

Drug abuse

Year Group

- Year 10
- Year 11
- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9

Key Subject: PSHE

Cross Curricular

- Science

QCA Scheme of Work

- Containers

Useful Equipment

- OHP, whiteboard or flipchart
- Tape recorder (optional)
- Packet of cigarettes with the warning "Smoking kills"

Aims

This assembly for KS3 and KS4 deals with the use and abuse of drugs. It looks at what young people think about drugs, and where they can find information. The emphasis is on information rather than experimentation as the way to find out about drugs. The assembly offers an opportunity for pupils to contribute ideas on how the school can help its pupils avoid drug abuse. The assembly aims:

- to discuss briefly the harm that drug use can cause
- to offer ways of finding out how to avoid drugs
- to help anyone with drugs issues

Introduction

"The Observer recently ran a special report on drug misuse in Britain. It covered every aspect of drug misuse and asked young people of your age what they thought about drugs. Here are some of their thoughts." (Observer article is available via the weblink listed in **Resources**. Select comments that reflect some of the opinions among students in your school, for students to read out. Note: do not use Erin Sheffield's comments now, they are used later.) "Think about which of their comments you agree with."

(Hold up a packet of cigarettes to show the warning **Smoking kills** written on it.) "Drugs do not carry health warnings like cigarette packets do although they can cause physical and psychological damage and even, in some cases, death. How will you find out about drugs? By trying them or by doing some research?"

Main presentation

Why do people take drugs like cannabis? Record students' responses on the flipchart, board or OHP, and review their suggestions.

Ask if students know the answer to any of these questions:

- What is ecstasy?
- What is cocaine?
- What is heroine?
- Can you get addicted to any or all of these?
- Will you get addicted after using them once or twice?
- Could you die from any of these substances?
- How would you say 'no' to someone who was trying to offer you drugs?
- Are any or all of these drugs illegal?
- What would be the consequences if you were caught in possession of them?

- What if you are with a friend who takes one of these drugs and something goes wrong? Will you be in trouble if you help them?
- What is our school's policy on drugs?
- Who can you talk to in confidence about any of these questions?

Ask students to think about how they would find the answers to any of these questions.

If the assembly is a response to a recent drug-related incident in school, mention the incident here and the consequences of the actions of those involved (although the names of particular students do not need to be mentioned). It may also be necessary to include the involvement of any outside agencies eg the police, local drug projects.

There are other ways of finding out about drugs other than by experimenting with them. Ask students where they would go for information if they wanted an answer to any of the questions.

Summary

We all know that we should try to avoid drugs like cannabis. So what is the best way to find out about drugs if we feel curious? Erin Heenan is 13 and lives in Sheffield. (Name of pupil reader) is going to read what Erin has to say.

"In my school, there is a wide range of resources to collect information on drugs. We learnt about the physical side, for example the damaging effects that illegal drugs have on your body. A woman came into school and told us how to recognise drugs and what they do to you. It was very informative. She explained the information in a way we understood. My friends and family are open about drugs and know that drug taking goes on. I'm glad I know the implications of drug abuse, and that I have somewhere to go to ask questions."

Erin is using that information and is making her own choice not to use drugs. When you return to your classroom your teachers will go through a fact sheet with some useful information about where to go to get answers to your own questions about drugs.

Additional notes

It may be appropriate to divide the assembly into key stage 3 and key stage 4. The assembly may be given as a preview to a PSHE unit on drugs. The school could plan follow-up activities relating to the school's policy on drugs. Teachers will need to compile or obtain a factsheet listing local groups that support young people with drug issues as well as websites (see **Resources**) for classroom follow-up.

Extension/shortening tip

To lengthen

Use more examples of the thoughts of young people about drugs, possibly using thoughts of individuals from your own school.

Allow more time for students to give their responses.

To shorten

Reduce the number of young people's comments from the Observer article.

Reduce the time allowed for students' responses. This could be taken up as part of classroom-based follow-up work.

Recommended resources

Key stage 3

Lifebytes

http://www.lifebytes.gov.uk/drugs/drugs_menu.html

Read the Observer's article on drug misuse

Large posters (made by students beforehand with bright colours and large letters) with the various names of drugs such cannabis, crack, weed, speed

A factsheet on local groups (see Additional notes)

Key stage 4

Mind, Body and Soul

<http://www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk/drugs/drugmenu.html>

D-2K

<http://www.d-2k.co.uk/index4.html> _____

Talk to Frank

<http://talktofrank.com/> _____

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