

Reducing Risk by Being Drug Free

HEALTH GOALS

- I will choose a drug-free lifestyle to reduce the risk of violence and accidents.
- I will choose a drug-free lifestyle to reduce the risk of HIV infection and unplanned pregnancy.

A lifestyle in which a person does not misuse or abuse drugs is a **drug-free lifestyle**. When you choose a drug-free lifestyle, you help protect yourself from the harmful effects of drugs, injuries, violence and accidents.



What Would You Do?

Writing About a Safe and Drug-Free School Zone Suppose that you know that one of your classmates is selling drugs at school. After reading the information about the importance of a safe and drug-free school zone on page 469, write an entry in your health journal about how you could help keep your school free from drug trafficking by telling a teacher or your principal about your classmate's illegal actions.



Health TEKS covered by Lesson 42: 5D, 7A, 7B, 7E, 8A, 15A, 16A, 16B, 16D

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What You'll Learn

1. Discuss ways drugs alter mood and behavior and increase the risk of violent behavior. (p. 469)
2. List ways to protect yourself from violence associated with drug use. (p. 469)
3. Explain how a safe and drug-free school zone decreases the risk of drug trafficking. (p. 469)
4. Explain reasons why teens who use drugs increase their risk of accidents, HIV infection and unplanned pregnancy. (pp. 470–472)

Why It's Important

You can make responsible decisions when you can think clearly. People who use drugs place themselves at risk for harmful behaviors that result from not thinking clearly.

Key Terms

- drug trafficking
- safe and drug-free school zone
- human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)
- prostitution
- injection drug use

Drug Use, Violence, and Accidents

Drugs alter the way people think and feel. The way people think and feel affects the way they behave. The following drugs may increase the risk that people will behave in violent ways or be involved in an accident.

Why Drug Use Increases the Risk of Violence and Accidents

Alcohol Alcohol depresses the nervous system and changes mood and behavior. Alcohol intensifies feelings, sometimes causing people to harm themselves or others.

Stimulants Stimulants may cause people to become impulsive and experience feelings of paranoia. They may become irrational when they believe other people are going to harm them.

Marijuana and hallucinogens People who use marijuana or hallucinogens may experience hallucinations and feel threatened. They may resort to violent actions.

PCP People who use PCP can become angry, aggressive, and irritable. They may have hallucinations and experience severe depression. They are difficult to control.

Anabolic-androgenic steroids People who use anabolic-androgenic steroids may have mood swings and outbursts of anger called “roid rages.”

Sedative-hypnotics People who take high doses of sedative-hypnotics can become angry and aggressive.

How Drug Trafficking Increases the Risk of Violence

The illegal production, distribution, transportation, selling, or purchasing of drugs is called **drug trafficking**. All people involved in drug trafficking are criminals. Drug trafficking is dangerous because people associated with drug trafficking usually own and use weapons to protect their territory, or “turf.” Many drive-by shootings are related to drug trafficking.

Make the Connection

Self-Defense For more information on protecting yourself from violence, see page 671 in Lesson 65.

Protect Yourself from Violence Associated with Drug Trafficking

These actions will help protect you from violence associated with drug trafficking:

- Do not associate with anyone who produces, distributes, transports, sells, or purchases drugs.
- Do not associate with gang members or people who associate with gangs.
- Stay away from people who own weapons.
- Stay away from areas in which there is drug trafficking.
- Stay away from gang turf.
- Help your school enforce a **safe and drug-free school zone**, which is a defined area around a school for the purpose of sheltering young people from the sale of drugs and use of weapons. There are increased penalties for using and selling drugs and having weapons in this zone.

Activity: Using Life Skills

Using Goal-Setting and Decision-Making Skills: Making a Responsible Decision

Suppose you had a bad day at school and an argument with your parents, but it's Friday and your best friend has invited you to a party. The music at the party is great, and all your friends are there. Your best friend pulls you aside and asks if you want to try Ecstasy. She says, "I just took a hit, and I am flying. Come on, do this with me. You'll forget about all your problems." You were supposed to be staying at your friend's house tonight, and you don't have a ride home. What should you do?

1 Describe the situation that requires a decision, list possible decisions you might make, and share the list of possible decisions with a parent, guardian, or other trusted adult. Think about what that responsible adult would do in your situation. List the results of each possible decision.

2 Use six questions to evaluate the consequences of the decision. Is it a healthful thing to do? Is it safe? Is it legal? Does it show respect for me and others? Does it follow the guidelines of my parent or guardian? Does it demonstrate good character?

3 Decide which decision is most responsible and appropriate. Imagine what the results would be. Write a one-page paper on at least two results you can imagine.

4 Act on your decision and evaluate the results. Write another one-page paper evaluating the two results that you imagined.



▲ It is important to remember that a "friend" who tries to pressure you into abusing drugs is not really your friend at all.

Drug Use and Accidents

Both legal and illegal drugs increase the risk of having an accident.

Prescription drugs Some prescription drugs can act as stimulants while others can act as depressants. Prescription drugs are responsible for many kinds of accidents by causing drowsiness or dizziness.

Illegal drugs Many accidents are a result of illegal drug use. For example, a person who uses hallucinogens may not be aware of surrounding circumstances. Or a person using barbiturates may be too slow to react to different situations.

Alcohol You have read a great deal about alcohol and automobile accidents, but alcohol also is involved in many other kinds of accidents. People who drink and use tools can harm themselves and others. People who drink alcohol and swim increase the risk of drowning.

Tobacco Many fires are started by people who smoke cigarettes. Smokers may dispose of a cigarette in a trash can or fall asleep while smoking. Many automobile accidents are caused by drivers who drop lighted cigarettes. The driver, while looking for the cigarette, becomes distracted and causes an accident.

Make the Connection

Responsible Decisions

For more information about responsible decisions, see page 61 in Lesson 6.

Drug Use and HIV

A pathogen that destroys infection-fighting T cells in the body is the **human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)**. People who are infected with HIV develop AIDS. **Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)** is a condition that results in a breakdown of the body's ability to fight infection.



How a Drug-Free Lifestyle Reduces the Risk of HIV Infection

Abstinence from sex Teens who use drugs may not stick to their decision to practice abstinence from sex. **Abstinence from sex** is voluntarily choosing not to be sexually active. HIV is transmitted from one person to another during intimate sexual contact. Teens who drink alcohol or use marijuana or other drugs that change reasoning and judgment do not think clearly. During drug use, they are not clear as to the consequences of their behavior. Most teens who have been sexually active were under the influence of alcohol during their first sexual experience. One occurrence of sexual contact can cause HIV infection and change your life.

Avoidance of rape Teens who use drugs increase their risk for being in situations in which rape occurs. **Rape** is the threatened or actual use of physical force to get someone to have sex without giving consent. When teens use drugs, they are less likely to think about the consequences of their behaviors. Females under the influence of drugs may take risks they usually would not take. For example, they might leave a party with a male they do not know well. Males under

the influence of drugs may make inappropriate sexual advances. They may disregard a female's refusal of sexual advances. Rape is illegal and increases the risk of HIV infection.

No need to support drug habit Teens who are drug dependent may have sex as a way of getting drugs. Suppose teens who are drug dependent are not able to support their drug habit. They may engage in prostitution to get money to buy drugs. **Prostitution** is sexual activity for pay. Prostitution and the exchange of sex for drugs is illegal and increases the risk of HIV infection.

Avoidance of infected needles Teens who inject illegal drugs may share a needle with infected blood on it. **Injection drug use** is drug use that involves injecting drugs into the body. When people inject drugs, the needle or syringe they use will have droplets of their blood on it. Suppose a teen uses a needle or syringe that has been used by a person infected with HIV. The droplets of blood infected with HIV will enter the teen's body. He or she can be infected with HIV. Injection of illegal drugs increases the risk of HIV infection.

Mini-Review

1. How is prostitution related to drug dependence and risks for HIV?
2. Why are injection drugs so dangerous?

Drug Use and Unplanned Pregnancy

Two people are involved in every unplanned teen pregnancy—a male and a female. For this reason, teen males and teen females must examine why unplanned pregnancies occur. Fact: Teens who use drugs are four times more likely to have an unplanned pregnancy than teens who do not use drugs.

Did You Know?

Young Pregnancy

About 46 of every 1000 American teens age 15 to 19 gave birth in 2001. The birth rate for that age group has declined 26 percent since 1991.

How a Drug-Free Lifestyle Reduces the Risk of Unplanned Pregnancy

Teens who use drugs are less likely to be in control of their sexual feelings.

Drugs can intensify sexual feelings very quickly. *Sexual feelings* are feelings that result from a strong physical and emotional attraction to another person. To control sexual feelings, teens must set limits for expressing affection.

Teens who use drugs may not stick to their decision to practice abstinence from sex. Teens who drink alcohol or use marijuana or other drugs do not think clearly. While under the influence of drugs, they are not as aware of the consequences of their behavior. Most teens who have been sexually active were under the influence of alcohol or another drug during their first sexual experience. One occurrence of sexual contact can result in an unplanned pregnancy.

Teens who use drugs are more at risk for being in situations in which rape occurs. When teens use drugs, they are less likely to think about the consequences of their behaviors. Females

under the influence of drugs may take risks they usually would not take. For example, they might agree to go to an unsupervised party. They might leave a party at night and walk home alone. They might drink too much, pass out, and not even know if they had engaged in sex. Males under the influence of drugs can become more aggressive. Their judgment is impaired, and they may not respect their own or a female's limits for expressing affection. Remember: using drugs is never a defense for rape.

Teens who use drugs are more likely to justify their wrong sexual behavior with the fact they were under the influence of drugs at the time. Some teens plan ahead to use drugs so they will have an excuse for inappropriate sexual behavior. For example, they may drink too much, have sex, and later say they would not have had sex if they had not been drinking. They do not think ahead as to other consequences for their actions, such as unplanned pregnancy.

abstinence from sex
acquired
immunodeficiency
syndrome (AIDS)
drug trafficking
human
immunodeficiency
virus (HIV)
injection drug use
prostitution
rape
safe and drug-free
school zone
sexual feelings



Key Terms Review

Complete these fill-in-the-blank statements with the lesson Key Terms on the left. Do not write in this book.

1. A defined area around a school where young people are sheltered from the sale of drugs and use of weapons is called a(n) _____.
2. The illegal selling of drugs is called _____.
3. The pathogen that destroys T-cells in the body is _____.
4. Taking drugs into the body using a needle is called _____.
5. Sexual activity for pay is called _____.
6. The breakdown of the body's ability to fight infection because of a lack of T-cells results in a disease called _____.

Recalling the Facts

7. Why is having a low T-cell count dangerous?
8. How is the use of alcohol related to pregnancy?
9. Why do people who follow a drug-free lifestyle have a decreased risk of injuries, violence, and accidents?
10. What are "roid rages"?
11. How can drugs cause a person to be less likely to control sexual feelings?
12. How does alcohol or drug use increase the risk of violence and accidents?
13. Why do people who have sex with a prostitute have an increased risk of HIV infection?
14. Describe how a drug-free lifestyle reduces the risk of HIV infection.
15. How can prescription drug use cause an accident?
16. How can drug use lead to prostitution?
17. How can smoking cause accidents?

Critical Thinking

18. Why is alcohol especially dangerous to a person who is depressed?
19. Why should a person avoid someone who is under the influence of PCP?
20. Why are athletes who use drugs at increased risk of injury?
21. How is tobacco use related to fires?
22. How do stimulants increase the risk of violence?

Activities

Responsible Decision Making

27. **Explain** A group of classmates plans to go downhill skiing. When you arrive at the slopes, you realize your classmates have been drinking. They suggest you have a beer. What do you see as the problems with what your classmates said? Refer to the Responsible Decision-Making Model on page 61 for help.

Real-Life Applications

23. Why do you think using drugs increases the risk of violence?
24. Why do you think athletes take anabolic-androgenic steroids?
25. Why do you think drug trafficking increases violence?
26. What are some things you could do to reduce accidents?

Sharpen Your Life Skills

28. **Advocate for Health** In groups, select and research a type of accident that is related to drug use. Prepare and give to the class a 5-minute TV news report based on your findings. Each group member should have a role in the presentation, which should include how the accident was related to drug use.