



2013 ACTIVITIES GUIDE

FOR GROUPS AGES 13 TO 16

DRUG AWARENESS WEEK

2013 Activities Guide for Groups Ages 13 to 16

Drug Awareness Week will take place from November 17 to 23, 2013. This year we have developed a host of original activities for young people ages 13 to 16.

Please note: The following activities have been specifically developed for young people ages 13 to 16. Activities guides for youth ages 10 to 12 and 17 to 24 can be downloaded at dependances.gouv.qc.ca (click on *Drug Awareness Week* in the *Drugs and Alcohol* section).

THE 2013 ACTIVITIES GUIDE IS A TOOL FOR TEACHERS AND PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 13 TO 16.

While it is being introduced during *Drug Awareness Week*, its activities can be carried out at any time of year. It is also advisable to link it to other efforts already under way in the school, such as the Healthy Schools, the guidance-oriented approach to learning, and violence prevention.

The activities in this guide were developed to promote the most effective protection factor known for countering the risks associated with drug and alcohol use and gambling—youth involvement in their schools and communities. Getting kids involved can help them develop personal and social skills and competencies that will be useful in various aspects of their lives, but also in preventing the risks and consequences of drug and alcohol use and gambling. Appendix 1 of this guide contains additional information about protective factors and involvement.

Two of the three activities presented in this guide are also designed to inform youth ages 13 to 16 of the effects, risks and consequences associated with different forms of marijuana and alcohol use and gambling.

PREVENTING DRUG ADDICTION IN YOUTH

While an information and awareness campaign like *Drug Awareness Week* differs from standard prevention programs in terms of its form and intensity, certain factors found effective in the literature were taken into consideration when developing the framework for *2013 Drug Awareness Week* tools, including the activities presented here.

The activities, which are tailored to the ages and interests of this cohort and intended for small homogeneous groups discussing alcohol or drug use (abstinence or non-consumption among 10- to 12-year-olds, for instance), are known to be more effective in preventing addiction. In addition, getting young people with good communication skills (prosocial peers) involved, having activities co-moderated by a professional and a prosocial peer, and carrying out recall activities are also recognized as some of the best ways to prevent addiction.

To find out more about predictors of effectiveness in preventing addiction, see the following documents:

Laventure, Myriam, K. Boisvert, and T. Besnard. “Programmes de prévention universelle et ciblée de la toxicomanie à l’adolescence : recension des facteurs prédictifs de l’efficacité.”, *Drogues, santé et société*, Vol. 9, No. 1, June 2010, pp. 121–164.

Palluy, Jézabelle et al. “Réussite éducative, santé, bien-être: agir efficacement en contexte scolaire – Synthèse des recommandations.” Québec City: Institut national de santé publique du Québec, 2010, various pages. (Online at http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/1065_ReussiteEducativeSanteBienEtre.pdf).

ACTIVITY

MY INVOLVEMENT = MY SKILLS!

➤ OBJECTIVES

- › Help young people recognize their involvement and the personal and social skills that it helps them develop.
- › Make students aware of the fact that these skills are excellent protection factors that can help them in various aspects of their lives and protect them from the risks associated with drug and alcohol use and gambling.

MATERIALS

- › *My Involvement = My Skills!* questionnaire
- › Black or white board
- › *2013 Drug Awareness Week* notebook for 13- to 16-year-olds
- › Poster designed for 13- to 16-year-olds, posted in the classroom (optional)

TIME REQUIRED

1 hour

HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

This activity consists of five steps:

- 1** Using an interactive approach, get the students to define “involvement.”
 - › Ask them to give examples of how they or others are involved.
- 2** Present the definition of “involvement” (see Appendix 1 if necessary).
 - › “Involvement” means participating in a variety of activities, including community involvement, volunteer work, social action, individual or team sports, music or arts, or any other intellectual or manual endeavors that can be performed with the family, at school, or in youth, school, or community organizations.
 - › Activities count as “involvement” when they connect a person with the outside world and are considered to be important, significant, and structured, with a clear goal. Involvement therefore means more than just playing with friends or watching TV. The activities must allow the person to mix with caring adults who support and encourage involvement.

- 3** As a class, ask the students to give examples of skills they can develop by getting involved (see examples in the box below). The goal is to provide examples while showing the link between activities and talents or the feelings of accomplishment and pride that may accompany them.

* We suggest using Appendix 1 to keep the group discussion going.

When you're involved in an activity that matches your interests:

- › You discover your talents.
- › You learn to know yourself better and what you like and don't like.
- › You meet other young people who share the same interests as you.
- › You develop good lifestyle habits (diet and exercise, etc.).
- › You learn to assert yourself and respect others.
- › You learn to better manage your stress and emotions.
- › You improve your physical or intellectual skills.
- › You learn to set goals and not give up despite the obstacles.
- › You build your self-esteem.
- › You develop critical thinking skills, which help you make good decisions.
- › You learn team spirit and cooperation.
- › You learn to excel.
- › You learn to handle criticism.

- 4** Have the students individually complete the *My Involvement = My Skills!* questionnaire (10 or 15 minutes).

- 5** Ask the students in which areas of their lives their skills can help them (overcome more difficult times, resist peer pressure or influence, etc.), and remind them of the campaign slogan, which is intended to help young people get involved in activities or live out their passions. Conclude the activity by reminding the students that all these skills are also useful in helping them make decisions, assert themselves, and be better equipped to avoid problems such as those associated with drug and alcohol use and gambling.

QUESTIONNAIRE

MY INVOLVEMENT = MY SKILLS!

Name: _____

Based on the definition of “involvement,” what activities are you involved in?

Are there activities you would like to be more involved in than others? Why?

When you get involved in an activity that matches your interests, you not only develop certain talents, you also learn to know yourself better and develop personal skills (self-confidence, perseverance, anger and stress management, etc.) and social skills (assertiveness, recognition of who has a good influence on you, etc.). Which skills do you think your involvement is helping you develop?

These skills foster the development of your personality and self-esteem. Give a concrete example of an experience you’ve had where you’ve used any of the skills identified in the previous question.

RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE: HOW DO YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

➤ OBJECTIVES

- › Make young people aware of the consequences associated with experimenting or occasionally using marijuana or drinking alcohol.
- › Get young people to identify various strategies to help them reduce or prevent the risks and consequences associated with drug and alcohol use.

Note: Questions must be age-appropriate. For example, thirteen-year-olds do not experience the same situations and are not subject to the same consequences as 16-year-olds.

MATERIALS

- › 2013 Drug Awareness Week notebook for 13- to 16-year-olds
- › Poster designed for 13- to 16-year-olds (optional)

TIME REQUIRED

45 to 60 minutes

HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- 1 Put the activity into context by explaining the objectives and content. The purpose of the activity is to make young people aware of the consequences associated with marijuana and alcohol use and understand how certain skills can protect them from such risks.

Talk about *Drug Awareness Week* and present the notebook or poster.

Name the types of addictions targeted by the campaign (alcohol, drugs, gambling).

Tell students the name of the campaign and ask them the following questions:

- › What message is the slogan trying to convey to young people your age?
- › Why do you think this message was chosen?

2 Present the activity.
Present the possible consequences of using drugs and alcohol, which are depicted as testimonials by young people in the *2013 Drug Awareness Week* notebook for 13- to 16-year-olds.

- › You can have students discuss the following questions in small groups before discussing them with the entire class. The groups may work on one or more of the testimonials presented.

For each testimonial selected:

- › What other consequences associated with drug and alcohol use and gambling can you identify in this situation? (These consequences may affect the young person or his/her family and friends.)
- › Are there any risks or consequences associated with drug and alcohol use or gambling other than the ones presented in the notebook? How can you protect yourself from the negative consequences that result from this situation?

IMPORTANT: Be sure to tell students that they don't need to use more than once or have a so-called abuse problem to feel the negative repercussions of using drugs or drinking too much.

3 Lead a discussion with the entire group.
Lead a discussion with the entire group on the consequences identified and strategies that help limit and prevent these risks.

Possible questions:

- › What do you think of these testimonials? Do they seem realistic to you?
- › In which situations are teenagers exposed to drinking?
- › Could these situations be handled differently? (Get students to find strategies that would lead to fewer negative consequences.)

Examples of strategies that help young people reduce or prevent risks associated with drug or alcohol use or gambling:

- › Choose not to use.
- › Go to parties with a friend where you agree to keep an eye on each other.
- › Learn how to say no to drugs, alcohol, and gambling.
- › Avoid putting yourself in situations where you might be offered drugs or alcohol.
- › Provide non-alcoholic drinks at parties.
- › Decide in advance to limit your drinking.
- › Decide in advance not to use certain substances and tell somebody you'll be with about your decision.
- › Set a spending limit if you're going to gamble and ask a friend to help you stick to it.

ACTIVITY TRUE OR FALSE?

➤ OBJECTIVES

- › Provide accurate and credible information on the effects, risks, and consequences associated with alcohol and marijuana use and gambling.
- › Promote the involvement of young people in activities that match their interests and help them develop personal and social skills.

MATERIALS

- › *True or False?* PowerPoint presentation (available at dependances.gouv.qc.ca)
- › Computer and multimedia projector
- › *2013 Drug Awareness Week* notebook for 13- to 16-year-olds

TIME REQUIRED

45 to 60 minutes

HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- › Tell the students the objectives of the activity.
- › Start the *True or False?* PowerPoint presentation. Show one slide at a time, taking the time to ask students about each statement. For example, ask those who think a statement is true to raise their hands, then those who think it is false. Reveal the slide with the correct answer afterwards.
- › To conclude the activity, ask students to answer the questions on involvement on the last two slides of the presentation. The content of the notebook may help them find examples of activities or skills.

APPENDIX 1

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

These are factors that, by their very presence in people's lives, can reduce the likelihood of problems, particularly related to alcohol or drug use, or to gambling. Protective factors can be acquired or reinforced.

Involvement = a protective factor

Involvement can take the form of engagement in any number of activities, including community involvement and volunteering, social action, individual or team sports, music and the arts, or other intellectual or manual pursuits that can be practiced with the family, at school, or in youth, school, or community organizations. To be considered involvement, activities must meet certain criteria: they must serve as a link between the individual and the outside world, be important and significant, be structured with a clear goal rather than random (e.g., playing with friends, watching TV, etc.), and be an opportunity for young people to spend time with caring adults and role models who support and encourage their involvement.

WHAT WE GAIN FROM GETTING INVOLVED

Becoming involved in activities we enjoy is beneficial in countless ways. It can help us improve our self-knowledge and self-confidence, introduce us to friends who share the same interests we do, bring us into contact with adults who are caring and supportive, help us develop assertiveness, teach us how to control our emotions, and help us develop a sense of belonging.

OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- › Having good self-esteem
- › Knowing your strengths and weaknesses
- › Believing in your future and setting goals
- › Having a trusted group of friends
- › Getting along well with family
- › Having good social skills (assertiveness, respect for others, the ability to manage peer pressure, etc.)
- › Having healthy habits, in terms of exercise, diet, and sleep

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

- › Community involvement or volunteer work
- › Individual or team sports
- › Music and the arts
- › Intellectual and manual activities

EXAMPLES OF INVOLVEMENT

- › Doing extracurricular activities during lunch periods (improv, drama, cooking, etc.)
- › Participating in class
- › Participating in recreational activities and organized sports in your neighborhood or town/city
- › Volunteering with a community or school group
- › Doing things with your family (playing board games, going on bike rides, etc.)
- › Joining a sports team
- › Taking lessons (dance, painting, piano, etc.)
- › Helping friends with projects

PRODUCED BY

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This document is only available online at dependances.gouv.qc.ca
by clicking **Drugs and alcohol** and then **Drug Awareness Week**.

Masculine pronouns are used generically in this document.

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