

All about me

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- identify their own personal skills and assets and communicate them to others
- understand how personal skills and assets are connected to a healthy lifestyle
- understand how alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and gambling affect the development of personal skills and assets

TIME

- 45-minute lesson

REQUIRED MATERIALS

flip chart paper

2-inch x 3-inch pieces of coloured paper (use one colour only and cut enough for each student to have 5 pieces)

magazines

large roll of paper (pre-cut the paper into pieces large enough to trace each student)

materials for decorating self-portraits (construction paper, tissue paper, wallpaper, yarn, buttons, glue, crayons, felts, paint, etc.)

Opening activity: Personal skills and assets

(15 minutes)

Record the following definition of personal skills and assets on flip chart paper: individual strengths, talents and gifts that people develop as they grow and learn. Ask students to give a few examples of strengths, talents and gifts, and record their ideas underneath the definition. Briefly discuss how different people grow and learn at different paces and have their own unique skills and assets.

Brainstorm with the class some specific examples of assets that are physical, verbal and intellectual. For example,

Physical (what I do and how I do it): I am a fast runner in soccer.

Verbal (what I say and how I say it): My friends tell me I say kind things to them.

Intellectual (what and how I think): I am really good at adding and subtracting in my head.

Provide everyone with five pieces of pre-cut coloured paper to record five personal skills or assets (using words or sentences). Encourage students to be as specific as possible and to give details about what they do, say or think that is a strength, talent or gift for them. As an alternative, you can have magazines available for students to cut out pictures that represent their personal skills or assets.

Ask students how personal skills and assets relate to alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and gambling. Help them understand that when young people feel good about themselves, become involved in positive social activities and experience success, they increase their chances of becoming healthy, productive adults in spite of difficult circumstances. They are less likely to have problems like dropping out of school, coming into conflict with the law or being harmfully involved with alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or gambling.

To provide students with excellent information on this topic, refer to the 40 Developmental Assets created by Search Institute at www.search-institute.org/assets/

Self-portraits

(25 minutes)

This activity may work better in the hallway or gymnasium to provide students with more space. You can also divide this activity into two parts: have students begin their self-portraits during this lesson and then finish at a later time, which will give them ample time to complete their work well.

Distribute the pre-cut paper for creating self-portraits. Ask students to work in pairs and take turns tracing each other: while one student lies down, the other student traces around his or her entire body with a pencil. Remind students to be respectful of personal boundaries when tracing each other. Explain that a general outline of the body is the expectation, so students do not have to actually touch their partners. It is also important to have a brief discussion about respecting individual differences, such as size (some people are taller, some are shorter; some people have thicker body frames and others are thinner). Another option for this part of the activity is to have a parent volunteer or classroom aid or assistant trace each student prior to the lesson.

After students have traced their self-portraits, they can begin cutting them out and decorating them. For example, they can use buttons for eyes, different colours of yarn for hair, different kinds of paper for clothing and shoes, and felts and crayons for drawing details like glasses and eyebrows.

Once students have completed their self-portraits, ask them to glue on the pieces of coloured paper that describe their skills and assets (from the opening activity). They can glue them on their clothing, hands, feet or head—wherever they like.:

Ask students how personal skills and assets can change as a result of gambling or using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. Here are some questions to help guide this discussion:

- How does smoking affect a person's ability to become a good runner?
- How might using alcohol or other drugs affect a student's school grades?
- Could it become a problem if a person drinks alcohol to have fun at a party?
- How is a person affected by using a drug that lowers his or her interest in things?

Closing: Tell others about your skills and assets

(5 minutes)

Have the class refer back to the opening activity and ask a volunteer to define personal skills and assets. Have students show their self-portraits and describe their personal skills and assets in pairs or small groups.

If you have the space, display the self-portraits around the classroom.