

MODULE

13

# “let’s talk”

## SUBSTANCE USE



### LEARNING GOALS

During this module, participants will:

- Discuss messages received about drugs and alcohol.
- Consider reasons why people use drugs and alcohol.
- Learn facts about drugs and alcohol and possible physical and emotional effects of their use and misuse.
- Learn how to make safe and informed decisions about drug and alcohol use.

## DEFINE THE ISSUE

Substance use is a prevalent thread in the fabric of our society, touching countless lives directly and indirectly. Young people may feel the powerful presence that drug and alcohol use and misuse can have in their homes, communities, and schools. Substance abuse may play a factor in a young person's decision to leave home, whether the abuse is that of a family member or their own.

Our knowledge and understanding of substance use can be shaped from a very young age, and those perceptions can be reinforced through the media we consume and society as a whole.

Module 13 aims to equip participants with accurate knowledge about drugs and alcohol in a non-judgmental, non-directive, and accepting capacity. Participants will engage in hands-on activities to make their own informed decisions regarding substance use.

## ICONS

For further details, see the Introduction Module.



## MODULE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	TIME	METHODOLOGY
A. Alcohol, Drugs, & Substance Use Disorders	15 minutes	Discussion/Handouts
B. Messages About Alcohol, Marijuana, Nicotine, and Other Drugs	15 minutes	Discussion/Activity
C. Safe and Informed Decision-Making and the Impact of Substance Use	15 minutes	Discussion/Activity



Total time required: **45 minutes**

## MATERIALS

- “Substance Information Sheet” handout
- “*Drug Combination Reaction Chart*”
- “Addiction FAQ” handout
- “Messages About Alcohol, Marijuana, Nicotine, and Other Drugs” worksheet
- “Risks and Consequences Flash Cards” (copy and cut before distributing)



Consider showing the companion film, *American Street Kid*.



Contact the NRS Prevention & Youth Engagement Coordinator at **773-289-1723** or [prevention@1800RUNAWAY.org](mailto:prevention@1800RUNAWAY.org) for support and technical assistance.

## ACTIVITY 13A

### ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS



15 minutes

**INTRODUCE** Alcohol, drugs, and substance use disorders.

**STATE** Today we are going to be talking about drug and alcohol use and substance use disorders. These can be difficult topics to discuss, but they are important because they are also a part of our society. What you learn in class might be redundant, or might conflict with information you have heard before. Even if that is the case for you, throughout this entire module, I encourage you to share what you are thinking and feeling as a way to make this learning environment the most inviting it can be, and so others can learn from your experiences and expertise.

**ASK** Why do you think talking about drugs and alcohol use could be a difficult conversation?

**ALLOW** responses

**STATE** Talking about drugs and alcohol can be difficult conversations to have because everyone in this room will have a different relationship to substance use and substance use disorders. Someone might know about substance use disorders because a family member has used or is currently using harmful substances, or someone in this room may have used substances themselves. That is why it is so important that while having this discussion, we never try to tell other people what they should or should not do, or judge someone for the experiences they've had. Most importantly, there will NOT be legal ramifications for the personal experiences around substance use that you share today. This is a safe space for conversation. The brain during adolescence is still developing. During this time, "reward pathways" are much more intense for young adults. Reward pathways are what helps the brain make connections between activity and pleasure. For this reason, adolescents are more prone than adults to developing an addiction to substances.

**ASK** Some people may start using drugs or drinking alcohol voluntarily for many reasons. Why do you think that people start?

**ALLOW** responses

**ASK** What are drugs and chemical substances? Answer this question as simply as you can.

**ALLOW** responses

**STATE** Drugs are chemical substances that can change how your body and mind work. They include alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, tobacco, prescription and over-the-counter medications, and other substances. Although alcohol is normally not seen as a drug by many, it is actually a drug that depresses, or slows down, your central nervous system, the body system that includes your brain, spinal cord, and nerves.

**ACTIVITY 13A** →

**ASK** Does anyone want to share what substance use disorders are?

**ALLOW** responses.

**STATE** A substance use disorder is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences.

**STATE** So, as was mentioned, people may start using drugs, or drinking alcohol because it can seem fun or explorative.

Other people might use substances to help distract them from, or numb, a physical or emotional pain. There are no right or wrong reasons why or how someone might start using, but the list is endless.

**STATE** Now let's think about alternatives to using these substances as a coping mechanism.

**ASK** What alternatives can you think of?

**ALLOW** 2-3 minutes for participants to respond. Examples may include:

- Get involved in school or extracurricular activities
- Exercise to relieve stress or anxiety
- Find a new activity you enjoy doing, i.e., listening to music, reading a book, or playing sports
- Join a support/youth group to cope with painful problems or issues
- Talk to a trusted friend, adult, or family member
- Connect with a mental health professional or doctor for support

**HAND OUT** Substance Information Sheet

**STATE** We are now going to spend some time reviewing the Substance Information Sheet I have just passed out.

**STATE** You will see this is a long list of commonly used drugs, the effects they have when used, and what are some potential health risks with long-term use or addiction.

**ALLOW** Time for the students to review the chart

**ASK** Is there anything on this chart that you think is interesting or surprising to you?

**ALLOW** responses

**ASK** Do you have any questions about anything you are reading on this chart?

**ALLOW** responses.

**HANDOUT** Addiction FAQ Sheet

**STATE** Now that we have reviewed the Substance Information Sheet, we are going to spend some more time talking about addiction. You have noticed on the Substance Information Sheet that there is a column labeled “Over Time”, this column reflects the potential impact of long term use or abuse of a substance. Long term use and abuse are often tied to addiction, in the sense that after a long time using the drug, our bodies develop a dependency for it.

**STATE** Sometimes it can be hard to recognize when someone is experiencing a substance use disorder, or to know how to best support them during this difficult period in their life.

**ASK** What questions do you have? Is there anything we discussed today that you want to talk about more?

**ALLOW** 2-3 minutes for participants to respond.

**STATE** Remember that at any point when you need help dealing with a problem or communicating with a loved one, you may contact the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY or use their online services at 1800RUNAWAY.org.

## SUBSTANCE INFORMATION SHEET

DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOUR BODY	
		AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Alcohol</b>	A chemical called ethanol. It is made from fruits and grains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster and weaker heartbeat</li> <li>• Clumsiness/staggering</li> <li>• Confusion and lack of concentration</li> <li>• Nausea and vomiting</li> <li>• Intense emotions including euphoria or anger</li> <li>• Depressant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent liver, heart, and brain damage</li> <li>• Liver cancer</li> <li>• High blood pressure</li> <li>• Alcoholism</li> <li>• Can be addictive if used habitually (i.e., all the time), with dangerous withdrawals</li> </ul>
<b>Amphetamines (bennies, black beauties, speed, uppers)</b>	Amphetamines are prescription stimulants generally used to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and narcolepsy. Amphetamines are misused when they are taken in a way or dose that's different than prescribed or taken without a prescription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased alertness, attention, and energy.</li> <li>• Enhanced mental performance (such as increased learning and memory).</li> <li>• With repeated misuse, feelings of hostility or paranoia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term misuse can increase the chance of developing psychosis.</li> <li>• High doses can result in dangerously high body temperature and irregular heartbeat.</li> <li>• Heart failure or seizures are possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Barbiturates (phenobarbital, barbs, red devils, reds &amp; blues)</b>	Barbiturates are depressants that have been used to treat seizure disorders, insomnia, and anxiety. However, barbiturates are less commonly prescribed now. Barbiturates are misused when they are taken in a way or dose that's different than prescribed or taken without a prescription.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drowsiness</li> <li>• Feeling calm</li> <li>• Problems with movement and memory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbiturates slow down the central nervous system and cause drowsiness.</li> <li>• They can also lower heart rate, breathing, and blood pressure, which, in large doses, can lead to death.</li> </ul>

## ACTIVITY 13A HANDOUT – SUBSTANCE INFORMATION SHEET

		WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOUR BODY	
DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Benzodiazepines (benzos, downers)</b>	<p>Benzodiazepines are depressants that are most commonly used to treat anxiety, panic disorder, seizures, insomnia, and muscle spasms.</p> <p>Benzodiazepines are misused when they are taken in a way or dose that's different than prescribed or taken without a prescription.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drowsiness</li> <li>• Feeling calm</li> <li>• Problems with movement and memory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benzodiazepines slow down the central nervous system and cause drowsiness</li> <li>• Slowed breathing</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Fainting</li> <li>• Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea</li> <li>• Tremors</li> </ul>
<b>Cannabis (marijuana, weed)</b>	<p>Cannabis is a plant containing the chemical THC. THC can be smoked in plant form, vaped, smoked in concentrate, or ingested in the form of edibles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euphoria</li> <li>• Enhanced sensory perception</li> <li>• Can produce feelings of introspection, calmness, productivity</li> <li>• Decreased balance and coordination</li> <li>• Increased appetite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory issues</li> <li>• Lung damage including chronic coughs</li> <li>• Mental health issues in some users</li> <li>• As of 2024, 24 states plus the District of Columbia have legalized the recreational use of marijuana, and another 14 states allow the drug for medical use only.</li> <li>• Can exacerbate existing mental health issues</li> <li>• Psychological dependence often develops if used habitually.</li> <li>• Many electronic vaporizers of THC concentrate (weed pens, dab pens, carts, etc.) contain the dangerous chemical Vitamin E acetate. Use illegally sourced “carts” with caution.</li> </ul>





## ACTIVITY 13A HANDOUT – SUBSTANCE INFORMATION SHEET

		WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOUR BODY	
DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Cocaine (Crack)</b>	A chemical from the leaves of the coca plant. It speeds up the brain and the body. Crack is usually smoked, while cocaine is inhaled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster heartbeat, rising blood pressure</li> <li>• Rise in body temperature</li> <li>• Faster breathing</li> <li>• Inability to sit still or sleep</li> <li>• Increased alertness</li> <li>• Elation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent lung damage</li> <li>• Holes and ulcers inside of nose</li> <li>• Personality changes and violent behavior</li> <li>• Fear of people and things (paranoia)</li> <li>• Seeing things that aren't real (hallucinating)</li> <li>• In many states, crack offenses carry harsher penalties than cocaine.</li> <li>• Extremely addictive</li> <li>• Can get addicted after single use (especially crack, which is more addictive than cocaine)</li> </ul>
<b>Ecstasy (MDMA, molly)</b>	Synthetic, psychoactive drug with both stimulant and hallucinogenic properties. It can be taken in a pill form or snorted through a powder form of MDMA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased heart rate</li> <li>• Increased blood pressure</li> <li>• Confusion and lack of concentration</li> <li>• Nausea and vomiting</li> <li>• Faintness</li> <li>• Blurred vision</li> <li>• Intense emotions such as euphoria, depression, paranoia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liver damage</li> <li>• Increased risk for heart attack/stroke</li> <li>• Disruption of mood/sleep and sexual activity</li> <li>• Not physically addictive, but can be dangerous if used irresponsibly</li> <li>• MDMA and other party drugs should be tested for purity before use, as fake party drugs made of more dangerous chemicals are common.</li> </ul>
<b>Opioids (e.g. fentanyl, percocet, oxycodone, heroin)</b>	One of a group of chemicals called narcotics. They come from the opium poppy and are used as painkillers. They can be swallowed, crushed and snorted, or injected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slower heartbeat</li> <li>• Slower breathing</li> <li>• Shrinking pupils and watering eyes</li> <li>• Skin on face, neck, and chest turning red</li> <li>• Nausea and vomiting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lung damage</li> <li>• Lower sex drive</li> <li>• Disruption of menstrual periods</li> <li>• Constipation</li> <li>• Extremely addictive, even after one use</li> <li>• You can get addicted to heroin after a single use. Heroin addiction presents extreme dangers to health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>



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DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Inhalants</b> (e.g., aerosol sprays, gas, paint, poppers, whippets, etc.)	Chemicals that give off fumes that act on the brain. These include anything you can huff to produce a high. They are ingested through the nose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dizziness, bad headaches</li> <li>• Slurred speech</li> <li>• Sneezing, cough, bloody noses</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Urinating and defecating without control</li> <li>• Sudden death</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent brain, lung, and kidney damage</li> <li>• Tiredness</li> <li>• Weak muscles</li> <li>• Skin turning blue</li> <li>• Possibility of death</li> <li>• Addictive</li> <li>• Permanent brain damage is a certainty when using inhalants regularly</li> </ul>
<b>LSD</b> (acid)	A chemical that produces vivid visual hallucinations. LSD is orally ingested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual hallucinations</li> <li>• Faster heartbeat, higher blood pressure</li> <li>• Increased body temperature</li> <li>• Difficulty in seeing and hearing</li> <li>• Increased emotional response; can include euphoria or becoming confused and panicky</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research indicates that hallucinogens can activate mental health disorders in those predisposed, such as schizophrenia and MM. These are rare.</li> <li>• Some users report acid “flashbacks” that can come months or years after initial use.</li> <li>• Not physically addictive. LSD is difficult to abuse, but psychologically dangerous when not used with caution.</li> <li>• Do not use if you have an existing mental health condition.</li> <li>• Frequent LSD use (&lt;1 month in between) sharply raises potential for long term psychological effects— this applies to all hallucinogens.</li> </ul>



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DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Magic Mushrooms (shrooms)</b>	Mushrooms containing the psychoactive chemical psilocybin. Mushrooms produce a similar, shorter high than LSD. Mushrooms are usually orally ingested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased emotional response, often depending highly on environment and state of mind, including euphoria or despair</li> <li>• Possible anxiety</li> <li>• Powerful hallucinations</li> <li>• Feeling introspective, spiritual, empathetic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subtle changes in perception can last days after ingestion.</li> <li>• Research indicates that hallucinogens can activate mental health disorders in those predisposed, such as schizophrenia and MM. These are rare.</li> <li>• Mushrooms are not addictive and not physically dangerous to the body. Like LSD, they can be dangerous to your psychology if used irresponsibly.</li> <li>• Do not use if you have an existing mental health condition.</li> <li>• Like LSD, mushrooms should not be used in rapid succession.</li> </ul>
<b>DMT</b>	DMT is the active chemical in the plant ayahuasca, but can also be smoked in crystalline form. DMT produces hallucinations magnitudes stronger than LSD or shrooms. It is typically smoked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produces brief but incredibly powerful psychedelic experience</li> <li>• Increased emotional response</li> <li>• “Spiritual insight” is often reported as an effect</li> <li>• Heart rate can increase</li> <li>• Nausea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At high doses, can cause seizures or coma</li> <li>• Similar possibility of triggering pre-disposed mental illnesses such as schizophrenia</li> <li>• Not physically addictive, but can produce psychological dependency</li> <li>• See LSD frequency and existing mental issues warning</li> </ul>
<b>Ketamine</b>	Used medically as a surgical anesthetic, but often abused as a hallucinogen. Liquid ketamine can be injected or mixed into drinks. In its powder form, it can be smoked or snorted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produces hallucinations, state of sedation</li> <li>• Loss of memory</li> <li>• Unconsciousness and slowed breathing</li> <li>• Raised blood pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory and attention issues</li> <li>• Ulcers, bladder pain</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Used as a date rape drug</li> <li>• Addictive</li> </ul>



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DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Gabapentin</b>	Gabapentin is used medically to treat epilepsy, but abuse is on the rise as an alternative to opioids. It is orally ingested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euphoria and relaxation</li> <li>• Often used to increase effects of other drugs</li> <li>• Slows breathing</li> <li>• Dizziness or drowsiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Weight gain</li> <li>• Abdominal pain</li> <li>• Tremors</li> <li>• Addictive</li> </ul>
<b>Methamphetamine (Meth)</b>	A stimulant drug that strongly activates certain systems in the brain. It can be smoked, snorted, injected, or orally ingested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory loss</li> <li>• Faster heart rate and breathing</li> <li>• Higher blood pressure</li> <li>• Increased wakefulness and physical activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiac and neurological damage</li> <li>• Impaired memory and learning</li> <li>• Severe dental problems</li> <li>• Intense itching leading to skin sores</li> <li>• Violent behavior and aggression</li> <li>• Extremely addictive</li> <li>• You can get addicted to meth after a single use. Meth use presents extreme dangers to your health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>Prescription opioids including OxyContin, Fentanyl, Vicodin, morphine, Percocet</b>	A commonly prescribed drug used for its pain-relieving properties. Many are taken in pill form, but can also be in the form of a lollipop or lozenge. They can also be injected, placed on the body through a patch, or a suppository.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of euphoria</li> <li>• Drowsy feeling</li> <li>• Constipation</li> <li>• Depressed breathing</li> <li>• Nausea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical dependence—withdrawal symptoms can occur (e.g., restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting)</li> <li>• Tolerance</li> <li>• Extremely addictive</li> </ul>
<b>PCP</b>	A hallucinogenic, dissociative drug used as an animal tranquilizer. It is typically smoked, but can be swallowed, snorted, or injected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster heartbeat, higher blood pressure</li> <li>• Blurred vision</li> <li>• Hallucinations</li> <li>• Slurred or stopped speech</li> <li>• Slower body movements and sense of time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent brain, heart, and lung damage</li> <li>• Permanent speech problems</li> <li>• Fear of people and things (paranoia)</li> <li>• Inability to remember things</li> <li>• Flashbacks</li> <li>• Linked to self-injury and violent, aggressive behavior</li> <li>• Addictive, with intense withdrawals</li> </ul>

SUBSTANCE INFORMATION SHEET →



1-800-RUNAWAY



1800RUNAWAY.org

## ACTIVITY 13A HANDOUT – SUBSTANCE INFORMATION SHEET

		WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOUR BODY	
DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Prescription stimulants including Ritalin, Adderall, and Vyvanse</b>	Prescription drugs used to treat narcolepsy, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and depression. Often abused to produce a feeling of hyperfocus. Stimulants are typically swallowed or crushed and snorted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased or decreased blood pressure</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Weight loss</li> <li>• Increase in alertness, attention, and energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irregular heartbeat, dangerously high body temperatures, and/or potential for cardiovascular failure or seizures (with high doses)</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Paranoia</li> <li>• Can be addictive when abused</li> </ul>
<b>Steroids</b>	Synthetic substances related to the male sex hormone testosterone. Many people start with oral forms and progress to injectable forms of steroids.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acne, loss of hair</li> <li>• Quick mood changes, becoming violent or depressed</li> <li>• Increased muscle growth</li> <li>• Increased injuries to muscles, tendons, and ligaments</li> <li>• Lower sex drive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heart attacks or stroke</li> <li>• Liver and/or kidney damage</li> <li>• Stunted growth for adolescents</li> <li>• Testicles shrink, can't get erections, become sterile</li> <li>• Disruption of menstrual periods and ovulation</li> <li>• Extreme mood swings and aggression</li> <li>• Can be addictive in some users</li> </ul>
<b>Synthetic Cathinones (bath salts, bliss, blue silk, cloud nine, ivory wave, ocean burst, pure ivory, purple wave, red dove, snow leopard, vanilla sky, white knight, white lightning)</b>	<p>Synthetic cathinones, also known as bath salts, are a class of lab-made stimulants chemically related to substances found in the khat plant. Khat is a shrub grown in East Africa and southern Arabia that some people consume for its stimulant effects.</p> <p>People may use illegal synthetic cathinones on purpose—sometimes as cheaper or more accessible alternatives to other drugs—or unknowingly, as contaminants in other drugs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euphoria (intense happiness or feelings of well-being)</li> <li>• Increased alertness</li> <li>• Increased energy</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Agitation</li> <li>• Hallucinations</li> <li>• Aggression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased heart rate and blood pressure</li> <li>• Elevated body temperature.</li> <li>• Sweating</li> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Seizures</li> </ul>



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DRUG	WHAT IS IT?	AT FIRST	OVER TIME
<b>Nicotine and Vape</b>	Found in cigarettes, cigars, and vaping devices. Most often used by young people in the form of vapes (Juul, Stig, Suorin, Blu, etc.) Nicotine can be vaped, smoked, chewed, and ingested.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster heartbeat, higher blood pressure</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Feelings of tension and tiredness relieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lung and heart damage</li> <li>• Lung, mouth, and throat cancer</li> <li>• Bad breath and stained teeth</li> <li>• Stomach ulcers</li> <li>• High blood pressure</li> <li>• Reduction in sense of taste and smell</li> <li>• Extremely addictive</li> </ul>
<b>Prescription central nervous system depressants such as Valium and Xanax</b>	Prescription CNS depressant used to treat anxiety, acute stress reactions, and panic attacks. Belongs to a dangerous class of drugs called benzodiazepines or “benzos.” They are typically swallowed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slower brain activity</li> <li>• Sedation</li> <li>• Lower inhibition</li> <li>• Drowsiness</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Commonly combined with other depressants such as alcohol for synergistic effects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seizures (after usage is abruptly stopped)</li> <li>• Intense withdrawal</li> <li>• Addictive</li> <li>• Extremely dangerous when combined with other depressants such as alcohol, or opioids like fentanyl— easy to overdose, at risk of death.</li> </ul>
<b>Rohypnol</b>	Commonly known by the street name “roofies,” Rohypnol is a benzo most commonly used as a date rape drug. It is typically swallowed and can be crushed up and snorted, dissolved, or injected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drowsiness</li> <li>• Sedation</li> <li>• Blacking out or “lost time”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory loss, decreased attention, and difficulty focusing</li> <li>• Depression, anxiety, and in extreme cases, psychosis</li> <li>• Ulcers, indigestion, and fatigue</li> <li>• Liver, heart, and kidney damage</li> </ul>

## DRUG COMBINATION REACTION CHART

TRIPSIT

## Guide to Drug Combinations

Version 4.0  
Generated on 17 Nov 2019 at 12:15 UTC

TRIPS/1																									Guide to Drug Combinations																									⬆️ Low Risk & Synergy		⦿ Low Risk & No Synergy		⬇️ Low Risk & Decrease		⚠️ Caution		💀 Unsafe		🔴 Dangerous	
	LSD	Mushrooms	DMT	Mescaline	DOx	NBOMes	2C-x	2C-T-x	5-MeO-xxT	Cannabis	Ketamine	MXE	DXM	Nitrous	Amphetamines	MDMA	Cocaine	Caffeine	Alcohol	GHB/GBL	Opioids	Tramadol	Benzodiazepine	MAOIs	SSRIs																																				
LSD	LSD	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	↓	↓	LSD																																			
Mushrooms	↑	Mushrooms	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	↑	↓	Mushrooms																																			
DMT	↑	↑	DMT	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	↑	↓	DMT																																			
Mescaline	↑	↑	↑	Mescaline	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	↑	↓	Mescaline																																			
DOx	↑	↑	↑	↑	DOx	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	⚠️	↓	DOx																																			
NBOMes	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	NBOMes	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	⚠️	↓	NBOMes																																			
2C-x	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	2C-x	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	⚠️	↓	2C-x																																			
2C-T-x	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	2C-T-x	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	⚠️	↓	2C-T-x																																			
5-MeO-xxT	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	5-MeO-xxT	⚠️	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	⚠️	↓	⚠️	↓	5-MeO-xxT																																			
Cannabis	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	Cannabis	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⦿	↓	↓	⦿	↑	↓	⚠️	⦿	Cannabis																																			
Ketamine	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	Ketamine	↑	⦿	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	Ketamine																																			
MXE	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	↑	↑	↑	MXE	⦿	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	MXE																																			
DXM	↑	↑	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⦿	⦿	DXM	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	DXM																																			
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Amphetamines	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	Amphetamines	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	Amphetamines																																			
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Cocaine	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	Cocaine	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	Cocaine																																			
Caffeine	⚠️	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⚠️	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	Caffeine	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	Caffeine																																			
Alcohol	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	Alcohol																																			
GHB/GBL	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	GHB/GBL	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	GHB/GBL																																			
Opioids	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	Opioids	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	Opioids																																			
Tramadol	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	Tramadol	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	Tramadol																																			
Benzodiazepine	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↓	↓	↓	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	Benzodiazepine																																			
MAOIs	↓	↑	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	↑	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	MAOIs																																			
SSRIs	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	⦿	⦿	⦿	⚠️	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⚠️	⦿	⚠️	⚠️	SSRIs																																			
	LSD	Mushrooms	DMT	Mescaline	DOx	NBOMes	2C-x	2C-T-x	5-MeO-xxT	Cannabis	Ketamine	MXE	DXM	Nitrous	Amphetamines	MDMA	Cocaine	Caffeine	Alcohol	GHB/GBL	Opioids	Tramadol	Benzodiazepine	MAOIs	SSRIs																																				

This information has been researched to the best ability by the TripSit team, and the greatest effort has been made not to include incorrect or misleading information though some information may never be 100% accurate.  
This chart is meant as a quick reference guide and additional research must always be done. It is not sufficient to only consult this chart when considering a combination. Use at your own risk and please try to be safe.  
When mixing drugs keep potentiation in mind and start with lower doses of each substance.  
For more information on specific drugs visit <http://drugs.tripsit.me>

Up-to-date information, details, explanations, and references are published on <http://combo.tripsit.me>

Further information about individual drugs including dosages, durations, and HR advice is available at <http://drugs.tripsit.me/>



## ADDICTION FAQ

### What is addiction?

According to drugabuse.gov, addiction “is a chronic [long term] disease characterized by drug seeking and use that is compulsive, or difficult to control, despite harmful consequences.”

- Most people take drugs voluntarily for the first time, but even a few uses can lead to brain changes that make the person dependent on a substance.
- Most drugs target the brain’s “reward system,” and the longer you take drugs the less natural reward chemicals your brain produces. Drugs literally replace your brain’s ability to feel happy or rewarded on its own.

### How do I recognize if I have a substance abuse problem?

#### What about someone close to me?

If you or someone close to you:

- Struggles to control your use of a particular substance,
- Uses drugs because they make you feel better about yourself or your problems,
- Has gotten in trouble with an adult or the authorities due to drug use,
- Sees your social circles change, grades slip, or hygiene worsen,

You may have a substance abuse issue.

### Why does addiction make it difficult to make healthy choices?

- Drugs can inhibit learning, judgment, decision-making, memory and behavior.
- Additionally, drugs and alcohol make it difficult to make healthy choices by relying on substances to solve our problems, instead of other coping mechanisms or stress management techniques.
- If you recognize you have a problem, there are a number of ways to seek help.

### How do I ask for help?

- Your goal should be to talk to a health professional to explore treatment options for you. For many young people, finding a trusted adult to assist with this process is helpful.
- Treatment programs are a common method of remedying drug issues. These programs look to gradually decrease your physical dependence on the substance and find healthier coping mechanisms.
- Treatment takes time, patience, and work, but it is an important step in maintaining your own wellbeing.

### Resources

- The National Runaway Safeline’s hotline, 1-800-RUNAWAY, is always an option. NRS can provide you with further information and support.
- <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/step-by-step-guides-to-finding-treatment-drug-use-disorders/if-you-have-a-problem-drugs-teens-young-adults/treatment-information> provides information on treatment specifically. FindTreatment.gov is also a helpful resource.
- The National Harm Reduction Coalition (<https://harmreduction.org/resource-center/>) offers a number of resources on drugs and drug-adjacent issues, such as syringe disposal, overdose prevention, and sex work.



## ACTIVITY 13B

# MESSAGES ABOUT ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA, NICOTINE, AND OTHER DRUGS



15 minutes

**INTRODUCE** Messages About Alcohol, Marijuana, Nicotine, and Other Drugs.

**STATE** Our knowledge of alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and other drugs can be gained from many different sources, and it can be difficult to know which sources are giving you factual information. We learn about alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs from our government, communities, religious or spiritual affiliations, families, friends, and the media. The messages they send could be positive or negative, and sometimes the different sources contradict each other.

**HAND OUT** “Messages About Alcohol, Marijuana, Nicotine, and Other Drugs” worksheets.

**STATE** Let’s talk about some of the messages we’ve seen in the media we consume. First, we’re going to talk about positive messages we’ve seen or heard in music, social media, television, or movies, and in other forms of media that reference the use of alcohol, nicotine, or other drugs. We’ll put those in the “plus” area of the chart.

**ASK** What messages have you seen or heard that promote the use of alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, or other drugs?

**WRITE** the responses in the appropriate areas on the chart. Examples include billboards that show people smoking and beer commercials that depict people having fun, or painkillers helping people live more pain free lives. Encourage everyone to respond.

**STATE** Great job! Now we’re going to talk about the messages that we’ve seen or heard in music, in movies, and on television that show the negative effects of using alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, or other drugs.

**ASK** Where have you seen or heard negative or discouraging messages about the use of alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, or other drugs?

**WRITE** the responses in the appropriate areas on the chart. Examples include abusing ADHD meds in order to perform better at school and getting in trouble, or antivaping commercials. Encourage everyone to respond.

**STATE** As you can see from looking at our chart, we receive a lot of messages from the media about using alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and other drugs.

ACTIVITY 13B →

## ACTIVITY 13B CONTINUED

**ASK** How do these types of messages make you feel?

**ALLOW** 1-2 minutes for participants to respond.

**ASK** Have you ever seen something in the media about alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, or other drugs that you later found out was incorrect?

**ALLOW** 1-2 minutes for participants to respond.

**ASK** Why do you think positive depictions of addictive substances are promoted?

**ALLOW** 1-2 minutes for participants to respond.

**STATE** Remember that at any point when you need help dealing or communicating with a loved one, you may contact the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY or use their online services at [1800RUNAWAY.org](https://1800RUNAWAY.org)!

**ASK** Do you have any questions or comments?

MESSAGES ABOUT ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA, NICOTINE, AND OTHER DRUGS

In the spaces below, give examples of both positive (+) and negative (-) messages about alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and other drugs found in wwmusic, social media, movies, and television.

MUSIC	
+	
-	

SOCIAL MEDIA	
+	
-	

TELEVISION	
+	
-	

MOVIES	
+	
-	

## ACTIVITY 13C

### SAFE AND INFORMED DECISION-MAKING AND THE IMPACT OF SUBSTANCE USE



15 minutes

**INTRODUCE** risky decisions and consequences of Alcohol, Marijuana, Nicotine, and other Drug use.

**STATE** We are talking about alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and other drugs because they touch most people's lives in a direct or indirect way, and through use or substance use disorders, they can affect your ability to make safe and informed decisions for yourself.

In this exercise, we're going to think about the potential risks associated with using alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and other drugs. This discussion and activity are not meant to scare you, or influence you, but rather encourage an honest conversation about making safe and informed decisions around alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and drug use.

**DIVIDE** participants into groups of three or four.

**HAND OUT** one set of flash cards to each group.

**STATE** The flash cards I just handed out contain a situation that has multiple decisions linked to alcohol and drug use. In your group, you're going to create a story by placing the cards in order, based on your understanding of the effects of drugs or alcohol in the everyday decisions that we make.

You will have 15 minutes with your group to develop this story, and the order of the cards. There are no right or wrong answers.

**ASK** Who would like to be the first group to volunteer the order they selected?

**SELECT** a volunteer.

**STATE** Tell us about how you ordered your flash cards. Why did you choose that order? Did you and your partners think of a situation? Feel free to tell a story and name the character in your story.

**CONTINUE** selecting groups until all have presented their results.

**DISCUSS** responses.

**STATE** We make decisions every day. Some decisions have bigger consequences and may affect our lives for better or worse. Drugs and alcohol sometimes make it harder to make informed choices. It is important to be informed and think about elements of health and safety when it comes to substance use.

**ASK** Do you have any questions or comments?

**DISCUSS** responses.

## SAFE AND INFORMED DECISIONS FLASH CARDS

Telling a Friend  
Where You're  
Going Out

Having a Limit  
of Drinks for  
the Night

Feeling  
Stressed Out

Feeling  
Pressured by  
Friends or Peers

Having a  
Designated  
Driver

Hanging with  
a Buddy for  
the Night

Getting Into an  
Accident

Giving a  
Friend a Ride

Hurting Yourself  
or Someone Else

Being Arrested/  
Going to Jail

Losing  
Your Friends

Having Your  
Driver's License  
Revoked

Bringing Your Own  
Non-Alcoholic  
Drinks to a Party

Going to a Party

Using Drugs  
and/or Alcohol

## ACTIVITY 13

### SUMMARY

- STATE**
- Alcohol and drug use can create risks to our health and safety.
  - Using alcohol and other drugs can affect one's ability to make safe decisions.
  - Messages about alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and other drugs can come from many different sources, and it is our task to evaluate if those messages are true.
  - A substance use disorder affects a person's life and the lives of those around them.
  - Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences.
  - It is not helpful to judge another person for their relationship with alcohol, nicotine, or other drugs, but rather help them in identifying support systems and coping skills outside of substance use.

## HANDOUTS AND WORKSHEETS

- A. Messages About Alcohol, Marijuana, Nicotine, and Other Drugs
- B. Substance Information Sheet
- C. Risks and Consequences Flash Cards

## REFERENCES

- Harper, G. W., & Carver, L. J. (1999). "Out-of-the-Mainstream" youth as partners in collaborative research: Exploring the benefits and challenges. *Health education and behavior*, 26(2), 250-265. doi: 10.1177/109019819902600208
- National Institute on Drug Abuse. (n.d.) *Commonly used drugs charts*. Retrieved from 2025w <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/commonly-used-drugs-charts>
- National Runaway Switchboard. (2001). *Runaway prevention curriculum for classroom and community educators*. Chicago, IL: NRS.

## RESOURCES

- ETR (Education, Training, and Research) has information and resources available for order on a variety of health issues (<http://www.etr.org>).
- Harm Reduction Coalition provides resources, education, and advocacy with and for people who use drugs ([www.harmreduction.org](http://www.harmreduction.org)).
- National Institute on Drug Abuse, a component of the National Institutes of Health, created a website to educate adolescents, parents, and teachers about the science behind drug abuse (<http://teens.drugabuse.gov>).
- National Institute of Health offers a chart on the effects and side effects of commonly used and abused drugs (<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/commonly-used-drugs-charts/>)
- TripSit provides open discussion of harm reduction techniques and positive support. They promote the use of harm reduction tools such as test kits, and offer guidance and support with regards to harm reduction when using drugs (<https://tripsit.me>).
- National Runaway Safeline (NRS) works to keep America's runaway, homeless and at-risk youth safe and offer the streets. NRS operates the 1-800-RUNAWAY hotline (call and text) and 1800RUNAWAY.org online services, including live chat, email, and forums. NRS provides youth and families in crisis with support and access to resources 24 hours a day, 365 days a year (<http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org>).
- Partnership to End Addiction is a drug abuse prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery resource, existing to help parents and caregivers effectively address alcohol and drug addiction with their teens and young adults (<http://www.drugfree.org/>).
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities ([www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov))