

THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE MAKE YOU STRONGER.

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DRUG AWARENESS WEEK
ALCOHOL / DRUGS / GAMBLING

**YOU USE
SOCIAL
MEDIA.**

**BUT HOW
MUCH DO
YOU KNOW
ABOUT YOUR
OWN SOCIAL
NETWORK?**

**WHICH PEOPLE
IN YOUR LIFE
WOULD BE THERE
IF YOU REALLY
NEEDED THEM?**



There are a lot of people in your life. Some you're close with, others less so. All of these people are part of what's called your social network. In a social network, there are people you trust—people who are there for you when you need them, who listen to you and help you find a solution when you've got a problem. There are also people you share interests and do things with—people you like being around and want to listen to and help when they've got a problem.

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT HAVING A SOCIAL NETWORK OF PEOPLE WHO ARE THERE FOR YOU?

It lets you:

- > Talk about anything, express yourself, feel understood, and know that someone shares your beliefs, thoughts, and feelings
- > Encourage and be encouraged, and share advice and useful information
- > Do things with other people or just hang out
- > Give and receive love and affection
- > Know that someone's there for you when you're having a hard time

Sharing and building connections with people you trust helps you feel loved and appreciated. It also helps you learn to be more assertive, listen to others, and communicate. Using these skills, you'll learn more about yourself and the people around you. You'll gain confidence and make better decisions, no matter the situation!

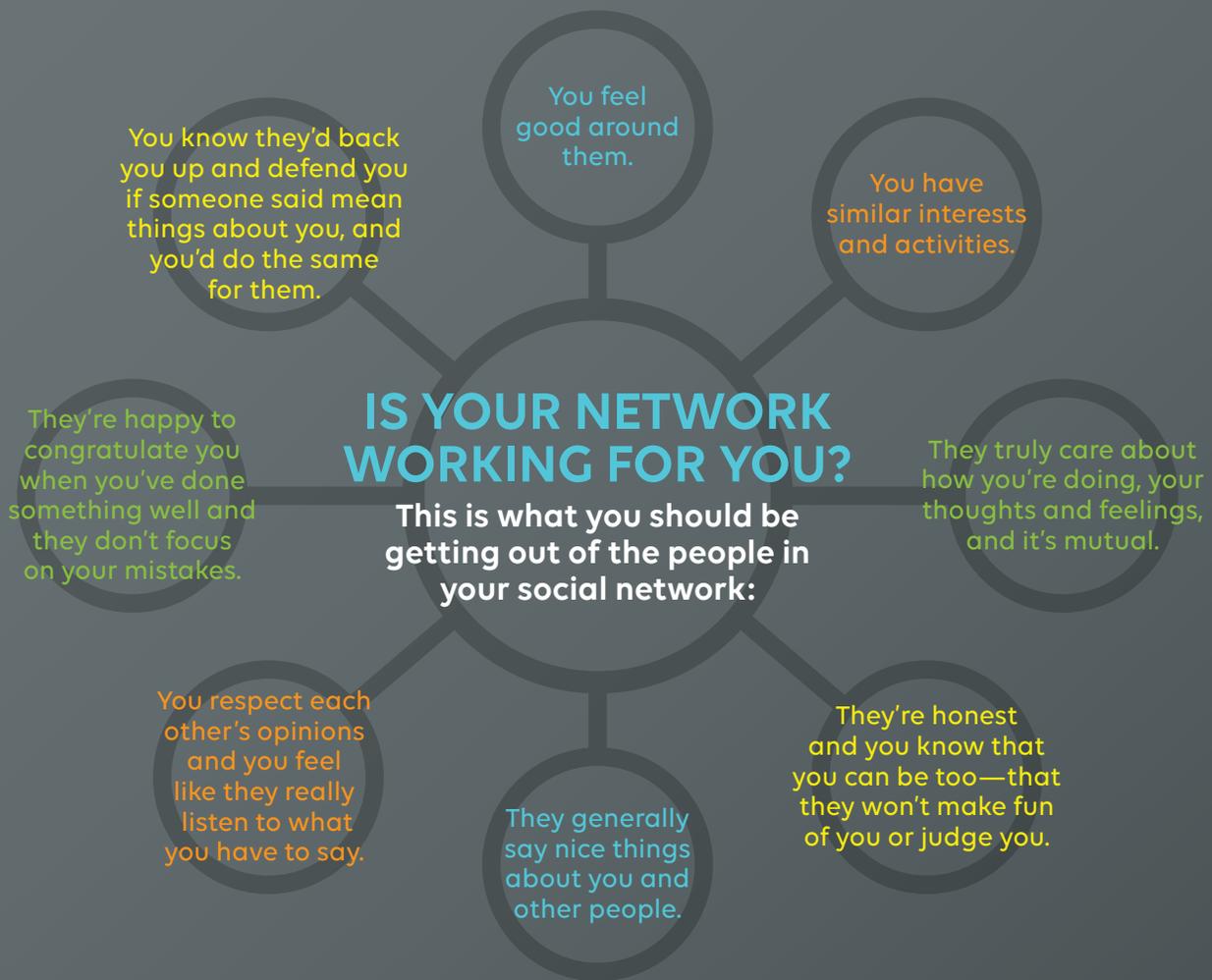
It's good to know that people care about you and are there for you when you need them!

WHO'S IN YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK?

- > Your friends: people you spend a lot of time with, but also people you're happy to see socially, like school friends, work friends, and the people you do sports or other extracurricular activities with
- > Your parents, brothers and sisters, and cousins
- > Other adults you get along well with, like grandparents, uncles and aunts, or a teacher, coach, someone you work with, or a neighbor

"When I need someone to talk to, I know my sister's there for me, but the person I share the most with is my friend Eva. We're really similar. I never feel judged when I talk to her."

- Julie



Make a list of the people in your social network who match one or more of the above descriptions. If someone in your life isn't on the list, it doesn't mean you have to shut them out. But the relationship definitely has room for improvement!

>

Getting older means you have more power and more opportunities to build, maintain, and grow a social network that really reflects who you are.

Here are a few ways to make that happen:

BE ASSERTIVE

> **BEING ASSERTIVE** means knowing how to express your opinions, feelings, and needs in a way that's honest and respectful. It's an attitude that comes from knowing you matter and have the power to act on your needs and surroundings.

> **BEING ASSERTIVE** gives people the chance to get to know the real you. It helps you build a social network of people like you, who will like the real you.

KNOW HOW TO INTERACT

BEING SOCIAL IS A SKILL THAT CAN BE LEARNED!

Here are a few examples of people who could be better at interacting, and things that everyone can do to improve.



THE "I'M ALWAYS RIGHT" KIND OF PERSON

This kind of person often interrupts others.

(S)he finishes friends' sentences and criticizes everyone's ideas and opinions.

WAYS OF IMPROVING

- > Good communication starts with good listening! Maybe that's why we have two ears and just one mouth—so that we can listen twice as much and talk a little less! Besides, listening means learning! Hearing someone else's opinion will help you learn about them and the topic being discussed.
- > Ask yourself if what you're saying could hurt someone's feelings. If you think the answer is yes, maybe you don't need to say it or maybe there's a different way of saying it!



THE "RETREATS BEHIND A WALL OF SILENCE" KIND OF PERSON

This kind of person barely talks and doesn't respond to verbal attacks.

(S)he repeats what others say, so no one really knows what (s)he likes or doesn't like.

WAYS OF IMPROVING

- > Sometimes, people who are shy worry about what other people think of them, which means they pay less attention to what other people are saying. To be a good friend when you're feeling shy, you can:
 - Start by taking a big breath and letting it all out at once
 - Decide not to play the "I'll bet he thinks that I think..." game
 - Tell yourself that sharing and being interested in others is a lot better than wondering what people think about you!
- > Another idea is to talk about yourself a little each day with your parents or with friends you trust. You can start by talking about a good thing that happened that day. Slowly, you'll learn to open up. Every person is unique. Keeping your wonderful qualities hidden away from the world just wouldn't be fair!

Being interested in others makes you interesting! When you really listen to other people and ask them questions during a discussion, they feel important. Everyone wants friends who really listen!



Being a young adult means wanting to try new stuff and test your limits. But what about drinking alcohol, using drugs, and gambling?



Studies show that since 2000, the number of young adults who drink or do drugs has gone down. Same goes for gambling. So drinking or doing drugs isn't necessarily a rite of passage!

RISKS and CONSEQUENCES

How can your social network protect you from the risks and consequences of drinking, doing drugs, and gambling?



Your relationships with the people you trust in your social network teach you to be assertive and get to know yourself. That leads to better choices. Those people are also there for you when you need them. That goes for every aspect of life, even when it comes to drinking, doing drugs, or gambling.

"The other day, I drank at a party. Instead of driving myself home, I ended up letting my friend—who hadn't been drinking—drive me home. Next time we go out, I'll be the designated driver!"

- Emmy

"Alex and I have an agreement. We keep an eye on each other at parties to make sure that everything's okay and the other person is comfortable with what's going on. It's nice to have someone to back you up in your decisions about drinking—it keeps you from getting into trouble or going overboard."

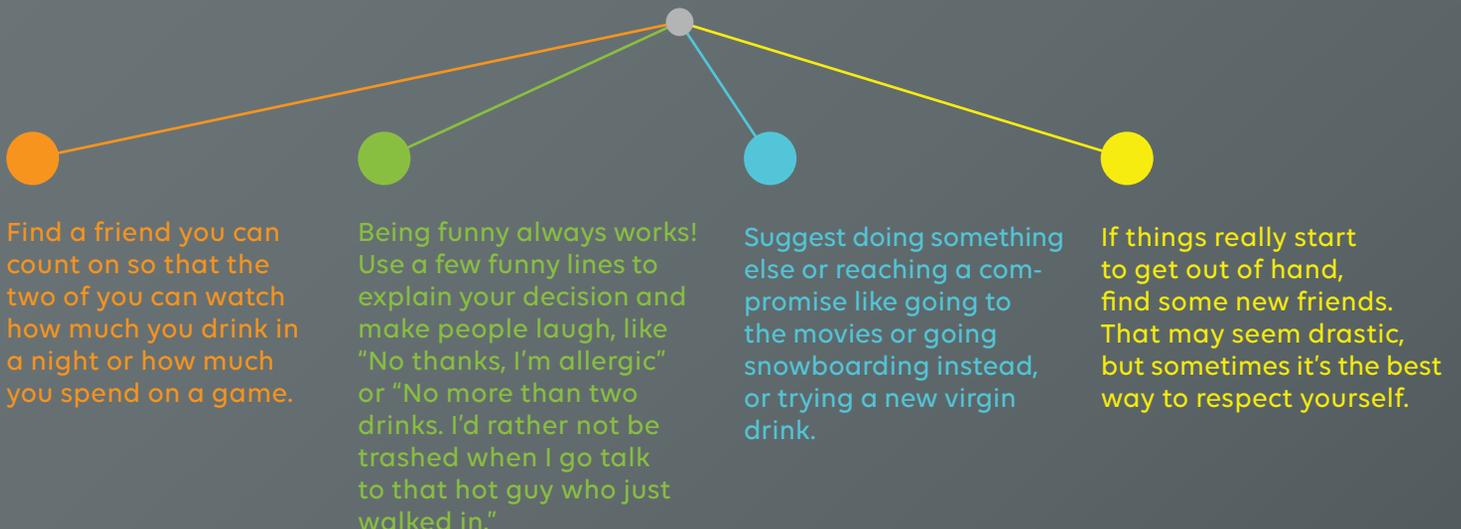
- Victor

"Yesterday, my friends and I started playing poker. I decided not to bet more than \$20 and I told my friend Henry. So when I hit \$20, I stopped playing. Another friend kept insisting that I keep playing, but I told him I wanted to save my money for something else. He kept pushing, so Henry stopped playing too. We went and jammed with our band instead."

- Ian

Here are some strategies to help you avoid or reduce the risks related to drinking, doing drugs, or gambling:

STRATEGIES



TRUE or FALSE?

You have your own social network and a lot of other people have you in theirs. You want to make good decisions and back your friends up when they need it. So what are the risks and consequences of drinking, doing drugs, or gambling?

Some people hallucinate after smoking (or ingesting) cannabis.

TRUE. Smoking or ingesting cannabis isn't harmless. Some people can have strong reactions and suffer serious psychological consequences, even if they only do it once. Regular, prolonged cannabis use can lead to pulmonary and cardiovascular damage, reduced cognitive function (memory, concentration, organization, and assimilation of information), mental health problems (depression, psychosis, schizophrenia), delinquent behavior, a greater risk of nonconsensual or unprotected sex, and a greater risk of driving under the influence. Plus, possession of cannabis is illegal and can lead to legal action and a criminal record. Having a criminal record can stop you from travelling to certain countries or getting a job that requires a clean criminal record.

There are tricks and strategies to win more money when gambling.

FALSE. Even in games that require skill, like poker (whether played with friends or online), it all comes down to luck in the end. With gambling, there is simply no way of predicting the results!

When you drink or do drugs, you could end up doing things you wouldn't have done if you were sober.

TRUE. When you're under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, your judgment is altered and you lose your inhibitions, which means you may act inappropriately or in a way you didn't really want to. You could make decisions that you would never have made if you weren't under the influence, or do things that can have serious immediate or long-term consequences: fights, accidents, injuries, DUIs, unprotected sex leading to a sexually transmitted infection or getting pregnant, delinquent behavior that hurts you or someone else, and so on.

You can die from shotgunning/speed drinking.

TRUE. Drinking a lot of alcohol in a short amount of time can cause vomiting, difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, and even death. If a person shows any of these signs, immediately call 911 and do not leave the person alone.

Mixing alcohol with an energy drink reduces the effects of the alcohol.

FALSE. Mixing the two only impedes your ability to recognize the symptoms of alcohol intoxication (slower reflexes, fatigue, poor coordination) because of the caffeine. This type of drink can give you the impression of being totally in control when you're far from it.

Even if the person giving you a drug is trustworthy and assures you that "it's the good stuff," you never know what's in it.

TRUE. Drugs sold on the black market, whether synthetic, prescription-type, or even cannabis-based, can be mixed with various products and other drugs that make them more dangerous—and their effects unpredictable. Black market drugs may have no effect whatsoever, or they may cause unpleasant psychological or physical effects that prove serious and even fatal.

The positive people in your social network can give you information and support that can, among other things, help you make educated decisions about drinking, doing drugs, or gambling.

Even with a good inner circle, though, there are times when you may not want to talk to a friend or family member. In those cases, you can turn to someone else in your network or talk to a medical professional.

**HAVE
QUESTIONS**
ABOUT DRINKING,
DRUGS, OR GAMBLING?

WORRIED
about yourself or
a friend when it
comes to drinking
or doing drugs?



TEL-JEUNES

1-800-263-2266 (or teljeunes.com)

DRUGS: Help and referral

1-800-265-2626
or 514-527-2626 (Montréal area)

GAMBLING: Help and referral

1-800-461-0140
or 514-527-0140 (Montréal area)

Someone will answer your call confidentially, 24/7.

Or visit the website:

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