

# Advertising antics

## SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

Examine the impact that changes in interests, abilities and activities may have on body image

Identify personal boundaries and recognize that boundaries vary depending on the nature of relationship, situation and culture

Investigate the effectiveness of various decision-making strategies

Assess how roles, expectations and images of others may influence career/life role interests

- recognize media strategies used to promote alcoholic beverages
- understand and identify positive and negative pressures
- examine and evaluate the health risks associated with drinking alcoholic beverages

## CONTENT AND TIME (45-MINUTE LESSON)

5.1 Opening activity: Media messages (5 minutes)

5.2 Media madness (10 minutes)

5.3 Story activity: Alcohol anxiety (20 minutes)

5.4 Review and homework assignment: Advertising agents (10 minutes)

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

NOTE: before this lesson, find examples of magazine or online advertisements about alcohol (both promoting and discouraging use).

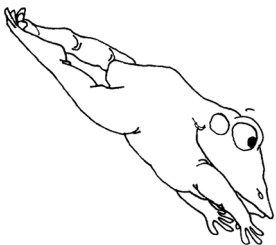
HANDOUT 5.2: Media madness

HANDOUT 5.3: Alcohol anxiety

Alcohol advertisements

Important Life Areas chart (from lesson four)

Notebooks



## 5.1 Opening activity: Media messages

(5 minutes)

Display the magazine and online advertisements where the class will be able to see them clearly. Ask the students to identify which ads promote alcoholic beverages and which ads discourage drinking. Also discuss how this is accomplished (the ad might highlight customer satisfaction and trust in the product, or might shock the viewer by illustrating a car accident caused by drinking and driving). Explain that advertisers use tactics to appeal to the viewer's intelligence and emotions, which will be explored in today's lesson.

## 5.2 Media madness

(10 minutes)

Discuss how becoming a young adult is an exciting time for most people because many new opportunities are available to them. They may go to college or university, they may start a new job, they may travel or they may move away from home for the first time. Turning 18 also marks the age when an individual is legally permitted to drink alcoholic beverages, such as beer, wine, champagne and liquor. Many young adults enter into this stage of life with a great deal of enthusiasm. They look forward to their 18th birthday, when they can celebrate drinking legally for the first time. So what is all the hype about?

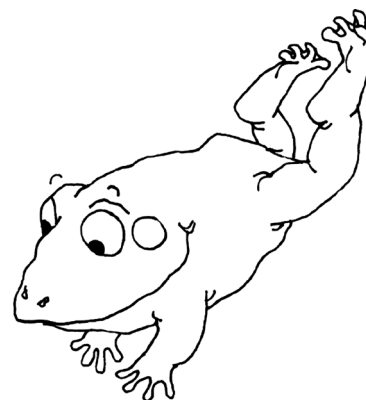
Distribute HANDOUT 5.2: Media madness. Explain that some people are curious to try alcohol and others think it will help them relax. For many people, peer influence plays a part. They want to fit in with the crowd, no matter what the cost. And why would drinking facilitate a sense of belonging; because it is viewed by many as the “fun” thing to do. And where did this notion that drinking is “fun” come from? The media. Over the years, the alcohol industry has used media to persuade people to use its products.

Discuss how the media can be found all around us, advertising in newspapers and magazines; promoting on T.V., radio, billboards, buses, the Internet and social media; and marketing at events like hockey games and music concerts. Often, the media uses tactics to sell products to us, whether or not these products are good for us.

Unfortunately, many people believe what they hear and see in the media. If a T.V. commercial shows that drinking makes you look “cool” and a magazine article tells how drinking makes you feel “good,” then it must be worth a try, right? WRONG! We need to be very aware of the tactics used by the media in order to challenge the messages we receive. We also need to recognize other pressures, such as negative peer influence, with which we are faced everyday.

Have the students brainstorm strategies the media uses to promote a product, even if that product may not be a healthy one. Consider eye-catching actions, feelings, themes and features presented in advertisements to attract people to something. Ask the students what they have seen on T.V., on the Internet or around the neighborhood. Once the students have shared ideas, show the bottom portion of HANDOUT 5.2, which lists the following strategies:

- Being young
- Having fun
- Looking cool
- Feeling free
- Being independent
- Getting satisfaction
- Experiencing success
- Being proud



Encourage the students to keep their eyes open for a variety of media strategies in the next few days.

### 5.3 Story activity: Alcohol anxiety

(20 minutes)

This next activity encourages the students to consider pressures that may influence adults to drink and adolescents to experiment with drinking. Being able to recognize pressures around them will enable the students to prepare themselves for incidents where they may feel at risk to try an alcoholic beverage. Being prepared allows the students to make decisions that are informed, rather than impulsive.

This activity can be done individually, in pairs or small groups. Distribute copies of HANDOUT 5.3: Alcohol Anxiety. Have the students read through the instructions at the top. Review the expectations to ensure that everyone understands the assignment given. The task is to read through the story and identify the positive messages influencing Jody to avoid drinking, along with the negative messages pressuring her to try it. At the end of the story, the students are asked to consider whether they think Jody will try drinking.

To save paper, you may prefer to distribute one copy of HANDOUT 5.3 to each group and have the students draw their own flags (12 in total) and respond in their notebooks.

Upon completion of this activity, have the students discuss why they coloured their flags green or red, and how they responded to the last question.

## 5.4 Review and homework assignment: Advertising agents (10 minutes)

Explain to the students that they will become representatives of an advertising agency over the next few days. During lesson eight, their job will be to design a large advertisement for a magazine, influencing young people to make healthy lifestyle choices. In order to be ready for this task, the students will need to observe interesting advertisements all around them and take note of catchy slogans, dynamic colours, upbeat illustrations or expressive emotions. Encourage the students to bring in sample advertisements. These can be ads from magazines, the Internet, T.V. commercials or billboards. The samples do not need to be specific to alcohol, drugs or gambling, as the students will be focusing on the strategies used to attract the audience.

During lesson eight, the students will create ads that promote healthy life choices in relation to the important life areas discussed in the last lesson (the list of important life areas should be posted in the classroom for the students to see clearly). You may want to discuss a few examples of appropriate ads:

- Taking responsibility to complete a job at home
- Being a positive role model for a younger student
- Studying to do well on a test

Have the students think carefully about the picture, the words and the message they will be sending to the audience. Challenge the class to think of advertisements that would be easily understood and appealing to kids, as they will be displayed throughout the school. Be sure to clarify that the students should have their ideas ready for the last lesson.

Check the class envelope and respond to any questions asked.

# Media madness

## Why do people experiment with alcohol?

- Curiosity
- To help them feel relaxed
- Peer influence
- The influence of the Media

## The media advertises all around us:

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- T.V.
- Radio
- Billboards
- Buses
- Buildings
- Internet
- Events (hockey games, music concerts, etc.)



## Media strategies used to promote a product:

- Being young
- Having fun
- Looking cool
- Feeling free
- Being independent
- Getting satisfaction
- Experiencing success
- Being proud

# Alcohol anxiety

*INSTRUCTIONS: Your job in this story is to be a detective and lead Jody on the right path toward healthy choices. Throughout the story, you will see flags. These flags are signs for Jody. Colouring a flag green will help her recognize a positive influence that encourages her to avoid drinking. Colouring a flag red will warn Jody of a negative influence that may put her at risk to try drinking.*

It was Saturday morning and Jody was very excited about her fun-filled day. First, she was going to watch her favourite T.V. show and then she was going to the shopping mall with her older sister.

When Jody turned on the T.V., she saw a commercial for a particular brand of beer. She watched a group of young, attractive adults feeling free and having fun. They were dressed cool, driving expensive cars and meeting at a huge, expensive beach house to drink beer together and play beach volleyball. 🚩 Her T.V. show finally came on and she began watching. One of the characters in the show was a free spirit. She was 22 years old and on her way to success. Jody hoped that one day she would be like that. This character drank beer too, just like the people in the commercial. But she didn't drink all the time, only once and a while when she felt stressed and she needed to forget about her problems. Jody wondered if drinking to deal with stress and daily problems was a good idea. 🚩

After the T.V. show, Jody got ready to go shopping. While she was waiting for her sister, she sat at the kitchen table and flipped through the newspaper. She saw an announcement about the health hazards of drinking and driving. The announcement listed many statistics about people hurt or killed as a result of drinking and driving in Canada. 🚩

Just then, Jody's sister came down from upstairs. Jody really liked spending time with her sister because she was trendy, she had cool friends, she drove an awesome car and she always knew what to say and do in certain situations. Jody's sister included her a lot of times too, which meant a great deal to Jody. Her sister was 17 and managed to buy her own car. She had a part time job and saved her money. Jody wanted to be like her sister and have her own car someday.

**HANDOUT 5.3b**

The two were off. On the drive to the shopping mall, there was a billboard on the side of the road. It read "Drinking can be deadly!" The picture was a view through a car windshield. But the view of the street ahead, which included other cars and people, was very blurry. You could not focus clearly on what was in front of you. There were five empty glasses in the corner of the billboard, with the following words written across them, "But I only had a few drinks." 📖 The radio was on and a new band was playing a popular rock song. The song was called "Alcohol." Jody listened to the words, "I got no troubles to recall; my best friend is alcohol. I drink all day, I drink all night; I know I've had enough when I start a fight." 📖

When they got to the shopping mall, Jody's sister saw some of her classmates in the parking lot. They invited her sister to a party that night and joked that bringing a beer or two wouldn't kill her. 📖 Jody's sister said "No thanks." Her sister liked sports. The next morning she was playing in a baseball game and she did not think that drinking would help improve her batting ability. Not only that, her sister knew that drinking is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 and she was only 17. Even if she were 18, she wouldn't drink if she were driving her car because she knew the dangers involved. She had told Jody many, many times that most of the people she knew did not drink and did not hang around places where alcohol was available because they were not yet 18. If Jody tried drinking before the legal age, she knew her sister would be very disappointed. 📖

Her sister's classmates did not take no for an answer; they kept pushing. One classmate asked, "Why don't you just come to one party? You'll be surprised how much fun you can have." Another said, "Gabriel, Tom and Steve think drinking is cool and if you don't drink, they won't want to hang out with you at the party." 📖 Jody's sister answered them with confidence and replied, "I'm okay with that. I don't think that acting drunk is all that attractive. I have lots of friends who think I'm cool just the way I am. And besides, why would I want to hang out with someone who pressures me to do something I don't want to do? See you guys later." 📖

After an hour of shopping, Jody and her sister were walking towards the car. A teenager about 16 years old walked out of the liquor store, holding a paper bag with a bottle inside. Jody wondered if the liquor store clerk served the teenager without questioning his age. Jody knew it was illegal to sell alcohol to anyone under 18.



## HANDOUT 5.3c

She figured that liquor store clerks must know that as well. She was curious about what had just happened and she wondered just how easy it would be for other teenagers to buy alcohol. 📄 The teenager's receipt fell out of the bag. Jody picked it up and read the amount. Jody gasped and then uttered, "\$23.00, no way!" Her sister nodded and said, "Just think of what else you could buy with \$23.00." Jody could not believe it. She would never be able to buy a car, like her sister had, if she spent that kind of money just to go to a party. 📄

On the way home, Jody and her sister were driving beside a bus. An advertisement on the bus posed a question. It simply asked, "Do you have a drinking problem? If you answered yes to this question, you're not alone. Call 1-800..." On one side of the ad was a picture of a woman crying, leaning over with her head in her hands. 📄

Jody read the question to herself silently. She thought about what might happen if she ever did have a problem with alcohol. Then she thought about whether or not she would try alcohol before turning 18. What answer do you think she came up with? Why?

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