you are offered drugs?

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Parents!

- Grades 6-8 is when curiosity peaks: young teenagers may encounter substances through friends, siblings or at school. This is an important time to communicate with children about the facts and dangers of substances at a young age.
- Children's brains are still developing and is more vulnerable. Drugs impact the reward system more strongly in teens.
- Communicate clear rules and expectations with alcohol.
- Be aware of signs to watch for.
- Discuss peer pressure and practice responses to say "no".
Not one big talk- but many small talks.