



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

DRAFT

UNODC YOUTH INITIATIVE

Discussion Guide

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Overview:

8 Themes, and for each theme

- Brief Introduction to orient discussion
- Detailed discussions points
- 1-4 Activity Suggestions per theme (youth encouraged to create own & share with others)
- List of resources provided for youth to consult for further information on each topic

Ice Breaker Ideas

Activity creation guidelines

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Section 1: Perceptions about Drug Use

The prevalence of drugs on television, news media and messages in communities have made drug use seem like a widespread epidemic and commonly associated with negative stereotypes. As a result, many people perceive people who use drugs as bad, dangerous people, or criminals escaping the law. Sometimes drug use is presented in the media as cool and adventurous. Either way, substance use is often seen as a free choice and those who use drugs face harsh attitudes and prejudice from other people who see them as weak, selfish and purposefully choosing to use drugs.

But what is the truth about the drugs in your community? Why some people end up using drugs and other don't? Different risk factors that can affect young persons such as living in the neighbourhood where drug dealing and drug use is taking place and where out of school activities are not available, economic strain on families where parents struggle financially to pay for the cost of living can influence family relationships negatively while spending time with peers that are involved in experimenting with drugs or delinquency while seeking for adventures put young people at higher risk of initiating drug use. As a consequence of being affected by these kinds of risk factors young persons may suffer from mental health problems making them even more vulnerable to substance use. It is not that all young people autonomously choose to use drugs, but being affected by these kinds of risk factors often influence young people to experiment and initiate substance use. When it comes to tobacco and alcohol, the industry spends a lot of money in subliminal advertising to get young people and especially people in the developing countries to use their products.

Youth is also time for finding out who you are and trying out new things. Spending time with peers who experiment with substance use and who talk about it may make it look like as if everybody is doing it. Fortunately the actual number of young people who are experimenting with drugs is smaller than young persons tend to think, but it is still alarming. Using substances means that the person is not usually able to go to school or work as the drugs affect their brain and thinking, concentration and memory as well as their body.

Many of the negative stereotypes that surround people who use drugs come from the way they are most often seen in public. People who use drugs appearing in the media and on television

can seem irrational, making people who do not use drugs scared of their unpredictable behaviour. Further heavy/dependent people who use drugs often have lost their job and/or home and lack many of the physical conditions needed to live healthy and productive lifestyle. Negative stereotypes, stigma and prejudice assigned to people who use drugs usually complicates the problem and makes it very difficult for people in need of treatment and social support to get the help they need. People who use drugs are often cut out of their communities and relationships and leave them often homeless and living on streets.

As a result of substance use and the way it affects the person's brain, thinking and memory and his or her relationships with family, friends and community, people who use drugs are not able to be responsible persons in their communities or become successful mentors to young people. They typically lack many of the possibilities needed to live a healthy and productive life.

Exploring our perceptions about drug use as a whole and people who use drugs in particular is a very important first step in achieving our goal of getting a better insight as to why people use drugs and thus helping us to prevent drug use and its consequences amongst youth. The activities listed below will provide you with an opportunity to explore some other perceptions that you have about people who use drugs and start to understand why using drugs can really be the manifestation of a deep seated problem in a person's life. By overcoming the incorrect and very harmful stereotypes that society often assigns on people who use drugs, we will start to realize that using drugs is often not a free choice or a moral question. We will also explore why staying away from drugs can help you achieve the life you want to live in the future.

Discussion Points

- How do you perceive people who use drugs? Are there qualities you associate or disassociate with drug use (e.g. happy, leaders, etc.)? Why or why not?
- How common is it for youth to use drugs in your community?
- Why do you think some youth use drugs?
- What could be the reasons that make young people experiment with alcohol/ tobacco/ illegal use of prescription drugs/ illegal drugs in the first place?
- Is drug use considered normal behaviour?
- Can drug use and subsequent drug dependence be considered a free choice?

- What are the living conditions of people who use drugs regularly?
- How does a drug-using lifestyle differ from how you want live your life?

Activities:

- **Research about youth, by youth** – Log on to the internet, or visit your local library for information about the number of young people that are using tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs for non-medical purposes or illicit drugs in your community or country. Bring your results to class in the most creative way you can – perhaps by drawing a picture that represents the number of youth that use drugs compared to the number of youth that do not.

If there are no (reliable) statistics available, think of different ways of collecting data on the substance/ drug use prevalence in your school and in your community. Select the most feasible method and assess the number of youth using tobacco, alcohol and other substances in your school. You can also broaden up the scope of your research, and collect information for example of the number of adults using substances in your school and community, or on the attitudes, values and beliefs related to substances and substance use among youth in your community. Share the most interesting findings at the Youth Initiative facebook -page!

- **Resetting your brain about people who use drugs – Teacher led discussion.**
 - Close your eyes and think of a young person you know or that you have heard of that has tried drugs, or is currently using drugs. What do they look like? Are they generally happy, relaxed people? Are they popular with other young people? Are their families very involved in their lives? Do they wear the best clothes? Are they involved in sports or other group activities?
 - Once the exercise is over, lead discussion as to what the classrooms answers were and ask the students to write the common answers on a piece of paper. These answers can be kept as a reminder of the perceptions youth hold about people who use drugs, as well as a reminder about what it is like to be a youth that uses drugs. The moderating trainer needs to be well guided to avoid unintentionally perpetuating negative perceptions and stigma
- **Word matching game**

Students are asked to write down words they associate with people who use drugs and people who do not use drugs onto a small piece of paper (such as “healthy”,

“responsible”, “dangerous”, “cool” etc.). The words will then be put into a bag where they can be mixed up. Students will then be given a sheet of paper divided into two columns, “Drug User” and “Non Drug User”. Students will pick a number of the papers out of the bag and tape them onto either column, according to how they view each group. The students will then place the words under either heading on their paper according to which characteristics they associate with using or not using drugs. Once students are finished assigning the words to their respective columns, the class will share their assessments with each other by making one big chart at the front of the classroom (tip: two big “charts” can be made by calling up volunteers to lay on large piece of paper where the outline of their bodies can be traced). Discussion regarding the students’ perceptions of people who do and do not use drugs will follow.

○ **Collage of ideal life**

Get photos from the internet, look in magazines or draw by hand a poster that represents yourself as grown up adults. In a brief presentation to the class, describe what you like, where you live, what kind of school you go to, what you do for fun, and who your friends are. Then think about why using drugs would stop you from being able to reach these goals and become this person you want to be. Include these images on your poster and present your poster to your class. Bonus points if you take a picture and post it to the Youth Initiative Facebook site!

Resources:

- ❖ European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs: <http://www.espad.org/>
- ❖ Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/>
- ❖ ONDCP Above the Influence – Live Above the Influence: <http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/liveati>
- ❖ Natural High Online Film Series: <http://www.naturalhigh.org/>
- ❖ SADD – Students Against Destructive Decisions – seeks to provide “To provide students with the best prevention tools possible to deal with the issues of underage drinking, other drug use, risky and impaired driving, and other destructive decisions.” - <http://sadd.org/mission.htm>
- ❖ Talk to Frank – Your Stories: <http://www.talktofrank.com/article.aspx?id=244>

- ❖ UNODC prevention website containing a participatory guide for youth drug abuse prevention programs (pages 39-56 give ideas on researching the drug use situation in your community): <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/index.html>
- ❖ Justice section of European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/index_en.htm

Resources in French

- ❖ MILTD <http://www.drogues.gouv.fr/>
- ❖ Health Canada <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogués/index-fra.php>
- ❖ CCSA <http://www.ccsa.ca/Fra/Pages/Home.aspx>
- ❖ Council of Europe's Pompidou group combating drugabuse and trafficking http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/pompidou/default_FR.asp?
- ❖ Justice section of European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/index_fr.htm

Resources in Spanish

- ❖ CICAD: http://www.cicad.oas.org/main/template.asp?file=/oid/default_spa.asp and http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/reduccion_demanda/default_spa.asp
- ❖ Information for parents: <http://www.laantidroga.com/>
- ❖ the Plan Nacional sobre Drogas of Spain <http://www.pnsd.msc.es/Categoria2/centro/home.htm>
- ❖ Justice section of European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/index_es.htm

Section 2: What is Vulnerability?

You have probably heard many reasons for young people using drugs. Some say it is because teenagers want to look cool or are pressured by their peers to fit in to a drug-using social circle. While these things may be true, there are a lot of more important factors that will influence a young person to start using drugs. Understanding them properly is another important part in starting to reduce the stigma about drug use and prevent addiction among the youth around the world.

Young people are influenced by a number of factors at a given time. Individual elements such as person's temperament or personality traits, factors relating to family life such as stability of their upbringing and family life, strong positive bond between parents and children, and factors related to school such as positive engagement to school activities as well as factors at the wider community level such as the safe communities where there are no drugs available influences the way young persons grow and live their lives, what kind of relationships they form with family, friends and peers and how do they see themselves.

Some of these factors at individual, family and community level can put young people more at risk and make them vulnerable to experiment with drugs and eventually start using drugs and become dependent. Examples of risk factors might include having a specific type of temperament or particular personality traits, a family history of addiction, a family member who uses drugs, negative relationships that lack bonding and warmth with parents, neglect and abuse, lack of family or home, friends who experiment or use drugs, or living in a community where drug use is very common, or lack of schooling or employment. Also insufficient rest and nutrition may pose an individual at greater risk, so it is important to maintain a balanced diet and get enough sleep. The more risk factors are present in a person's life the more likely it is that he or she will start experimenting with the use of drugs or continue to use in a regular pattern and eventually become dependent.

On the other hand, a young person might be exposed to all of these negative risk factors and still never try drugs. This is thanks to a number of protective factors that also exist at the individual, family and community levels. These might include at individual level good sense of discipline, a healthy self esteem, good skills for problem solving, good ability to express yourself, good ability to recognize and communicate your emotions, know-how on how to

support your own mental wellbeing and to cope with stress or anxiety, as well as ability to establish personal goals. At family level a strong, healthy parental bonding and consistent family rules, among others, protect the family members from risky behaviour. At the community level the protective factors include such as attending a school that has explicit school policies on substance use and living in a safe and caring community that supports the wellbeing of its members. Sadly, once a person starts using drugs the risk factors tend to outweigh the protective factors. Risk factors such as poverty and drug availability to drugs poverty, alienation grow even stronger as a person becomes more dependent on drugs.

The good news is that we can influence the protective factors by learning new and improving already existing skills before young persons experiment or start using drugs. For example, there are programmes that teach young persons to develop various life- and social-skills (such as resisting peer pressure or communicating efficiently to assert ourselves when asked to experiment with drugs), and to mobilise communities to work together and help people living in the same neighbourhoods to get to know each other to make communities safer and healthier environments for everybody. These kinds of programmes that help young people make healthier decisions and make them able to stand up in support of what they believe is right are becoming more common in schools, others are often offered at community centres and halls. For young people who are already using drugs and need more help and support, many drug treatment services offer help to people who use drugs and their families in successfully re-building a drug-free lifestyle.

The activity in this section will help you to get a better understanding of what are the conditions that make a person more vulnerable to drug use and less free to resist drug use. By starting from the beginning of a person's path to substance use you will be able to better understand why some people can refuse drugs, while for others, saying "No" is not as easy.

Discussion Points:

- What do you think vulnerability means in terms of drug use?
- What are the factors that make some persons more at risk of becoming dependent to drugs than others?
- How do these differ between individuals, amongst families and within communities?

- What are some protective factors that reduce risk of drug dependence?
- How could you enhance your personal protective factors against risky behaviour? Talk in pairs what works best for you personally. Check the “Resilience for Teens”- webpage produced by American Psychological Association (in the resources sections) as a homework to find more tips on how to protect your wellbeing.
- What could you do in class in order to support each others protective factors?
- How do societies protect their citizens from problems related to drug use?

Activities:

○ **Research about youth, by youth VOL 2**

Broaden the research you might have made under the previous month/ theme on the number of youth using drugs by conducting another research to find out *when, where* and *with whom* young persons in your school/ community experiment with or use tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs. Divide the class into three teams, and give each of them one type of harmful substance to do research on. Select the methods of research accordingly (i.e. observations in and around school, interviews of youth, interviews of professionals who might have knowledge on the matter, searching information from library or internet) and do the research. You can also reflect on the causes *why* young people use drugs in these occasions. Groups can present their findings via traditional presentation, self made map of places and times youth engage in harmful substance use, ‘news report’ broadcasted in you tube, etc.

○ Make a list of things that are good in your life and that function as protective factors against risky behaviour. Think in individual, family, school and community level, and write down also what kind of social contacts or networks you have that support you when facing difficulties.

○ **The Learning Tree** is a common, popular education brainstorming tool that looks at the symptoms of a problem, its causes, institutions that support the cause, solutions to the problem, and the ideal situation.

1. Divide the class into teams of 4-5 students.
2. Assign each team to research and discuss the causes and effects of drug use in their community or country. Specific focus should be on the common risk and protective

factors at either the individual, family or community levels (each team should cover one level).

3. Students should create a learning tree that shows the root causes and ultimate effects of drug use and addiction.

4. At the end of the module, students will give five-minute presentations to the class based on their learning tree. The presentation should do the following:

- Present all elements (problem, cause, solution/ideals) of drug use
- Include something learned about a different country from a different school participating in the program on the Youth Initiative Facebook or Twitter Page.

○ **Media sells us images on drug use**

Keep a diary for one week on what kind of images media represents to us on substance use and mark down all the times you see content related to harmful substance use. Pay special attention to images of young persons either smoking, using alcohol or other drugs, or who are under the influence of drugs. You can also divide your class in to teams, each focusing on specific type of substances (alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs, illegal drugs). Then compare these notes in your class. Did you encounter to images of youth using drugs? Where they positive or negative images? What kind of contexts did they have? Did they suggest or show any consequences to substance use? Where these truthful? You might categorize your findings by the type and form of media (i.e. ads, different types of news, entertainment), and reflect also on to whom and by whom these messages were targeted, or did these representations suggest any reasons to substance use? Follow the kind of media you normally use, including printed as well as electronic types of media, and anything from ads to news and to entertainment. To make the task easier, you could rule the social media out this time, and do an other project on it later. If you have divided your class in teams focusing on specific substances, let the groups first reflect their findings inside their teams, and then present their most interesting findings to the class.

- **Smoking in Movies:** Alternatively, you could test your knowledge on smoking and movies by taking the fun test at <http://www.smokefreemovies-europe.eu/en/joi/overview.html>

Resources:

- ❖ American Psychological Association: Resilience for Teens – Got Bounce?
<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/bounce.aspx>
- ❖ HBO Addiction Series - produced by HBO in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA): <http://www.hbo.com/addiction/>
- ❖ ONDCP Above the Influence – Recognize Influence:
<http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/whydrugs>
- ❖ NIDA: Preventing Drug Abuse Amongst Children and Adolescents:
<http://www.nida.nih.gov/prevention/principles.html>
- ❖ UNODC prevention website containing a publication on School-based education for drug abuse prevention: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/index.html>
- ❖ Information on smoking in movies: <http://www.smokefreemovies-europe.eu/en/joi/overview.html>

Section 3: The Direct Effects of Using Drugs

To get a better appreciation of why vulnerability factors are so important, it is essential to understand exactly how drugs impact both the brain and the body. Because different drugs are made of different chemicals, different kinds of reactions take place when drugs interact with your natural body chemicals. The end results can be both dangerous and long-lasting.

Therefore, appreciating the full range of potential effects of drug use will help build our overall understanding of addiction and the long term consequences that drug use can have on a person's life.

Instead of a long science lecture however, this section encourages you to take learning into your own hands. Check out the links listed in the "resources" section below to see if you can complete all of the fun games and hands-on activities in the National Institute for Drug Abuse's Brain Games. Then, make up your own postcard about the effects of a certain drug on the brain and send it to your friends at the UNODC! The goal of this section is to get you informed about what drugs really do so that you can help yourself and your friends make smart life decisions.

Discussion Points:

- What are the short and long-term physical effects of drug use? What are some myths about drug use?
- Why are drugs (including prescription drugs used for non-medical purposes) illegal? Are you aware of your country's legislation concerning drugs and harmful substance use?
- What are the impacts of drug use on the brain? Why is this so dangerous?
- What are drugs? Is it safe to take drugs even if they are not considered illegal? What are the risks?

Activities:

- **NIDA for Teens: Brain Games** <http://teens.drugabuse.gov/havefun/index.php>
 - Dive into brain science by finding out "What Neuro-Transmitter Are You", doing the PyraMind Climb and taking Dr.NIDA's Challenge.
- **Postcard Project** – After doing your research and acing all of NIDA's Brain Games, now its your turn to get creative! Your teacher will assign you a different drug, and

your job is to show its effect on the brain in the form of a postcard. Make it as scientific or as artistic as you prefer. Then, get ready to send your postcard to a student in another country that is also participating in the youth campaign to prevent substance abuse. We're all in this together!

- **Additional activity: myriad of problems related to drugs:** take each an blank paper, and write down as many negative short and long term consequences of drug use (tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs and non-medical use of prescription drugs) as you can during 8 minutes. Then the first in row reads his/her list, and anybody who has the same consequence crosses that one out. Then the next one reads the consequences not ruled out from his/her list in a similar manner, and you continue until everybody has read their uncrossed consequences. Then applaud to the one who had biggest number of consequences and next to the one who had biggest number of unique consequences. You can sum up by drawing a big poster with all these negative effects of drug use, that has separate columns for short and long term effects, and has the consequences grouped by the substance type. Hang your poster to the schools wall where everybody can see it.

Resources:

- ❖ Neuroscience for Kids – <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/introb.html>
- ❖ Drug Info (Australia): www.druginfo.adf.org.au
- ❖ NIDA for Teens: <http://teens.drugabuse.gov>
- ❖ <http://www.drugfactsweek.drugabuse.gov/>
- ❖ Or, do your own research from information from organizations in your community!

Section 4: Abuse of Prescription Drug

Many people, young and old, think that just because pharmaceutical drugs used to treat medical conditions and diseases are prescribed by a doctor and come from a pharmacy means that they are safer to take than illicit street drugs. However, prescription drugs function in similar ways to the illegal drugs we just learned about, and if not taken as prescribed to you by a doctor can have equally dangerous effects on your brain and body and can lead to an overdose just like illicit drugs.

It is important to understand that Governments of different countries have decided together that psychotropic and narcotic substances including prescription drugs are so dangerous when not used to treat a medical condition or an illness under the supervision of a trained doctor that they need to be controlled. Countries have agreed on different measures on how to control drugs, for example only trained medical doctors can prescribe drugs and they should be purchased only from licensed pharmacies where trained pharmacists can dispense and sell them.

Still, people decide to use prescription drugs for nonmedical purposes, which are often similar to the reasons associated with illicit drug use or as an alternative to other illicit drug use. Prescription drugs are often more easily available, for example in the family medicine cabinet with information about what the drugs contain, what are the expected effects and what kind of dosages one should take making them seem safer than drugs bought on the streets. Sometimes friends, who themselves may have been prescribed prescription drugs may share or sell their medication. People do not often realize that sharing or selling their prescription medication even with somebody who is in pain and seems to need medication is not safe and nor is it legal.

Some people, including young persons, use prescription drugs to self-medicate when they feel down and sad or when they have acute pain with medication they find in the family medicine cabinet. Self-medication is dangerous and can lead to dependence of the drugs.

Young persons may also try to enhance their abilities or behaviour with prescription drugs, for example to stay awake to study for exams. Again, prescription drugs should not be used for any other purpose than to treat medical conditions and as prescribed by a medical doctor.

For all these reasons, it is important to raise awareness about prescription drug abuse, and to help prevent young people from abusing it.

The activities section will put your knowledge of the brain back to work by reviewing the actual effects of commonly prescribed medications on the brain.

Discussion Points

- Why are prescription drugs dangerous to take when not prescribed by a doctor?
- Why do some people think prescription drugs are safe even when used for nonmedical purposes? Why is this wrong?
- Why do some people including young persons use prescription drugs for nonmedical purposes?
- Does it happen in your community? How could you find out if you are not sure?
- What kind of groups are particularly vulnerable to this kind of drug use?
- Are there any resources for people affected by this problem in your community? What kind of actors or stakeholders there are in your community relating to the abuse of prescription drugs?

Activities:

- **Translation Time** – Check out the information at the TeensHealth website listed in the resources section below. This information is listed in English, but to spread it through your school and community effectively it needs to be translated in your local language. In teams of three, research the effects of the three types of prescription drugs commonly used (Opioids, Central Nervous System Depressants, Stimulants) to translate a short description of one of the types from English into the language you speak at home. When you are finished with your abstract, type it up and ask your teacher for help printing them out. Then, in teams, pass the small pieces of paper around your school or community as a positive first step in raising awareness about prescription drug abuse.
- **Make up your own activity** – if it works well suggest it to other groups as well via Facebook

Resources:

- ❖ TeensHealth – Prescription Drug Abuse: http://kidshealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/drugs/prescription_drug_abuse.html
- ❖ Neuroscience for Kids – <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/introb.html>
- ❖ Drug Info (Australia): www.druginfo.adf.org.au
- ❖ Health Canada: Drugs Not 4 Me Campaign: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogués/youth-jeunes/index-eng.php>
- ❖ NIDA for Teens: <http://teens.drugabuse.gov>
- ❖ ONDCP Above the Influence: <http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/>
- ❖ UNODC Prescription Drugs Abuse: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/non-medical-use-prescription-drugs.html>

Section 5: Consequences and Risks Associated with Drug Use

Now that we understand the chemical effects that drugs can have on the brain and body, it is important to understand that there are other important consequences of drug use that have long-term impacts on a person's health and safety. For example, taking drugs can alter your mood and have serious effects on your relationships with your friends and family, make you decide to drive when you are high with potentially devastating consequences and increases your risk of getting infected by HIV particularly when using contaminated injecting equipment.

The information presented below is not meant to scare but rather inform you. The goal of this section is to help you appreciate what drug use can mean for your relationships, health and safety by informing you about the major risks inherent to using drugs and some of the ways that you can talk about these issues with your friends.

Behavioural Responses

Taking psychoactive drugs can have serious impacts on your mood and general mental health due to the interaction of drugs with natural brain chemicals, as we have already discussed. Taking drugs can change your ability to focus on your school work and even change your ability to handle social situations confidently. The personal relationships of people who are addicted to drugs with their family members and friends are very often affected negatively by people who are addicted to drugs, as their erratic behaviour make it difficult for people to trust them. Drug use can also cause depression and can even lead to suicide if the drug user is not able to find effective treatment and support in time for his or her condition.

Risk of HIV infection

Another very serious danger of taking drugs is the increased risk of contracting HIV. This can happen as a result of having unsafe sex or sharing unclean needles when you inject drugs, and is a deadly consequence of drug use. HIV is transmitted through direct contact of body fluids, for example blood. The virus attacks your body's immune system and eventually leads to AIDS, for which there is still no cure. In the same way, even the effect of being high can have serious consequences. Being high increases your likelihood of engaging in risky behaviours and impairs your decision making capabilities, which means that you might do things that you would not normally do if you were sober. For example, when you are high you might be more likely to have unsafe sex and forget to use condoms, which can again expose you to sexually

transmitted diseases like HIV, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) or Hepatitis, or result in a pregnancy.

Impaired Driving

Another risky behaviour related to drug use is impaired driving. Even though different drugs have a different effect on the brain, driving high is always a bad idea. Just like driving under the influence of alcohol, your altered state of mind when you are high makes your actions and judgements unpredictable. This means that you might speed, be too distracted to notice another oncoming vehicle or even fall asleep behind the wheel. No matter the drug, driving high is a serious threat not only to your life, but to the life of your friends, family and community members.

It can be difficult to stand up to your friends when you know they are high and taking risks, or are pressuring you to do the same. The activities in this section will help you practice doing just that, while also learning some tips from your friends on how to best approach the conversation with a friend you are concerned about. The goal is to find the most effective ways of getting your message across: your actions when you are high can have dangerous, long-term consequences to you and to others. Check out the links in the resources section of this manual for good tips on stopping your friends from making decisions they will regret.

Discussion Points

- What are some of the effects of drug use and how can they impact your daily life?
- How does drug use affect your personal relationship?
- What is HIV and why is it so important to prevent?
- What are the dangers related to the effects of being high on your judgement and personality?
- Why do young people decide to drive drunk or high?
- What are some things you can tell your friends to help them avoid making risky decisions?
- What do you think, how aware the youth in your school are of the risks and consequences of the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs?
- What kind of impacts drug use has in an societal level – what do you think?

Activities:

- **Body Map:** On a large piece of paper, draw an outline of the human body. Then, draw arrows to the parts of your body that can be damaged by taking drugs and label them according to the drug that causes this effect. Trade your map with a partner to see what effects they came up with, and then share with your class.

- **It's Skit Time!** – In groups of 2 or 3 students, write a short story/ drama involving a scenario where a young person successfully intervenes when a friend family member is too intoxicated to drive. If you have access to a video camera, videotape your skit and send it in to the UNODC or share it on YouTube with another school involved in the UNODC Youth Initiative.

- **Photo week:** Organize a photo competition in your class with the theme 'effects of substance use'. Document by photographing all the negative consequences of substance use you find in your community. It might be for example tobacco butts and garbage in places where people smoke, a park that feels unsafe at dark because you think that there might be a risk of encountering intoxicated people, a shop that you think sells alcohol to minors, or anything else you can think of. Make a photo exhibition to the school hallway of the best shots.
– Next time you could organize a similar photo competition on all the positive things existing in your community that support you to lead a healthy lifestyle!

- **What do drugs cost to our earth?** – Log on to the internet and start finding out what are the environmental consequences of production of drugs, including the effects of the tobacco industry. What kind of social consequences drug production has? Present the findings to selected audience via selected methods – have a family discussion on this, make a song to present at the school gathering or a poster to school wall.

Resources:

- ❖ Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse – BC Roadside Survey 2010:
http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/Priorities/ImpairedDriving/BC_Roadside_Survey_2010/Pages/default.aspx
- ❖ DrugInfo Australia – Staying Safe on the Roads: Tips for Young People:
<http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/fact-sheets/staying-safe-on-the-roads-tips-for-young-people-web-fact-sheet>
- ❖ Health Canada: Drugs Not 4 Me Campaign: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogués/youth-jeunes/index-eng.php>
- ❖ Liquor Control Board of Ontario – Deflate the elephant:
<http://www.deflatetheelephant.com/deflatetheelephant.html>
- ❖ Kids Health from Nemors: HIV and AIDS:
http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/infection/hiv.html#
- ❖ UNODC – HIV and AIDS - What is being done: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/hiv-aids/what-is-being-done.html>
- ❖ Xperiment.ca: www.xperiment.ca

Section 6: Prevention of Drug Use

You have now learned about what makes people vulnerable to drug use and how drugs affect your brain and body, behaviour and relationships and what kind of consequences drug use often has. It is now time to think about is it possible to prevent young people from experimenting and initiating drug use and if it is how can we do that.

Preventing young people from experimenting and initiating drug use is possible. The earlier we teach children and young people correct information and skills the better able they are to make healthier choices when they grow up and the more skills they have to engage in healthy activities such as sports, theatre and music in their free time instead of experimenting with drugs. Also, the more positive and caring your relationships with your parents, siblings, friends and teachers and communities are, the less likely you are to have a need to experiment with drugs.

We also know that there are prevention programmes that work and those that do not. So what should be done to prevent drug use? In order for young people to make healthy and safe choices in life and not experiment with drugs they need to have correct information about drugs, drug use, the effects and consequences of drugs and how to avoid and deal with situations where they may be offered drugs or even pressured to use them. They need also life-skills to deal with these situations, and environments that support them to make healthy choices.

Schools are ideal places to reach young persons. Most children and youth go to school and have trained teachers who can use interactive and interesting methods to teach correct information and skills to help young people to make healthy decisions in life. Schools can help to build these skills and knowledge throughout the years enforcing the learning experience. It is important that these programmes are part of a school policy that defines rules and regulations at school, explains the support mechanism (for example visits to school psychologist) if a student is found to be using drugs and the consequences of drug use. However, it is important that the policy focuses on support instead of punishment.

Families and parents may sometimes need support and help in bringing up children. Prevention programmes that support parents and help families to improve their relationships, spend time together and bond and provide parents with skills to monitor, supervise and communicate with children are effective in preventing behaviour problems in children and adolescents and improve the overall family life.

At workplaces employers should ensure employee health and safety and provide services to support the well-being of their staff. This is good for the employees, but also for the company as staff who are doing well both physically and psychologically are productive and have less accidents and sick leave days.

What is common with all these programmes is that they offer series of sessions that help provide skills and correct information about drugs and drug use.

We also know what does not work. Campaigns, either on TV, radio or on billboards by the roads that use scary pictures and slogans alone do not change behaviour as they don't teach skills to refuse drugs that are needed in the situations where a person may encounter drug use. Alternative activities such as sports, music and theatre alone do not help young persons to cope with these situations. However, when combined with life skills education and information about drugs they can become effective tools for youth to change their perceptions and attitudes about drug use.

Now your task is to find out more about prevention programmes that work and how do they look like, who should implement them, where and who should they target?

Discussion points:

- If you encounter situations where others are experimenting or using drugs, how can you say no and not be pressured by others to try drugs?
- What kind of skills and information do you think you would need to avoid drug use?
- What kind of prevention programmes do you know?
- Have you participated in drug education programmes based on life skills in your school, in your sports group or elsewhere in your community?

Activities:

- **School Policy:** Find out if your school has a school policy that deals with drug use. If your school already has such a policy, check if the activities outlined in the policy have already been supported, provided and implemented. If your school does not have a school policy that deals with drug use find out if you can help and draw the attention of teachers, parents and other students on this problem. You can also find out what kind of resources are available at the internet to guide the process of developing a school policy on substance use.
- **School campaign:** What would you like to change inside your school to make it more pleasant place for you and others? Identify a concrete goal, big or small, that you would like to achieve in your school related to substance free healthy lifestyles. You could either focus on combating the negative effects of drug use or the risk factors, or in supporting the positive supportive factors already existing in your school. Be creative! You can brainstorm the idea in smaller groups, and then vote for the most popular one.

Then think what kind of steps you would need to take in order to achieve this goal. Develop an action plan by breaking the task down to smaller steps. Think of what resources you have, what talents people in your group have, who else could be involved and which adults could offer their help, what would be realistic schedule, how you would get publicity to your activity/campaign, and how would you finally evaluate it. Present the plans to other people in your school, or if you have sufficient resources, execute it! Share your final plan, or documentation on the executed activity, via social media with other youth participating this Initiative.

- **Community involvement:** Find out in small groups what kind of drug use prevention programmes are implemented in your community through health care centres, youth centres, religious communities and even private sector such as businesses. Draw a map of your community and indicate who is involved in drug use prevention and who could still get involved!

- **Sport:** Find out what kind of sport activities exists in your community, and create a plan on how could these be used as a effective tool for prevention of drug abuse in your community.

Resources:

- ❖ UNODC prevention website:
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/index.html>
- ❖ UNODC School prevention - publication
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/schools.html>
- ❖ UNODC Family skills training programmes – publications
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/familyskillstraining.html>
- ❖ NIDA: Preventing drug use among children and adolescents, research based guide for parents, educators and community leaders
<http://drugabuse.gov/pdf/prevention/redbook.pdf>
- ❖ NIDA: Prevention can work
<http://archives.drugabuse.gov/about/welcome/aboutdrugabuse/prevention/>
- ❖ UNODC global youth networks resources for taking action:
www.unodc.org/youthnet/youthnet_action.html
- ❖ Smoke free class –competition:
http://www.smokefreeclass.info/smoking_and_youth.htm

Section 7: Treatment of Drug Dependence

Now that you know more about the causes and effects of drug use and how to prevent drug use, it is important to know that drug dependence is treatable and that there is help available for people who use drugs that can help them recover from the disease of drug dependence. Treatment programs, counselling services and rehabilitation centres provide safe, healthy environments where people who use drugs can seek the help they need to get healthy.

Drug use leaves a permanent trace in the brain that affects behaviour, thinking and especially the regulation of emotions and behaviour. There are various treatment options available ranging from pharmacological treatment to psycho-social and support after recovery. Often a combination of many different treatments are used and are individually tailored to the needs of the person. Although drug dependence is treatable person who has become dependent will always be vulnerable to drug use even when they have recovered. Relapse is part of this disease and means that the person will need to learn psycho-social skills as part of their treatment to stop behaviours that may lead to relapse and help maintain recovery for the rest of their life. This means that drug dependence requires long-term treatment and there are no quick fixes to the disease.

If you are thinking about using drugs or have ever experimented with drugs it is important that you talk about it with an adult that you trust. This can be a parent, a teacher, a school counsellor, your doctor or another member of your community. No matter who you talk to, it is important that they help you get the counselling you need to understand why you felt like trying drugs and how to avoid wanting to try using them again. Also, if you have engaged in risky behaviours such as unsafe sex or sharing unclean needles it is very important to get tested for sexually transmitted diseases and/or HIV.

If you know a friend or family member who is addicted to drugs, the first step is to tell an adult that you trust about the problem. It can be difficult to talk to someone about his or her drug use, so having support from other people will be very important in helping you do so. But in the end, having your support might really help someone that is dependent on drugs recover and start to lead a new life.

The activities in this section will help you learn how to have a conversation with someone close to you about drug use. You will also get a chance to learn more about the treatment facilities available in your community so that you are prepared to help someone find the services they need.

Discussion Points

- Who should you talk to if you are thinking about or have already tried using drugs?
- What should you do if a family member is using drugs?
- What treatment programs are available in your community for people who use drugs?
- Is there any support available to people who would like to stop smoking or cut down drinking in your school? What about elsewhere in your community?
- What is the benefit of treatment for drugs and how can it help people overcome their drug problem?

Activities:

- **Role Playing** – in groups of two people, write a short conversation where one person confronts a friend or family member about their drug use. Try to think of all of the things you have learned in this program to predict what the person using drugs might say to you – how they will react, why they might defend their drug use and why they might be glad to be receiving help from a young person. Present the play in front of your class twice – with each partner switching roles between the drug user and the young person trying to help them recover. Film your play if possible and upload to YouTube to help other young people learn how to help others as well.
- **Treatment Check** - Go online or into your community to research the facilities available to help treat people with drug addictions. Then, draw a map of your community and mark down where each of the facilities are in relation to important landmarks, like the school, town square or recreation center.
- **Treatment Works** - Present your map to other students in your class and explain what each of the facilities you found does to help people who use drugs overcome their addictions. Can you think of anything else they can be doing?

Resources:

- ❖ ONDCP Above the Influence – Get Help: <http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/help>

- ❖ The Office of the Children’s Commissioner - You are not on your own: A booklet to help children and parents talk about a parent’s drinking:

http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_498

Section 8: The Role of Youth in the Global Effort to Prevent Drug Use

The UNODC Youth Initiative believes that youth represent a strong force in preventing substance use in communities and around the world. More than many scientific researchers, you hold the experience of today’s youth and the ability to communicate positive, non-stigmatizing messages that are based on facts about the disease to respond to the huge problem of drug use disorder around the world.

This is where you and your reflections throughout this programme come in. What can you do to prevent another young person from starting to use drugs? What can your school do to help young people make better decisions today? How can your community help its members to raise awareness about drugs and overcome the disease of substance abuse?

The truth is, there is a lot that you can do to answer these questions. The first step is to inform yourself, which after all your researching, learning and sharing with the help of this discussion guide, you can proudly consider yourself having done. The next step not to accept the wrong images, stereotypes and prejudices or theories based on ideology rather than facts about people who use drugs and drug dependent persons. Third, it is time to get creative, and find ways to spread the information you have learned to other youth in your community (and even to other adults!).

Awareness raising activities like posters and rallies or by doing a fundraiser for a local treatment service are effective means of spreading your message. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and Youtube also present a good avenue for you to express your views about using drugs. By posting your videos created during the activities in this programme, you have already been creating valuable resources for other youth to use in preventing drug use in their lives, families and communities.

The resources below will help you come up with some ideas for spreading the message about substance use and mobilizing a youth effort in drug use prevention. Blogging, Tweeting and posting to Facebook some of the alternative activities to drug use you come up with in the activities section is a great way to get started.

Discussion Points

- What do you want to do to help young people make better decisions today?
- How can youth help prevent drug use in their schools, families and communities?
- What are some fun and engaging alternative activities to using drugs that you can promote in your community?
- How can your class raise awareness about what you have learned in your school, community and country? How could you have influence on what services are available at your community related to substance misuse? What would be a good way for youth in your country to influence legislation?
- How could you raise awareness globally?
- How can youth partner with the UNODC and other schools and groups participating to this initiative to reduce the use of drugs among young people?

Activities:

- **100 Things I'd Rather Be Doing** – In a group, try to think of 100 things you like to do that does not involve using drugs or doing other dangerous activities. Post your list to social media sites and compare with other Youth Initiative students from around the world!
- **Awareness Raising Contest** – in teams of 4 or 5 students, brainstorm an idea for an awareness raising project and think about how to put your plan into action. The team with the best idea voted by the class wins! Next, make your idea a reality by implementing it in your community.
- **Connecting Globally** – brainstorm now for projects you could conduct together with other schools and for fun ways you could interact with other schools participating to this initiative. Post best ideas to facebook!

Resources:

- ❖ Global Poverty Project: ‘How To’ Social Networking:
http://www.globalpovertyproject.com/howto/social_networking
- ❖ Global Poverty Project: How To Organize an Event -
<http://www.globalpovertyproject.com/howto/organise>
- ❖ ONDCP Above the Influence – Live Above the Influence:
<http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/liveati>
- ❖ ONDCP Above the Influence – Share Your Voice:
<http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/speak>
- ❖ Natural High Online Film Series: <http://www.naturalhigh.org/>
- ❖ SADD – Students Against Destructive Decisions - <http://sadd.org/mission.htm>

ICE BREAKER IDEAS

- **Human Bingo**
This game can be played on a bingo card or in a list. Each square or item on the list is something about one of the people in the group. The players must find that person and ask him or her to sign the square or by the item on the list. The first person to get a Bingo or complete the list wins.
- **Interviews**
Each person interviews the person seated next to him or her for five minutes and then introduces the person to the group. Give out a list of interview questions or let the persons be creative in their interviews.
- **Would you rather...?**
Ask questions and have people create their own.
- **I Never Did That!**
Sit in a circle. Give each person 10 or 15 small coins, candies, etc.. In turn, each person tells something they have never done. Anyone who *has* done it gives the speaker one of his or her jellybeans or pennies. After going around the circle twice, the person with the most jellybeans or pennies wins. For example: I have never travelled outside the USA. I have never eaten sushi. I have never played a violin.
- **Two Truths and a Lie**
In turn, each person tell two true things and one false thing about themselves. The group tries to guess which one is the lie.
- **Famous pairs**
Tape names of famous pairs and couples on the persons backs. They have to find the person that completes their pair by asking each other yes and no questions.
- **Famous Authors**
Tape names of famous/popular authors on the persons backs. They have to find out who they are by asking everyone else yes or no questions.

Guidelines for Creating Activities

This checklist gives guidelines for you to think about when designing activities. It is not necessary for any one activity to achieve all of these things, but each point is worth considering when designing an activity. The most important principle to remember, though, is that each individual activity needs to be kept focused on the theme, so that its purpose is clear.

WHO is the activity for?

- Is the activity at a manageable for the given period of time?
- Will the activity be real and interesting? (This will apply particularly if it is based on things that are part of their experience.

WHY do it?

- What is the purpose of the activity?
- What new information will you learn?
- Will learners see some purpose in the activity?
- Is it clear to participants why it is worthwhile to do the activity?
- Does the activity give the opportunity to assess what they have done, or to think about what they are learning?

HOW will they do it?

- Are the instructions clear, simple, and well-ordered?
- Does the activity require learners to work together meaningfully? Collaborating with others is a valuable way of learning, although obviously some activities will be designed for individuals.)

WILL they really do it, and want to do more?

- Have you used exciting/interesting material to stimulate learners (for example, pictures, sounds, objects, articles, etc)?
- Does it lead them into the next activity or topic?
- Does it provide the right level of challenge?
- Does the activity provide feedback which will help to motivate learners and build their confidence?
- Have you encouraged learners to express their own ideas, and think about their own opinions?

Appendix:

Youth Friendly Sites Providing Information about Drug Use

- American Psychological Association: Resilience for Teens – Got Bounce?
<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/bounce.aspx>
- Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse – Xperiment.ca - www.xperiment.ca
- Drug Info (Australia): www.druginfo.adf.org.au
- Global Poverty Project: ‘How To’ Guides:
http://www.globalpovertyproject.com/howto/social_networking
- HBO Addiction Series - produced by HBO in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA): <http://www.hbo.com/addiction/>
- Health Canada: Drugs Not 4 Me Campaign: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogues/youth-jeunes/index-eng.php>
- Just Think Twice: <http://www.justthinktwice.com/>
- Liquor Control Board of Ontario – Deflate the elephant:
<http://www.deflatetheelephant.com/deflatetheelephant.html>
- Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth:
<http://monitoringthefuture.org/>
- Natural High Online Film Series: <http://www.naturalhigh.org/>
- Neuroscience for Kids – <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/introb.html>
- NIDA for Teens: <http://teens.drugabuse.gov>
- The Office of the Children’s Commissioner - You are not on your own: A booklet to help children and parents talk about a parent’s drinking:
http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_498
- ONDCP Above the Influence: <http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/>
- Partnership for a Drug Free America – Check Yourself: <http://checkyourself.com/>
- SADD – Students Against Destructive Decisions – seeks to provide “the best prevention tools possible to deal with the issues of underage drinking, other drug use, risky and impaired driving, and other destructive decisions.” -
<http://sadd.org/mission.htm>
- Talk to Frank – Your Stories: <http://www.talktofrank.com/article.aspx?id=244>
- TeensHealth – Prescription Drug Abuse:
http://kidshealth.org/teen/drug_alcohol/drugs/prescription_drug_abuse.html

- UNODC prevention website containing various prevention materials, i.e. UNODC Family skills training programmes – publications, “School-based education for drug abuse prevention”, “SPORT – using sport for drug abuse prevention”, “Monitoring and Evaluating Youth substance Abuse Programmes”, and others
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/index.html>
- Justice section of European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/index_en.htm

Resources in French

- MILTD <http://www.drogues.gouv.fr/>
- Health Canada <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogues/index-fra.php>
- CCSA <http://www.ccsa.ca/Fra/Pages/Home.aspx>
- Council of Europe’s Pompidou group combating drugabuse and trafficking
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/pompidou/default_FR.asp?
- Justice section of European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/index_fr.htm

Resources in Spanish

- CICAD: http://www.cicad.oas.org/main/template.asp?file=/oid/default_spa.asp and
http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/reduccion_demanda/default_spa.asp
- Information for parents: <http://www.laantidroga.com/>
- the Plan Nacional sobre Drogas of Spain
<http://www.pnsd.msc.es/Categoria2/centro/home.htm>
- Justice section of European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/index_es.htm

A site on how to manage your privacy on Facebook

20 Facebook privacy settings tips - created by Joe Cassels for Web News:

<http://www.techradar.com/news/internet/web/20-facebook-privacy-settings-tips-924540>

Forum Guidelines for Youth Initiative Facebook page

In order to ensure the efficient and optimal use of the Youth Initiative Facebook Forum there are some basic rules that apply. Below are the guidelines that apply whenever this forum is used. Please familiarize yourself with these rules.

Topics – This platform is about UNODC and topics related to the role of youth in drug issues and to ways of supporting the healthy lifestyles of youth, by youth. Please refrain from drifting off topic to subjects that are irrelevant to the UNODC Youth Forum. Additionally posted responses should be specific and of relevance to the ideas discussed in the original message.

Exchange-The main goal of this forum is the fruitful exchange of ideas and knowledge; in order to promote that environment we ask that you address each other respectfully. Address your comments to the idea rather than the person. Flaming or abusing of others will not be tolerated.

Discrimination- no posts or links promoting discrimination of race, gender, religion, nationality, physical or mental disabilities or age will be tolerated.

Images- Please refrain from posting any material that is indecent or contains illicit imagery in this forum. Additionally we ask that you be aware that sites often change their content without notification so be very careful with any links that you post.

Advertisement- This forum should not be used for the promotion or advertisement of products or services. Please refrain from posting any advertisement or recruiting through this forum for any personal projects.

Personal Information- This is a public forum, any information that you post will become a part of the public domain, therefore we ask that you avoid posting any personal information

Copyrights- Please respect the copyrights of other users, sites and media. Any links pointing to information or images for which the person posting has no legal permission will be removed.

Spam- there is a zero-tolerance policy for spam. Notifications- we welcome cooperation in reporting any post that violate these guidelines. Please e-mail our moderator at twolfe@unusa.org.

Moderator- as in every community, UNA-USA has a moderator who reserves the right to edit any post if they are considered disrespectful or if they do not abide by the rules above.

Concerns- If you have any questions or concerns please contact the UNODC Youth moderator at -----.