

Overview

In this lesson, students will take a closer look at drug misuse, drug abuse and addiction. The students will listen to various scenarios and see how the progression of the addiction leads to severe consequences.

National Health Education Standards

Standard 1: Comprehending Concepts

Performance Indicator 1.12.6: Summarize the harmful short- and long-term physical, psychological and social effects of drug use.

Performance Indicator 1.12.9: Evaluate situations that could lead to the use of other drugs.

Healthy Behavior Outcome (HBO)

Make choices about drugs that support a healthy lifestyle.

Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

Objective	Assessment
1. Identify stages of addiction.	• <i>Stages of Addiction</i> notes
2. List physical, psychological, and social consequences associated with drug addiction.	• <i>Discussion Questions 2, 3, 4</i> from Addiction Activity
3. Identify the influences of others on drug abuse, including those impacted by drug use.	• <i>Discussion Question 2</i> from Addiction Activity
4. Identify ways you could support a person with an addiction.	• <i>Discussion Question 6</i>

Time: 25-30 minutes

Materials

Assessments and Worksheets

- *Stages of Addiction* notes ([Attachment 1](#)); *Addiction Scenarios* ([Attachment 2](#)); and *Discussion Questions* ([Attachment 3](#)).

Resources

- Four colors of paper cut into squares

Resources

- *National Institute on Drug Abuse: Drugs, Brains, & Behavior–The Science of Addiction*
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugs-brains-behavior-science-addiction/drug-abuse-addiction>
- Help for Addiction:
 - o <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment/what-to-do-if-your-adult-friend-or-loved-one-has-problem-drugs>
 - o <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

Introduction

Today we are going to take a closer look at addiction and the consequences that come with it.

Teaching Step

Activity 1: Stages of Addiction Notes

- We are talking about addiction today because people underestimate the power of physical and psychological addiction. People do not intend to ruin their relationships, health, career, educational goals, etc. when they begin using; it is just a natural consequence associated with addiction.
- Addiction can happen to anyone, it does not discriminate. Addiction can also be termed “Substance Use Disorder (SUD).” Addiction is a health issue. It is a disease that affects a person’s brain and behavior and leads to an inability to control the use of a legal or illegal drug or medication. There are many factors that influence addiction including physiological (e.g. levels of chemicals in our brain such as dopamine), genetic (e.g. predisposition to addiction), psychological (e.g. the ability to cope with stress), sociocultural and environmental (e.g. association with friends who use, the stability of the home environment, the availability of drugs).
- Ask students, “Why do people start using drugs even when they know they are bad for their health?”
- “What is addiction?” Addiction is a complex disease the brain and body that involves compulsive use of one or more substances despite health and/or social consequences. There are a number of factors that influence addiction including behavioral, environmental and biological. People with addiction should not be blamed for suffering from the disease. All people make choices about whether to use substances. However, people do not choose how their brain and body respond to drugs and alcohol, which is why people with addiction cannot control their use while others can. People with addiction can still stop using – it’s just much harder than it is for someone who has not become addicted.
- People with addiction are responsible for seeking treatment and maintaining recovery. Often they need the help and support of family, friends and peers to stay in treatment and increase their chances of survival and recovery.
- Distribute *Stages of Addiction* notes and review.
 - o **Experimental:** Drugs are used out of curiosity
 - o **Occasional:** Drugs may also be used socially or occasionally
 - o **Situational:** Use of drugs associated with particular activities

- o **Intense:** Users habitually turn to drugs whenever they are faced with a problem
- o **Compulsive:** Users cannot control their drug use; emotionally and most of the time physically dependent on the drug

Activity 2: Addition Activity

- Now that you have a better understanding of addiction, let's look at the life of a person in active addiction.
 - **Step 1:** Distribute three squares of paper with four different colors to each student; students will end up with twelve pieces of paper. Have four student volunteers distribute the papers.
 - o The students will write the following items on the cards:
 - **Color 1** – Three special people in their life
 - **Color 2** – Three possessions special to them
 - **Color 3** – Three activities they enjoy
 - **Color 4** – Three personal attributes, abilities, talents or characteristics about themselves
 - o Only the students will see what is written on their cards. They are to have the cards spread out on their desk prior to reading the story.
 - **Step 2:** The teacher begins reading the scenario ([See Attachment 2](#)) and pauses after each one for the students to rip the papers referred to in the story.
 - o *Please note that, due to the content of the activity, some students may have an emotional reaction.*
 - o *Remind students of the support they have in the school if this activity triggers any troublesome feelings. Alert the counselor(s) in your school about the nature of the activity before the lesson. Reach out and refer those students to the counselor when you recognize signs the student may have troublesome feelings about the lesson.*
 - **Step 3:** Distribute the **Discussion Questions** and have the students work on them individually.
 - o Have students report out answers to reinforce the dangers associated with drug addiction.
 - o Remind students that this is a safe classroom environment and we support each other as answers are shared.
- 1. How did you feel ripping up the papers?**
 - Students will have a variety of emotions. Many students share how they did not like ripping up the papers and it made them feel sad. The impact of addiction becomes more of a reality knowing that there are people who have experienced these consequences in real life.
 - 2. In your opinion, what category of papers had the most impact on you when ripping up the papers? Why?**
 - Typically, the special people category. Students have shared different reasons for why they felt the way they did.

3. How does this activity relate to addiction?

- The gradual intensity; the story is read faster as they make harder decisions; at the end, someone picks the papers to be ripped up representing the loss of control; the things they lost; etc.

4. At what point in the activity did the user lose control?

- Some students say when they first used drugs. Another answer is when they had a person pick their cards and rip them up. These answers are both correct, but hearing the student's rationale is enlightening. Remember addiction is a complex brain disease and could happen to anyone.

5. What will you do to prevent becoming a victim of drug addiction?

- Students state various reasons that motivate them to be drug free. This can be defined as their "anti-drug." This question also allows for students to map out their drug free path and set goals for the future.

6. What could you do to support a person who is experiencing addiction?

- Take care of yourself and seek support.
 - Talk to a caring adult.
 - Build supports such as a teen support group.
- Nothing you have done has ever caused anyone else to drink too much or use drugs. It's not your fault. You need and deserve help for yourself.
- Additional information to share with students if needed (<https://drugfree.org/article/want-help-adult-family-member-friend-drug-alcohol-problem-7-suggestions/>)

7. What can you do to continue to make healthy, drug-free choices?

- Student answers may vary.

How to Help a Friend or Family Member

• Some suggestions to get started:

- Learn all you can about alcohol and drug misuse and addiction.
- Speak up and offer your support: talk to the person about your concerns, and offer your help and support, including your willingness to go with them and get help. Like other chronic diseases, the earlier addiction is treated, the better.
- Express love and concern: don't wait for your loved one to "hit bottom." You may be met with excuses, denial or anger. Be prepared to respond with specific examples of behavior that has you worried.
- Don't expect the person to stop without help: you have heard it before - promises to cut down, stop - but, it doesn't work. Treatment, support, and new coping skills are needed to overcome addiction to alcohol and drugs.

- o Support recovery as an ongoing process: once your friend or family member is receiving treatment, or going to meetings, remain involved. Continue to show that you are concerned about his/her successful long-term recovery.
- **Some things you don't want to do:**
 - o Don't preach: Don't lecture, threaten, bribe, preach or moralize.
 - o Don't be a martyr: Avoid emotional appeals that may only increase feelings of guilt and the compulsion to drink or use other drugs.
 - o Don't cover up, lie or make excuses for his/her behavior.
 - o Don't assume their responsibilities: taking over their responsibilities protects them from the consequences of their behavior.
 - o Don't argue when using: avoid arguing with the person when they are using alcohol or drugs; at that point he/she can't have a rational conversation.
 - o Don't feel guilty or responsible for their behavior; it's not your fault.
 - o Don't join them: don't try to keep up with them by drinking or using.

Closure

- We have identified the stages and consequences of addiction. Addiction does not discriminate; anyone can fall victim to addiction. It is important to identify the situations that could lead to addiction and the consequences that it has on the user's life and the lives of their loved ones.
- Students turn in Discussion Questions.

STAGES OF ADDICTION

- _____ – drugs are used out of curiosity
- _____ – drugs may also be used socially or occasionally
- _____ – use of drugs associated with particular activities
- _____ – users habitually turn to drugs whenever they are faced with a problem
- _____ – users cannot control their drug use; emotionally and most of the time physically dependent on the drug

DANGERS OF ADDICTION STORY

SCENARIO ONE: You just started high school and were invited to a party; the older kids actually noticed you! After hours that passed by like minutes, you notice you are well past your curfew. You text your parents that you lost track of time and you are on your way home. When you walk in, your parents are glad you are home safe but upset about the worry you caused them. They can also smell tobacco on your clothes and question the party you attended. You tell them you weren't smoking; others at the party were smoking. Your parents are curious, but believe your story and take one of your possessions away for coming home past curfew. *Choose one of your **POSSESSION PAPERS** and tear it up.*

- o Students have twenty seconds to choose which possession paper to tear up.

SCENARIO TWO: Things at school couldn't be better. You are part of the "in crowd," grades are good, and you are on the sports team you have dreamed of since you were in elementary school. The group that invited you to the party last weekend asks if you want to meet up for a bonfire at one of their homes. You say you will stop by after practice. When you arrive, people greet you and bring you into the fun. They offer you a pill and ask you to join the "pill party." You decline at first, but think it couldn't be that bad, they are prescription drugs a doctor gave them and look at all the fun they are having. You take the pill. The next morning you are feeling the effects of whatever it was you took last night and you are unable to participate in one of your favorite activities. *Tear up one **ACTIVITY PAPER** and one **PERSONAL ATTRIBUTE PAPER**.*

- o Students have fifteen seconds to choose which activity and personal attribute paper to tear up.

SCENARIO THREE: Popping pills has become one of your favorite things to do. You are now looking forward to hanging out with this crowd every weekend and creating different pill concoctions. You feel you can handle it; it's not a problem. *Tear up one **PERSON PAPER** and one **PERSONAL ATTRIBUTE PAPER**.*

- o Students have ten seconds to choose which person and personal attribute paper to tear up.

DANGERS OF ADDICTION STORY (CONTINUED)

SCENARIO FOUR: You are now experiencing the consequences of your pill use: grades are falling; coaches are frustrated with your poor performance; fighting with your parents; stealing money. *Tear up one PERSON PAPER and one PERSONAL ATTRIBUTE PAPER.*

- o Students have ten seconds to choose which person and personal attribute paper to tear up.

SCENARIO FIVE: Not able to afford the prescription drugs you are used to, your dealer offers you something cheaper that will stop the withdrawal sickness from not having the pills. They give you heroin and say the first hit is free. Nervous, but needing to feel better, you let your inhibitions go and inject the heroin. Feeling euphoric, you attempt to drive home. You are pulled over by the police and taken into the station for a DUI. *Tear up one POSSESSION PAPER and one ACTIVITY PAPER.*

- o Students have five seconds to choose which possession paper and activity paper to tear up.

SCENARIO SIX: You are at the mercy of your addiction. Your life is out of control due to your heroin use.

- o The students are to hold the remaining three pieces of paper in their hand like they would hold a hand of playing cards.
- o The students will then turn and face their partner with the papers held so that their partner can't read what is written on the pieces of paper.
- o Each student will randomly take two pieces of paper from their partner's hand (leaving them with one paper) and tear them up.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did you feel ripping up the papers?

2. In your opinion, what category of papers had the most impact on you when ripping up the papers? Why?

3. How does this activity relate to addiction?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

4. At what point in the activity did the user lose control?

5. What could you do to support a person who is experiencing addiction?

6. What can you do to continue to make healthy, drug-free choices?
