

# DRUG AWARENESS WEEK



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## 2011 ACTIVITIES GUIDE

For groups of young people age 13–16

Québec 

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For this year's Drug Awareness Week (**November 20–26, 2011**), we suggest the following original activities for young people age 13–16.

### IMPORTANT:

More activities available at [dependances.gouv.qc.ca](http://dependances.gouv.qc.ca)  
(Drugs and Alcohol section: 2011 Drug Awareness Week)

### *Note:*

*The following activities are not recommended for groups of young people age 10–12 or 17–24. Activity guides for each of these two age groups are available for download at [dependances.gouv.qc.ca](http://dependances.gouv.qc.ca) (Drugs and Alcohol section: 2011 Drug Awareness Week)*

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## DRUG AWARENESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A social information and awareness campaign like Drug Awareness Week differs from standard prevention programs in terms of its form and intensity. Nevertheless, we did take into account certain factors found effective in the literature when developing tools for 2011 Drug Awareness Week, including the activities presented here.

A number of factors predict the effectiveness of an addiction prevention program for young people. Activities should be aimed at small groups with the same drug and alcohol consumption habits and that include prosocial peers (good communicators who are active in their community); be jointly led by a psychosocial professional and a prosocial peer; be adapted to the age and specific community of the young people targeted; and include followup sessions.

To find out more about predictors of effectiveness in preventing addiction, see the following documents:

Myriam Laventure, Krystel Boisvert, and Thérèse Besnard. "Programmes de prévention universelle et ciblée de la toxicomanie à l'adolescence : recension des facteurs prédictifs de l'efficacité", *Drogues, santé et société*, Vol. 9, No. 1, June 2010, pp. 121–164.

Institut national de santé publique du Québec. *Réussite éducative, santé, bien-être : agir efficacement en contexte scolaire – Synthèse des recommandations*, Eds. Jézabelle Palluy et al., [Québec], Institut national de santé publique du Québec, 2010. [Available online] [http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/1065\\_ReussiteEducativSanteBienEtre.pdf](http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/1065_ReussiteEducativSanteBienEtre.pdf).

Gaëtane Dubé et al. *Enquête québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire*, 2008, Québec, Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2009, 222 p.

A list of additional documents is available at [www.dependances.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.dependances.gouv.qc.ca)  
(Drugs and Alcohol section: Publications about drugs and alcohol:

Young people and alcohol

Teens & Cannabis

Young people and designer drugs

Taking amphetamines to lose weight... Not such a great idea!

The dangers of chugging alcohol

Drugs... Let's talk about it

Chart: The law of effect

Chart: More about drugs

# ACTIVITY 01

## MYTH OR REALITY?

### OBJECTIVE:

Provide young people with accurate information so they can make informed decisions about their own consumption and to help prevent the at-risk behaviors associated with drugs and alcohol.

### MATERIALS:

- *Myth or Reality?* PowerPoint presentation available for download at [dependances.gouv.qc.ca](http://dependances.gouv.qc.ca)
- A computer and a multimedia projector

**TIME:** 30 to 45 minutes

### HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS:

- Present the *Myth or Reality?* activity to the group. Ask the members of the group to determine whether the statements are actually true or just a popular belief. Here are some sample questions that may be used to fuel the discussion:
  - What is the difference between myth and reality?
  - Do you think you know a lot about the possible consequences of alcohol and drug use or gambling?
  - Would you be able to tell the difference between a popular belief and a myth?
- Present the slides one at a time, taking time to discuss each statement with the group. For example, ask those who think the statement is a myth to raise their hand, or ask those who believe it is a reality to raise theirs. Then move on to the next slide, which gives the correct answer.
- At the end of the presentation, lead a discussion on the perceptions that young people had at the beginning of the exercise and ask if the presentation raised any other questions.

# ACTIVITY 02

## LETTER TO MYSELF

### OBJECTIVE:

Encourage young people to discover an interest, pastime, or life goal that will act as a protective factor to help them steer clear of problems, including those related to alcohol and drug use or gambling.

**MATERIAL:** The “Letter to myself” questionnaire (Appendix 1)

**TIME:** About 30 minutes in class (plus time at home for anyone who did not have enough class time to finish their letter) and 15 to 20 minutes of group discussion

### HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS:

- Ask each student to answer the questionnaire and write a letter to themselves based on their answers. Once they finish writing their letter, have the students seal the envelope and keep it in a safe place so they can open and read it a year later.

The moderator can also offer to return the letters to the students in one year, either by email or mail.

- Next, lead the students in a discussion about the importance of having passions and dreams that help protect them from the inappropriate behaviors associated with alcohol and drug use and gambling, among other things. (See Appendix 2 for information on protective factors)

# ACTIVITY 03

## ROUND TABLE – SO WHICH OPTION WORKS FOR YOU?

### *Round table:*

*A meeting held to discuss a specific topic in the spirit of equality between participants.*

### OBJECTIVE:

Encourage young people to discover a passion or dream that will act as a protective factor to help them steer clear of a variety of problems, including those related to alcohol and drug use or gambling.

### MATERIALS:

- The “Types of Options” list (Appendix 3) and “Questionnaire” (Appendix 4)
- Documents (leaflets, newspaper clippings, list of websites, and other documents) on extracurricular activities available at school, in the neighborhood, and so on, compiled a few weeks before the activity.

**TIME:** About 15 minutes for each option discussed in the round table.

### HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS:

- Ask students to divide into teams of four or five. Each team will lead a round table discussion. Encourage them to break into groups based on their favorite activities (e.g., five students who are into sports, four who play a musical instrument, four who are enrolled in the same extracurricular activity, etc.).
- Next ask each group to choose the option they would like to discuss in front of the class. Tell students they have to find useful information on the activity they have chosen based on their knowledge of the activity and on the information in the documents provided. Stress that each young person has to research one or two points in the Questionnaire for the option the group has chosen. This way, each member of the group will have a chance to speak to the class.
- While the students are working, place a few chairs in a semicircle in the front of the room facing the rest of the class.
- When all the teams are ready, ask one team to sit in front to begin the round table. Your job is to act as discussion moderator.
- Each team will have a chance to speak to the group. Ask each team questions from the list. You may add other questions as well. You can also hold a question period to give members from other teams the chance to ask any questions they have for the round table panel.

# APPENDIX 1

## LETTER TO MYSELF

Right now, my main interest is:

This is how I first found out about it:

This is what drew me to it:

Whenever I do something related to this interest, this is how I feel:

This is how I would describe myself today:

This is how I picture myself in one year:



# APPENDIX 2

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

Protective factors are things which, by their very presence in people's lives, can reduce the likelihood of problems with alcohol, drugs, or gambling. A protective factor can be acquired or reinforced.

## INVOLVEMENT = A PROTECTIVE FACTOR

### INVOLVEMENT:

Regular participation in an activity (or activities) for an extended period, and in a variety of settings (e.g., home, school, or school or community youth organizations).

Getting young people involved in their communities is one of the biggest factors in preventing problems related to alcohol and drugs.

#### What you gain from getting involved:

Getting involved in an activity you enjoy can help you in many ways. For instance it can help you boost your self-awareness and self-confidence, find friends who share similar interests, interact with helpful and supportive adults, be more assertive, learn how to manage your emotions, and develop a sense of belonging to your community—all of which makes you feel better about yourself.

### TYPES OF ACTIVITIES:

- Community service and volunteering
- Social action
- Individual or team sports
- Music and the arts
- Involvement in student life (being part of a committee, student radio, improv league, etc.)

### EXAMPLES OF INVOLVEMENT:

- Doing extracurricular activities during lunch periods (improv, theater, cooking, etc.)
- Participating in class
- Participating in recreational activities and organized sports in your neighborhood or town/city
- Volunteering with a community or school group
- Doing things with your family (playing board games, going on bike rides, etc.)
- Joining a sports team
- Taking lessons (dance, painting, piano, etc.)
- Helping friends with their projects

### OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

- Self-esteem
- Knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses
- Specific goals and confidence in your future
- A circle of friends you can trust
- Strong family ties
- Strong social skills (assertiveness, respect for others, etc.)
- Healthy lifestyle (daily physical activity, healthy diet, good sleep habits, etc.)

# APPENDIX 3

## TYPES OF OPTIONS

### OPTION 15

Participate in extracurricular activities such as improv, theater, a reading club, etc.

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### OPTION 10

Help out younger kids at school.

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### OPTION 02

Sign up for an art course (e.g., jewelry making, painting, sculpture, or knitting).

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### OPTION 14

Volunteer with a community or school group.

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### OPTION 18

Do things with your family like board games, bike rides, winter sports, camping, and other activities.

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### OPTION 03

Join a sports team or take up an individual sport.

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### OPTION 08

Take dance lessons (e.g., social, line dancing, hip-hop, classical, African, etc.).

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### OPTION 07

Take up carpentry, mechanics, etc.

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### OPTION 09

Explore sciences like astronomy, biology, or chemistry.

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**THERE'S PLENTY MORE, SO IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER OPTIONS, FEEL FREE TO CHOOSE THOSE!**

# APPENDIX 4

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OPTION

What specific skills does it require?

Do you have to work hard to be good at it?

Is it a structured activity?

### TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR OPTION...

Who do you do it with?

Where?

How many times a week?

Do you need any special equipment?

Do you have to sign up for it? If so, where?

What advice would you give someone who's thinking about starting?

How does this activity make your life better? Name five ways.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

La Direction des communications du ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec

This document is only available online at [dependances.gouv.qc.ca](http://dependances.gouv.qc.ca)  
(**Drugs and Alcohol** section: **Drug Awareness Week**).

Masculine pronouns are used generically in this document.

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