

SECTION

3



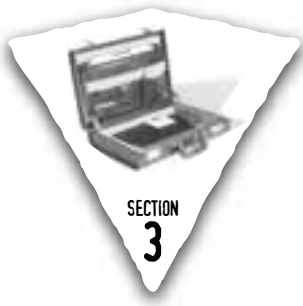
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GRADE 8
**LEARNING
PLANS**



A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE: CURRICULUM SUPPLEMENT





INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADE 8 UNIT

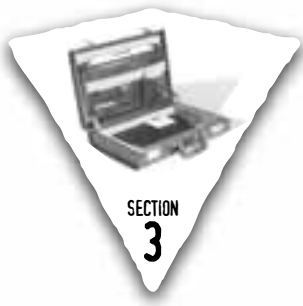
The overall aims of this grade 8 unit are to strengthen students' understanding of the factors that influence substance-use decisions and to help them make healthy substance-use decisions. An important ingredient of sound decision making is having a clear understanding of risks and harms linked to substance use—those concerning alcohol and cannabis mainly will be presented. The remainder of the unit aims to increase knowledge and skills pertaining to family and media influences.

The assumption here is that alcohol and/or cannabis will still be the substances of choice and most easily available. However, the *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey 2007* shows that hallucinogens (mescaline or psilocybin) are the third most frequently used category of psychoactive substances. The Healthy Living curriculum also identifies a discussion of over-the-counter and prescription drug misuse as required outcomes for grade 8 students. The best knowledge available on junior high school-level drug education advises that the program focus on the drugs that are available to students rather than provide a broad education on all substances. Yet, what is available and what is in use can change at a faster pace than survey data can report. This first lesson in Healthy Living 8 is designed to help teachers identify what other substances are available to their students to help them tailor the activity plans to those specific substances.

Grade 8 Unit Overview

The grade 8 component of *A Question of Influence* covers the three spheres of influence—personal, social, and cultural—in the form of three learning themes: how I influence myself, how others influence me, and how I am influenced by the world around me. Each learning theme includes a set of activities and associated teacher and student materials matched to the Nova Scotia Healthy Living curriculum outcomes for grade 8. The three learning themes are preceded by an introductory session that introduces the complete unit to the students and lays the foundation for the learning theme activities. A fifth and final wrap-up session completes the unit. It is designed to encourage students to reflect on what they have learned about what influences their decisions around alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. It also provides the teacher with an opportunity to assess what students have learned from the unit as a whole.¹

¹ Suggestions for assessing other aspects of student performance throughout the unit can be found in Appendix D.



Each of the three learning themes, the introductory session, and wrap-up session begin with introductory notes to help orient the teacher to the content of that session or learning theme. A summary table is provided at the beginning of each session/learning theme to identify the Healthy Living curriculum outcome links, specific activity objectives, estimated time frame, and preparation required to work through each activity in class. Separate pages for teaching aids, referred to as “slides” throughout the unit, and student handout materials are found at the back of the unit.

The time estimates included here are based on the actual outcomes of the resource field test in the winter and spring of 2006. The complete unit is intended to be delivered in no more than six hours of instructional time or a maximum of eight 45-minute classes. Not every teacher will have Healthy Living classes that run for 45 minutes, and the delivery of the activities will have to be adapted based on the length of class time available.

It is strongly recommended that none of the learning themes be dropped in order to shorten the time required to deliver the unit. Instead, suggestions for shortening individual activities include the following:

- Reduce the number of case studies or stories used for group activities.
- Reduce the number of groups and increase the group sizes. If increasing the size of small groups is not an option, assign the same story to more than one group, ask one group to report back on the story and, once they finish their report, ask the other groups with the same story if they have anything to add.
- Place strict time limits on brainstorming activities (five minutes, for example) rather than trying to get every last idea or comment.
- Place case studies on slides and discuss them with the entire class.

A NOTE ON THE APPROACH TAKEN WITH THIS SUPPLEMENT

This supplement is based largely on the Social Influences Model—the drug education approach that has been shown by research over the past 25 years to be most effective for junior high school students. This model sees adolescent use of substances as the result of influences from peers, the media, and the general culture. These social influences take the form of messages that appear to condone substance use: for example, modelling of alcohol and other drug use by peers and media personalities, persuasive advertising appeals, and/or direct offers by peers to use substances. For the purposes of this supplement, personal influences stemming from normal adolescent development (e.g., need for independence, to experience risk)

**A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE**

are also viewed as an important source of influence. This model aims to create greater awareness of these three spheres of influence—personal, social or interpersonal, and cultural or environmental—and to develop skills to analyse and minimize their impact.

A NOTE ON THE USE OF THE TERM “CANNABIS”

The term “cannabis” is used throughout the resource. During the field-test phase of resource development, some students commented that “cannabis” was a new word for them. Although junior high students are more familiar with the term “marijuana,” the resource continues to use “cannabis” as it is a more inclusive term, including marijuana, hash, and hash oil. It will be helpful to the students if teachers explain to them that the term cannabis will be used to refer to the substance they may know as marijuana, pot, weed, dope, grass, or hash/hash oil.



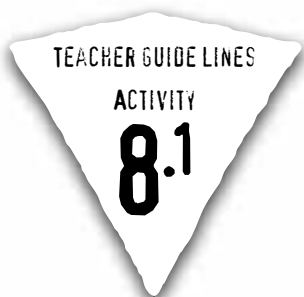
FIRST CLASS— INTRODUCING GRADE 8 STUDENTS TO THE UNIT

Introduction

This first session of Healthy Living 8 includes a very brief refresher on the concept of influencing factors connected to alcohol, cannabis, and other drug-related decision making. It carries through with the Healthy Living 7 curriculum outcome “Identify personal, social, and cultural influences related to alcohol, cannabis, and other drug use (B3.7)” that forms the foundation of this curriculum supplement. It also introduces grade 8 students to the entire unit and sets the stage for an ongoing discussion on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. The first class includes a brief brainstorming activity that asks students to reflect on the substances that are actually available in their community as well as the substances that they suspect are being experimented with by other students in their school or community. This provides students with the opportunity to consider the role that environmental influences (e.g., what substances are available) and social influences (e.g., what their peers are doing) may play in their own substance-use choices.

Grade 8 Introductory Session

| Healthy Living Curriculum Links | Activity Objective(s) | Activities | Time Frame | Preparation | Materials |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Identify personal, social, and cultural influences related to alcohol, cannabis, other drug use, and gambling (B3.7 and reinforce Healthy Living 7 B3.7) | To introduce students to the entire unit and set the stage for an ongoing discussion on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs | <p>If introducing Circles of Influence for the first time, it is recommended that students complete Activity 7.1 from Healthy Living 7</p> <p>Activity 7.1 Circles of Influence- The teacher reviews the concept of multiple types of influences on student decision making and describes upcoming activities</p> <p>Activity 8.1 <i>What Substances Are in Our Community?</i>—Through a brainstorming exercise, students identify the substances available to them in their community and consider the implications of the availability of these substances.</p> | <p>Up to 30 minutes</p> <p>Up to 45 minutes if introducing the <i>Circles of Influence</i> for the first time</p> | Prepare Slide 8.A— <i>Circles of Influence</i> , if needed. | Overhead projector Flip chart or blackboard |



TEACHER'S NOTES

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ACTIVITY 8.1: What Substances Are in Our Community?

Note

The instructions for this first class are written as if grade 8 students have been exposed to the concept of three types of influences that can affect their decisions around alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. In the first year that *A Question of Influence* is used in the Nova Scotia school system (2006–2007), teachers will need to extend the length of time for this introductory class and add Activity 7.1: *Circles of Influence* from the grade 7 unit (see pages 41-42). Insert instruction points 1 through 3 of that activity into the beginning of this introduction to the grade 8 unit and drop instruction point 1 below.

1. Remind students that the material on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs they have covered in Healthy Living 7 classes has looked at three types of influencing factors that can have an impact on their decisions and behaviour. Ask the students to recall the three types of influences. Explain that the activities that will be covered in Healthy Living 8 also look at ways they can influence themselves, how others influence them, and how they are influenced by the world around them. Explain to the students that the activities related to the three types of influence in this unit are more in-depth than in previous grades.
2. Explain to the students that two things that can influence their decisions about alcohol, cannabis, or other drugs are what they see others doing and what substances are available. If the upcoming activities are to be useful, they need to focus on the substances they are most likely to face. As a result, ask for their input on what they know for sure is available right here in this community. Stress that you are not assuming that they are using anything nor are you asking them what, if anything, they are using. You are just looking for a list of substances that should be the focus of the upcoming classes, based on what the students know for sure.

Ask the students to answer the following questions:

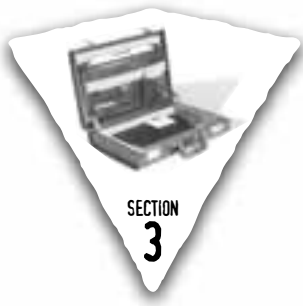
- What substances are available to you at home, at school, and in the community?
- What do you know for certain that other teens in our community are using?
- Is there anything special or unique about how they are using the



LEARNING THEME ONE: HOW I INFLUENCE MYSELF

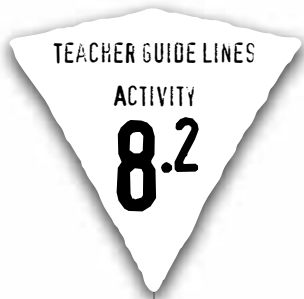
Introduction

A major source of self-influence for adolescents is their access to accurate knowledge and their ability to identify and correct common misconceptions. The purpose of this activity plan is to clarify common student misperceptions concerning alcohol, cannabis, and pharmaceutical products and to provide them with a greater understanding of the risks. The risks addressed include injury, longer-term health problems, and coming into conflict with the law. This will be accomplished through students' participation in a "game show" where teams compete with each other to come up with the correct response to a series of questions on the risks associated with the use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs.



Grade 8 Learning Theme One—How I Influence Myself

| Healthy Living Curriculum Links | Activity Objective(s) | Activities | Time Frame | Preparation | Materials |
|---|--|---|--|---|-----------|
| <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the risks associated with the use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs (B3.6)</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of laws related to alcohol, cannabis, other drugs, and gambling (B3.5)</p> | <p>To provide students with an understanding of the legal implications of possessing or using alcohol, cannabis, or over-the-counter/prescription drugs at their age</p> <p>To provide students with an understanding of the risks involved with the use of alcohol and cannabis, and the non-medical use of over-the-counter and prescription medications</p> | <p>Activity 8.2 <i>The Game Show—Knowing the Risks of Alcohol and Other Drugs</i>—By working as teams, students compete in a “Reach for the Top” type game show to decide the correct answer to a series of questions on alcohol and other drug-related risks.</p> | <p>Up to 90 minutes; two 45-minute classes</p> | <p>Preview the 15 items on Student Handout 8.A and 8.B. If students identified a substance through Activity 8.1 that is not covered in the 15 items, refer to Appendix C: Detailed Information for Selected Drugs to develop one or two additional questions on the risks of that substance and write them in on the handouts.</p> <p>Make copies of Student Handouts 8.A—<i>Risk-Wise, Part One</i> and 8.B—<i>Risk-Wise, Part Two</i>.</p> <p>Get five to six bells, whistles, or other noisemakers, one for each class team.</p> | |



TEACHER'S NOTES

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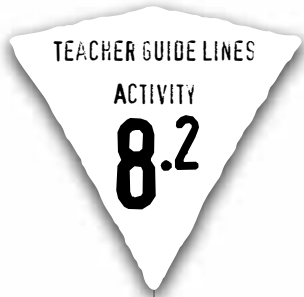
ACTIVITY 8.2:

The Game Show—Knowing the Risks of Alcohol and Other Drugs

Note

This activity includes 15 (potentially one or two more) alcohol and other drug risk-related items and their correct responses. Having teams respond to these items and discussing the correct result will be time consuming. The best way to maximize discussion of the risks is to divide the items in half and complete the game over two classes. The students will be given the questions at the start of each class to discuss in teams before the game begins. The statements have been divided into two handouts so that teams cannot research their responses between the first and second classes.

1. Begin the session by explaining to the class that research has shown that, when making decisions about trying alcohol and other drugs, teenagers are often influenced by their perception and knowledge of what risks are connected to using a specific substance. The risks can include health effects and getting into trouble with the law. In addition, one substance may carry greater or lesser risks than another substance. Tell the class that the next session or two will take a look at how “risk-wise” they are and will give them the opportunity to compete in a game.
2. Divide the class into teams of five to six students. Explain that each team is going to be given a sheet of seven to eight statements and asked to decide whether they agree or disagree with each statement. They will have about 10 minutes to do this. They can then appoint a team “mouth” to represent the team in a competition against other teams to come up with the most correct responses to the statements. Once the groups are formed, give each team a copy of Student Handout 8.A—*Risk-Wise, Part One*.
3. After the teams have worked for 10 minutes, line up the team “mouths” at the front of the class and give each “mouth” a noisemaker. Explain that you are going to read each statement, and the “mouths” are to make their noise as fast as they can to see who gets to go first. Ask a student to volunteer to be the scorekeeper and ask them to keep track of each team’s responses.

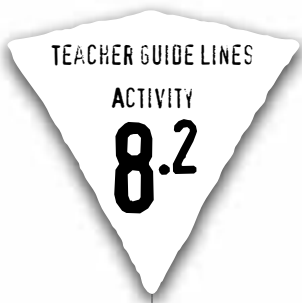


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4. Once the teams have responded to all the questions on Student Handout 8.A—*Risk-Wise, Part One*, read out the correct response to each item from the responses on pages 87-89 and discuss it with the students. Have the scorekeeper give each team one point for their correct responses and no points for their incorrect responses.
5. Repeat steps 2 through 4 in the second class, using the same teams and “mouths” and Student Handout 8.B—*Risk-Wise, Part Two* (responses on pages 89-91). Add up the scores to determine the winning team.
6. Once all the questions from the two student handouts have been discussed, ask the class to describe and draw conclusions from what they have learned from the activity about the risks of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs.



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**ACTIVITY 8.2:
Game Show Answer Key**

- 1. Alcohol is only a risk to you if you are older and have been using it for many years.** [*Disagree is correct*].

Alcohol can pose health risks no matter what your age, no matter if you have been drinking for years or if this is your first experience with alcohol. While alcohol is associated with longer term, chronic health risks such as liver disease, young people who drink to get drunk are placing themselves at risk for accidents, violence, and alcohol poisoning.

- 2. It is not dangerous to drink and drive if you stay on the back roads.** [*Disagree is correct*].

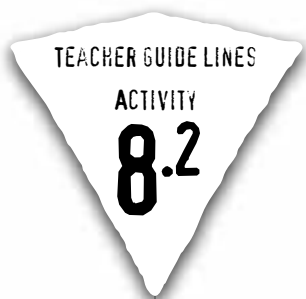
Driving a car requires attention, judgment, and sound decision making, no matter what road you are on. Consuming alcohol can have negative effects on the skills required to drive well. Drinking any amount and driving can be extremely dangerous, particularly for young drivers.

- 3. Smoking the occasional joint is not too harmful for a teenager.** [*Disagree is correct*].

That may be so, but the harms associated with smoking even the occasional joint depend on what's in the joint (for example, is it mixed with another drug), the amount of THC present, and the circumstances surrounding use, such as location and combining cannabis with alcohol or other drugs. Depending on these factors, even one joint may contribute to a harmful outcome. It's also against the law, and police may apprehend even an occasional user.

- 4. The health risks from cannabis have never been proven.** [*Disagree is correct*].

This statement is an old myth. While it may have been true at one time, there is now a good body of research documenting the health risks of cannabis use. These include lung damage and respiratory illnesses, and heart complications in individuals with high blood pressure or heart disease. Research has found that many users experience panic attacks while using. Use by adolescents is linked to depression; it can also bring on schizophrenia among those who are predisposed to it and make



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symptoms worse. Cannabis affects short-term memory, problem solving, and attention span, which can be a problem when driving or in other situations requiring mental alertness.

5. Prescribed medications are safer than street drugs. *[Disagree is correct].*

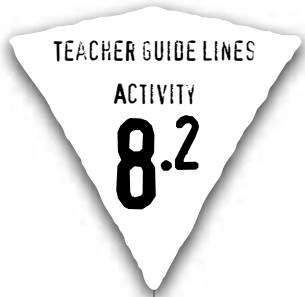
When taken as directed by a physician, prescribed medications are generally safe. Using too much of some of these drugs (e.g., tranquilizers, pain killers, and sleeping pills) or using them for too long can lead to drug dependency, which, like any drug dependency, can cause a variety of serious problems in a person's life. Use of pharmaceuticals by students to get high, to self-medicate depression or anxiety, or to try to get an edge on tests and studying is hazardous and can lead to overdose or dependency. Some prescribed medicines, such as those used in managing severe pain, are particularly dangerous if misused. For example, the pain medicine OxyContin has been linked to a number of deaths in Nova Scotia and other provinces.

6. If I have a learner's permit to drive, I can drive if the other person is too impaired to be behind the wheel. *[Disagree is correct].*

Under Nova Scotia's Graduated Driver's License System, anyone in the Learner's stage is restricted from having more than one passenger in the vehicle and that passenger must be an experienced driver with a Class 5 License. That passenger is considered responsible for whatever happens while the learner is behind the wheel. Under the Criminal Code of Canada, a person commits an offence when operating or in care or control of a motor vehicle while impaired by alcohol or drugs. (See www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rmv/safe/alcohol.asp.)

7. If the police catch me with a joint, I'll just get a warning because of my age. *[Disagree is correct].*

Plans by the Canadian government to reduce the penalties for cannabis possession are now on hold. Possession of any amount of cannabis is against the law under the Criminal Code of Canada. Under current laws, a young person who is found in possession of cannabis can receive a criminal conviction and even a jail sentence. A criminal conviction can limit career opportunities and make it difficult to travel to other countries. Even if possession of small amounts of cannabis is eventually decriminalized as the Canadian government has considered for several years, fines would be levied, regardless of whether a person is an adult or youth.



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woman will feel the effects of alcohol more than a man who drinks the same amount. The risk is that females who match their male companions drink for drink will reach a higher level of impairment faster.

12. Combining cannabis with other drugs such as alcohol or prescription drugs can increase or alter the effects of the drugs. [*Agree is correct*].

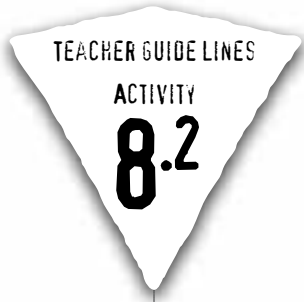
Combining cannabis with any other drug, including alcohol, is very risky because it is impossible to predict the effects. Depending on the drugs being used and the characteristics of the individual, the effect of combining drugs can be like adding them ($1+1=2$); on the other hand, they can increase effects dramatically ($1+1=3$), or cancel out many of the effects ($1+1=0$). Driving after combining any substances (including cannabis and alcohol) is very dangerous.

13. Medications purchased over the counter at pharmacies are safe. [*Disagree is correct*].

This is generally true; however, some over-the-counter medicines (OTCs), such as certain cough medicines, sleep aids, antihistamines, and products like Gravol, can cause problems if not taken as directed or if abused for their psychoactive effects. It is also important to note that OTC medications can produce dangerous health effects when taken with alcohol.

14. It is safe to get into a car if the driver has been smoking cannabis. [*Disagree is correct*].

Driving under the influence of any drug that negatively affects one's abilities is extremely irresponsible, and it's also against the law. Mixing cannabis, alcohol, and driving is particularly dangerous. Under the current laws, driving while impaired by any drug—including cannabis—is against the law even though there's no "legal limit" like there is for alcohol. Police can use their own judgment and information from witnesses to determine whether or not a person might be driving while impaired by a drug. Since the effects of impairing drugs on one's ability to drive are unknown, no amount is a safe amount. The Canadian government has just proposed new legislation that will allow police officers to demand tests of a person's physical capabilities when they suspect that they are driving under the influence of cannabis (or any other drug) and to demand bodily fluids for testing.



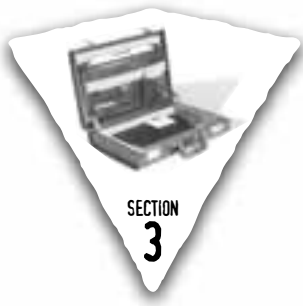
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15. You can't be charged with impaired driving if your blood alcohol content is below the legal limit. *[Disagree is correct].*

If a police officer determines that your ability to operate the vehicle is impaired, you can be charged with the offence of impaired driving even if your blood alcohol content (BAC) is below the legal limit. The national legal limit is 80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood, and it is an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada to drive a vehicle if your BAC exceeds this limit.



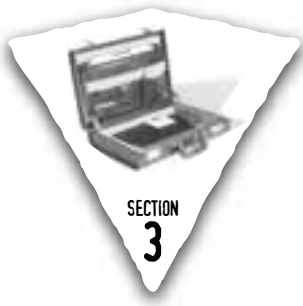
LEARNING THEME TWO: HOW OTHERS INFLUENCE ME

Introduction

This session concentrates on an examination of parents and family as a source of influence. The session begins with a discussion of family rules or norms. It moves on to focus on the impact that one member's substance use has on the family. This includes ways a teenager's alcohol and other drug-related decisions and actions affect their family, and conversely, how the behaviour of other family members affects the student and the family. Students will be asked to brainstorm ideas about how an individual family member's substance use affects others in the family. They will also be presented with case study scenarios and asked to analyse the situation through small-group work.

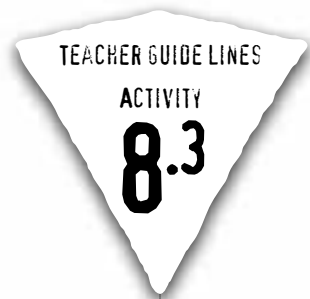
Note

This session has the potential to bring family substance-use issues to the surface for some students. Plan for this possibility by reviewing the discussion *Advice on early identification and referral processes* on pages 20-21 of this supplement and discussing it with the school guidance counsellor.



Grade 8 Learning Theme Two—How Others Influence Me

| Healthy Living Curriculum Links | Activity Objective(s) | Activities | Time Frame | Preparation | Materials |
|--|--|---|------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| <p>Identify and practise strategies for avoiding potentially dangerous situations (B4.2)</p> <p>Compare their families' values and attitudes with their own (C1.2)</p> | <p>To encourage students to identify the rules and behaviour norms about alcohol and other drugs in their own homes and understand why the rules exist</p> | <p>Activity 8.3 <i>House Rules</i>—Through class discussion, students will identify what they believe are the rules about alcohol and other drugs in their families.</p> | Up to 30 minutes | | Blackboard or flip chart |
| <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the effect in the family of harmful involvement with alcohol, cannabis, other drugs, and gambling (B3.8)</p> | <p>To enable students to identify possible effects on the family when a member is experiencing problems with alcohol or other drugs</p> <p>To help students to identify some of the warning signs that a family member or peer may be experiencing a substance use problem</p> | <p>Activity.8.4 <i>Effects on Family Members</i>—Students participate in a brainstorming activity about the things that can happen at home when a family member has a problem with alcohol or other drugs.</p> | Up to 30 minutes | Post flip chart paper around the room labelled "Mother," "Father," "Older sibling," "Extended family." | Flip chart paper Markers |
| <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the effect in the family of harmful involvement with alcohol, cannabis, other drugs, and gambling (B3.8)</p> | <p>To enable students to identify possible effects on the family when a member is experiencing problems with alcohol or other drugs</p> <p>To help students to identify some of the warning signs that a family member or peer may be experiencing a substance use problem</p> | <p>Activity 8.5 <i>Family Stories—What Is Going On?</i>—Using five family scenarios, students discuss the specific problems in each scenario and talk about the ways the family member could be helped.</p> | Up to 45 minutes | Make copies of Student Handouts 8.C— <i>Family Stories</i> and 8.D— <i>Family Story Questions</i> . | |



TEACHER'S NOTES

Activity 8.3

House Rules²

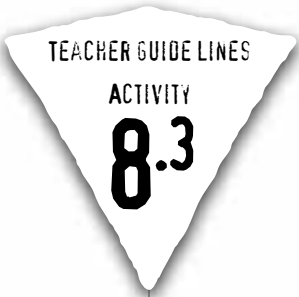
Begin the session by stating that some families have established clear rules around alcohol and other drugs. Although they may vary depending on age, these rules can apply to adults, youth, and children. These rules may even extend to guests.

1. Ask the students to spend a few minutes writing down the rules on alcohol and other drugs that exist in their own families. Ask them to make sure they include things that they are allowed to do as well as the things they are not allowed to (e.g., have a drink with the adults at special family celebrations; attend a party as long as they call home for a drive if there is no “safe” driver available at the party).
2. Some students may come from households where, for a variety of reasons, there are no rules or they do not know them. Try to avoid singling students out by requiring everyone to provide verbal answers. Add the phrase “or write down what you think the rules should be” to the previous directions to take these students into account.
3. Ask the students to share their rules they have written down and record them on the board or on flip chart paper. You can anticipate a wide range of items such as
 - No drinking anything at any time, no exceptions.
 - Can have the occasional drink on special family occasions.
 - No illicit drugs ever (cannabis may be singled out).
 - Call us to come get you if you are in a situation where no one is sober enough to drive home, no matter what you have been doing.
 - If you want to try a drug, bring it home and try it here.

[*Watch for examples of rules that restrict behaviour, and rules that seem to be trying to keep teens safe, no matter how they may sound.*]

4. Ask the students to share the consequences of breaking the rules in their family. Ask if they think the consequences fit the circumstance or should they be different?

² Numerous parent and teen drug education resources and programs include the identification of family rules as an activity. The activity included here was inspired by the South Australia Department of Education, Training and Employment's resources from 2000, *Drug Education R-12. Teacher Support Package. The Middle Years.*



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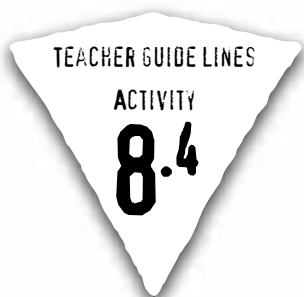
TEACHER'S NOTES

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5. When you have a complete list, lead a class discussion around the rules by having them complete the following statements:

- I think my family's rules about alcohol and other drugs are...
- Family rules about alcohol and other drugs are useful because...
- Families make rules about alcohol because...

The final statement should include a response that the family rules are made to keep everyone safe. If no one points this out, mention it to the class: "The use of alcohol and other drugs always carries some risk with it. Many families make rules to try to keep their children safe and out of harm's way."



TEACHER'S NOTES

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ACTIVITY 8.4:

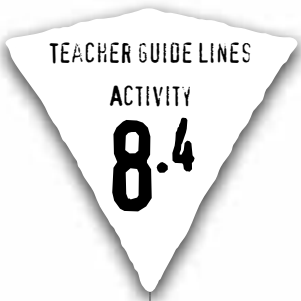
Effects on Family Members

1. Explain to the class that the focus of the unit up to this point has been on junior high school–age teens facing decisions about alcohol and other drugs. However, it is not just young adolescents whose lives can be affected by alcohol and other drugs. In some cases, older family members, including siblings, parents, and extended family members, experience substance-use problems. The focus of this activity is how the alcohol and other drug-related behaviour of each family member can affect others in the family.
2. Spend a few minutes brainstorming ideas about what kinds of things might happen in the home if a parent or older sibling drinks too much or has become harmfully involved or dependent on a prescription drug or an illegal drug like cannabis or cocaine. Ask the class what they think is the difference between “harmfully involved” and “dependent.”

Harmful involvement can be defined as heavy use and/or more frequent use, with the person looking forward to chances to use the substance. Problems may begin to emerge, but the person continues to use despite these problems. Dependence involves heavy, frequent use. The substance is very important to the person, and he or she will make personal sacrifices to get and use the substance, spending a lot of money and time using the drug. He or she craves the drug and even feels uncomfortable without it. In fact, he or she needs to have the drug to feel “normal.” The person continues to use the drug even though it is causing various problems at school, home, with friends, or with money. Both types of substance use are a concern within a family as they can have a great impact on day-to-day life.

Ask the students if they think that the consequences of harmful involvement or dependency would be different if the person having the problem was the mother, the father, or an older sibling.

3. Pointing out the flip chart paper around the room and noting that they each identify different family members, ask the students to write their responses to the following questions on the flip chart paper.
 - What could be some of the effects on the family if the dad was harmfully involved or dependent on a substance?
 - What could be some of the effects if the mom was harmfully involved or dependent?



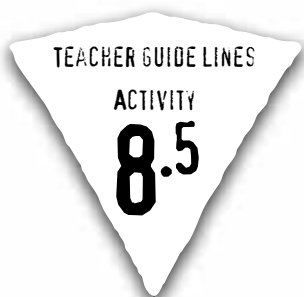
TEACHER'S NOTES

- What could be some of the effects on the family if an older teenager (high school student or recent graduate) was harmfully involved or dependent?
- What could be some of the effects on the family if an extended family member like a grandparent, aunt, or uncle was harmfully involved or dependent?
- What could be some of the effects on the wider community if an individual within the community was harmfully involved or dependent?

4. Once the students have finished, discuss the items that they have identified. If any of the following effects are not on the list, draw them to the students' attention:

- Fewer chores being done around the house and fewer meals made
- Money problems showing up or increasing
- Acting withdrawn, mood swings, or other changes in personality
- Unexplained and increasing absences from the home
- Missing time at work or losing a job
- Forgetfulness
- Sleeping a lot or not being able to sleep at night
- Appearing distracted or inattentive
- Changes in physical appearance, taking less care of self
- Going to more doctor appointments or getting prescriptions filled more frequently
- Not showing up at child's special events
- More fighting between family members, more "scenes"
- Family members feeling less connected to one another
- A social worker from Children's Aid or Family Services coming to their home

5. Ask the students how they react to the list? Did they think it would be as long as it is? Is there anything that they did not realize? Tell the students that there are a number of supports in the community that can help out when a family member is harmfully involved or dependent on a substance and that this will be discussed in the next two activities.



TEACHER'S NOTES

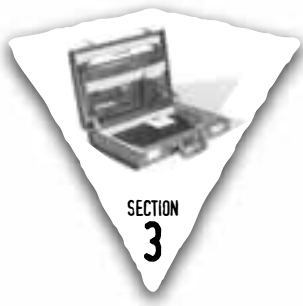
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ACTIVITY 8.5: **Family Stories—What is Going On?**

1. Explain to the class that recognizing when a family member is having a problem with alcohol or another drug can be difficult. It happens often enough, though, that it is helpful to look at it in greater detail. As a class, they will be asked to do some detective work in looking at the situations of a few hypothetical families and trying to figure out what may be going on and what might be done to help.
2. Divide the class into five groups and assign each group one of the items from Student Handout 8.C—*Family Stories*. Ask each group to review their story and respond to the five questions on Student Handout 8.D—*Family Story Questions*.
3. After reviewing their stories and questions for about 10–15 minutes, ask each group to share their story and their responses with the larger class.
4. Ask the students to share what they have learned from the family stories.

Note

It is possible that some of the students in the class will have similar experiences to those described in the Family Stories. It is important to be aware that this activity could make some students uncomfortable or even disclose that this is happening to them. It may be beneficial to talk to the school guidance counsellor in advance of the class and decide how to handle the discomfort or disclosure of students, should it arise.



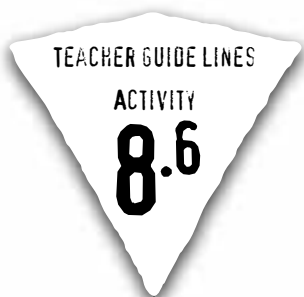
LEARNING THEME THREE: HOW I AM INFLUENCED BY THE WORLD AROUND ME

Introduction

In this session, students explore positive ideas about drinking alcohol that are promoted and reinforced in ads for alcohol. A key component of this exploration includes understanding the consequences of drinking—the negative side of alcohol use that is seldom alluded to in alcohol ads. Students will discuss some common myths about drinking that seem to be upheld in alcohol advertising. In groups, students create their own parody ads that try to portray the reality of the consequences of drinking.

Grade 8 Learning Theme Three—How I Am Influenced by the World around Me

| Healthy Living Curriculum Links | Activity Objective(s) | Activities | Time Frame | Preparation | Materials |
|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| <p>Evaluate the role of the media in promoting alcohol and other drug use (B3.4)</p> <p>Evaluate the role of media on self-image and lifestyle choices (C3.1)</p> | <p>To encourage students to be aware of and understand the negative consequences of alcohol use</p> <p>To help students apply critical thinking to the false messages about drinking that are implied in advertisements</p> | <p>Activity 8.6 <i>Alcohol Myths and Parody Ads</i>— Working in small groups, students develop their own parody ads that expose some of the myths promoted in alcohol advertising.</p> | <p>Up to 90 minutes; two 45-minute classes to prepare and present their ads</p> | <p>Prepare slides 8.B through 8.E—<i>Alcohol Advertising Myths</i>.</p> | <p>Overhead projector.</p> |



TEACHER'S NOTES

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ACTIVITY 8.6:

Alcohol Myths and Parody Ads³

1. Tell the class that the focus of the next two classes will be on looking at some of the myths about drinking alcohol that are found in advertising. Indicate that they will be given a chance to show the truth behind the ads by making their own ads.
2. Using the Alcohol Advertising Myth slides (8.B through 8.E), discuss each of the following myths with the students.

Myth #1—Drinking is a risk-free activity.

Here are two ads that support the idea that drinking is a risk-free activity. What messages do they deliver?

- Violence and drinking aren't connected—in fact, disagreements can more easily be resolved over a friendly drink (“There is no disagreement that arm wrestling can't resolve”).
- Drinking makes you sexy, and an intimate encounter with someone you've just met in a bar is a normal, even desirable, occurrence (“Names optional”).

Myth #2—Problem drinking is okay.

Here are some ads that encourage people to believe that problem drinking behaviours are normal. Can you identify these messages?

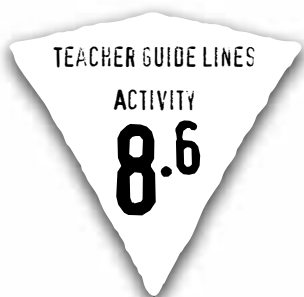
- It is okay to drink a lot of alcohol (“A quality drink, after those years of quantity drinking”)
- It is okay to over-drink to the point where you can't function (“Smirnoff half day off”).

Myth #3—Alcohol is a magic potion that will make your life better.

How about these ads that want you to believe that alcohol will transform you?

- You can be one person when you are not drinking and someone completely different (and more exciting) when you are drinking (“Auditor by day. Bacardi by Night.”).
- Alcohol will make you more exciting and appealing to the opposite sex (“It makes you electric”).

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TEACHER'S NOTES

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Myth #4—Sports and alcohol go together.

The alcohol industry spends millions of dollars pairing playing and watching sports with alcohol. How is this reinforced here?

- Alcohol is part of participating in any kind of sport or recreation (“It’s Game Day”).
- Alcohol is part of a healthy lifestyle (“Lose the carbs. Not the taste.”).
- Drinking alcohol will make you more athletic (“Lose the carbs. Not the taste.”).

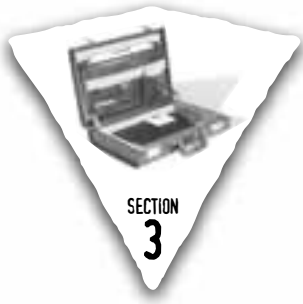
3. After reviewing the myths, ask the class to break up into groups of no more than four students. Assign each group one of the following four myths. You may have to assign the same topic to more than one group.

- Drinking is a risk-free activity.
- Problem drinking behaviours are normal.
- Alcohol is a magic potion that can make your life better.
- Sports and alcohol go together.

Tell the groups that their assignment is to tell the other side of the story about their myth through a parody ad. Explain to the class that the parody ads shatter myths about alcohol by delivering messages about the possible harmful and negative consequences of drinking too much.

4. Assign each group a parody ad topic.

- “Drinking is a risk-free activity” groups will develop an ad that demonstrates the health risks that are associated with drinking.
- “Problem drinking behaviours are normal” groups will develop an ad that demonstrates problem drinking behaviours such as getting into fights when intoxicated, drinking to the point of alcohol poisoning, becoming dependent on alcohol and needing to drink often, and so on.
- “Alcohol is a magic potion that can make your life better” groups will develop an ad that demonstrates the consequences of drinking—especially as it relates to young people.
- “Sports and alcohol go together” groups will develop an ad that demonstrates sports and the alcohol industry.



FINAL SESSION: WRAP UP AND ASSESSMENT—UNDERSTANDING OUR PERSONAL INFLUENCES

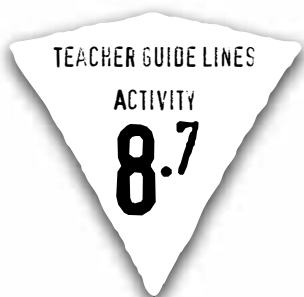
Introduction

This final session of Healthy Living 8 asks the students to reflect on what they have learned about influencing factors from the previous learning themes and activities. It asks them to demonstrate what they have learned by describing what types of influences they personally experience and ways they can have an impact on those influences. By assigning the session’s single activity, teachers have an opportunity to assess student progress and learning from the unit by their responses to identifying their own influences or through the development of a rubric tailored by individual teachers for the activity.⁴

Grade 8 Wrap-Up Session

| Healthy Living Curriculum Links | Activity Objective(s) | Activities | Time Frame | Preparation | Materials |
|---|---|---|------------------|--|--------------------|
| Identify personal, social, and cultural influences related to alcohol, cannabis, other drug use, and gambling (B3.7 and reinforce Healthy Living 7 B3.7) | To assess student learning and application of that learning about the factors that influence the use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs | Activity 8.7 <i>What Can I Do about the Things That Can Influence Me?</i> —Through class discussion and individual thinking and writing, students will assess how they can have an impact on the factors that influence them. | Up to 30 minutes | Prepare Slide 8.A— <i>Circles of Influence</i> Make a copy of Student Handout 8.E— <i>What Can I do About the Things That Can Influence Me?</i> for each student. | Overhead projector |

⁴See Appendix D for examples of assessment rubrics.



TEACHER'S NOTES

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ACTIVITY 8.7:

What Can I Do About the Things That Can Influence Me?

1. Remind the students that the focus of the previous classes has been developing an understanding of the way personal, social, and cultural or environmental factors affect the decisions they make about on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. Using the *Circles of Influence* slide (8.A), remind the students that these factors can be described as
 - how I influence myself
 - how others influence me
 - how I am influenced by the world around me
2. Based on some of the activities taken in the unit, ask the students to provide some examples of the different types of influence.

| How I influence myself | How others influence me | How I am influenced by the world around me |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| The skills I have for making up my mind | Friends | Laws related to alcohol and other drugs |
| My knowledge/information | What others expect me to do | How easy it is to get alcohol or cannabis |
| My values and goals | My parents and grandparents | Television and movies |
| My feelings | My teachers and coaches | Advertising |

3. Once the students have completed this list, remind⁵ them of the following:
 - We have control over some of these influences and no control over others. We can have control over what we know by trying to find out more, but we cannot have control over what substances are available in our community.
 - Sometimes an influence is negative, and sometimes it is positive. A friend encouraging us to join a sports team on the weekends is a positive influence; while another friend offering us a beer in their parents' basement is a negative influence.
4. Explain to the students that they can do things about reducing negative influences and increasing positive influences, and can take more control over some of the influencing factors. Distribute Student Handout 8.E—*What Can I Do about the Things That Can Influence Me?*. Ask the

⁵Students were exposed to these two ideas in Healthy Living 7.

CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

How I am Influenced by the World Around Me

How others Influence Me

How I Influence Myself

ALCOHOL ADVERTISING MYTHS: DRINKING IS A RISK-FREE ACTIVITY.



“There is no disagreement that arm wrestling can’t resolve.”

“Names optional”



ALCOHOL ADVERTISING MYTHS: PROBLEM DRINKING BEHAVIOURS ARE NORMAL.



**"A quality drink,
after all those
years of quantity
drinking."**



ALCOHOL ADVERTISING MYTHS: ALCOHOL IS A MAGIC POTION THAT MAKES YOUR LIFE BETTER.



**"Auditor by day.
Bacardi by night."**



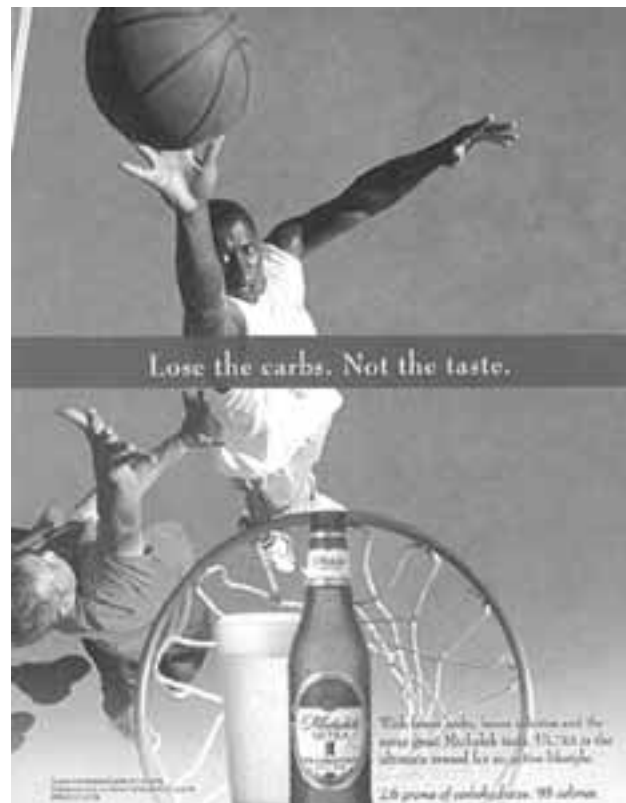
"It Makes You Electric"

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ALCOHOL ADVERTISING MYTHS: SPORTS AND ALCOHOL GO TOGETHER.



"It's Game Day."



**"Lose the Carbs.
Not the Taste."**

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RISK-WISE, PART ONE

Please read the statements below. As a team, decide whether you agree or disagree with each item. Make sure your "mouth" keeps track of the team responses.

1. Alcohol is only a risk to you if you are older and have been using it for many years.
2. It is not dangerous to drink and drive if you stay on the back roads.
3. Smoking the occasional joint is not too harmful for a teenager.
4. The health risks from cannabis have never been proven.
5. Prescribed medications are safer than street drugs.
6. If I have a learner's permit to drive, I can drive if the other person is too impaired to be behind the wheel.
7. If the police catch me with a joint, I'll just get a warning because of my age.
8. Cannabis is not addictive.

RISK-WISE, PART TWO

Please read the statements below. As a team, decide whether you agree or disagree with each item. Make sure your "mouth" keeps track of the team responses.

9. Cannabis is almost legal in Canada.
10. The level of risk and the chance of harm is the same no matter what substance is being used and who is using it.
11. Men can "handle" alcohol better than women can.
12. Combining cannabis with other drugs such as alcohol or prescription drugs can increase or alter the effects of the drugs.
13. Medications purchased over the counter at pharmacies are safe.
14. It is safe to get into a car if the driver has been smoking cannabis.
15. You can't be charged with impaired driving if your blood alcohol level is below the legal limit.

FAMILY STORIES

Family Story One

About six months ago, Kalan's dad was involved in a car crash that left him with a broken hip. He was prescribed a painkiller to help with the pain, and he has been taking it ever since. Although he went back to work about six weeks after the accident, he has started missing quite a bit of time the past few weeks, and this week he has not gone to work at all. No one has said anything, but Kalan wonders if his father may have lost his job. He seems to have a lot of doctor's appointments, one with a new family doctor that is in a different town. Kalan's dad seems to be in his own world, and his mom seems angry.

Family Story Two

Stephanie's mom had been taking a tranquilizer for well over a year to help her with feelings of anxiety and not being able to sleep. Recently, Stephanie heard a news story on television that said no one should take that type of drug for more than three to four weeks at a time as it can lead to dependency and withdrawal symptoms when trying to stop the drug. Stephanie has noticed a few changes with her mother lately. Twice she has forgotten to pick Stephanie up at a friend's house, which never happened before. Stephanie's mom always had supper on the table, but now it seems that Stephanie is always looking for something to make for supper for her little sister, as her mom is in her room with the door closed. She seems to be taking more of the pills than when she started, and she seems to be sadder than a few months back. Stephanie is worried about her mother.

Family Story Three

Liam's grandfather enjoys what he calls "a good drink." As long as he can remember, there have been little comments and jokes made about Poppa and his drinks. Lately, though, things seem to be getting out of hand. Sometimes when Poppa comes over for supper, he passes out in the living room and stays there throughout the meal. Those are actually the good times. Other times he sits at the table and seems to pick a fight with whoever is close to him. One night he threw a punch at Liam's dad for taking the car keys from him. He did not get his keys back, so he took off walking down the road towards his home three kilometres away, and Liam's uncle had to go get him.

FAMILY STORIES

continued...




Family Story Four

Dana has always looked up to her older brother. He has always been so full of life and into so many things; it just always seems that the house is full of life when he is home. He is very good to Dana, too, driving her to where she needs to go and making sure he picks her up again. But since he started grade 11, things seem different. He is still as popular as ever and spends a lot of time with friends. When he is home, however, he just seems to sit around a lot without much to say, or he just stays in his room. He is out late every Thursday and Friday night. He pays very little attention to Dana, and she has heard him yelling back and forth with their dad.

Family Story Five

Kyle's mother has always enjoyed a good drink and a good party with friends. Lately, however, it seems to Kyle that she is drinking more often and at different times than before, including in the morning. When Kyle gets home from school, he can smell alcohol on his mother, and sometimes it is even noticeable when he opens the front door. Sometimes, his mom comes out to greet him, talking about things he cannot understand, slurring her words and staggering. The worst times are finding her asleep on the couch smelling like alcohol. Kyle is embarrassed by her behaviour. He has stopped inviting his friends around and makes excuses so that he does not have to invite his mother to school events.



FAMILY STORY QUESTIONS

1. What do you suspect is the problem here?
 2. How does the behaviour of the person with the substance-use problem affect the others in the family?
 3. How might it affect his or her life outside the home?
 4. What options does this family have to get help for the family member who is having substance-use problems?
 5. What might get in the way of getting help?
-

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT THE THINGS THAT INFLUENCE ME?

Ways I Influence Myself

How I Can Have
A Greater Influence on Myself

Ways Others Influence Me

How I Can Make This Better

Ways I Am Influenced
by the World around Me

How I Can Make This Better

