

CHOOSE LIFE! -

FOLLOW UP SCHOOL LESSONS - for the Drugs Awareness Programme -

The lessons are designed to be interactive with as much student involvement as possible (Let the students set some 'ground rules' - e.g. Confidentiality, Giving each other space, Listening, Respecting what others say)

Lesson 1. - Looks at what drug are, what they do to you, and the damage they can inflict

Lesson 2. - Looks at the levels of use, reasons for use, the cost of using and the alternative to using.

LESSON 1.

Introduction - Description of an unnamed drug - *'The sufferer is tremulous and loses his self command; he is subject to fits of agitation and depression; he loses colour and has a haggard appearance. The appetite falls of and symptoms of gastric catarrh may be manifested. The heart also suffers; it palpitates, or intermits. As with other such agents, a renewed dose of the poison may give temporary relief, but at the cost of future misery.'*

Get the students to guess which drug is being described

The drug is, in fact CAFFEINE. The source of this quote is from two British pharmacologists named Allbutt and Dixon writing in the late nineteenth century about the excessive coffee drinker!

Definition of a drug - A substance which may modify one or more of the body's functions

Categories and Names of Drugs

There are 3/4 categories of drugs

STIMULANTS HALLUCINOGENS DEPRESSANTS/OPIATES

Cocaine	LSD	Tranquillisers
Heroin		
Amphetamines	Magic Mushrooms	Barbiturates
Methadone		
Amyl Nitrite	Mescaline	Alcohol
Codeine		
Caffeine		Solvents

Cannabis is both a Depressant and a Hallucinogen

Ecstasy is both a Stimulant and a mild Hallucinogen

Get the students to give you the names of different drugs (including 'street names') and get them to put each one into its category - also get them to tell how they are ingested (e.g. injection, smoking, swallowing, 'sniffing')- use a 'Flip Chart, Blackboard or Overhead Projector to write down the results -

This exercise should give you a good idea of how aware the students are of the different drugs available.

CANNABIS - (Depressant Hallucinogen)

WHAT IS IT? - an hallucinogenic drug with some depressant characteristics: comes as a 'herb' or in resin form and is smoked or eaten.

WHAT DOES IT DO? - gives a feeling of happiness or mellowness; a relaxed 'dreamy' intoxication, giggling; talkativeness; lack of co-ordination; lethargy; loss of concentration; increases appetite.

IS IT DANGEROUS? - lung damage similar to tobacco; paranoia; anxiety; short term memory loss; laziness; approx 70% of people with mental health problems are regular cannabis users.

AMPHETAMINE - (Stimulant)

WHAT IS IT? - a stimulant drug; it comes in a white/yellow powder/tablet form; can be 'snorted'.

WHAT DOES IT DO? - increases alertness and 'energy'; loss of appetite; clear thinking; mood swings; anxiety; insomnia; exhaustion.

IS IT DANGEROUS? - tiredness, paranoia, depression (also of appetite) 120mg can kill. When heavy users stop they are likely to feel distressed, suffering tiredness, suffering tiredness, depression, anxiety and craving, consequently there is a strong temptation to resume using.

'CRYSTAL METH' is the 'freebase' form, it's effects being much more severe.

L.S.D. -(Hallucinogen)

WHAT IS IT? - a hallucinogen; comes in very small tablet form or small squares of impregnated paper with different designs; is taken orally.

WHAT DOES IT DO? - it changes perception; 'hear' colours and 'see' sounds; hallucinations; users may feel separated from their body

IS IT DANGEROUS? - unpredictable behaviour; 'flashbacks' may occur long after the effects of L.S.D. have worn off; may trigger mental problems, paranoia and delusions; risk of accidents whilst 'tripping'; recent research in the USA shows LSD may cause permanent alteration of the brain's mechanism - described as 'hallucinogenic persisting perception disorder' it causes permanent change in visual facility. Those using it are 25x more likely to suffer from bouts of depression.

A similar experience to LSD can be obtained by ingesting LIBERTY CAP MUSHROOMS, usually called **magic mushrooms**.

ECSTASY - (stimulant with hallucinogenic effects)

WHAT IS IT? - A stimulant drug with hallucinogenic tendencies; comes in tablet or capsule form; taken orally.

WHAT DOES IT DO? - heightens perception of colour and sound; increases energy; 'warmth' to others and relaxed; possibility of hallucinations; paranoia; insomnia; depression.

IS IT DANGEROUS? - overheating; possible damage to brain receptors with the fear of long term depression; increases blood pressure; dangerous for those with a history of heart problems, diabetes or fits.

COCAINE - (stimulant)

WHAT IS IT? - a stimulant drug; comes as a white powder which can be snorted or injected;

WHAT DOES IT DO? - gives a short but BIG 'high' excitement; increased alertness; confidence; talkativeness; increased blood pressure and pulse rate; sleeplessness and depression.

IS IT DANGEROUS? - nose ulcers; psychological addiction; paranoia; convulsions. Approx 60% of heart problems in USA are amongst Cocaine users.

CRACK COCAINE 'the freebase form' of Cocaine is smoked and is very addictive.

HEROIN - (opiate - depressant)

WHAT IS IT? - an opiate, pain killer; comes in powder form (brown or white); can be smoked, sniffed or injected. Heroin is also a central nervous system depressant, slowing down breathing and heart rate.

WHAT DOES IT DO? - after initial 'rush' it gives warm, happy feeling; detached from pain; problems disappear; drowsiness; slows down whole metabolism.

IS IT DANGEROUS? - physical and psychological addiction; infection from dirty needles; sweating, nervousness, cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea, tremors, 'gooseflesh', occur during withdrawal. An overdose, particularly when linked to alcohol use, produces stupor and coma and may lead to death from respiratory failure.

What drugs do to you and the damage they inflict

Materials required - white paper 2m x 1m (several pieces), several marker pens (different colours)

Detailed descriptions of most major drugs, their effects and the dangers of use are given above, both for teacher preparation and possible for photocopying and giving out at the end of the lesson

Get one of the male students to lie down on the paper and get someone to 'draw' around him.

Let the students suggest a drug e.g.

Cannabis - write this on the paper and ask them to describe **how it feels** - from their own experience(!) or from what they have been told. (relaxed, talkative etc)

What is it actually doing to the body?

What damage is it causing both long and short term?

Write the results on the sheet on or near the appropriate organ of the body.

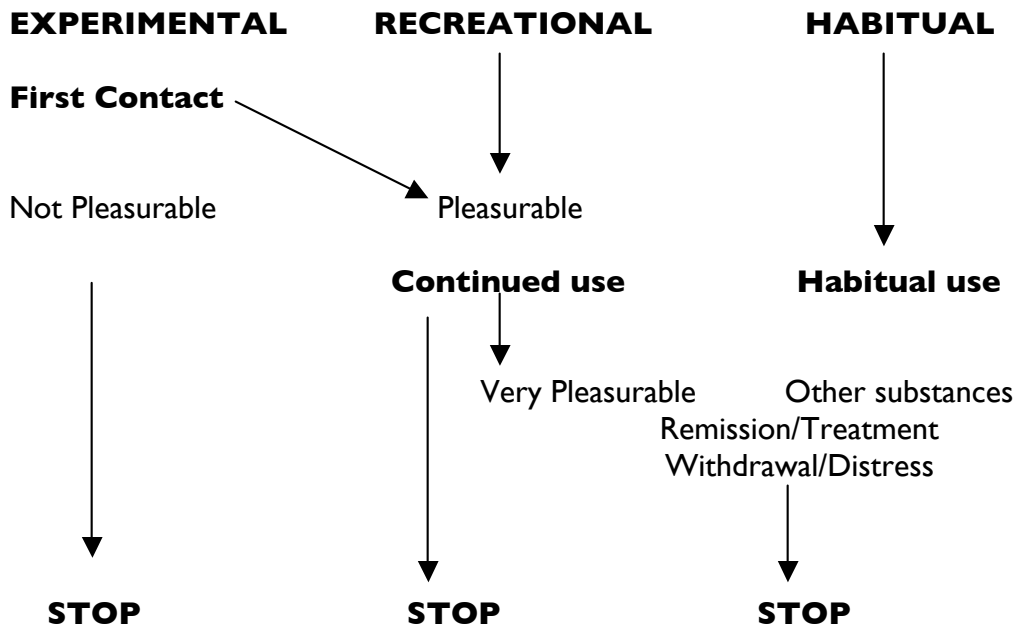
Repeat the procedure with several drugs e.g. Heroin, Ecstasy, Cocaine, Alcohol.

These results should show the students the physical and psychological effects of drug abuse. Let the students talk about the short and long term damage of Drug use/abuse.

LESSON 2. Recap briefly the main points of lesson 1.

Levels of use

Build up the flow chart using a question and answer technique - the intention is to show that it is easy to go from **Experimental to Recreational to Habitual** use (even though many young people stop before they reach the 'Habitual' stage).



Reasons for use/abuse

Get the students to give you a list of reasons why people start using drugs
 It would be good to get the students to discuss how much the media (Films, TV, Magazines etc) affect their thinking.

Curiosity - see what it feels like

Pleasure - it feels good

Peer Pressure - everybody's doing it

Fashion/Media - Films, TV, Magazines etc

Culture - 'Clubbing'

Boredom -

Dysfunctional family life - makes the day go away!

Reasons for persistent use

Energy - All night 'raves' (Discos)

Sleeplessness

Confidence

Spiritual - makes me feel closer to 'God'.

Dependence

"Research suggests all kinds of reasons for misuse - the key factors are unemployment, low self esteem, educational failure, boredom, physical, psychological and family problems.

Even where the cause relates more to experimentation or enjoyment, or a shift from alcohol or tobacco, the **fact is that overtly mind-altering**

substances have a greater pull than other activities. Many people misuse drugs because they don't have the opportunity to lead fulfilling lives".

(UK GOVERNMENT STUDY)

The cost of use/abuse

Briefly present some statistics looking at health (both mental and physical) issues. Anti-social and Criminal behaviour:-

ALCOHOL ABUSE is related to all these problems:-

88% of Criminal damage

78% of assaults

30% of Divorces

40% of Domestic Violence

30% of Child Abuse

Crime - in a recent survey 644 drug addicts were responsible for 70,000 offences over a three month period!

Half of all recorded crime has some drug related element to it, whether in terms of individual consumption or supply of drugs, or the consequent impact of it on criminal behaviour.

General costs to the criminal justice system of drug related crime are at a very conservative estimate at least £1 billion per annum.

The total cost of healthcare for people with smoking related diseases is estimated at £500 million per annum.

The total cost of drug misuse in the UK including health, crime, social and educational costs is estimated at £4 billion per annum.

Number of deaths in UK attributal to drug misuse has risen from 1,399 in 1993 to over 2,000 in 1999.

Alcohol related deaths - 30,000 per annum

Smoking related deaths - 120,000 per annum

There are probably over 200,000 drug users who are addicts. 43,000 registered Heroin addicts.

THE STATISTICS IN THE SECTION ABOVE ARE FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

Is there another way

Discuss alternatives - healthy lifestyle, sport, hobbies, social responsibility, career etc

Spiritual view - discuss the 'God Shaped Hole' from the audio/visual programme CHOOSE LIFE.

Blaise Pascal talked about the 'God Shaped Vacuum'

What do we fill our lives with?

Cigarettes

Alcohol

Drugs

Money

Education

Love

Etc

Many of the alternatives are 'legitimate' BUT -

Freddie Mercury, "You can have everything and still be the loneliest man".

If it's a 'God shaped Hole', guess who fits!

Why the 'Christian God'?

(THE SECTION BELOW IS AN ORTHODOX BIBLICAL VIEW OF WHY AND HOW WE CAN BEGIN A MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD WHICH IS FULFILLING IN EVERY WAY. THIS IS ALSO THE AUTHOR'S VIEW)

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were sinners, Christ (Jesus) died for us. Romans 5:8

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name He gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12

The Bible says, "Christ died once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us back to God".

Jesus said, "I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full."

A PERSONAL CONCLUSION

Reducing man to 'flesh, bone and intelligence' has left us short of what

we were made - body, soul and spirit - made in the image of God to love and serve Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and our neighbours as our self.

The well-known British writer C.S.Lewis suggests that Man needs God as a car needs petrol - Maybe taking God out of the equation in our increasingly secular society is causing our youth to fill up at the pump serving a cocktail of pleasure giving drugs - with the inevitable consequences, rather than drinking of the living water that Jesus Christ offered to every thirsty soul.