

# Substance Use



## Alberta Education Health & Life Skills Programs of Studies Outcomes

The students will...

- W – 7.6 Analyze social factors that may influence avoidance and/or use of particular substances.
- L – 7.7 Determine and use knowledge and skills of the class to promote school and community health.

## Teacher Background

Through a PowerPoint Trivia game, students will learn about alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, gambling and factors that influence choice.

This lesson is adapted with permission from an AADAC Grade 7 lesson plan called “Substance Use and Gambling Information”.

## Objectives

- Provide students with accurate information about substance use and gambling.
- Identify consequences to using drugs, alcohol and gambling.
- Assess drug and gambling information.
- Understand the danger of mixing drugs.
- Be aware of accurate facts and rates of use related to youth.
- Understand tolerance, dependence and withdrawal as possible consequences of use.
- Borrow the “Big Cigarette” from your school nurse.

## Materials

- Trivia PowerPoint Game
- Answers to the trivia activity

## Get Ready

- Lead the class in a discussion to determine what we mean by ‘substance use’, i.e., drugs and alcohol, and ‘gambling’. Record their responses on the board under each heading.
- Follow up with the Activity: Trivia PowerPoint Game

## Activity: Trivia PowerPoint Game

**Instructions:** Divide the students into teams and explain that you will be playing a trivia game, where they will answer true and false questions. One team will be allowed to choose a category and question, they will then have 15 seconds to determine their answer. An answer sheet is included. The numbers to the left of the question on the answer sheet indicate how many points the students receive if they get the correct answer. Often it is helpful to discuss the answers with students, providing more information about the topic.

## Discussion

**Drug** – A drug is any substance taken into the body which changes the way the body or mind works. Three basic categories of drugs are:

- Legally available drugs (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, solvents)
- Medicines (e.g., antibiotics, sleeping pills, pain relievers, steroids)
- Illegal or street drugs (e.g., marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy)

**Gambling** – Gambling is risking something of value (could be money, technologies or clothes, etc.) on an activity with an uncertain outcome and the result cannot be changed.

Discuss with students whether people who start using substances or gambling think it will lead to an ongoing problem. Note that nobody starts using substances or gambling believes it is going to become a problem. Explain that it is important to talk about these things to gain a better understanding of their effect on people's lives.

## Conclusion

By learning about making healthy decisions and receiving accurate, relevant information about the harm associated with substance use and gambling, your students will be better equipped to make healthy choices.

## Take Home Activity & Follow-up Classroom Discussion

Have students take the trivia game questions and answers home and discuss them with their parents.

Discuss with students what they learned from the game, including the information they found surprising, unsettling or meaningful

## Assessment Strategy

Have students write a paragraph about the negative effects of either substance use, alcohol use or gambling. Students should be able to recall the information learned in the trivia game for this exercise.

## Trivia Questions and Answers

To accompany PowerPoint for Grade 7 Mental Health Kit Lesson Plan.

### Alcohol

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Alcohol is a drug.</b>
100	<b>A</b>	TRUE. A drug is any substance, other than food, that is taken to change the way the body or the mind functions. Drugs can occur naturally or can be produced in a lab.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Alcohol is a depressant.</b>
200	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Alcohol depresses the brain centers that control behavior.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>When a person stops drinking suddenly after drinking heavily, they can get sick.</b>
300	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Physical dependence occurs when the body gets used to having alcohol in the system. Withdrawal symptoms (sickness) may happen if drinking is suddenly stopped.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>If you drink only beer, you won't develop a drinking problem.</b>
400	<b>A</b>	FALSE. The form of alcohol makes no difference. The effect of the pure alcohol contained in all alcoholic beverages is the same.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Only people who drink every day can become alcoholics.</b>
500	<b>A</b>	FALSE. Anyone who drinks can become alcoholic.

### Marijuana

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Smoking marijuana interferes with your sense of time and distance.</b>
100	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Judging distance and passage of time is difficult under the influence of marijuana. People under the influence frequently misjudge the speed at which they are driving, and the amount of time required for braking.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Marijuana is grown naturally therefore it is less harmful than cigarettes.</b>
200	<b>A</b>	FALSE. An average cigarette has over 4000 chemicals in it; most of those same chemicals are present in marijuana. Marijuana is not regulated at all and therefore we can never be sure of what we are getting. Cigarettes are tested and have warning labels, therefore we know the dangers of smoking.

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Most grade seven students have tried Marijuana in Alberta.</b>
300	<b>A</b>	FALSE. 96.5% of Alberta Grade 7 students reported never trying Marijuana. (Source: The Alberta Youth Experience Survey 2008)
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Short-term memory loss, laziness and feeling tired all the time are side effects of using marijuana.</b>
400	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Mood swings, poor concentration and lung damage are also side effects as well.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Marijuana is not addictive.</b>
500	<b>A</b>	FALSE. It can be. Psychologically addictive and a mild physical addiction.

## Tobacco

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Smoking causes 80% - 90% of all lung cancers.</b>
100	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Researchers estimate that 80% - 90% of all lung cancer is smoking-related (Source: Tobacco Basics Handbook).
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Tobacco smoke contains tar.</b>
200	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Tar consists of solid particles from cigarette smoke. It interferes with the normal exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the lungs, and contributes to shortness of breath (Source: AADAC Quick Facts).
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Smoking light cigarettes decreases your risk of heart disease compared with smoking regular cigarettes.</b>
300	<b>A</b>	FALSE. Some evidence indicates that light cigarettes contain more tar, nicotine, and carbon monoxide than manufacturers claim. Smoking light cigarettes is unlikely to reduce the risk of heart disease. (Source: Tobacco Basic Handbook)
	<b>Q</b>	<b>There are more smokers than non-smokers.</b>
400	<b>A</b>	FALSE. Almost 80% of individuals over the age of 15 do not smoke. (Source: Tobacco Basics Handbook)
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Tobacco smoke contains 4000 different chemicals.</b>
500	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Fifty of these chemicals are cancer-causing agents called carcinogens.

## Gambling

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Playing pool with friends for money isn't really gambling.</b>
100	<b>A</b>	FALSE. This is gambling. Gambling is defined as “the act of risking money, property or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome.”
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Some features in gambling devices can help contribute to a person's problem.</b>
200	<b>A</b>	TRUE. For example, the most powerful and long-lasting learning pattern occurs when a behaviour is reinforced intermittently and unpredictably. Patterns of intermittent winning may lead to irrational beliefs about gambling and winning. Slot machines and VLTs pay out on an intermittent reinforcement schedule.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Government revenue from gambling in Alberta is over \$1 billion annually.</b>
300	<b>A</b>	TRUE. In 2004/2005 Alberta government revenue from VLTs, ticket lotteries, casino slot machines and electronic bingo was over \$1.2 billion. (Source: Deal Us In Phase 1 Aug 05)
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Computers keep track of every game played on licensed VLTs.</b>
400	<b>A</b>	TRUE. If there is a complaint by a customer, the computer centre can print out each selection made by the player for the entire game.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>When a flipped coin comes up heads four times in a row, the next flip will more likely come up tails than heads.</b>
500	<b>A</b>	FALSE. There is no relationship between previous outcomes and the next flip of the coin. The coin is just as likely to come up heads as it is to come up tails (50-50 chance). Gamblers often feel they have some control over the outcome, even when they don't.

## Risk and Protective Factors

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Protective factors decrease kids' chances of becoming harmfully involved with substance use or gambling.</b>
100	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Examples of protective factors are developing good social skills, participating in productive activities, feeling connected to school, and having friends who positively influence decision-making.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Risk factors increase kids' chances of harmful involvement with substances or gambling.</b>
200	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Other examples of risk factors are early involvement with alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or gambling, a history of substance abuse in the family, family conflict and poor school connection.

	<b>Q</b>	<b>Schools can make a valuable difference in preventing substance use and gambling problems.</b>
300	<b>A</b>	TRUE. Research shows that participation in extracurricular activities, positive relationships between youth and adults in the school setting, and high social and academic expectations are critical factors in preventing substance use and gambling problems.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>Young people may turn to substance use or gambling when they cannot express their feelings in a healthy way.</b>
400	<b>A</b>	TRUE. As people grow older, bottled up feelings will continue to cause pain. Some people try to relieve the pain through substance use or gambling.
	<b>Q</b>	<b>It is helpful for an adult to tell a youth how to replace feelings of sadness with feelings of happiness.</b>
500	<b>A</b>	FALSE. A young person needs to know that it is okay to talk honestly about feelings or to feel sad, confused and vulnerable at times. Adults can show they care by listening and understanding.

## FINAL JEOPARDY CATEGORY:

### Drug Use and Mental Illness

	<b>Q</b>	<b>What percentage of people who use drugs also have a mental illness?</b>
000	<b>A</b>	53%

Adapted with permission from: "Substance Use and Gambling Information" Grade 7 Lesson Plan, AADAC.