

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Students may be getting wrong information regarding addictive drugs from unreliable sources.
2. Students may make better choices about drug abuse if they have accurate information.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. List all the things they believe to be true about drugs and addiction.
2. Discuss the sources and possible motives of the information about drugs and addiction.
3. Determine the reliability and validity of sources.

KEY TERMS

Drug: Any substance other than food that, when taken into the body, alters the structure or function of the body in some way.

Drug Abuse: Use of an illegal drug, use of a prescription drug for other than its intended use, or use of a product not intended as a drug.

Medicine: A kind of drug that is taken into the body or applied to the body to prevent or cure a disease or disabling condition – intended to be helpful.

Psychoactive Drug: A drug that affects the central nervous system and alters normal functioning of the brain, resulting in mental or behavioral changes.

Stimulant: A drug that speeds up the central nervous system.

Depressant: A drug that slows down the central nervous system.

Narcotic: Highly addictive pain killers, which also are depressants.

Hallucinogen: A drug that alters mood, thought, and the senses.

Addiction (Dependence) — There can be two types:

1. **Psychological dependence:** An emotional/mental need for a drug so one can relax or sleep and without it, one cannot function.

2. **Physiological dependence:** A chemical need for a drug — the body builds up a tolerance or becomes used to the effects of the drug and therefore needs larger and larger doses for the same effect.

Withdrawal: When a person stops taking a drug to which a person is physiologically dependent, resulting in such side effects as chills, nausea, vomiting, nervousness, insomnia, and cramps.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

SPECIAL TEACHER NOTE:

This lesson and the next, Lesson 7, include specific names of various drugs. In some teaching situations, teachers and administrators believe it is wise to deal directly with specific drugs using their pharmacological or their street names, or both.

Some educators believe that most of their students already know something about these drugs, or soon will, and it is better to deal with them in an open and informative way. Other teachers and administrators fear that giving information about specific drugs and their effects will arouse curiosity and actually increase rather than diminish the likelihood of their use. This lesson, and Lesson 7, can be taught by those advocating either approach. In addition, you should use discretion in deciding how much information is appropriate for younger students.

In one part of this lesson, you will see an optional section that includes specific drug names. This section is introduced with the words, “[Begin optional section]” and ends with the words, “[End optional section].” You should include this section if you think it is appropriate and helpful for your students to discuss specific drug names and omit it if you do not.

This lesson is an introduction to the Drug Unit. It quizzes the students regarding what they know about drugs. The next lesson, Lesson 7, will present fairly detailed facts and information about various types of drugs that are commonly misused.

Sources for content of Quiz:

- National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health
www.drugabuse.gov
- Partnership for Drug-Free Kids: Above the Influence
<http://abovetheinfluence.com/drugs/adderall>

MATERIALS / PREPARATION

In the Box: Grandmothers’ Letter and a Mousetrap.

- The mouse trap is only talked about in the story. We suggest that you take the mouse trap out of the box as you read the story, perhaps even hit the trigger plate at some point.
- **Quiz:** The quiz will be passed out at the appropriate time in the lesson. After the quiz, review each statement as a whole group and reveal to the students which are myths and which are facts.

- Each student will need his or her notebook in which to draw.
- One person in each group will need a sheet of paper to record group responses.

Preparation for the Lesson:

- Write the students’ names on the board in groups of three or four for small-group interaction during this lesson.
- Write the following list of quiz statements on the board before the lesson:
 1. The very first use of an inhalant can cause permanent brain damage.
 2. More girls than boys tend to use harmful drugs.
 3. Some people can take harmful drugs and not suffer any effects.
 4. Harmful drug use is not easy to stop.
 5. The pleasurable effects of harmful drugs tend to increase with each use.
 6. The life expectancy of people who take harmful narcotics is four to four and a half years.

- On a separate part of the board, create the following table and label where you will record student responses from a discussion during the lesson:

NOTE: You will use this box only if you are teaching the optional sections of this lesson.

Drug Names

- On another part of the board create these tables and labels where you will record students’ different responses from other discussions during the lesson:

Sources

Rating

Motivation

NOTE: This lesson will take approximately 45 minutes, if you do not include the optional section.

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON



SMALL GROUP RULES

5 MINUTES

List students' names on the board in groups of three or four.

[Have students gather into the groups that you listed on the board.]

In our last session, we came up with an agreement that we all signed. Which parts of that agreement will be needed while working in small groups today?

[Answers should include be a respectful listener, be considerate of other people's responses and thoughts, give all members an opportunity to participate, every group member is valuable, and be compassionate and understanding about other people's experiences and opinions.]

Before we begin work in our small groups, I have another section of the story of Dima, Sasha, and Natasha to read to you. This one includes a story about a mouse named "Mystyck".



= 5 minutes



STORY

ABOUT 3 MINUTES

[Read the following story, "Mystyck"]

"It is a mousetrap," answered Natasha in response to Tatyana Alexandrovna's question.

"True," replied the teacher. "You know how this kind of mousetrap works?"

"Of course," replied Sasha, with a hint of bored superiority in his voice. "Look – here is a little tray that holds the bait, and this trip-wire lets go of the part that springs closed and kills the mouse when the tray is jiggled. It's a very ordinary mousetrap. Everybody knows how they work."

"Excellent, Sasha – so take this pencil and trigger it for me."

Sasha's expression of confidence faded a little as he poked at the bait tray while the mousetrap remained absolutely still. He gave the tray a slightly harder poke, also with no effect. He concentrated mightily and aimed his pencil at exactly the point most likely to trigger the mousetrap when Dima suddenly jabbed him in the ribs and yelled, "Snap!"

Sasha jumped and glared at Dima, breathing hard, his face red with embarrassment.

"There's something wrong with this mousetrap," he said. "It should have gone off!"

To their surprise, their teacher smiled and nodded.

"Perhaps you'd like to know why your grandmothers placed a mousetrap in their box. There's a story that goes with it."

Dear Ones,

One day when Dima's father was a boy, he found a small field mouse. It was September, and he was afraid that the mouse wouldn't survive the winter – and besides, he really wanted to keep him as a pet. For some time, he kept his mouse concealed in a small tin box he hid behind the woodpile. He would sneak Mystyck (as he named the mouse) bits of bread and cheese, thinking that nobody would ever discover the new addition to the household.

The day came when Dima's grandmother, Olga, discovered the box. Wondering what such a nice tin box was doing in such an odd place, she opened it – and her screams could have been heard on the moon!

The children couldn't help but laugh thinking of Dima's grandmother unsuspectingly opening a box containing a mouse.

"I bet he got punished," said Natasha.

"Actually, he was not punished. Even more surprising, he was allowed to keep Mystyck the mouse as a pet. But there was a condition placed on his being allowed to keep the mouse: Mystyck must be fed only from this mousetrap."

The children gasped as Tatyana Alexandrovna pointed out something about the trap that they had all overlooked.

"Take a close look at this mousetrap. Do you see this bit of fine wire that prevents the killing bar from snapping shut? This mousetrap has become safe for mice. It can never become dangerous for them unless this wire is removed."

"You see, your grandmother was afraid that the mouse would escape some day from its tin box. When that happened, the fine wire would be removed and the mouse trap set with a bit of Mystyck's favorite food. And that would be the end of Mystyck, that runaway mouse!"

The children gulped, thinking not only the frightful death of Mystyck but also the diabolical cleverness of the trap that had been set for it.

"Wow," said Dima. "That was pretty clever of my grandmother. But why did she want us to have this mousetrap?"

"Because you are in danger!" replied the teacher. "There are traps set for each of you. Traps that you will think are as safe as Mystyck the mouse thought about his 'dinner plate.' But each of those traps is just waiting to spring shut – snapping the neck of the unsuspecting." As she spoke, she broke a pencil to emphasize the shattering of little bones.

"Traps set for us! Who would do such a thing? And I'm sure I would recognize a trap like that," said Natasha, staring intently at the mousetrap and thinking of the much bigger fox and bear traps she had seen in museums.

The teacher continued the letter.

Let me tell you about two such traps. Many youths your age are beginning to experiment with these traps and at first nothing happens! What do you think they do? They keep on playing with them. In time, they become convinced – like Mystyck – that what they are doing is perfectly safe. Then . . . snap! That's when they're doomed."

"Yes, but what are the traps?" asked Dima. "Are they real, or is this another of our grandmothers' strange jokes?"

“Oh, they’re real all right,” replied Tatyana Alexandrovna. “One trap is drug abuse. You all know teens who are playing around with drugs, don’t you?”

All three fought to keep their faces expressionless, but inwardly they knew that their teacher was right.

The teacher picked up the letter once again.

If drug abuse killed every young person that tried it, it wouldn’t be much of a temptation. But because it seems so safe, and also so delightful, it is all the more deadly when it finally snaps shut.

Another trap that is already luring your older friends is sexual experimentation. The terrible consequences of sex outside of marriage, including disease, pregnancy, and emotional crippling, aren’t immediately apparent. They think that what they are doing is perfectly safe.

Your Grandmothers

The mood of the little group suddenly became very solemn. As they gathered up their hats and coats for the walk home, Natasha suddenly remembered something that had been bothering her ever since she had heard the story of Mystyck and the mousetrap.

“Tatyana Alexandrovna? Whatever happened to Mystyck, the mouse?” she asked.

The teacher paused a moment from zipping up her boots and looked at each of the three children in turn. She sadly shook her head. Each child left silently, thinking about the traps that might lie ahead for them.

 = 8 minutes

EXPLORING THE LESSON



QUIZ

6 MINUTES

Let’s find out how much you know about the first trap, drug abuse.

[Allow students time to take the quiz.]

Please read each statement [listed on the board under the label “Quiz”] and first decide for yourself if you think each statement is a myth or a fact. You have a couple of minutes.

 = 14 minutes



DISCUSSION

5 MINUTES

In your assigned small group of three or four, take turns sharing why you think each one is a myth or a fact. You have five minutes.

[Walk around the room to monitor the groups. Encourage respectful group responses, behavior, and participation. Listen to the groups to hear if there are key issues or ideas that students should be reminded of later in the lesson.]

Write the word “Myth” beside each statement on the board that is not factual.

On the board I will write “Myth” next to the untrue statements. Without talking for the next few minutes, look at your original responses and compare them with the correct ones on the board.

1. The very first use of an inhalant can cause permanent brain damage.
Fact: Brain damage, hearing loss, limb spasms, and more.
2. More girls than boys tend to use harmful drugs.
Myth: More boys tend to take drugs, but the incidence of drug use among girls is rising.
3. Some people can take harmful drugs and not suffer any effects.
Myth: Even though it may be some time before you see the results, damage is happening to your mind and body.
4. Harmful drug use is not easy to stop.
Fact: Many harmful drugs start a physical craving in the user almost immediately.
5. The effect drug users desire (the feeling of “getting high”) tends to increase with each use of the drug.
Myth: For most harmful drugs, the effect diminishes with each use causing the user to need more of the drug to experience the same high.
6. The life expectancy of people who take harmful narcotics is four to four and a half years.
Fact: Recent studies demonstrate that this is a fact.

Feedback

Now I want you to discuss within your group. Compare and talk about any information that was new to you or information you previously had that was incorrect. You have five minutes.

 = 19 minutes

LISTING DRUG NAMES

5 MINUTES

Working in your same groups, make a list in your notebooks of as many drugs as you can. You have five minutes.

[Walk from group to group and listen for names of drugs being discussed. If you do not hear any mentioned in a particular group, interject the comment:]

Be sure to share with each other the names people use for different drugs. You can use popular or slang terms.

As I went from group to group, I heard several of you use some names for different drugs. Tell me some examples from your groups, and I will list them on the board.

Drug Names

[Possible names for drugs that you might hear, and may want to suggest if they are not offered, are:

- *Opium*
- *Marijuana*
- *Ephedrine*
- *Hashish*
- *LSD*
- *Methadone*
- *Heroin*
- *Cocaine*
- *Inhalants]*



INFORMATION SOURCE LISTING

5 MINUTES

People learn about drugs from various sources, such as the newspaper, TV, and people.

Working within your same groups, discuss where you, or young people your age, learn about drugs. If you think you know how different drugs make someone feel or what different drugs might do to the body, where did you get the information? You have five minutes.

Please give me some examples from your groups, and I will list them on the board.

[You will discuss the "Rating" and "Motivation" boxes later in the lesson. For now, list the responses under the "Sources" column. Possible responses may include:]

Sources	Rating	Motivation
drug users movies television magazines newspapers advertisements Internet music teachers parents friends		

 = 24 minutes



OPEN QUESTION

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

Do you think a person who uses drugs is a good source of information about drugs? Why or why not?

Rarely would a drug user give accurate information about drugs because he or she may want you to “just try it one time”. Remember Mystyck, the mouse, and his “safe” trap? What drug users tell you can be a trap or a snare; it looks safe until you are caught!

Even when drug users are people whom you love and who love you, what they say about drugs can’t always be trusted because they have already made wrong choices for themselves in taking drugs. It would be like a poisonous snake telling its prey that just a little bite will not hurt, when in fact it may be deadly!

So, having reliable sources for your information about such dangerous things is crucial. But how can you know if a source of information is reliable or not? Any ideas?

[Allow for several responses from the whole group.]

The first step in determining whether anything is fact or fiction, true or untrue, is figuring out the validity or reliability of the source. This means responding reflectively in considering the source of information, as opposed to simply accepting information or reacting to information.



= 29 minutes



RATING

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

Now, in your small groups, I want you to rate all of the sources we have listed in the left column using:

- 4 for totally trustworthy
- 3 for often trustworthy
- 2 for sometimes trustworthy
- 1 for rarely trustworthy
- 0 for never trustworthy

When you consider whether a source is reliable or trustworthy, you need to try to determine the person’s motivation.

- Is he or she conveying the information in a way that demonstrates their concern for your well-being?
- Are they trying to convince you to do something that might be beneficial to them but potentially harmful to you?
- Are they deceived themselves?

If you think it depends on some other factors, then explain those circumstances.

People who want the most accurate information typically look to experts – people who have experience, education, or training in a particular field of study or vocation.

For example, if you fall from a tree and break a leg, where would you go for help to fix it? Why not go to a veterinarian? Why not go to a botanist (plant doctor)? They are all doctors, after all! What might happen if you went to the animal doctor? What might happen if you went to the plant doctor? Why would a medical doctor be a better choice than the others?

Think about how humorous it would look if a seamstress used her skills to fix broken pipes! Imagine old leaky pipes patched together with pieces of lace, ribbon, and beautiful fabric! It might look just wonderful and appear to be mended nicely, but in reality the pipes would probably continue to leak and not work properly.

 = 34 minutes



MOTIVE GUESSES

5 MINUTES

For possible responses, note the items listed under “Rating” and “Motivation” in the chart below, which are included as examples, not as the “right” or only possible answers.

In your groups, discuss what would motivate a person (relative, friend, or drug dealer), using a movie, or an advertisement to tell you the “facts” – perhaps true, perhaps false – about drugs? The recorder will write the responses in the “motivation” column. You have three minutes.

[Take two minutes to share the results. Responses may include items listed below:]

Sources	Rating	Motivation
drug users	0 never trustworthy	money
movies	1 rarely trustworthy	protection
television	2 sometimes	inform
magazines	3 often trustworthy	
newspapers	4 totally trustworthy	
advertisements		
Internet		
music		
teachers		
parents		
friends		

 = 39 minutes



LECTURE

ABOUT 1 MINUTE

NOTE:

Remind students that the term “drug dealer” does not necessarily mean a remote professional – it could be another student (especially a senior) in your school.

As you discussed what motivates sources to give “facts” (truthful or untruthful) about drugs, I noticed that some responses suggested that there might be reasons that some sources would not want us to know the truth about drugs and addiction.

These sources might be trying to manipulate you, to get you to do something you really don’t want to do, so that they can gain something from it.

For example, a drug dealer would want you to believe that drugs were not harmful so that you would continue to purchase drugs and give him your money.



= 40 minutes

ENDING THE LESSON



NOTEBOOK RESPONSES

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

We’ve only been able to discuss these issues in a brief way today, and we’ll come back to the idea of reliable sources in a later lesson. As we’ve started talking about what we know about drugs, we’ve begun to recognize that we have to think about the source of our information as much as we do about the information itself.

In the next few lessons, we will look more at what is true and what is false about drug use and addiction. Knowledge is one of our most powerful tools as we make choices and habits that form our character, lead us toward our goals, and make us genuinely mature adults!

In your notebooks, briefly respond to the following two questions:

1. To whom can you turn for accurate, honest information?
2. Is there information you have received from any sources that you need to reevaluate?

Before dismissing your students, remember to dictate the Parent-Teacher questions to them.



= 45 minutes

RESOURCES

GOING DEEPER

Proverb: a short, memorable saying that carries good advice or makes a moral point.

In each of the next several lessons, the GOING DEEPER segments will be based around an ancient proverb. A proverb is a short, memorable saying that carries good advice or makes a moral point. Proverbs may speak about God and religious themes, but often they just communicate everyday wisdom or common-sense advice.

[You may want to give some examples from your own culture that your students would have heard, such as: In America, a teacher might quote, “The early bird catches the worm,” or “If anything can go wrong, it will,” or “Kindness is its own reward.”]

The proverbs in this course are from an ancient Hebrew book of wisdom in the Bible that is simply called “Proverbs”. It is also sometimes called “The Proverbs of Solomon”.

One of these proverbs tells us that it is useless to spread a trap in full view of the birds (Proverbs 1:17). Even though birds are not very bright, they are smart enough to avoid a trap if they see it! In the same way, people who know about drugs and understand how they work are less likely to fall into the trap of drug abuse.

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

Your assignment is to create an advertising campaign to alert people your age about the facts of illegal drugs. Be creative! Here are some ideas:

- Design posters for display on public transit (buses, taxis, subways, etc.).
- Write and perform a screenplay for 30- or 60-second TV spots.
- Write and perform scripts for public service announcements on the radio.
- Recruit a celebrity spokesperson to represent your views in a 30-second TV and radio ad. Have a student pretend to be the celebrity.

[If it is practical, use another class as a “focus group” to test your advertising.

1. *Is it convincing?*
2. *Does it communicate well with its intended audience (students your age)?*

3. *Did you choose the right celebrity to communicate with your audience?*
4. *Is it believable that your celebrity would advocate a drug-free lifestyle?*
5. *Does your audience have a better understanding of the dangers of drug abuse after viewing your work?]*

FOCUS POINT

Be sure to leave time for discussion at the end of the learning activity so your students can discuss the connection between the learning activity and the lesson. Listen to see whether they seemed to understand the key points listed. If you sense that one or more of these points may have been lost, be sure to guide the discussion to make sure they get these main ideas.

1. **People who know about drugs and understand how they work are less likely to fall into the trap of drug abuse.**
2. **Wise people avoid traps when they become aware of them. Wise people understand the dangers of drug abuse and avoid its trap.**

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

For Family Discussion:

Share with your adolescent about when you were young. Were there people you were tempted to listen to that you should not have? If so, what would you guess were their motivations for trying to lead you the wrong way?