

What's important? Knowing your facts, yourself and your role models

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- review safety rules about alcohol, tobacco and medicines
- learn healthy alternatives to using alcohol, tobacco and medicines
- recognize healthy and unhealthy choices
- understand the importance of personal goals and the influence of role models

TIME

- 45-minute lesson

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Fact faceoff question and answer cards

20 paper pockets (library card holders or letter-size envelopes)

balloons or *Balloon dreams* handout

felt pens

coloured ribbons

magazines

Flip chart paper

Opening activity: Fact faceoff

(10 minutes)

In preparation for this activity, photocopy and cut out the *Fact faceoff* question and answer cards. Create a display for scoring on a blackboard or billboard by

1. making four columns labelled Team A, Team B, Team C and Team D
2. placing four paper pockets vertically under each team heading
3. labelling the pockets in each column 5, 10, 15 and 20

You will need to place the question and answer cards in the pockets before beginning the activity. The teams have the same number of questions in each pocket. There are 5 questions for each team, worth a total of 60 points (1 question in the 5 pocket, worth 5 points, 2 questions in the 10 pocket, each worth 10 points, 1 question in the 15 pocket, worth 15 points, and 1 question in the 20 pocket, worth 20 points). There is a 15-point card that has *Fact faceoff* as one of the multiple-choice answers. This is the *Fact faceoff* card, which has a bonus of 5 extra points. With the exception of the *Fact faceoff* card, the teams will have the same scoring value in each pocket. This quiz may take longer than 10 minutes. To shorten the time, you can complete the quiz during two classes. Other alternatives are to place only one 10-point question in each team's envelope, or to take away the 5- or 20-point questions.

Explain to the class that the purpose of this activity is to find out what students know about drugs like alcohol, tobacco and medicines, and to give them proper information so that they can make healthy choices.

Divide the class into four equal teams. Each team can create a team name, which may be added to the display. Team A begins by selecting one question from any one of their pockets labelled 5, 10, 15 or 20. If Team A answers correctly, they receive the points for that pocket and it is now Team B's turn to select from their own pockets. However, if Team A answers incorrectly, Team B has a chance to steal the question and the points.

If Team B answers the "stolen" question correctly, they get the points for the question; but if they answer incorrectly, the question is finished and the answer is read out loud. In either case, it is now Team C's turn to select from their own pockets.

The only questions that cannot be stolen are the true and false questions and the *Fact faceoff* card. If they are answered incorrectly, they are not passed on to the next team. The team that picks the *Fact faceoff* card and answers it correctly earns five bonus points.

Only one question is read per team, even if the answer is correct. This prevents some teams from getting five correct answers in a row and leaving other teams anxious for their turns. The answers to the questions are quite detailed to give the class comprehensive information. Student answers do not have to be precise, but close. When all the questions have been asked, the team with the most points wins. You can invite a student volunteer to record each team's points.

Class discussion: The importance of personal goals and the influence of role models

(10 minutes)

Just as students need to know the right information about alcohol and drugs in order to make healthy choices, they also need to understand the importance of personal goals and the influence of role models. Making healthy choices about alcohol and drug use requires students to figure out what they want in life and identify what will help them or hold them back from achieving their goals. Goal setting provides direction, especially during difficult experiences. It helps young people develop resilience, which is the ability to thrive in the face of adversity. Role models play a significant part in this, as they often influence the goals young people set for themselves. Role models help us make healthy decisions, guide us through difficult situations and help us cope during times of struggle.



A goal is an aim a person works toward achieving.

Role models are people who have the qualities that we would like to have. They are people who influence us in a way that makes us want to do our best and be better people (Women & Girls' Tech Up, 2005).

As a class, have a discussion about student aspirations and role models. Use the following questions to guide this discussion:

1. Why is it important to have goals to work toward?
2. How does this create focus in a person's life?
3. What is important to you today?
4. What do you think will be important in the future?
5. What kind of person do you want to be?
6. How can you achieve the goals that are important to you?
7. Who is someone you look up to? (This can be a person you know well or someone you have not met, but admire; it can be a parent, grandparent, family friend, teacher, actor, singer, athlete, etc.)
8. What makes your role model special? What is it about this person that makes you want to be like him or her?
9. What are likable qualities in a role model?
10. What kinds of choices did your role models make to achieve their goals?

Balloon dreams

(20 minutes)

As a class, brainstorm a range of short-term and long-term goals that students have (e.g., saving up allowance money to buy a Video Game, practising to improve hockey skills, reading every day to get a B+ in Language Arts, travelling to a different country after graduating high school, becoming a veterinarian, etc.). Ask students to make an association between their goals and the qualities in the role models they admire (e.g., I save my allowance money to be responsible like my older sister; I practise hockey because I want to be a strong player like my cousin, etc.). Record ideas on flip chart paper.

| Goal | Likeable Quality |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| saving allowance | responsibility |
| improving hockey skills | determination |
| reading every day | patience and effort |
| travelling | sense of adventure |
| becoming a veterinarian | willingness to learn and help |

Have students identify a short-term and a long-term goal they hope to achieve. Distribute a balloon to each student, which will represent both goals. Ask students to blow up their balloons, visualizing each breath of air as a step toward achieving their goals. Have them work in pairs to help each other tie their balloons. Using felt pens, students can write both goals on their balloons. Encourage them to take a moment to reflect on their ability to achieve their goals.

Hand out four pieces of ribbon and a selection of magazine pages to everyone. Ask students to tie the ribbons onto their balloons and select magazine pictures or words to attach to each ribbon (they can attach as many as they like). The pictures or words represent the likeable qualities of the students' role models. Remind the class that the pictures and words should symbolize the qualities that will help the students achieve their goals.

Have volunteers present their balloons to the class. You can use the balloons to create a classroom display or let students take their work home.

Cautionary note: you may prefer to use the *Balloon dreams* handout if you have students with latex allergies in your class.

Closure: Role model appreciation

(5 minutes)

Ask students to identify how they could show appreciation to their role models (e.g., giving a hug, making a card, sending a gift, saying “thank you” or simply by following in their footsteps). Have the class recognize all role models discussed by giving them a round of applause.

Fact faceoff

5-POINT QUESTIONS

Q: If you have a headache, what is one thing you can do instead of taking a drug?

A: Try to relax, take a nap, massage your head and neck, get away from noise or stay out of the sun. (AADAC, 2000, p. 15)



Q: Someone is looking at your paper during a test. Which of the following is the best response:

- a. "Please look at someone else's paper."
- b. "I want you to do your own work."
- c. "Boy, you owe me."

A: b. I want you to do your own work. (AADAC, 2000, p. 14)



Q: True or false? Beer is a drug.

A: True. Beer is a form of alcohol, which is a drug. (AADAC, 2000, p. 8)



Q: Do people always know how you are feeling? Explain why.

A: No. You cannot assume that people always know how you are feeling. You need to communicate your feelings to help others understand what you are going through (e.g., when you feel tired, you may look sad). (AADAC, 2000, p. 14)

10-POINT QUESTIONS

Q: True or false? There are drugs in medicines like cough syrups.

A: True. Although not all drugs are medicines, all medicines are made of some kind of drug. Medicines are also made in different forms. They can be solids (pills), liquids (cough medicines) or sprays (asthma inhalers). (Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba, 1983, p. 3-1, 3-2)



Q: At school you tell a friend that you have a sore throat. Your friend tells you she has some medicine for your sore throat and she offers it to you. Should you take it? Explain why.

A: No. You should only take medicines that are prescribed to you by your doctor or dentist, or given to you by a parent or guardian.



Q: Where can young people go if they want information about alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or gambling?

A: They can go to family members, relatives, teachers, school counsellors, school nurses or the library (AADAC, 2000, p. 14).



Q: What should you do if you find a needle in the park?

- a. Carefully pick it up and put it in the garbage.
- b. Take it home and give it to a parent, so that no one else will touch it.
- c. Do not touch it because it may be infected.

A: c. Do not touch it because it may be infected. Tell your parents, a teacher, a police officer, or another adult you trust and let them handle it.

Q: Ryan is in Grade 6 and he wants to try smoking cigarettes. Can it hurt Ryan to try it? Explain why.

A: Yes. Smoking causes many health problems such as cancer, lung disease and heart disease. The younger people are when they start smoking, the more likely they are to depend on it. Once people have smoked for a while, quitting is very difficult.



Q: Drugs that you cannot get from a store shelf, only from a pharmacist are called

- over-the-counter drugs
- prescription drugs
- illegal drugs.

A: b. Prescription drugs are prescribed to people by doctors or dentists for specific reasons. The only legal way to get prescription drugs is from a pharmacist. You can buy over-the-counter drugs from store shelves. Medicines for headaches, sore throats and stomach aches are examples of some over-the-counter drugs. Illegal drugs are drugs that are against the law to have.



Q: What is the drug in tobacco?

- kerosene
- tar
- nicotine

A: c. Nicotine is a stimulant drug, which means that it causes the heart to beat faster.



Q: Why is feeling good about yourself important?

- you have a good opinion of yourself and your abilities
- you will never fail at anything again
- everyone will like you better

A: a. Having a good opinion of yourself and your abilities gives you a strong sense of who you are and what you want in life. Feeling good about yourself helps you get through difficult times, instead of looking for a way to escape.

15-POINT QUESTIONS

Q: What is a drug?

A: A drug is a substance, other than food, that changes the way the body or mind works.



Q: Drugs used for preventing disease are called

- a. vaccines
- b. over-the-counter drugs
- c. illegal drugs
- d. *Fact faceoff*.

A: a. Vaccines cause the body to make antibodies, which prevent illness by killing germs that might cause disease.

(Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba, 1983, p. 3-2)



Q: People use drugs to

- a. prevent or fight disease
- b. help their bodies work normally
- c. change the way they think or feel
- d. all of the above.

A: d. All are reasons for using drugs. Different people use drugs for different reasons.



Q: How can using medicines improperly be dangerous?

- a. Medicines can be poisonous if you take too much of them or take them for a longer time than is needed.
- b. You can become very ill if you take a medicine that your body does not need.
- c. It is unsafe to mix different kinds of medicines without a doctor's permission.
- d. all of the above.

A: d. All are true. An important reason for taking drugs is to prevent or treat illness. The drugs in medicines are helpful to many people when they are used properly and only when necessary. Using medicines improperly can be very harmful.

Q: Sometimes people use drugs, but not for medical reasons. Why would somebody want to try a drug like tobacco or alcohol?

A: Out of curiosity, to deal with problems and feelings, to look cool or feel grown up, to rebel against authority or to fit in with others.

20-POINT QUESTIONS

Q: Why is it important to have supportive relationships with others?

- a. You have positive role models to trust, to help you make decisions and to lean on during difficult times.
- b. You are popular if you have lots of friends.
- c. You know people who can do favours for you whenever you need them.

A: a. You have positive role models to trust, to help you make decisions and to lean on during difficult times.



Q: If an older student asked you to try alcohol, tobacco or another drug, what would be a good way to say no?

- a. Be honest and say "I'm not comfortable doing that."
- b. Be polite and to the point by saying, "No, thank you."
- c. Do not answer, simply walk away.
- d. all of the above.

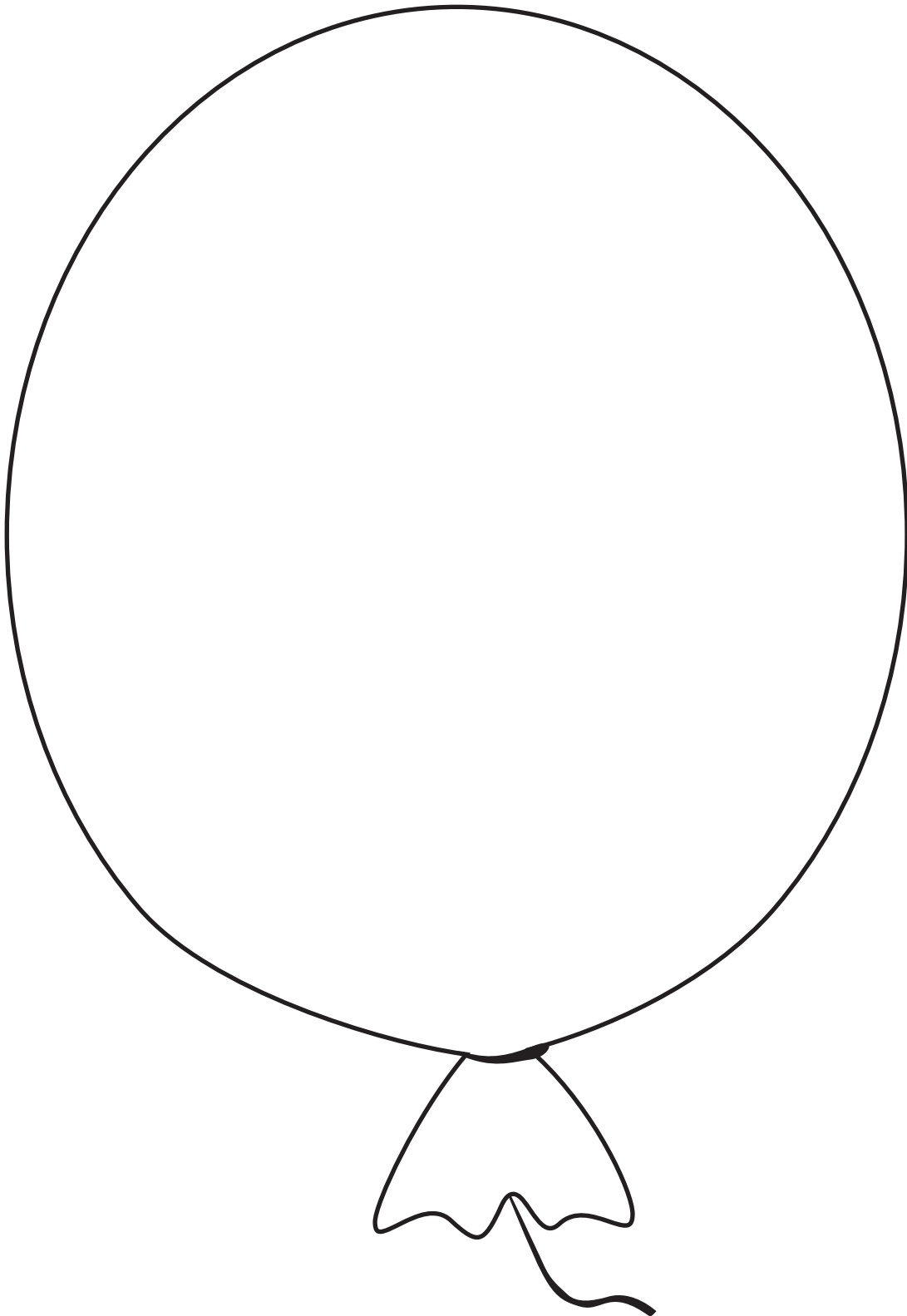
A: d. All are good ways of saying no. It is important to think about how you will answer if someone asks you to try something. Decide how you are comfortable saying no in a respectful way to avoid unnecessary conflict.



Q: Describe one safety rule about taking medicines.

A: Only take medicines that are prescribed to you by a doctor or dentist, or given to you by a parent or guardian. Take your medicine in front of a parent or guardian. Never take drugs from a stranger, or even a friend. Never share your medicines with anyone. Do not take more than the recommended amount. Never take different drugs at the same time, unless prescribed by your doctor. Always read labels carefully.

Balloon dreams



Reference List

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC). (2000). *Snakes & ladders: The AADAC addictions game*. Edmonton, AB: Author.

Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba. (1983). *Tuning in to health: Alcohol and other drug decisions*. Manitoba: Author.

Women & Girls, Tech Up. (2005). *Who is a role model?*
Retrieved Jan. 26, 2005 from http://www.techup.org/mentor/mn_rolemd.html