

Learning Activity

You use, you lose

Materials

- Student materials vary depending on format chosen to complete activity
- Chart paper and markers

Instructions

- Open a whole-class discussion inviting students to name some of their favourite activities (some may mention playing sports, watching TV, reading, dancing, playing video games, etc.)
- Instruct students to work individually to create a representation of their preferred activity (e.g. an illustration and/or written description of the activity and what they enjoy about it)
- As a whole class, discuss the impacts of drug use on the ability to engage in certain activities. Ask students to reflect on what they know about the effects of drug use and whether/how these effects would impact their ability to enjoy those same activities. Examples:
 - Withdrawal from social circles affecting activities enjoyed with friends
 - Slowed brain and body functions caused by depressants can make certain activities more dangerous (e.g. cycling, walking)
 - Blurred vision, decreased coordination, and slowed reaction time (e.g. from alcohol consumption or cannabis use) can affect performance in activities like sports and video games
 - Decreased concentration (e.g. from cannabis use) can make it difficult to enjoy reading or watching movies/TV
 - Athletic performance can be negatively impacted by cannabis (increasing heart rate and irritating lungs) and drinking alcohol (damage to organs, decreased motor skills, weight gain and hangovers)
 - Drugs including cannabis, hallucinogens, and even caffeine can affect mental health and cause restlessness and anxiety, affecting all aspects of a person's life
 - Injury or death would prevent enjoyment of any of these activities
 - Legal consequences of drug/alcohol use, including punishment for behaviours while intoxicated such as driving while impaired might mean they cannot engage in those activities

Teaching Tool

Grade 8: Substance Use

- Instruct students to work individually to create a representation of how drugs would negatively impact their ability to enjoy their preferred activity
- As a whole class, discuss some of the students' representations. On chart paper, write down some of activities that can be negatively affected by drug use. Post the chart paper in the center of a bulletin board or wall in the classroom or hallway.
- Allow students to complete their representations. Post their work on the board/wall around the chart paper.
 - Optional: Have students create a "You use, you lose" banner to post above the board/wall

Variations

- Allow students to act out their chosen activities and the effects of substance misuse presenting a dramatization to a small group or to the whole class