

CHOOSE
SMART
SOLUTIONS



DRUG AWARENESS WEEK
ALCOHOL – DRUGS – GAMBLING

AGE 13-16
ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY FOR GROUPS
AGE 13 TO 16

QUESTION

What do you think about the ways of dealing with stress presented in the first video?



QUESTION

Do you have examples of stressful situations in your life or in the lives of people your age in general?



QUESTION

What ways do you know of, or use, to deal with stress and solve problems?



QUESTION

In your opinion, why might it be helpful to talk to someone you trust when you're going through a tough time?

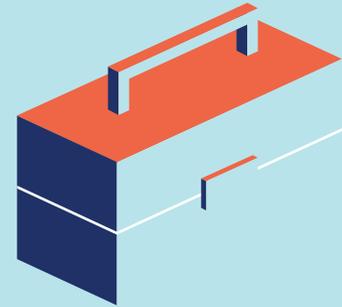


QUESTION

Do you always feel comfortable saying no when someone offers you alcohol or drugs or suggests doing something that doesn't seem right to you?



ANTI-STRESS TOOLBOX



There are a lot of tools that can help you adapt to new situations and decompress. Here are a few of them:

- **LAUGH.** When you laugh, you release hormones that help reduce stress. It's good for your whole body. When you're dealing with a stressful situation, you can ask a friend to tell you a joke or watch videos or TV shows that make you laugh.
- **BREATHE.** When you feel yourself getting stressed, take a minute to stop and do some breathing exercises. Inhale, allowing your belly to softly expand, and exhale slowly until all the air is gone. Repeat three times.

- **CUDDLE** with a pet. Studies have shown that petting an animal reduces stress. If you don't have pets at home, maybe you can visit a friend or family member who has one, or even go to a pet shop or animal shelter!
- **HELP** someone. The mere act of helping someone or doing a good deed reduces stress levels. Thinking about someone else lets you take a step back from your own situation. By getting a bit of distance, you may even find a solution or see your situation in a new light, which makes this approach extra helpful!
- **GET MOVING**. Staying in shape and being active helps reduce stress. If, for example, you feel stressed out before an exam or an interview, go for a long walk or take the stairs. You can even go up and down a few times in a row.
- **HAVE FUN**. Sometimes, taking your mind off things does a world of good. You can read a book, go to the movies, write, dance, cook, watch videos... Whatever helps!
- **LISTEN** to relaxing music or music that you like. Music can help you relax, decompress, or externalize your feelings.

Inspired by Catherine Raymond's translation of *Tool Box* by Nathalie Wan, research coordinator at the Centre for Studies on Human Stress, published in *Mammoth Magazine*, No. 16, Fall 2016.

STATEMENT 1

Any alcohol you consume has an effect on your brain and body.

TRUE OR FALSE?





TRUE

Alcohol is a psychoactive substance that:

- Affects brain function
- Distorts your judgment and risk perception
- Influences your behavior
- Reduces your physical coordination

One hour after consuming alcohol, your brain is no longer the same:

- You may feel relaxed
- You're a little more talkative
- You feel less inhibited
- You may become more emotional or excited

If you continue to drink:

- Your judgment is even less sound
- Your reaction time slows down
- Your vision is blurred
- You lose your balance and stagger
- Your speech is less coherent
- You may become angry or depressed
- You have trouble thinking straight

STATEMENT 2

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

TRUE OR FALSE?





FALSE

Mixing the two only impedes your ability to recognize the symptoms of alcohol intoxication. This type of drink can give you the impression of being totally in control when you're far from it, which actually makes it more likely that you'll get severely intoxicated. As a result, you may face the same negative consequences you would if you had just had alcohol.

STATEMENT 3

Marijuana alters communication between nerve cells and distorts the senses.

TRUE OR FALSE?





TRUE

Drugs affect both the brain and the body.
Marijuana can have the following effects:

Psychological effects:

- Feeling of well-being and relaxation
- Increased talkativeness
- Poor concentration and short term memory loss
- Spontaneous urge to laugh
- Altered perception of time and space
- Distorted sensory perception (colors look brighter, sounds are more intense)
- Slower reaction time

For some people, marijuana can:

- Trigger hallucinations
- Alter self-perception
- Cause a lot of anxiety

Physical effects:

- Rapid heart rate
- Poor physical coordination and balance
- Increased appetite
- Dry mouth and throat
- Swelling of the blood vessels (red eyes)
- Drowsiness

STATEMENT 4

Alcohol is illegal if you're under 18, but the risks are the same, no matter what your age.

TRUE OR FALSE?





FALSE

When you're 18, your brain isn't fully formed, you haven't finished growing, and your personality is still coming together.

When you're young, you are...

- At greater risk of developing drinking-related problems
- At greater risk of becoming addicted

STATEMENT 5

There are foolproof tricks for winning every time when you gamble or play games like poker for money.

TRUE OR FALSE?





FALSE

When gambling (e.g., playing poker) the player's skill **AND** luck both play a role.

There is no sure fire way of winning at gambling. Luck always influences the outcome.

STATEMENT 6

No serious negative consequences can come from drinking or using marijuana.

TRUE OR FALSE?





FALSE

When alcohol or another drug disrupts the brain, you are more likely to act inappropriately.

You may end up:

- Hurting people you love by saying mean things to them or even fighting with them
- Posting images or comments that will have an adverse affect when they're seen by friends, family, teachers, coaches, potential employers, etc.
- Having sex without really wanting to or having unprotected sex, which puts you at greater risk for sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy
- Driving a vehicle or getting a ride in a vehicle with someone who is impaired and potentially getting in an accident

STATEMENT 7

There are a number of strategies that can help you reduce or avoid the risks and consequences associated with drinking, taking drugs, and gambling.

TRUE OR FALSE?





TRUE

At your age, your brain is still developing and can be particularly sensitive to psychoactive substances like alcohol and other drugs, which is why experts recommend that teenagers abstain from using them. If you do decide to take them, there are a number of strategies that can help you reduce or avoid the risks and consequences.

QUESTION

What strategies can you use to avoid the risks and negative consequences of drinking, taking drugs, or gambling?



STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING OR REDUCING THE RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES ASSOCIATED WITH DRINKING, TAKING DRUGS, AND GAMBLING

- Choose not to use
 - Bring non-alcoholic drinks to parties
 - Alternate between alcoholic and non alcoholic drinks
 - Don't drink on an empty stomach and pace yourself
 - Decide ahead of time to limit your drinking
 - Decide ahead of time not to use certain substances and discuss it with a friend who's going to be there so they can back you up
 - Team up with a friend who can keep an eye on your drinking, and vice versa, at parties
 - Don't do risky physical activities or sports if you've been drinking or doing drugs
- Don't drive a motorized vehicle (scooter, ATV, car, etc.) if you've been drinking or doing drugs
 - If you're going to drink or do drugs, plan your transportation ahead of time to avoid injuring yourself or putting your life and the lives of others at risk
 - Don't accept a ride from someone who's been drinking or doing drugs
 - Don't mix substances, like alcohol and drugs or alcohol and energy drinks, since each substance can amplify or mask the other's effects
 - If you're going to gamble, set yourself a limit in advance and tell a friend who's going to be there so you have some support