

# Discussing drug details

## SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

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Examine and evaluate the impact of caffeine, alcohol and drugs on personal health/wellness

- learning the definition of a drug
- understand conditions that would cause the effects of drugs to vary
- identify three different categories of drugs (legally available drugs, medicines and illegal drugs)
- recognize that many commonly used substances can be considered drugs

## CONTENT AND TIME (45-MINUTE LESSON)

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- 1.1 Opening activity: Understanding the lessons (10 minutes)
- 1.2 Envelope education (15 minutes)
- 1.3 Data on drugs (15 minutes)
- 1.4 Review: What we have learned (5 minutes)

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

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HANDOUT 1.1: Understanding the lessons

HANDOUT 1.2: Envelope education

HANDOUT 1.3: Data on drugs

Two envelopes (to be posted on the bulletin board)

A class set of envelopes (for activity 1.2: Envelope education)

Small paper strips (to go in one bulletin board envelope)

Large sentence strips (for the class bulletin board)

A pair of gloves or mittens for each student (you will want to ask the students to bring these items the day before this lesson)

Notebooks

## 1.1 Opening activity: Understanding the lessons (5 minutes)

Explain that the focus of these lessons is to provide the students with accurate information and help them acquire life skills, while emphasizing the importance of healthy lifestyle choices. The lessons cover concepts such as addiction, media influences, peer pressure, supportive relationships and self-esteem, which are directly related to alcohol, drug and gambling prevention.

Tell the students that you will provide an ongoing opportunity for them to ask questions about gambling and alcohol or drug use. Post two envelopes on the classroom bulletin board. One envelope will hold blank slips of paper, on which the students can record their questions. The other envelope will store the questions generated by the students. Tell the students that you will check the envelope for questions at the end of each lesson. As a class, you will uncover the answers, many of which will be explored in activities throughout these lessons. Emphasize that you will also be available to help the students address personal concerns they may have and that this will be done on an individual basis.

## 1.2 Envelope education (10 minutes)

In preparation for this activity, take a photocopy of HANDOUT 1.2: Envelope education. Cut out the sentence strips and place each of them in a separate envelope, so that you have enough envelopes for every class member. Seal the envelopes. If envelopes are unavailable, you may simply cut out the sentence strips, fold each in half and tape the ends together.

Gather the students as a large group and ask them to consider the following questions while they participate in this activity:

- What is the definition of a drug?
- Do drugs affect different people in the exact same way?

Have everyone put on a pair of mittens or gloves and distribute the envelopes. Challenge the students to open the envelopes neatly, making as few tears as possible; or if you have taped the ends of the sentence strips, have them undo the tape, ripping the paper as little as possible. Explain that when they have opened their envelopes, they are to read the message inside. The students may have difficulty with this task, as the words are written backwards. Do not give them any hints.

After five minutes, stop the activity and ask the students to take off their mittens or gloves. Have them open the envelopes if they have not already done so and call on volunteers to read what is written inside. Ask the class if each message makes sense when it is first read. Here, you may have some students figure out that the messages are written backwards. If so, ask how many students figured this out. If not, you may give them clues to help them figure this out or you may simply tell them to read backwards. Have the students keep their sentence strips on their desks and discuss some or all of the following questions:

- How did the way your hands normally work change for this activity?
- What factors made it difficult to understand your message at first? (Try to draw the conclusion that students do not usually think to read backwards and that reading a sentence rarely involves this level of problem solving.)
- Why did some students open their envelopes quicker or neater than others?
- Why did some students figure out that the message was written backwards quicker than others?
- Was this activity the same for everyone? Why? (Try to draw the conclusion that people have different abilities, learning styles, coordination skills, etc.)
- Do you think you could do better or worse on another day or at a different time of day? Why? (If the students have difficulty, ask them to consider being tired, feeling upset about something or having a lot of energy.)
- How does this activity relate to a discussion about drug use? (Here, try to elicit the conclusion that (1) drugs affect the way a person's body and mind function and (2) drugs affect people differently because we all have a unique physical and mental make-up.)

## 1.3 Data on drugs

(15 minutes)

Read the definition of a drug at the top of HANDOUT 1.3:  
Data on drugs.

A drug is a substance other than food, which is taken to change the way the body or the mind functions. A drug changes the way you feel and act.

Discuss how the effects of a drug may vary:

A drug's effects depend on the kind of drug you take, how much of the drug you take, when you take the drug, how often you take the drug and what else you have taken with the drug. However, once a drug has been taken, you cannot control the drug's effects. It will continue to work in your body until the body breaks it down and removes it. For example, if you take a drug that makes you drowsy, you will continue to feel drowsy until the drug wears off.

Next, explain that there are three different categories of drugs. Challenge the students to identify these. After several predictions, discuss the three main categories of drugs at the bottom of the handout: medicines, legally available drugs and illegal drugs. Ask volunteers to read their messages (backwards, so that they make sense). There are only nine different phrases, so you will want to ask the students not to repeat a sentence that has already been read. When each message has been read, ask the class to identify the appropriate category. For example:

- sleeping pills and antibiotics are prescription drugs that are available only by visiting the doctor and pharmacist – **medicines**
- insulin (to help people with Diabetes), inhalers (to help people with Asthma) and medicated epi-pens (for severe allergic reactions) are prescription drugs for people with specific conditions – **medicines**
- many kinds of eye drops, cold and cough remedies and pain relievers are non-prescription or 'over-the-counter' drugs – **medicines**
- tea, coffee and cola drinks contain caffeine, which is a legally available drug – **legally available drugs**
- wine, beer and liquor are legally available drugs for people over 18 – **legally available drugs**

- cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco and some electronic smoking products (“vaping”) contain nicotine, a legally available drug for people over 18 – **legally available drugs**
- cannabis (also called marijuana) products are **legally available drugs** for people over 18
- illegal drugs are against the law to purchase – **illegal drugs**



You will notice that examples of illegal drugs, such as heroin, crack, cocaine and ecstasy have not been provided in this resource. Providing details about drugs of this nature is not age-appropriate during class-room discussions. Although the students may be familiar with some illegal drug names, they will probably not understand the specifics of these drug types. You can acknowledge illegal drugs identified by the students; and if somebody requests more information, you can follow up by visiting the Alberta Health Services website or referring to resources offered at your local addiction services office.

Provide HANDOUT 1.3 for the students to keep in their notebooks. Have them record one or more fact(s) underneath each drug category at the bottom of the page. For example:

**Medicines**

Eye drops are an example of ‘over-the-counter’ medicines

**Legally available drugs**

There is nicotine in cigarettes, which is a legally available drug for adults

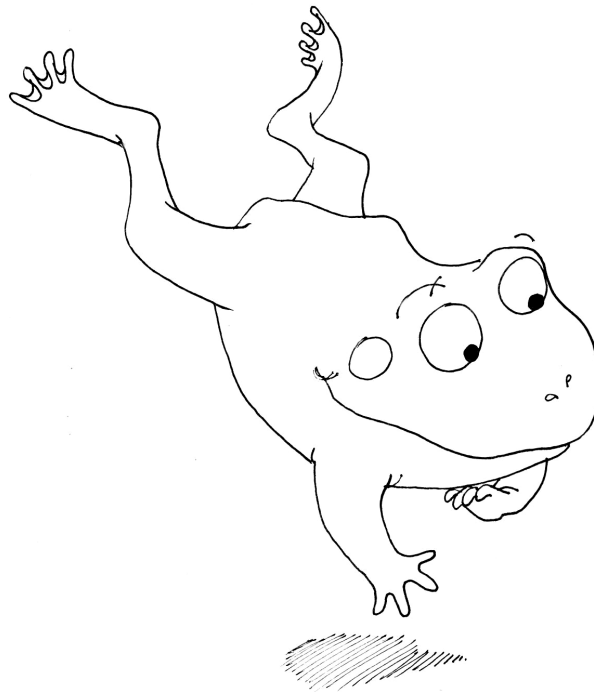
**Illegal drugs**

Illegal drugs are against the law to purchase

## 1.4 Review: What we have learned

(5 minutes)

Review with the class the definition of a drug, the varying effects of drugs and the three categories of drugs. Invite volunteers to summarize the information that was learned on sentence strips, to be displayed on the class bulletin board. Remind the students to think of questions they may have, to write these down and to add them to the class envelope.



# Understanding the lessons

Lesson 1: Discussing Drug Details – Information about drugs

Lesson 2: Drug Deliberation – Reasons for drug use

Lesson 3: Gambling Go-Round – The difference between social and problem gambling

Lesson 4: Addiction Affliction – Physical and psychological dependence

Lesson 5: Advertising Antics – Media strategies used to pressure people

Lesson 6: Real Relationships – The influence of supportive relationships

Lesson 7: Being Positive is Powerful – The importance of high self-esteem

Lesson 8: Media Mania – An advertising campaign for healthy life choices



# Envelope education



drug available legally a is which caffeine contain drinks cola and coffee tea	18 over people for drugs available legally are products (marijuana called also) cannabis
drug available legally a is which caffeine contain drinks cola and coffee tea	purchase to law the against are drugs illegal
drug available legally a is which caffeine contain drinks cola and coffee tea	purchase to law the against are drugs illegal
drug available legally a is which caffeine contain drinks cola and coffee tea	purchase to law the against are drugs illegal
18 over people for drugs available legally are liquor and beer wine	pharmacist and doctor the visiting by only available are that drugs prescription are antibiotics and pills sleeping
18 over people for drugs available legally are liquor and beer wine	pharmacist and doctor the visiting by only available are that drugs prescription are antibiotics and pills sleeping
18 over people for drugs available legally are liquor and beer wine	pharmacist and doctor the visiting by only available are that drugs prescription are antibiotics and pills sleeping
18 over people for drug available legally a nicotine contain ("vaping") products smoking electronic some and tobacco chewing tobacco pipe cigars cigarettes	pharmacist and doctor the visiting by only available are that drugs prescription are antibiotics and pills sleeping
18 over people for drug available legally a nicotine contain ("vaping") products smoking electronic some and tobacco chewing tobacco pipe cigars cigarettes	conditions specific with people for drugs prescription are (reactions allergic severe for) epi-pens medicated and (Athsma with people help to) inhalers (Diabetes with people help to) insulin
18 over people for drug available legally a nicotine contain ("vaping") products smoking electronic some and tobacco chewing tobacco pipe cigars cigarettes	conditions specific with people for drugs prescription are (reactions allergic severe for) epi-pens medicated and (Athsma with people help to) inhalers (Diabetes with people help to) insulin
purchase to law the against are drugs illegal	conditions specific with people for drugs prescription are (reactions allergic severe for) epi-pens medicated and (Athsma with people help to) inhalers (Diabetes with people help to) insulin
purchase to law the against are drugs illegal	conditions specific with people for drugs prescription are (reactions allergic severe for) epi-pens medicated and (Athsma with people help to) inhalers (Diabetes with people help to) insulin
purchase to law the against are drugs illegal	drugs 'over-the-counter' or non-prescription are relievers pain and remedies cough and cold drops eye of kinds many
18 over people for drugs available legally are products (marijuana called also) cannabis	drugs 'over-the-counter' or non-prescription are relievers pain and remedies cough and cold drops eye of kinds many
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# Data on drugs

A drug is a substance other than food, which is taken to change the way the body or the mind functions. A drug changes the way you feel and act.

A drug's effects depend on:

- The kind of drug you take
- How much of the drug you take
- When you take the drug
- How often you take the drug
- What else you have taken with the drug

Once a drug has been taken, you cannot control the drug's effects. It will continue to work in your body until the body breaks it down and removes it. For example, if you take a drug that makes you drowsy, you will continue to feel drowsy until the drug wears off.

There are three main categories of drugs, which are as follows:

**Medicines**

**Legally available drugs**

**Illegal drugs**

