

Lesson 2

Critical Decisions about Substances (Interactive Nights Out)



Key Terms

detoxification program
methadone
normal
stress
therapeutic community

What You Will Learn to Do

- Respond to substance use and abuse situations

Linked Core Abilities

- Take responsibility for your actions and choices
- Do your share as a good citizen in your school, community, country, and the world

Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Weigh the external and internal factors that influence decisions about substance abuse
- Apply the F-I-N-D-S decision process (See section on F-I-N-D-S in Unit 3, Chapter 10, Lesson 1)
- Employ predeciding techniques as a substance abuse prevention strategy
- Identify two kinds of intervention: interpersonal and enforcement
- Recognize signs of substance abuse
- Describe why people abuse substances and ways to remain drug-, alcohol-, and tobacco-free
- Identify ways to approach/help someone you suspect has a drug problem
- Define the key words contained in this lesson

Introduction

Do you know the difference between substance use, misuse and abuse? Can you recognize the symptoms of each? Substance abuse is a social dilemma that impacts families, employers, friends, and even school systems. In this lesson, you examine the types of behaviors and characteristics common to substance abusers and apply appropriate responses to substance use and abuse situations.

Obviously, all drug use is not bad. Drugs taken as prescribed by doctors or as indicated on over-the-counter drug packaging can help prevent and cure illnesses and relieve symptoms of illnesses. When taken under these circumstances and for these reasons, drugs are a useful tool in keeping people healthy. However, drugs should only be a small part of an individual's efforts to maintain wellness, since the best way to stay healthy is to maintain a healthy lifestyle. When people are healthy and feeling well both mentally and physically, they do not require drugs. So why do people misuse and abuse drugs when they do not need them?

The reasons for misusing and abusing drugs all have one thing in common: People depend on drugs to change the way they feel, instead of learning to change themselves or their behaviors to solve their problems or face new challenges. You do not need drugs to have a good time; there are many other longer lasting ways to feel good. You do not need drugs to relieve uncomfortable feelings; many other young people struggle with troubles and challenges much like your own. Even adults are often concerned with the same things you are. Many people, young and old, work to change the things that they do not like in their lives and learn to live with those aspects of their lives that they cannot change—all free of drugs. In fact, people who abuse drugs to avoid their problems realize they are not able to solve them.

How Use Develops

Students are usually first tempted to smoke cigarettes and marijuana and drink alcohol at parties and other social occasions because of peer pressure and curiosity. From there, drug abuse may then progress in five stages:

1. **Experimental use**
2. **Occasional use**
3. **Regular use**
4. **Multiple drug use**
5. **Total dependency**

This progression of stages is not inevitable; it can be stopped at any stage although stopping becomes more difficult in later stages. The best way to prevent a problem with drugs is to simply not abuse them in the first place.

Experimental Use

Those who experiment with drugs may be more curious about a drug's effects than the drug's dangers. In the case of certain drugs, however, the dangers of addiction, permanent psychological damage, or physical harm takes only one unlucky experiment. Drugs have different effects on different individuals who have no way of knowing what that effect may be. For some, trying a drug once can result in immediate addiction, serious injury to themselves or others, and even death. Remember, those who are now dependent started with experimentation, and they probably never thought that trying a drug once or twice would become an addiction. The many lives ruined by drugs prove that this can indeed happen.

Occasional Use

For occasional drug users, drugs become a way of having a good time with friends in social situations. Using drugs while alone is still relatively uncommon. Drug use may become the major social activity of the group, so it is very easy for occasional use to turn into a regular habit.

Regular Use

Regular users take drugs to maintain a drugged feeling. Though they may deny it, these users are psychologically dependent on drugs. Drug use has become a regular part of their lifestyle, and although they continue to carry out their daily activities at home, school, or work, they are usually barely making it.

Multiple Drug Use

In many cases, once people try one drug and get comfortable taking it, they are more likely to feel comfortable trying other types of drugs. For example, after many young people give in to pressures to try marijuana, and if they continue to use it regularly, it is likely they will try other drugs as well. Unfortunately, as covered in the previous lesson, each drug produces different effects, and while users of one drug may know what to expect when they take it, another drug may be much more dangerous and affect them in a very different way.

Note

The chances that a first-time user of cocaine will become addicted are 1 in 6; the chances that a first-time user of crack will become addicted are 1 in 3; and 1 out of 10 drinkers becomes an alcoholic.

Total Dependency

Dependent users rely on drugs physically as well as psychologically and will go to great lengths to get them. Without drugs, they experience severe physical and mental distress. Dependent users all started with experimental drug use. In many cases, as users grow more dependent on drugs, they crave new sensations and may try more than one drug at a time or different ways of taking a drug. Such habits multiply the risks of drug use. For example, people who start injecting drugs risk contracting diseases like AIDS through shared needles.



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

Who's at Risk?

Key Note Term

stress – strain or pressure on the body or mind

Anyone has the potential to become dependent on substances, but some people seem to be more susceptible than others. Certain times in life may make someone more likely to try drugs for the first time or to use drugs to escape problems. People who are under a great amount of **stress** are more likely to use drugs; adolescence is a time of great stress and drugs are often readily available to young people. Young people who have family problems are more likely to use drugs, and those with low self-esteem run the risk of continuing to use drugs after just trying them to deal with peer pressure or bad feelings.

The best prevention is simply not to use drugs except as directed for medical reasons and not to drink alcohol until you are of legal age and then only moderately. Children of alcoholics should consider not drinking at all, even when reaching legal age, because their risk of alcoholism is much greater than that of children of non-alcoholics.

Remember, no matter how rough things may get, there are always alternatives to drug abuse, whether it is changing an uncomfortable situation, participating in a healthy activity you enjoy, or seeking counseling for problems you feel you cannot handle alone. Although it may seem that drug abuse is very prevalent in the United States, it does not mean that it is normal.

What Is Normal, Anyway?

Key Note Term

normal – according to a rule or standard pattern; regular, usual

While you may wonder what the term *normal* has to do with drugs, deciding what kind of behavior is **normal** in your life has a lot to do with whether or not you abuse drugs. Many young people are very concerned with being normal, which can mean different things in different situations to different people. Behavior that is normal for one person may not be normal for another. What is normal in one group may be considered strange in another.

When you worry about how your clothes and hair look, if you are saying the right things, or if people will laugh at you for certain things, you are concerned with whether other people think you are normal. In fact, worrying about being normal is very normal. Young people, in particular, worry because they are experiencing so many changes in their lives. This acute awareness of “fitting in” usually decreases as you become an adult and gain a better sense of who you are. Your teenage years are a time for learning what is normal for you. It is not an easy process, so give some thought to the type of behavior you believe is normal.

Do not make the mistake of labeling your emotions as good or bad. You may not enjoy feeling angry, sad, or bored, but these are emotions that everyone has. They teach you about yourself. When you abuse drugs to escape these feelings, you are cheating yourself. Uncomfortable feelings are often messages that you need to change something in your life; look at them as feedback on how you think, act, and view your environment. They are for you to analyze and work with. They are normal.

What you consider normal is generally considered normal by your group of friends. You became friends because you have things in common. But what do you do if

your friends want you to try drugs? Is it normal behavior to go along with the group? If what is standard for the group is not for you, then it is better for you not to be what the group considers normal.

If you could run faster than all the others in your group, you would not want to slow down just to be normal. The same goes for drugs. If you know that drugs hurt you, why use them to be considered normal? Why slow down with the crowd when you know you can win the race?

Risk Factors and Drug Abuse

Why do some people abuse drugs? Some people turn to drugs as a way of coping with life's problems and stresses. Other people attempt to improve their mental or physical abilities with drugs. Still others use drugs to try to feel good or get high. Unfortunately, a drug's desired effects are often followed by its unpleasant, harmful side effects.

Risk Factors

Some teenagers who have difficulty coping turn to drugs. Three major types of factors contribute to the risk of drug abuse among teenagers: family factors, social factors, and personal factors.

Family Factors

One of the risk factors for teenage drug abuse is poor family relationships. If teenagers have good relationships with their families (see Figure 3.2.1), they can learn to deal with life's problems and stresses. In a close, supportive relationship, the teen will be able to confide in parents or siblings and find the guidance needed to cope.



Figure 3-2.1: Family attitudes and behaviors influence how teens solve problems or relieve stress.

Courtesy of Choice Photos/
The Image Bank.

However, if family relationships are not close and supportive, the teenager may not get needed guidance. The teen may feel alienated from the family. This alienation may cause the teen to feel closer to peers and therefore more vulnerable to the influence of peers who abuse drugs.

Social Factors

Peer pressure is one of the factors that contributes to drug abuse in teenagers. Most teens who have tried drugs were introduced to them by their friends or peers. They may have initially tried drugs because they were curious. Some continue to abuse drugs because they want to be part of the crowd or be accepted by friends who abuse drugs.

Imagine this situation with Mike. Mike is a 15-year-old high school student who has smoked marijuana almost every day for two years. Mike was introduced to marijuana by some of his friends and continues to use it in order to be accepted by them. Mike says that he can stop using marijuana at any time, although he has yet tried. Mike may not realize that regular use of marijuana often results in a strong emotional need to continue smoking it. One way to avoid drugs is to associate with friends who do not use drugs, as depicted in Figure 3.2.2.

Personal Factors

Stress, low self-esteem, and lack of confidence are personal factors that can place a teen at risk for drug abuse. From time to time, most teenagers experience stress. Stress may occur as a result of a death of a friend or family member, a change in an important relationship, an illness, or an academic or social problem. Some of the symptoms of stress are nervousness, inability to concentrate or sleep, irritability, and depression.

Sometimes teenagers turn to drugs to decrease or avoid the negative feelings and symptoms associated with stress. However, abusing drugs will not decrease the underlying causes of stress. Drug abuse ultimately makes life more stressful. Stress

Figure 3.2.2: One way of avoiding drug use is choosing friends who choose healthy activities instead of drugs.

Courtesy of First Light.



and negative feelings are a normal part of life. With the proper guidance and advice from positive adult or peer role models, teens can learn techniques for managing stress and negative feelings.

For example, imagine the story of Talia. Talia broke up with Chad after they had dated for two years. Chad kept to himself and pretended the breakup with Talia did not bother him. Chad never really dealt with the sadness over the loss of his girlfriend. Eventually, Chad began to feel depressed; he couldn't sleep very well. Several of his classmates encouraged Chad to get high so that he would get out of his slump.

Perhaps if Chad had been able to talk about his sadness and deal with the breakup of his relationship with Talia, he would not have felt a need to deal with his negative feelings by getting high. Strong social ties and supports can act as powerful buffers, cushioning the negative effects of stress.

Another risk factor for drug abuse is the desire by some teenagers to change their body image or to excel at school athletics. These teens often think that their popularity will increase if they are outstanding athletes. Some athletes abuse anabolic steroids, synthetic drugs that build up protein tissue in the body. Abusers use steroids to boost muscle size and make their bodies stronger.

Other athletes believe that the use of psychoactive drugs such as amphetamines, or speed, will help them concentrate on the game. They may hope that amphetamines will give them extra energy. Still other athletes think that using narcotics, or pain pills, will enable them to continue performing even after they have been injured.

Peggy is a 16-year-old high school athlete who sprained her ankle before the volleyball team tryouts. She wanted to try out, but her ankle hurt a lot. A friend offered Peggy some pain pills and told her that professional athletes take painkillers all the time.

Peggy's friend is wrong. Although most professional and amateur athletes consult their physicians or trainers about aching muscles, sprains, or other complaints, only a few athletes use drugs unwisely. Athletes who use painkillers during competition are likely to sustain more serious injuries that can end their careers. Those who abuse drugs to increase their abilities may face lifelong or life-threatening disorders. For these reasons, organizers of athletic events forbid athletes to use drugs before or during competition.

Legal Risks of Illegal Drug Use

Before deciding to drink alcohol or abuse drugs, remember that abuse of legal drugs, taking illegal drugs, underage drinking, and driving while intoxicated are all against the law. By endangering their lives and the lives of others, users become a societal problem, often requiring legal punishment. Drug laws vary from state to state, but the general trend throughout the United States is toward stiffer penalties for those convicted of drug possession, drug selling, and alcohol-related car accidents. People convicted of these crimes must pay higher fines and must often spend time in jail. If you think trying drugs might be a fun way to spend some time, think about how much fun you would have spending time in a prison.

Turning the Pressure Off



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

As a teenager, you have many new pressures in your life, as well as many new challenges and experiences. Along with these new opportunities come added responsibilities. While adjusting to these changes that are a part of becoming an adult, you are constantly making decisions. Sometimes you make good decisions and other times you may make mistakes. Making mistakes is normal in a good way because they are part of the learning process. Of course, nobody likes to make mistakes, so try to analyze each situation beforehand to minimize them.

When it comes to drugs, however, it is extremely important to make the right decision before you make a mistake; making just one wrong choice may be too late. Having to juggle pressures from your family, school, activities, job, and friends may overwhelm you at times. The many new situations and emotions you experience can sometimes seem unbearable with no end in sight. Unfortunately, drugs and people who use them and are willing to share them are readily available with what seems like a quick solution to all your problems.

Pressures from society, your family, friends, and yourself may sometimes make it difficult for you to say no to drugs. Our culture often encourages quick solutions to problems; many people would like to believe that taking a pill could cure all types of problems, but there is no magic pill to make it all better. Pills and other drugs only produce chemical reactions in your mind and body, which in turn create artificial feelings and unhealthy side effects.

Advertising, movies, and television shows often glamorize drug and alcohol abuse. It may appear that all the beautiful, fun people are drinking at a bar or taking a refreshing break with the crisp, clean smoke of a cigarette. These types of false messages reinforce the idea of drug abuse as a normal and desirable part of life. You may see your parents drink at parties; you may know students who use drugs; and you may be curious about drugs' effects or tempted to use them to relieve uncomfortable emotions. Though all these situations may make drug abuse attractive to you, the reality of drugs' effects is far from glamorous. The pleasure drugs give is short lived and unreal. They never solve problems; only you can do that, and you cannot function if drugs are a problem in your life.

What you need is a plan of action to cope with all the pressures to abuse drugs. Once you decide that you do not want drugs to be a part of your life, you must develop strategies to resist these pressures as well as healthy alternatives to drugs.

Handling Internal Pressures

The following are tips for being able to handle internal pressures. By being able to cope with what's "inside," you have a better chance of staying drug-free.

Accept and Analyze Your Emotions

If you are feeling something unpleasant, take time to consider the cause of your emotions instead of trying to avoid feeling bad. If you do not address the cause, the uncomfortable feelings will return to bother you. Also, remember that certain amounts of anger, sadness, boredom, and frustration are normal human responses to life that must be accepted.

Seek Out Help When You Feel Overwhelmed

Members of your family, teachers, counselors, and friends can help you. There are also many places that offer help for specific problems, like divorced parents, shyness, alcoholism, or lack of reading skills. You can ask a counselor or instructor at school about them or look for yourself in the phone book. If you are willing to make the effort, there are people willing to help you. Seek them out.

Find Alternatives to Drug Use

If your routine is a big yawn, take a look around and see if there is an activity that looks interesting to you. Photography, auto mechanics, painting, chess, drama, singing, playing an instrument, and part-time employment are among the many activities you could do that would add new challenges to an unexciting routine.

Of even greater importance, these activities pay you back with a real sense of accomplishment and heightened self-esteem as you get better and better at them. Drugs cannot give you these benefits; they can only temporarily produce a false feeling of well-being. In the long run, drugs always take far more than they give and leave the user with nothing but problems.

Release Excess Energy and Learn How to Relax

If you cannot sit still in your seat during class, maybe you are not exercising your body enough. Physical activities such as running, walking, biking, tennis, basketball, weight training, martial arts, skiing, and dance, among others, keep your body in shape while relaxing and focusing your mind during mental activities.

If you have problems relaxing, try the relaxation methods in the chapter on stress, such as meditation, deep breathing, and visualization techniques.

Practice Patience

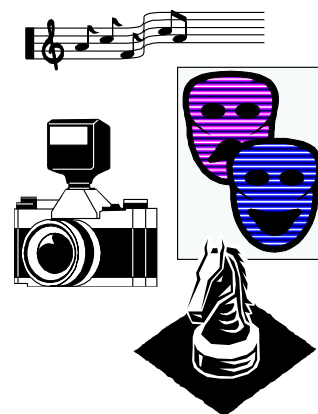
If there is a situation that makes you feel bad, you cannot think of a way to change it, and nothing you do seems to work, what can you do? *Wait!* You may not like that answer because waiting is difficult, especially for young people. But there will be times in life when the situation is out of your control. This fact is understandably hard for young people to accept. However, change is certain and inevitable. If you wait and stay alert, new solutions and opportunities will become available to you in time. To cope with the stress of a difficult situation until things do change, follow the tips in the chapter on stress. People on drugs never learn this lesson of waiting and miss opportunities to change their lives for the better.

Resisting External Pressures

There are also external pressures that you need to deal with. The following sections give you some hints and tips for refusing drugs when in social situations.

Learn How to Refuse Drugs Effectively

Standing up to peers when they want you to do something that you do not wish to do can be very difficult. When you go against the crowd, you risk rejection, which is scary. However, every time you make a decision to do what is best for you and those you care about, you become a stronger person. You also gain the respect



Courtesy of CACI and the US Army.

of those people who are your true friends. Your strength and your decisions may even give others the courage to do what is best for them as well. In today's school environment, saying no may not be easy, but it is definitely worth the effort.

Prepare Yourself for Situations Where You May Be Offered Drugs

Visualize different circumstances and different behaviors you can use to refuse offers of drugs. Have answers ready, such as the following:

- **No, thanks, I'd rather do something else.**
- **No, I already feel fine.**
- **No, thanks, I already have enough problems.**
- **No, I'm running in the meet tomorrow (interviewing for a job, taking an important test, acting in a play, etc.).**
- **No, thanks, I'll pass.**
- **No, I don't like the way it smells, tastes, and makes me feel.**
- **No, I'm not feeling too well, and I don't want to get worse.**



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

If you do not feel comfortable saying no in a situation, find a way to remove yourself from the scene. Suddenly remembering an appointment or some other excuse can get you away from the situation and give you time to think of another way of handling it next time. The important thing is not to do the drugs.

Analyze Media and Advertising

Is the image of drugs projected by advertising accurate? Who gains by making products appear glamorous and sophisticated? People who sell products want you to buy them and will use psychological techniques in advertising to create a demand for their goods. Companies that sell beer, cigarettes, and non-drug-related products, such as cars, have one main goal—they want your money.

Your goal is to do what is best for you. Some products that advertising tries to sell you are opposed to that goal. Your defense against advertisements for products that are useless or harmful is the power to read between the lines of the psychological game. Think about the message an ad is giving and decide for yourself whether it is accurate.

Developing Refusal Skills

In Figure 3.2.3, two of the teenagers are trying to coax their friend into drinking alcohol with them. The friend, however, does not believe in using drugs of any kind. Even so, she worries about what her friends will think if she refuses. Perhaps you have felt this way about saying no to your friends. Maybe you worried that if you refused alcohol, your friends would be disappointed or think you were uncool. You might even have decided to go along with your friends just to avoid the discomfort of saying no.

Refusing your friends is never easy. Nevertheless, being true to yourself and honest with friends are two values that help you develop a sense of your own identity. To



Figure 3.2.3: You can learn to refuse to do something that you're not comfortable with.

Courtesy of Larry Lawfer.

refuse an offer convincingly, you must do more than say no. The following guidelines can help you learn to say no in a way that tells others you mean it.

The answer you give is up to you. Deciding now and practicing what you want to say when the time comes will make your response easier. Avoiding situations where alcohol is served will make it easier still.

Give a Reason for Your Refusal

Don't say no without presenting your personal reason(s) for not going along with the suggestion. Be honest; don't supply phony reasons. Honest answers are more easily accepted by other people. Some answers might be as follows:

- **No thanks . . . I don't want to start a bad habit.**
- **I don't need it to have a good time.**
- **I want to keep a clear head.**
- **My parents would be upset if they knew.**
- **I could get suspended from the team.**
- **I don't use alcohol or other drugs.**

Show Your Concern for Others

Express your concern for those trying to persuade you. You might say things like the following:

- **I couldn't stand it if you hurt yourself doing that.**
- **Your parents would ground you for months if they ever found out.**
- **Some people have died from drinking alcohol or taking other drugs.**
- **I'm worried about the amount you drink.**
- **You're only hurting yourself by drinking alcohol.**

Provide Alternatives

Try to persuade your friends to do something safer or more comfortable. Here are some suggestions:

- **Let's leave this party and go back to my house.**
- **This is boring. Let's watch a movie at my place (see Figure 3.2.4).**
- **Doesn't anybody feel like going to the gym instead of doing this?**

Use Body Language to Reinforce What You Say

Your body language can either strengthen or weaken your message. To make it clear that you mean no when you say it, you should look your friends in the eyes when presenting your feelings. Try to avoid staring at the ground or glancing away. Also avoid mannerisms that indicate anxiety and nervousness. Do not give power to your persuader by looking away.

Take a Definite Action

If your friends persist in trying to persuade you after you have made your feelings clear to them, it is wise not to continue repeating the point. Instead, try to take a definite action that removes you from the situation and makes it clear that you cannot be persuaded to change your mind.

Here are some examples of specific actions that you can take to remove yourself from potentially harmful situations:

Figure 3.2.4: A movie and popcorn at home is an alternative to drinking.
Courtesy of Larry Lawfer.



- **Call for help rather than ride with a drunk driver.**
- **Get up and leave a party.**
- **Widen your circle of friends.**
- **Call other friends and do something else.**

Apply the Skill

1. Imagine that you are studying for a test with one of your friends when he or she asks you to sit close by during the test and share your answers. Describe how this request would make you feel and some possible ways in which you might respond to the request. If you were to refuse, what honest reason could you give and how would you express it? What do you think would be some of the possible consequences of your saying no? What would be some of the possible consequences of saying yes?
2. Describe two situations from your past in which you said no to others who were trying to convince you to do something you did not want to do. Explain how you felt in each situation. List the things that allowed you to refuse in each of these cases. In which situation was it more difficult to say no? Why? Did you use any of the steps presented in this skill when you refused? If so, describe the steps and how effective they were.

Ways to Say No

Today's young adults experience a great deal of peer pressure to experiment with or use alcohol and tobacco. One way to deal with this peer pressure is to be prepared to offer quick responses when such situations occur. The following are some quick-response ideas that you can use to plan ahead:

- **I'm not into body pollution.**
- **I'm kind of depressed, so I don't think I should try it today.**
- **Not today, or, not now.**
- **Nope, I don't want the hassle.**
- **I can't; my mom can smell it on me when I get home.**
- **No, thank you.**
- **When I need it, I'll let you know.**
- **I get grounded if I look sideways at my kid sister. I'd hate to think what would happen if my dad caught me smoking.**
- **No thanks; I'll wait until it's legal.**
- **No thanks. My grades are bad enough.**
- **I'm into vitamins.**
- **Not for me, thanks; I'm not into chemicals.**
- **No thanks; I'm allergic.**
- **No; I need all the brains I've got.**
- **I don't want to die young.**

- **I'm into health.**
- **I have a big test tomorrow, and I'd like to remember what I study tonight.**
- **Some other time.**
- **If the coach finds out, I'll have to run laps.**
- **No thanks; I just read a new study on its harmful effects.**

Resisting Peer Pressure

In this activity you will role-play and practice refusal skills.

Materials

- Bag of jelly beans
- Set of five role-playing cards per group

Procedure

1. Work in a group with four other students.
2. Your teacher will distribute a different role-playing card to each group member.
3. Do not discuss your role with other group members.
4. Imagine that you are at a party with friends. Spend five minutes thinking about your assigned role and how you will act during the imagined party.
5. As a group, go to the classroom area designated by your teacher. Each member acts out his or her role.

Discussion

1. Describe your role and explain how you felt playing that role during the imagined party.
2. How do you think player four felt about being pressured to eat the jelly beans when he or she refused?
3. How do you think player three felt when he or she first resisted taking the jelly beans? How do you think player three felt about giving in?
4. How do you think player three felt when player two accepted the jelly beans immediately and then pressured player three to take them?
5. How do you think player one felt about pressuring all the other players?
6. What refusal skills will you use to resist pressure from friends and make your own decisions?

Substance Abuse Intervention

It is important for you to learn about the effects of drug use, the reasons why drugs are harmful, and ways to resist pressures to try drugs. However, imbedded within the principles of good citizenship, JROTC cadets take this one step further. They also learn about the dangers posed by drugs in order to help other students avoid them, thus persuading those using drugs to seek help. Involvement in intervention programs can only help to dissolve the drug problem.

Tell-Tale Signs of Drug Use

As a cadet and leader in the JROTC program, you serve as a role model for other cadets. You send a positive message to your followers about how to successfully function without drugs. You can also help by recognizing signs of problems in other cadets. The following list of symptoms and signs of drug use will help you to determine if someone you know may be using drugs or has a serious drug problem:

- **Changes in attendance, discipline, interests, neatness, and attention**
- **Loss of interest in sports, extracurricular activities, or hobbies**
- **Failing memory**
- **Unusual degree of activity, like excitement, boundless energy, excessive laughter, and excessive talkativeness**
- **Unusual inactivity, such as moodiness, depression, drowsiness**
- **Poor physical coordination**
- **Slurred speech**
- **Deterioration of physical appearance and lack of concern for health habits and dress**
- **Loss of appetite and rapid weight loss**
- **Sudden increase in appetite**
- **Unpredictable outbreaks of temper and arguing**
- **Nervousness and irritability**
- **Reduced motivation, self-discipline, and self-esteem**
- **Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times to conceal eyes that may be red or have constricted or dilated pupils**
- **Constantly wearing long-sleeved shirts or blouses (to hide needle marks)**
- **Borrowing frequently from others or stealing money (required to purchase drugs)**
- **Chronic dishonesty, such as lying, stealing, or cheating**
- **Appearing frequently in out-of-the-way areas, such as closets, storage areas, or restrooms**
- **Guilty behavior and fear of discovery**
- **Association with known or possible drug sellers or abusers**
- **Not giving straight answers when questioned about activities**
- **Appearance of intoxication but no smell of alcohol, indicating possible use of barbiturates or marijuana**
- **Pale and perspiring skin**
- **Runny nose and/or nosebleeds**
- **Use of drug-related vocabulary**
- **Possession of pipes, rolling papers, small decongestant bottles, and lighters**
- **Possession of drugs or evidence of drugs, such as peculiar plants, butts, seeds, or leaves in ashtrays or clothing pockets**
- **Odor of drugs and the smell of incense or other cover-up scents**

All of these signs of drug use may also be caused by other medical, psychological, or personal problems, so if a friend or family member is showing one of the signs, it is in no way an absolute indication that he or she is abusing drugs. Before jumping to conclusions, consider how frequently these signs occur and whether or not the person showing the signs has a logical explanation for them other than drug abuse. Expressing concern and asking questions is the best way to get a person to confide in you.

Remember these are just guidelines of which you should be aware. Many of these behaviors or signs can have causes other than drug use. However, if you notice some of these signs in someone, you can be fairly certain that there is some kind of problem; whether related to drugs or not, the person needs help. You can be a part of that help.

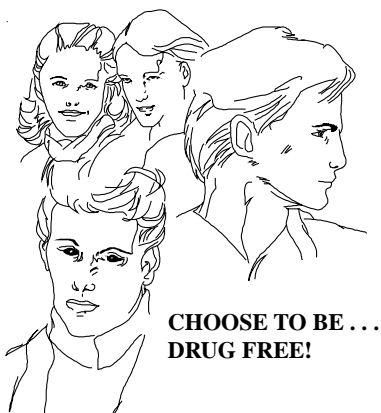
Who You Gonna Call? Where Do You Find Help?

If a friend you know is having problems and is considering abusing drugs to relieve the pain, you can be of help just by being there to listen and by affirming your personal decision that drugs are not a good way to deal with problems. In some cases, this may be all that is needed; a caring and strong presence can go a long way as can an informed discussion about what a particular drug can do to the mind and body. There may be other situations, though, that require specific and professional help that you are not prepared to give.

When you realize that someone you know may have a drug problem, there are some choices of action you need to make. Here are some of your choices:

- ***Convince the person to seek help.*** Be prepared with the names of people and agencies that can provide help.
- ***Tell a responsible adult, such as an instructor or counselor, that you are concerned about the person.*** You may be reluctant to do this because it feels like telling on someone. However, especially in cases where you know the person is using life-threatening drugs or participating in dangerous situations, you are really doing this person a favor. Your action may save a life.
- ***If you know of someone selling drugs, report the person to an appropriate authority.*** People who sell drugs have passed the point of having a personal problem. Drug dealers are hurting others.

Find out what types of help are available at your school and in your community for people with problems. Know the proper procedure for reporting drug-related incidents, and above all, show the cadets whom you lead that you care about their well-being and are willing to help. Your example and your support can have a positive impact on those around you.



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

Choosing to Be Drug Free

You may already know about the pressures to experiment with psychoactive drugs. How can you help yourself and others stay away from drug abuse? What can you do to help someone who is abusing drugs?

Treating Drug Abuse and Addiction

Before drug abusers can be helped, they need to recognize their problem. Unfortunately, this may be difficult for them. Many abusers deny their behavior; others deny the problems that led them to drug abuse. Figure 3.2.5 lists some of the signs of drug abuse. This list may help you recognize a drug abuse problem in a friend or classmate and allow you to convince the abuser that he or she has a drug problem.

After drug abusers recognize their problem, many options are available to them. Options for drug abusers include programs in which people withdraw from the drug under medical care and treatment centers in which abusers learn to live drug-free lives. Programs to help abusers and their families are available. Understanding the underlying cause for the drug abuse and involving family members can restore and reinforce the family's stability.

Many organizations counsel people about drug problems. Community hospitals have clinics or programs that provide low-cost or volunteer counseling for teenagers and adults. Local schools and governments also schedule parent meetings, peer group counseling, and drug-free programs. One of the most important aspects of dealing with drug problems, as shown in Figure 3.2.6, is family support.

Exploding Careers: Drug Counselor

A person trying to overcome a drug abuse problem may need assistance from someone outside of his or her circle of family and friends. A drug counselor can help. Drug counselors are trained to help abusers overcome the difficult problem of drug abuse. These counselors also often work with the abuser's family.

Drug counselors work in one-on-one situations, in group situations, in special drug abuse clinics, in hospitals, or for companies with employee drug programs. They also work for telephone hotlines or run private counseling services.

No certification or license is needed for this career. However, a drug counselor must have compassion and an ability to gain a client's trust. A high school diploma and training are sufficient to become a drug counselor. However, college and master's degree programs are available.

Signs of Drug Abuse

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| • Major changes in behavior | • Poor coordination |
| • Lying, cheating | • Changes in appearance |
| • Sudden changes in mood | • Slurred speech |
| • Forgetfulness, withdrawn attitude | • Irresponsible decision-making |
| • New friends who are suspected of abusing drugs | • Attention-getting behavior |
| • Loss of memory | • Aggressiveness |
| • Poor school performance | • Denial of any problems |

Figure 3.2.5: Learning to recognize the signs of drug abuse can make a difference.

Reprinted from *Health Skills for Wellness*, Third Edition, by V.E. (Buzz) Pruitt, Kathy Teer Crumpler, and Deborah Prothrow-Stith, (2001), Prentice Hall, Inc.

Figure 3.2.6: Family support is an important part of recovery from drug abuse.

Courtesy of Mieke Maas/
The Image Bank.



Key Note Term

detoxification program – a type of program where drug users or addicts can get help with drawing from substances

Key Note Term

therapeutic community – usually a residential treatment center for drug abusers and addicts

Key Note Term

methadone – controlled substance that is used in heroin withdrawal; produces some effects similar to heroin, but does not produce a “high”

Detoxification Programs

One type of drug abuse treatment is a **detoxification program**. A detoxification program involves gradual but complete withdrawal from the abused drug. People who enter detoxification programs usually receive medical treatment and supervision in a hospital. Drug abusers may stop taking the drug all at once, or physicians may reduce the drug dosage slowly to avoid painful withdrawal symptoms. Detoxification programs always include counseling to help program participants deal with their abuse and to cope constructively with the problems that led to it and were caused by it.

Therapeutic Communities

Another type of drug abuse treatment is **therapeutic communities**. A therapeutic community is a residential treatment center where drug abusers live and learn to adjust to drug-free lives. Members of therapeutic communities lend support and friendship to each other. Often drug abusers are required to undergo detoxification before becoming a part of the community. Therapeutic communities provide medical advice and counseling to help abusers develop a sense of personal and social worth. The staff of therapeutic communities usually consists of health-care professionals and former drug abusers.

Methadone Maintenance Programs

A third type of drug abuse treatment, called methadone maintenance, helps heroin abusers. **Methadone** is a drug that produces many effects similar to heroin but does not produce the same high that causes heroin addicts to crave the drug. This type of treatment involves substituting methadone for heroin. Small, regular doses of methadone prevent withdrawal symptoms. Methadone treatment is intended to eliminate the desire for heroin.

Methadone can cause dependency. Therefore, a trained professional must carefully monitor treatment and slowly lower the dosage. Long-term methadone use causes side effects such as liver damage. Methadone is not a cure for heroin addiction, but it can be a first step.

Making a Public Service Television Commercial

In this activity, you will plan a 30-second commercial to help teens cope with the peer pressure to try drugs.

Materials

Six pieces of poster board

Colored markers

Procedure

1. Work in groups of four to brainstorm ideas, characters, and a theme for a 30-second television commercial. The commercial should give advice to teenagers about coping with peer pressure to take drugs. The theme could be something like “Teen Decisions” or “Wise Choice.”
2. Two group members should prepare the visual part of the commercial by illustrating six storyboards. The storyboards will show what will appear on the television screen every five seconds.
3. The other two group members should prepare the audio part of the commercial by writing the script. The script, when read aloud, should be about 30 seconds long.
4. When the visual and audio parts of your commercial are complete, work together to develop music or sound effects to accompany the commercial.
5. Combine the visual, audio, and sound effects and present your commercial to your classmates. Ask for their reactions.

Discussion

1. What was the theme of your commercial? Why did you choose this theme?
2. Who were the characters in your script? What was their message?
3. Did your classmates think your public service commercial was effective for teenagers? Why or why not?

Avoiding Drug Use

You make decisions every day. You decide what to eat, which clothes to wear, and how much to exercise. You may also make decisions about drugs.

Refusing Drugs

Deciding not to take drugs can be a difficult decision when you are faced with pressure to take them. There are ways to avoid drugs in your life. One way is to refuse when someone offers you drugs. To be effective, you can present your personal reasons for not wanting to take drugs. Be honest; do not supply phony reasons. For example, you could say, “No thanks . . . I want to keep a clear head,” or “I don’t want to become addicted,” or simply “I don’t use drugs.” To make it clear that you mean what you say, look the person in the eyes when presenting your thoughts about drug abuse.

If the person who is offering you drugs continues to try to persuade you, make a definite action that removes you from the situation. This action should make it clear that you cannot be persuaded to change your mind. For example, you can simply get up and leave or enjoy activities with another group of nonabusing friends.

Managing Stress

Another way to avoid drugs is to manage the stress in your life. There are many methods that you can use to help manage stress, including the following:

- **Give in to your emotions. If you are angry, disgusted, or confused, admit your feelings. Suppressing your emotions adds to stress.**
- **Take a brief break from the stressful situation and do something small and constructive like washing your car, emptying a wastebasket, or getting a haircut.**
- **Have a quiet place and have a brief idle period there every day.**
- **Concentrate intensely on something that interest you, reading, surfing the Internet, a sport or a hobby. Contrary to common sense, concentration is at the heart of stress reduction.**
- **Stop to smell the flowers, make friends with a young child or elderly person, or play with a kitten or puppy.**
- **Work with your hands, doing a pleasant task.**
- **Hug somebody you like, and who you think will hug you back.**
- **Find something to laugh at—a cartoon, a movie, a television show, a Web site for jokes, even yourself.**
- **Minimize drinking caffeinated beverages and drink fruit juice or water instead.**
- **Run, swim, ride a bike, or engage in some other form of vigorous exercise.**
- **Learn to manage your time effectively.**

Note

For more information about controlling stress, refer to Unit 4, Chapter 1, Lesson 8, “Understanding and Controlling Stress.”

Getting Help

If you decide that the stresses and problems in your life are too much to manage, find someone to help you. Many people are willing to help, but first you must let them know that you need help. Parents, teachers, friends, brothers, sisters, school counselors, school nurses, and members of the clergy are usually available for guidance and support. A second option is to call one of the national hotlines that tell you where to call for drug information and treatment referral in your area. For these numbers, call 1-800-662-HELP.

Alternatives to Drug Use

Turning to drugs to try to feel good or deal with problems is a risky choice. You can get involved in many healthy and constructive activities to lift your mood, feel better about yourself, and deal with the pressures in your life.

Engaging in physical activity is one way to help yourself feel better. Physical activity not only helps improve your mood, but it also relieves the negative effects of stress. Getting enough exercise and getting involved in sports can help you feel energetic, positive, and self-confident.

Helping other people can give you a good feeling about yourself, too. Many social service agencies need volunteers. You could volunteer to read to someone with a visual handicap, make a social visit to an elderly person in a nursing facility, teach a hobby or sport to a youngster, raise funds for a charity, or pick up trash as shown in Figure 3.2.7.

Participating in youth groups can help you feel a sense of belonging and connection to others. The members of these groups support one another as each person strives to find his or her place in the world. Youth groups also volunteer to help others in need.

Working at a part-time job not only provides you with spending money, but can also give you a sense of accomplishment and increased self-esteem. Not only can you learn a new skill, but you can meet new friends. Your family, friends, or school counselor may be able to help you find such a job.

Remember that abusing drugs cannot relieve the pressures and problems in life. It can only postpone decision making and create more problems. Imagine how you would feel if you had to tell lies, hide your physical condition, worry about police, and deal with drug side effects. People who become dependent on drugs spend almost all of their time thinking about drugs, taking drugs, getting the money for drugs, and looking for drugs. Drugs end up controlling their lives. By deciding not to use drugs, you are acting to take control of your life.

Intervening to Help a Friend

Jen had been concerned about her friend Christina's use of marijuana for some time, but last night was the final straw. Jen and Christina were to meet at a friend's party, but Christina showed up two hours late and was high. Christina was feeling drowsy and acting uncoordinated. So Jen drove her home. The next day, Christina told Jen that she was perfectly fine at the party and could have driven herself home. Christina also declared that she could quit smoking marijuana easily at any time.



Figure 3.2.7: Helping others can boost your self-esteem and build friendships with other people.

Courtesy of Bob Daemmrich.

Other friends have started to give up on Christina. But Jen still cares about Christina and fears her friend may be in trouble with drugs. She wants to help, but how can she when Christina is so out of touch with reality?

As seen in Figure 3.2.8, intervening to help a friend who abuses drugs is difficult. You fear you may lose the friend. But your friend's behavior may cause that loss through a fatal accident. Use these guidelines to help save your friendship and your friend.

- 1. Stop enabling behaviors.** Enabling behaviors are actions you take that allow, or enable, someone to continue to behave dangerously without facing the consequences. By making it more difficult for people to behave dangerously, you may make them rethink what they are doing. You will help your friend most if you stop
 - **Covering up**, such as saying your friend is at your house when he or she is not.
 - **Giving second chances**, such as repeatedly lending money when your friend has not paid back previous loans.
 - **Making excuses**, such as, "That's OK, everyone's late sometimes."
- 2. Talk to your friend.** Talking to your friend about his or her behavior will not be easy, but it is worthwhile if you
 - **Express your concern and** say you are intervening because you are worried about his or her well-being.
 - **Help your friend face the facts about his or her destructive behavior.** Present specific evidence of the problem. Describe behaviors accurately and simply, using dates and times when possible.
 - **Describe your feelings.** Tell how your friend's behavior affects you. For example, Jen might say to Christina, "I was worried something had happened to you when you were late. And when you showed up so high that you were drowsy and uncoordinated, it hurt me."
 - **Don't criticize or argue.** Resist the temptation to be judgmental. You are objecting to the behavior, not the person. Do not get drawn into "no-I-didn't, yes-you-did" arguments. Expect your friend to deny drug dependency or other destructive patterns of behavior. If your friend argues, say "I just want you to know how I feel" and leave.

Figure 3.2.8: A friend may need your help to overcome a drug problem.
Courtesy of Larry Lawfer.



- **Offer specific help and support.** Prepare a list of resources that your friend can go to for help. Include names, addresses, and phone numbers. Offer to go with your friend to the school counselor, a social service center, a member of the clergy, a health professional, or other resource.
3. **Ask another friend to help.** The more people speaking the truth and offering support the better. Be sure to discuss your concerns and guidelines for intervening with the second friend. Work together.
 4. **Follow through.** Do what you said you would do, and stop doing what you said you would not do anymore. Be sure your friend knows that your determination to stop enabling is firm and that your offers of support can be counted on.
 5. **Seek adult or professional help.** If you think your friend is in a life-threatening or similarly serious situation, find a more experienced person to intervene directly.

Remember, you can only be responsible for yourself. You cannot make another person get help or change behavior. If you have done the above, you have done all you can, and you are a good friend.

Substance Abuse Prevention

Involvement in prevention programs can only help to solve the drug problem. The following is a brief history of substance abuse prevention. Later in this lesson, telephone numbers for self-help groups and prevention organizations are provided.

Prevention History

Historically, various organizations, communities, and governmental agencies founded drug abuse prevention programs based on the theory that people used drugs because they were ignorant of the consequences of such use. According to this theory, failure to recognize any negative effects of drugs resulted in neutral or even positive attitudes toward experimenting with drugs.

During the 1960s, drug education programs focused on providing information. Administrators of those programs often called them *fear arousal messages*, because they dealt with health and social consequences of drug use. However, these programs were somewhat ineffective because youths said that the messages themselves lacked credibility.

By the 1970s, social scientists began to address more personal factors that influenced drug abuse behavior among children and adolescents. Studies showed that a close association exists between drug abuse and a person's attitudes, beliefs, and values, as well as other personality factors such as feelings of self-esteem, self-reliance, and alienation.

One prevention approach that grew from this research was affective education. Rather than focusing on drug abuse behaviors, affective education focused on the factors associated with use. This approach attempted to eliminate the reasons for using drugs by creating a school climate that was supportive of students' social and emotional needs. These programs often focused on training the students in effective decision-making skills. Students in these programs worked to clarify their values, analyze behavior consequences, and identify alternative behaviors.

Some of the other leading prevention approaches in the 1970s focused on alternative activities to drug use. These programs involved youths in community projects to reduce alienation, while others provided alternative opportunities for recreation, socialization, and informal education.

Prevention Today

Today, many schools have drug prevention programs. Sometimes these programs directly involve the students. For example, high school students might perform as “peer” teachers for seventh graders. Some studies have shown that prevention programs led by peers are more effective than programs led by adults. The health programs led by peers were more successful at preventing nonsmokers from smoking. Through role-playing, students acted out situations requiring resistance to peer pressure. Students also made social commitments not to smoke or use drugs.

For most youths, substance abuse appears to be the result, in large part, of social influences. Thus, teaching youths to resist these influences is one approach to the prevention of use. However, not all youths use drugs for the same reason or respond to the same prevention approach. Thus, it may not be effective to focus on any single prevention approach, and it is important to explore multiple strategies.

Changing the Social Environment

Successful drug programs change the social environment to reduce the risks of early drug use. These programs help to provide adolescents with the personal attributes and behavioral skills they need to choose nondrug alternatives, hopefully reducing their tendency to use stronger drugs in the future.

The social environment may provide the necessary conditions for drug use through models and social supports, and through access to drugs. However, not all adolescents in high-risk environments choose to experiment or use drugs regularly. Intrapersonal and behavioral factors may be critical in determining the response to the environment through values and skills available to the adolescent to choose nondrug alternatives that meet their needs. These findings imply concentrating the prevention efforts on both of these factors, rather than on a single factor. They also imply that adolescent drug use is functional; thus, prevention efforts should focus on the functions served by drugs as well as on the more immediate predictors of drug use.

Some models suggest that prevention efforts should focus on this functionality and provide alternative behaviors for drug use rather than simply trying to suppress the underlying need or reason for use. These models often reward adolescents for choosing alternatives to drug use and suggest that such rewards should come from both peers and parents.

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is using natural and/or synthetic chemical substances for non-medical reasons to affect the body and its processes. For example, people sometimes use amphetamines to stay awake when tired. If abused, drugs can also affect the mind and nervous system. For example, people sometimes use marijuana to change moods and to get high.

Used properly to treat a medical problem, drugs can correct imbalances in body chemistry, protect against disease, and relieve tension, fatigue, and pain. However, when people abuse drugs they can cause

- **Health problems.** Every year, hospitals treat thousands of people for drug-related accidents and mental and physical illness. Drug users can harm their health by losing resistance to disease. Plus, intravenous drug users may be exposed to AIDS and other serious diseases. More than 25,000 die every year from these accidents.
- **Addiction.** When you need more and more of a drug to get the same effect, you risk an overdose, which can kill. The continued use of many drugs can lead to a physical and/or psychological dependence.
- **Legal problems.** Stealing is often the only way to support an expensive habit. Law enforcement officials arrest about two million people each year for alcohol and drug related offenses. Possession of illegal drugs is punishable by heavy fines and prison sentences. A police record can follow you through life and eliminate certain career choices.
- **Financial hardships.** From \$10 a week for cigarettes to \$100 a day for heroin, drug abuse can be an expensive habit.
- **Social difficulties.** Instead of trying to work out their problems with other people, drug abusers often take more drugs as a solution.
- **Violence.** Certain drugs can trigger violence against others.
- **Loss of friends.** Once hooked, drugs come first—ahead of friendships or anything else.

The facts show that drug abuse is on the rise. Emergency rooms treated 10,000 users of crack cocaine in 1994. In 1985 the cocaine death rate was triple that of 1981. Crack is a \$30 billion a year business. Drug-related law enforcement agencies spend \$6.5 billion a year fighting crack.

Drug abuse has risen to epidemic proportions in most communities. It touches everyone—regardless of age, race, or economic background. Communities should use information on drugs to help its citizens better understand this serious problem affecting our homes, schools, and neighborhoods.

Drug Abuse Prevention

There are many ways in which you can become involved in drug abuse prevention. You might be able to volunteer at drug treatment and rehabilitation centers. Look in the phone book under drug abuse for information and prevention programs. You may be able to find several local sources for preventive information. There are also toll-free numbers that provide information on drug abuse and prevention.

Many major hospitals have chemical dependency hospitals affiliated with them. These hospitals may offer professional treatment for alcoholism and drug dependency. Some may offer services such as seminars on drug recovery, depression, or anxiety and other individualized programs.

Help and/or information is available from many private and public agencies, facilities, and people. Drug treatment centers and clinics specialize in treating people with drug

problems. Hospitals treat on an in- or outpatient basis. Mental health centers can treat people with drug problems by dealing with underlying problems. Public health agencies and social service agencies can give practical advice, make referrals, and so on. Halfway houses provide residential treatment for those with drug problems.

If you need help with a cocaine problem, call 1-800-662-HELP or visit the Web site, findtreatment.samhsa.gov. Volunteer to help others with their drug problems and help to promote prevention programs.

The Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP) promotes and distributes prevention materials throughout the country. OSAP also supports the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) and the Regional Alcohol and Drug Awareness Resource (RADAR) Network. To learn more information on alcohol and other drugs, write or call the NCADI:

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
Information Services
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
1-800 729-6686

Alcohol Abuse

With over 157 million drivers and 105 million drinkers in the United States (in 1990), it is no wonder that people who drink and drive have become the major safety problem on our highways. Approximately 50,000 people die each year on U.S. highways, and alcohol is a factor in at least half of those deaths.

Alcohol can cause a feeling of relaxation and often an unreal sense of cheerfulness. Because of its widespread use, many people do not consider alcohol to be a drug or even dangerous. And, it can be very dangerous. The following list represents just a few of the serious side effects of alcohol:

- **Increase loss of body heat, giving a false feeling of warmth while actually decreasing the body's temperature**
- **Affect a person mentally and physically, even with one drink**
- **Contribute to loss of coordination and slurring of speech**
- **Produce changes in personality and mental functions**
- **Loosen inhibitions, causing intensification of feelings (such as anger and sadness)**
- **Impair clear thinking and judgment**

People who mix alcohol with other drugs multiply the effects of the drugs (known as the synergistic effect). Many drugs interact with each other in harmful ways; consequently, mixing alcohol with other depressants may lead to accidental deaths.

Alcohol Abuse Prevention

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is a worldwide group of men and women who help each other maintain sobriety and who offer to share their recovery experiences freely with others who may have a drinking problem. The AA program consists

basically of Twelve Steps designed for personal recovery from alcoholism. The organization functions through almost 73,000 local groups in 114 countries. Several hundred thousand alcoholics have achieved sobriety in AA, but members recognize that their program is not always effective and that some may require professional counseling or treatment.

Look for Alcoholics Anonymous in any telephone directory. In most urban areas, a central AA office can answer your questions or put you in touch with AA members. If AA is not in your local directory, write the General Service Office:

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
www.alcoholicsanonymous.org.

Al-Anon is a worldwide organization that offers help to families and friends of alcoholics. Members receive support through a mutual exchange of experiences about how an alcoholic has affected their lives. Alateen is a fellowship of young Al-Anon members, usually teenagers, with someone else's drinking problems affecting their lives. Young people come together to share experiences, strengths, and hopes with each other as they discuss their difficulties. They can also encourage one another to learn effective ways to cope with their problems.

To contact the nearest Al-Anon or Alateen Group, call the local Al-Anon Information Service (Intergroup) in metropolitan areas or write to Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters:

1600 Corporate Landing Pkwy
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
1-888-425-2666
www.al-anon.org.

There are many other places that people can get help for problems caused by alcohol. They can talk with family, friends, a school counselor, or a doctor. Look in the yellow pages under alcohol or alcoholism. Use referral services and get information provided by the local affiliate of the American Council on Alcoholism (1-800-527-5344 or www.aca-usa.org). Remember, it is important to seek help and support for people with drinking problems.

At least 22 states have established formal programs for citizen-reporting of drunk drivers. Oregon has a toll-free hotline and a governor who, at one time, displayed a red star on his car for every drunk driver he reported. During 1982 and 1983—the first two years of Oregon's reporting program—tragic fatalities were the lowest in 20 years. Most will agree that everybody has to work together. The government cannot do it alone. In Nebraska, fatalities dropped 26 percent in the first year of its drunk driver-reporting program.

Note

Drinking is the third leading cause of death in the United States, right behind heart disease and cancer.

**DON'T DRINK
& DRIVE**



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

Call your police department to see if such a program exists in your area. If not, push for one. There are many other organizations working to get drunks off the roads. For specific information on how you can help, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD):

National Office
511 E. John Carpenter Frwy., Suite 700
Irving, TX 75062-8187
1-800-438-6233
www.madd.org.

“Know When to Say When,” which has been in effect since 1983, is a nationwide consumer education campaign developed by Anheuser-Busch that encourages consumers to be responsible when they drink. It aims at normally responsible, law-abiding citizens who only need reminders of their legal and moral obligations to themselves and others. The purpose of the campaign is to help create a climate that strongly discourages situational abuse. The campaign involves a series of television commercials, a movie, billboards, and newspaper advertisements that remind consumers not to overindulge.

“The Buddy System” is an education campaign aimed at college students and other young adults. It includes a short movie, brochures explaining the program, and posters. The program makes a strong point that friends should be responsible for each other and should help one another avoid drunk driving situations.

Other programs developed to avoid drunk driving situations include free or reduced-price taxi rides home to customers who are unable to drive safely, and designated driver programs. A group designates one person to refrain from drinking so that a safe ride home is available to the other members of the group.

Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) is a student-run program that works to counteract peer pressure to drink and drive. The founder of SADD, Bob Anastas, suggests that teenagers call their parents if they or their driving friends have been drinking. Anastas has found that such an agreement between parents and teenagers works. Since the founding of SADD in 1981, more than three million students in 6500 high schools in all 50 states have become involved in SADD chapters. The efforts of groups like SADD are beginning to have an impact.

In 1980, traffic accidents accounted for killing 12,214 Americans ages 16 to 21; in 1983, 9054. In 1980, 49% of drivers ages 16 to 21 killed in traffic accidents were legally intoxicated; in 1983, 47%. For information about the parent-teenager agreement, or about starting a SADD chapter at your school, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to SADD

Students Against Driving Drunk
P.O. Box 800
Marlborough, MS 01752
1-877-723-3462
www.sadd.org.

Each year in the United States, drinking and driving results in costs totaling more than a billion dollars for property damage, insurance, and medical expenses. Drinking and driving accounts for over 500,000 people being injured and more than one million people arrested.

General Information

There are better, safer, more rewarding experiences in life than using drugs. They involve doing something that you find exciting, satisfying, meaningful, and challenging. Some alternatives include sports, dancing, playing music, theater, volunteer work, tutoring, writing, reading, playing games, photography, or crafts. You can find out about other alternatives by asking organizations in your community about programs they offer. Check with schools, community colleges, adult education programs, YMCA, YWCA, Boys' or Girls' Clubs, libraries, and so on.

Drug abuse prevention programs have evolved from the need for action and the need to reach the target school-aged population. The result is a heavy reliance on school systems, use of academic time, and involvement of educators in implementation. Everyone has the opportunity to become involved in community efforts to make citizens aware of the drug problem and how to prevent drug abuse.

Concerning the fight against drunk drivers, there are many things that people can do to help. Your knowledge of the following tips can possibly save a life when you are in a position to influence family members, friends, or other adults who are planning and/or attending a social function that includes alcohol.

As responsible hosts, they should

- **Recognize that every social occasion does not have to include alcoholic beverages.**
- **Place limits on the amount available if alcohol is served. Estimate how much alcohol to have on hand based on the number of guests and the length of the party. As a guideline, plan on one drink per guest per hour; then purchase only that amount.**
- **Provide other activities when serving alcoholic beverages. Drinking should not be the main purpose of any activity.**
- **Create a climate that respects individual choice by providing attractive nonalcoholic drinks.**
- **Be conscious of the drinking age and remember that serving alcohol to a minor is illegal.**
- **Serve snacks so that guests do not drink on an empty stomach and to slow down alcohol absorption.**
- **Create a climate that discourages overindulgence but assume responsibility for guests who overindulge. See that they get home safely by providing or arranging transportation or invite them to stay later or overnight.**
- **Keep a list of telephone numbers of emergency health care, police, and taxi services in case you have a problem.**

As responsible guests, they should

- **Regard alcohol as the highly toxic substance it is; understand its effects on the body, brain, and thought processes.**
- **Set a limit on the consumption of alcohol that is well within their personal limits, remembering that this will vary from time to time.**

- Eat while they drink, such as low salt snacks or a meal.
- If they have exceeded their limit, ask for a ride home with someone who has not been drinking.

As friends, they should

- Discourage anyone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol from driving.
- Call a cab for anyone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol.
- Remember a brief uncomfortable confrontation may save the life of a friend and others.

As concerned citizens, they should

- Talk about the dangers of drinking and driving to those who are overindulging. Ensure they understand the dangers of drinking and driving, the effects of alcohol on driving performance, and the consequences of being arrested and convicted of driving under the influence.
- Be a positive role model. Their attitudes and behavior regarding drinking and driving will influence others, especially minors.
- Support education and prevention activities in their local schools.
- Practice other safety measures such as using seat belts and child restraints for protection from drunk drivers.
- Join an organization on the local, state, or national level that is working to educate people about the dangers of drinking and driving.
- Support strong laws and enforcement of those laws. Let government know your feelings.

Help Is a Phone Call Away

The following is a list of numbers to call if you need more information on what you can do to help.

Hazeldon Educational Materials: **1-800-328-9000**

Alcohol Hotline: **1-800-252-6465**

Dare America (CA): **1-800-223-3273**

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment National Hotline: **1-800-662-4357**

Conclusion

Now that you have finished this lesson, you should have a better understanding of drugs, their effects, their dangers, and the correct role they should play in a person's life. You have also learned the importance of remaining drug-free and ways to avoid the pressures to abuse drugs. Use your knowledge to make your life and the lives of those around you better. You do have the power to control much of the way your life turns out. Set an example; your actions do make a difference in the world. Become involved as an individual. Talk to your friends and neighbors about drugs. Ask them to join you in your community's attack on drugs. Reach out a helping hand to your community; join the fight against drugs and become a part of the solution. If you feel you need help to be sober and drug-free, try to be brave enough to call the telephone numbers provided in this chapter. If you know someone who needs help, be a true friend and pass these phone numbers along. Your assistance could save a life.

This lesson concludes Chapter 3, "Drug Awareness." Refer back to this lesson whenever you need to say no or you need contact information to get help for yourself or others.

Lesson Review

1. What are four clues that might warn you that someone you know is abusing drugs?
2. What are two types of drug abuse treatment programs? How do these programs work?
3. List two alternatives to drug use. Explain how they work.
4. Suppose you were at a party where drugs were being used. What would you do?