

# STAY IN CONTROL

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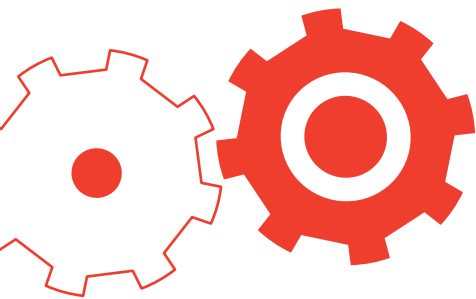
# YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES

DRUG AWARENESS WEEK  
ALCOHOL - DRUGS - GAMBLING

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Québec 

# YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES



# TO BUILD YOUR SKILLS.

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**It's cool to try out and explore new activities! But did you ever think of all the stuff you learn when you do?**

Getting involved in activities not only helps you expand your horizons and meet new people, it also helps you build your skills—and not just practical stuff like knowing baseball rules, but also personal and social competencies that help develop your personality. The more you improve your personal skills (stress management, perseverance, self-knowledge, etc.) and social skills (assertiveness, team spirit, etc.), the more prepared you'll be to deal with all sorts of situations.

In life, we all need to interact with others, deal with stress, solve problems, find solutions, help each other, and communicate. No doubt there are lots of activities you do or would like to do that can help you build these skills: things like picking up a new team sport, helping out with chores or odd jobs, exploring the arts, playing music, or getting involved on a school committee.

## YOUR COMPETENCIES: THE KEY TO STAYING IN CONTROL

To make decisions that correspond to what you really want and stay in control in life, you need to really know yourself.

Doing activities you like helps you develop personal and social skills and know yourself better. Here's what happens when you get involved:

- ▶ You discover your talents.
- ▶ You learn what you like and don't like.
- ▶ You meet other young people who share the same interests as you.
- ▶ You develop healthy lifestyle habits (diet, exercise, sleep, etc.).
- ▶ You learn to assert yourself and respect others.
- ▶ You learn to better manage your stress and emotions.
- ▶ You improve your physical and intellectual skills.
- ▶ You learn to set goals and not give up despite the obstacles.
- ▶ You build your self-esteem.
- ▶ You develop critical thinking skills, which help you make good decisions.
- ▶ You learn to be a team player and cooperate.
- ▶ You learn to excel.
- ▶ You learn to handle criticism.

# THESE COMPETENCIES AREN'T JUST USEFUL IN THE ACTIVITIES YOU DO NOW, THEY'LL COME IN HANDY IN OTHER SITUATIONS TOO. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:



## GREG

plays soccer.



He's learning to be a team player.



He helps make sure everyone gets along inside and outside his circle of friends.



## MELISSA

babysits.



She's developing her sense of responsibility.



She's now more serious about school.



## ALEX

is taking guitar lessons.



He's learning to stick to it and set goals.



Now when he has difficulty in science, he steps up his efforts and doesn't get discouraged as easily.



## BRIANNA

works out at a fitness center.



She's developing her ability to adopt healthy lifestyle habits.



She decides to quit smoking, a choice that fits with her values, including doing what it takes to stay healthy.



## ERIK

is involved in theater.



He's learning to overcome his shyness and better communicate his emotions.



This has given him the courage to approach a girl he's interested in!

You can see how the skills you pick up stay with you and help you in your decisions about everything else you do.

## YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES!

## DID YOU KNOW?

Most high school students don't use alcohol or other drugs, or they only try once or use occasionally. It's a personal choice, and you can always say no, even when others don't.

A marijuana joint contains 50% more tar than a cigarette of the same size, which means it's bad news for the respiratory system. In addition, marijuana use may cause anxiety in some people—a side effect you can live without!

Mixing alcoholic beverages and energy drinks makes it harder to recognize the symptoms of alcohol intoxication (delayed reflexes, fatigue, poor physical coordination, etc.) because of the caffeine consumed. These mixes can make you feel fully in control of yourself even if you're not.

# WHEN YOU USE ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS, OR GAMBLE, YOU CAN LOSE CONTROL:



“At a party the other day, my best friend  
smoked some pot and  
**SHE FELT SO BAD**  
that she panicked.”  
— Emma

Cannabis use impairs your senses and perception of time and space and adversely affects your concentration and short-term memory. Some people may also find that cannabis alters their self-perception and causes a lot of anxiety.



“The other day I had a few drinks  
and kissed another girl.  
**NOW MY GIRLFRIEND REFUSES TO SEE ME—**  
it really sucks!”  
— Alexis

When you are under the effects of alcohol, you lose your inhibitions, which means you may act inappropriately or in a way that doesn't really correspond to what you want. You're more at risk of making decisions you would not have made otherwise, since your judgment is impaired by alcohol. Negative consequences may then arise.



“I have a friend  
**WHO GOT ARRESTED**  
for smoking up in the alley.”  
— Jade

Simple possession of any quantity of drugs is a criminal offense that can lead to legal action and a criminal record, regardless of the accused's age.



“I went to poker night in my friend's basement the other day. I know I'm good because I almost always win, but I don't know what happened. I was really unlucky this time and  
**LOST EVERY GAME.”**  
— Frank

Poker is a game of both luck and skill. In a match-up between two equally skilled players, luck will determine the winner, even if you might feel like you're calling the shots.

# THERE ARE RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS, AND GAMBLING.

When it comes to alcohol or other drugs, and gambling, you need to use your judgment, learn to know yourself better, and draw on your skills to stay in control of the situation.

Since alcohol and other drugs change how we act and influence our decisions, their use involves risks and can lead to negative consequences.

Even if you only use alcohol or other drugs occasionally, there are immediate effects due to changes in brain function. The effects of alcohol are progressive and start with the first drink, before you're even aware of it. The relaxed feeling you may get after drinking a little can quickly turn into something unpleasant and lead to consequences. For example, you might:

- ▶ Make decisions you wouldn't have made if you hadn't consumed
- ▶ Say hurtful things to people you care about
- ▶ Pick a fight (even with a friend)
- ▶ Decide there's no risk in riding in a car with someone else who's been using
- ▶ Have unprotected sex and contract a sexually transmitted infection or face an unplanned pregnancy
- ▶ Post images or comments on social media that could cause you problems with your family and friends, your school, or potential employers



## STRATEGIES FOR STAYING IN CONTROL

To reduce or avoid the risks associated with alcohol and other drugs, and gambling, you need to learn strategies.

**The most important thing to ask yourself is whether you really need to use alcohol or other drugs or gamble.**

You can have fun without using or gambling—here are some examples of strategies:

- ▶ Learn how to say no to drugs, alcohol, and gambling.
- ▶ Avoid putting yourself in situations where you might be offered drugs, alcohol, or gambling.
- ▶ Provide non-alcoholic drinks at parties.

If you decide to use alcohol or other drugs or gamble, there are strategies that can help reduce or prevent the risks. For example, agree with a friend that you'll keep an eye on each other at a party, set a limit ahead of time on what you'll drink or use, decide in advance not to use certain substances and tell someone you'll be with of your decision and, if you're going to gamble, set a spending limit and ask a friend to help you stick to it.

What do *you* really want? Ultimately, you're the one in control—and you've got the power to decide what you're going to do based on what you like and what's best for you.

# HAVE QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE USE OF ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS,  
OR ABOUT GAMBLING?

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR USE OR THAT OF A FRIEND?



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1-800-263-2266 or  
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**DRUGS: HELP AND REFERRAL**

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514-527-0140 [Montréal area]

**CALLS ARE ANSWERED 24/7.**



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