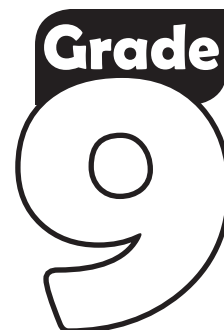


# Substance Use



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

The students will...

W - 9.6 Analyze addictions, e.g., stages, kinds, and resources available to treat addictions.

### Teacher Background

A drug is any non-food substance that changes the way the mind or body works. Drugs are neither good nor bad, they are simply a substance, and it is the way they are used that has good or bad results. For example, medicines can be used to heal, but they can also make someone sick if not used properly.

Mood altering drugs (also called psychoactive drugs) can affect the way a person thinks, feels or acts. These drugs usually have physical effects as well, but it is their ability to work on the mind which sets them apart from other drugs. Because they can affect moods, they can be very attractive to some people, and at the same time cause problems.

Youth have always experimented and pushed the boundaries of what they should and should not do - it is part of growing up. When tobacco, alcohol or other drugs or gambling are involved, experimentation can become a dangerous progression that may lead to dependency and/or an addiction.

The progression of an addiction reflects a continuum, ranging from no use to dependency. People may move back and forth within this continuum, but generally they advance from no use, to use, to misuse, to abuse, and finally to dependency. Once a person is dependent they may have to abstain from all substances and/or gambling, to regain their health.

### Objectives

- To learn about different kinds of drugs.
- To learn about the process of addictions.
- To learn about what kinds of local help is available for youth to stop using drugs, alcohol or gambling.

### Materials

- Inflated balloons (one for each student)
- Black felt markers
- Handout: *What is a drug?*

This lesson is adapted with permission from an AADAC Grade 9 Teacher Information Series.



- Handout: *The Process of Addictions*
- Worksheet: *List of Resources*

## Get Ready

- Introduce today's lesson, i.e., "In today's lesson we will learn about substance use and their effects. We will also develop a list of resources for help if someone is involved in substance abuse."
- Ask students to think about where they have seen drug and alcohol use and gambling around them, e.g., on the street, at the mall, in the school yard, at home, etc. Since this may be a very sensitive area, it is recommended that students do this reflection on their own, and not share it with others.
- As an adult working with youth, it is your responsibility to assist a student that may be demonstrating problems in this topic area.

## Activity 1: Balloon Frantic

- Give each student a balloon and a felt marker. They will write a word on the balloon that represents something that has a lot of meaning to them, e.g., their family, friends, sport, money, etc. The students are invited to share their word with the group.
- The students will keep their balloons aloft, never allowing them to touch the ground. They may do this by hitting the balloons with their arms, head, hands, etc. After they have done this for a while, ask them to hold the balloons and discuss how hard it was to keep something so important to them up in the air.
- Ask students the question "What happens when a person uses a drug?" Some of the answers might be: "drugs get you high", "people use them for medicines", etc.
- Now, have the students keep the balloons aloft without using their hands. This is what it is like to use drugs and not have all of your abilities or senses available to you.

## Activity 2: What Is A Drug?

On the board write the terms "Uppers", "Downers" and "All-arounders". As a class, have students list the names of the drugs they know according to their classification. Discuss the handout "*What is a Drug?*".

**Optional Assignment:** As a group or individual assignment, have students research the short and long-term effects of the various groups of drugs. Upon completion, they can present the information to the class.

## Activity 3: Level of Use

- There are many forms of addiction, but the ones we are discussing today are drugs, alcohol and gambling. The progression of an addiction reflects a continuum, ranging from no use to dependency. People generally advance from no use, to use, to misuse, to abuse, and finally to dependency.
- Discuss the *Process of Addictions* handout.
- Inform students that there are places for help for someone who has a drug, alcohol or gambling problem. Allow students class time to go on the internet to complete the *List of Resource* worksheet. If students have not completed the list during class, have them complete it as a take home activity.

Refer to: [www.albertahealthservices.ca/addiction.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/addiction.asp) or [www.211edmonton.com](http://www.211edmonton.com)

## Conclusion

Experimenting with drugs, alcohol and gambling are a natural part of adolescence, but youth need to appreciate the risk involved in this experimentation. This lesson provided students with a general overview of what drugs are and how they influence us, as well as the stages of use and development of dependency. An important part of this lesson is that students will have a list of contacts where people with drug, alcohol or gambling problems can go for help.

## Take Home Activity & Follow-up Classroom Discussion

Have students complete the worksheet *List of Resources*. In addition to the internet, the local library and local community mental health clinic are good places to call or visit to find this information. Have students bring their homework back to class, so results can be compiled and made available for everyone.

Have students share their findings from the *List of Resources* assignment with the entire class and write their information on the board. Summarize all information on one page and distribute it to the entire class.

## Assessment Strategy

- Students will be able to classify common drugs into the three main classifications, and know the basic effects of drugs listed.
- Students will understand the negative consequences of using drugs.
- Students will understand the usual progression of an addiction from no use to dependency.
- Students will know where to get help for a problem with drugs, alcohol or gambling.

## Reference

Alberta Health Services. (2010). Teacher Information Series. Retrieved from: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/addiction.asp>

# List of Resources

## Worksheet

Identify the places and people in your community that provide help for someone with a drug, alcohol, or gambling problem.

Are these services for adults, or youth, or both?

Self-help Groups (AA, NA, Alanon, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Counselors \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Detox Centres \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hospitals \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Doctors \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teachers \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Family \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Friends \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Others \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# The process of addictions

## Grade 9

SUGGESTED TIME: 40 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will become aware of the process of addictions.
- Students will become aware that developing an addiction is a process that happens over time.
- Students will identify resources in the community.

### ALBERTA LEARNING OUTCOME LINKS

Grade 9 *Health and Life Skills, Wellness Choices*

- Personal Health: W-9.6  
Analyze addictions

### SUGGESTED RESOURCES

- Handout Levels of use located on page 2 of this resource.
- Handout List of resources located on page 3 of this resource.

The progression of an addiction reflects a continuum, ranging from no use to dependency. People may move back and forth within this continuum, but generally they advance from no use, to use, misuse, abuse, and finally to dependency. Once a person is dependent, they may have to stay abstinent from all substances, or gambling, to get their health back.

### No use

In this stage there is no use of alcohol, other drugs, or gambling. People have their own reasons not to be involved, including religious beliefs, their age, etc.

### Use

People begin to experiment with alcohol, other drugs, or gambling to see what it is like, or to fit in with friends and peers.

They may use a substance or gamble to enhance an already pleasurable experience. Some people argue that social use is not merely using in social situations. Rather, it is using in a responsible way. There are few if any negative consequences to social use. Social use does not include youth under age 18 who drink alcohol, or anyone who uses illegal drugs. Using under those circumstances can result in negative legal or parental consequences.

### Misuse

A person begins to experience problems associated with their use of alcohol, other drugs, or gambling. They may get hangovers, get in trouble at home or school because they were drunk or high, spend more money than they intended to on gambling, or do something they regret while under the influence of alcohol or another drug. All these problems, although they may seem small at the time, can escalate into a much larger problem.

### Abuse

Problems become much more regular. The person uses or gambles more frequently and it begins to interfere with major areas of their life such as family, parents, school, legal issues, money, friends, and leisure. The person may become obsessive about when and where they are going to get drugs or money to gamble.

### Dependency

The person at this stage has lost the ability to choose to use or not to use. Using substances or gambling has become a way of life. They continue despite the negative consequences and those consequences are occurring more and more frequently. The person may experience physical or psychological withdrawal, cravings, and decreased physical, mental, and emotional health.

**Note:** When using the student self-assessment handout on the next page, it is a good idea to let the students do this in confidence. The tool is a means of increasing awareness of a potential problem.

If you are concerned about a student's use of drugs, alcohol, or gambling, refer them to a counsellor who can help them look at their use.

For more information and to find an addiction services office near you, please call the 24-hour Helpline at 1-866-332-2322.



Check the behaviours you see in yourself then circle the stage of use you think you are at.

**Stage of Use Behaviours**

- 
- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| No Use     | <input type="checkbox"/> Never use alcohol, other drugs, or gambling  |
| Use        | <input type="checkbox"/> Curiosity<br><input type="checkbox"/> Risk-taking<br><input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure<br><input type="checkbox"/> Defy parents   |
| <hr/>      |   |
| Occasional | <input type="checkbox"/> Parties  |
| <hr/>      |   |
| Use        | <input type="checkbox"/> Thrill-seeking<br><input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance by peers   |
| <hr/>      |   |
| Misuse     | <input type="checkbox"/> Use drugs or gamble to feel good<br><input type="checkbox"/> Use drugs or gamble to stop bad feelings<br><input type="checkbox"/> Binging<br><input type="checkbox"/> Experimenting with different drugs and forms of gambling<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grades affected<br><input type="checkbox"/> Activities change<br><input type="checkbox"/> Use drugs or gamble to relieve boredom or stress<br><input type="checkbox"/> Escape bad feelings<br><input type="checkbox"/> More fights with parents |

**Stage of Use Behaviours**

- 
- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Abuse      | <input type="checkbox"/> Use or gamble more often<br><input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to control use or gambling<br><input type="checkbox"/> Use drugs or gamble to cope with life<br><input type="checkbox"/> Most friends use drugs or gamble<br><input type="checkbox"/> Crave drugs or gambling<br><input type="checkbox"/> Think a lot about getting high or gambling<br><input type="checkbox"/> Get irritable when drugs not available or when there is no money to gamble<br><input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of anxiety or depression<br><input type="checkbox"/> Physical tolerance develops |
| <hr/>      |  |
| Dependency | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting high or gambling is the only thing in life<br><input type="checkbox"/> Occasional efforts to control use or gambling<br><input type="checkbox"/> Feel shameful and hopeless<br><input type="checkbox"/> Self-centered<br><input type="checkbox"/> Demanding of others<br><input type="checkbox"/> Defensive<br><input type="checkbox"/> Blaming<br><input type="checkbox"/> Controlling others  |

## The Process of Addictions

If you are concerned about your own or somebody else's (a friend or family member's) use of alcohol, other drugs or gambling, it is important to know where to go for help. On your own, or in small groups, identify the places and people in your community that could help you.

### Local Addictions Counselling Office

Self-Help Groups (AA, NA, Alanon, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Counsellors \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis Centres \_\_\_\_\_

Detox Centres or Hospitals \_\_\_\_\_

Doctors \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers \_\_\_\_\_

Family \_\_\_\_\_

Friends \_\_\_\_\_

Others \_\_\_\_\_

# What is a drug?

## Grade 9

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will become familiar with the types of drugs and their effects.

### ALBERTA LEARNING OUTCOME LINKS

Grade 9 *Health and Life Skills, Wellness Choices*

- Personal Health: W-9.6  
Analyze addictions

Grade 9 *English Language Arts*

- General Outcome #3 (Specific outcomes: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4):  
Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to manage ideas and information.

### SUGGESTED RESOURCES

- Handout Drug classifications located on page 4 of this resource.
- Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse at [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)

The word drug is often used to refer to illegal street drugs. There are, however, many different kinds of drugs. For example, alcohol, caffeine and nicotine are so often used, they are seldom thought of as drugs. For this reason they are sometimes referred to as “invisible drugs.” Whether the drug is prescription, over-the-counter, legal or illegal, it can be classified according to its effect.

## Mood-altering drugs

### Uppers

Uppers are stimulants. Stimulants speed up the body processes and the central nervous system (CNS). Stimulants are drugs that are used for a quick, temporary, increase of energy. They increase alertness and endurance, decrease appetite, and produce feelings of well-being and euphoria. Abuse of stimulants can produce severe psychological and physical dependence. Nicotine and caffeine are the two most commonly used stimulants.

**Examples:** caffeine, nicotine, Ritalin®, cocaine, crack, speed, Dexedrine®, Tenuate®, Ionamin®, ecstasy

- **Ecstasy** is a drug sometimes associated with the rave culture. It acts as both an upper or stimulant and a hallucinogen (tending to produce hallucinations). It is most often classified as a hallucinogenic amphetamine. Common desired effects of ecstasy are:

- an enhanced sense of touch,
- feeling of increased self worth to the point of euphoria,
- feelings of empathy with others, increased alertness and increased physical energy.

Some physical effects include:

- rapid heart rate,
- elevated blood pressure,
- excessive pupil dilation,
- tremors, palpitations and sweating,
- increased salivation and
- grinding of teeth and clenching of jaw muscles.

After-effects can include drowsiness, muscle aches and generalized fatigue, depression lasting one to two days, difficulty concentrating, paranoid feelings of persecution, and short-lived anxiety and irritability.

### Downers

Downers slow down the body processes and depress the CNS.

- **Narcotics** (also referred to as narcotic analgesics) are highly addictive painkilling drugs that may also produce a euphoric sense of well-being.

**Examples:** opium, codeine, morphine, heroin, methadone, Demerol®, Dilaudid®, Novahistex-DH®, Talwin®, Percodan®

Non-narcotic pain relievers differ from narcotics because they do not depress the CNS or have mind-altering effects. Examples of non-narcotic pain relievers are Tylenol® or Aspirin®. They are not classified as “downers.”

- **Tranquillizers** and sleeping pills are also drugs that slow down the CNS. In the past, many sleeping pills belonged to a chemical group called the barbiturates.
  - Barbiturates (e.g. Seconal®, Tuinal®) have been largely replaced by benzodiazepenes. Most tranquillizers and sleeping pills prescribed today belong to the benzodiazepene chemical group.
  - In usual doses tranquillizers (e.g. Valium®, Ativan®, Restoril®) produce a sense of calm well-being and are used to treat anxiety. In larger doses, they will also induce sleep and even unconsciousness. Sleeping pills cause greater depression of the CNS in order to induce and maintain sleep.

For more information and to find an addiction services office near you, please call the 24-hour Helpline at 1-866-332-2322.



- **Alcohol** first depresses centres in the brain that inhibit actions and restrain behaviour, which is the reason some people initially appear livelier after consuming alcohol. Excessive consumption can result in further depression of the CNS so that a person may fail to retain memory of the event (a blackout) or lose consciousness (pass out). Death can occur from an overdose of alcohol.

- **Inhalants** are also downers. They are substances that people sniff for their mood-altering effects. Short-term use results in a user looking and feeling as if they were drunk. Long-term use may result in permanent health problems such as memory loss, brain damage, personality changes, muscular weakness, fatigue, and nerve damage starting in the hands and feet.

**Examples:** cooking spray, gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluid, antifreeze, paints, model airplane glue, cleaning fluids and nail polish remover

#### All-arounders

All-arounders have various effects on the body. They can act like both uppers and downers. Hallucinogens and cannabis fall into this category.

- Hallucinogens are drugs used to produce distortion of reality and hallucinations. These drugs are also called illusionogenic or psychedelic. They dramatically affect perception, emotions, and mental processes. They distort the senses and can cause hallucinations. There are currently no accepted medical uses for hallucinogenic drugs.

**Examples:** LSD (acid, blotter), PCP (angel dust), mescaline or peyote, psilocybin (magic mushrooms)

- Cannabis, commonly referred to as marijuana, is derived from the hemp plant, *Cannabis sativa*. THC is the active ingredient in the cannabis plant. Cannabis is the most widely used of all illegal drugs. It has depressant effects, but, like stimulants, cannabis increases the heart rate.

**Examples:** marijuana (pot, grass, weed, joint), hashish (hash), hash oil, THC (tetrahydrocannabinol)

- Ecstasy is sometimes classed as an all-arounder because of its hallucinogenic properties.

#### Drug effects and the individual

The effect of a drug varies from person to person depending on the following:

- Specific drug. Example: Different types of marijuana will have different potencies.
- Amount taken or dose.
- How the drug is taken. Example: Injecting cocaine produces effects more quickly and intensely than smoking it.
- The body. Example: In general a larger person has to drink more alcohol to become drunk than a smaller person does. Also, food a person has eaten will slow down the absorption of alcohol into the blood stream.
- Previous exposure of the body to this and other drugs. Regular users of a drug may require more to produce the desired effect.
- Gender. Example: Women have less of an enzyme called ADH. ADH breaks down alcohol in the body. Usually, women have a higher blood alcohol concentration (BAC) than men after consuming an identical amount of alcohol.
- The setting or location. Example: The physical environment in which the drug is taken can affect the user's experience.
- The user's mental state. Example: A user who is very anxious about a drug experience may be more likely to have a panic reaction than someone who is not.
- Other drugs being used.

#### Activity

Have the group generate ideas on what their definition of a drug is. Ask questions such as: "What is a drug?", "What does a drug do?" or "What happens when a person uses a drug?" Some of the answers may be: drugs are bad, drugs get you high, people use them for medicine, etc.

One definition of the term “drug” is:

**A drug is any non-food substance that changes the way the mind or body works.**

Drugs are neither good nor bad; they are simply a substance and it’s the way they are used that has good or bad results. For example, medicines can be used to heal, but they can also make someone sick if not used properly.

### Drug classifications

Mood-altering drugs (MADs), also called psychoactive drugs, can affect the way a person thinks, feels, or acts. These drugs usually have physical effects as well, but it is their ability to work on the mind that sets them apart from other drugs. Because they can affect moods, they can be very attractive to some people and at the same time cause problems.

On the board, write the headings for the different mood altering drug classifications. To simplify things, use the terms “Uppers,” “Downers,” and “All-arounders.” Have students list the names of the drugs they know, whether it’s street names or proper names. List them on the board according to their classification. See the back of this page for information on how to classify the drugs.

Give students the handout showing the classifications. As a group or individual assignment, students can research the short and long-term effects of the various groups of drugs. Upon completion, they can present the information to the class.

### DEBRIEF

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What are drugs used for?

Do drugs affect everyone in the same way?

Why or why not?

Can drugs that are used medically be harmful?

How do the different classes of drugs affect the body?

# Drug classifications

## Uppers (stimulants)

*Nicotine*

*Caffeine*

*Cocaine* also called C, Coke, Snow, Nose, Candy, Blow

*Ecstasy* also called Adam, rave euphoria, X, MDM, M&M, hug drug

*Amphetamines* also called speed, ice, crystal, meth

## Downers (depressants)

*Alcohol* (beer, wine, spirits)

*Inhalants* (sniff, huffers)

*Narcotics* (codeine, morphine, Demerol®, opium)

*Tranquillizers* (Valium®, Librium®, Quaalude®)

## All-arounders

*Cannabis* (Marijuana; hashish (hash); hash oil (honey oil)—also called pot, grass, reefer, ganja, joint)

*Hallucinogens* (LSD, also called acid, blotter)

*Psilocybin* also called magic mushrooms, shrooms

*PCP* (phencyclidine) also called angel dust, horse tranquillizer