



2012 ACTIVITIES GUIDE

FOR GROUPS AGES 17 TO 24

25th DRUG AWARENESS WEEK
ALCOHOL - DRUGS - GAMBLING

Québec 

Drug Awareness Week
2012 Activities guide for groups ages 17 to 24

Drug Awareness Week will take place from November 18 to 24, 2012.

This year we have developed a host of original activities for young people between the ages of 17 and 24, whether they are in Secondary 5, taking adult education classes, pursuing vocational or technical training, or attending a cégep.

Please note: The activities described here have been specifically developed for young people 17 to 24 years of age. Activities guides for those between the ages of 10 and 12 or 13 and 16 can be downloaded from the website **dependances.gouv.qc.ca** (click on Drug Awareness Week in the Drugs and Alcohol section).

The *2012 Activities Guide* is a tool for professionals working with young people between the ages of 17 and 24. While it is being introduced during Drug Awareness Week, its activities can be carried out at any time of year.

PREVENTING DRUG ADDICTION IN YOUTH

The activities, which are tailored to the ages and interests of this cohort and intended for small homogeneous groups discussing alcohol or drug use, are known to be more effective at preventing drug addiction. In addition, getting young people with good communication skills (prosocial pairs) involved, having activities co-moderated by a professional and a prosocial pair, 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.

Institut national de santé publique du Québec. "Réussite éducative, santé, bien-être : agir efficacement en contexte scolaire – Synthèse des recommandations", written by Palluy, Jézabelle et al, Québec City, Institut national de santé publique du Québec, 2010, available online at http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/1065_ReussiteEducativeSanteBienEtre.pdf.

Dubé, Gaëtane et al. "Québec Survey of Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling in High School Students", 2008, Québec City, Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2009, 222 pp. (The full version is available only in French, "Enquête québécoise sur le tabac, l'alcool, la drogue et le jeu chez les élèves du secondaire".)

Other documents can be found on the website **dependances.gouv.qc.ca** in the **Drugs and Alcohol** section, under **Publications about drugs and alcohol**. They include:

- *Young people and alcohol*
- *Teens & cannabis*
- *Young people and designer drugs*
- *Taking amphetamines to lose weight—not such a great idea!*
- *The dangers of chugging alcohol*
- *Drugs...Let's talk about it*
- *The law of effect* (a chart)
- *More about drugs* (a chart)

ACTIVITY I

MYTH OR REALITY?

OBJECTIVE

PROVIDE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION SO THEY CAN MAKE ENLIGHTENED CHOICES ABOUT USING ALCOHOL AND DRUGS OR ENGAGING IN GAMBLING, IN ORDER TO PREVENT AT-RISK BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH THESE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES.

MATERIALS

- The PowerPoint presentation *Myth or Reality?*, which can be downloaded from the website dependances.gouv.qc.ca
- A computer and a multimedia projector
- The document on protective factors (Appendix I) can also provide helpful information

TIME REQUIRED

30 to 45 minutes

HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- Show the PowerPoint presentation *Myth or Reality?* to participants and ask them to try to determine whether the statements made are actual facts or just popularly held beliefs.
- Show the slides, one at a time, and ask the students about each suggested statement. For instance, ask for a show of hands from those who think the statement is false, and then a show of hands from those who believe the opposite, that it's true. Then proceed to the next slide, which will show the correct answer.
- After the slide show, lead a discussion of the various perceptions that the students had at the start, and ask them whether this activity has led them to think otherwise.

ACTIVITY 2

LET'S TALK

OBJECTIVE

PROVIDE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION SO THEY CAN MAKE ENLIGHTENED CHOICES ABOUT USING ALCOHOL AND DRUGS OR ENGAGING IN GAMBLING, IN ORDER TO PREVENT AT-RISK BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH THESE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES.

MATERIALS

- The list of discussion subjects (Appendix 2)
- The document on protective factors (Appendix 1), which can provide additional information

TIME REQUIRED

Each statement will be debated for approximately 18 minutes

ACTIVITY FORMAT

- Two teams will go head to head over a specific topic selected from the list of subjects (Appendix 2), attempting to convince the jury that they have stronger arguments.
- The jury will decide who has won the debate. The judge will conclude each debate by providing the answer indicated after each statement in this guide.

ACTIVITY 2

LET'S TALK (CONT'D)

THE PARTICIPANTS

- A moderator, who will also serve as judge
- A jury composed of four to 10 young people, one of whom will be chosen as president
- The AFFIRMATIVE team (three to five members)
- The NEGATIVE team (three to five members)
- Others in attendance will make up the audience

HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- The judge selects three statements from among those proposed, explains the rules of the activity, and ensures that debaters comply with the time periods set for each round.
- For each selected topic, the AFFIRMATIVE and NEGATIVE teams will have eight minutes to prepare. It isn't necessary for all team members to agree with positions they have to defend (YES or NO).

What's important is that debaters find arguments that support the team's position. The moderator can encourage team members to use examples from real life to back up their arguments.

- Each team has five minutes to present its arguments to the jury. A coin toss will determine which team goes first.
- The jury will deliberate for three to five minutes before the president announces its decision.
- The judge will comment on the jury's decision and read the response from this guide that goes with each statement. If necessary, the judge will lead a discussion of the subject with all participants.

ACTIVITY 3

WHAT'S INTENSE TO ME!

OBJECTIVE

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPANTS TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT THEIR INTERESTS, HOBBIES, AND GOALS IN LIFE. THESE CAN SERVE AS PROTECTIVE FACTORS, HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE AVOID VARIOUS PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THOSE STEMMING FROM ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE OR GAMBLING.

MATERIAL

- The questionnaire *What's intense to me!* (Appendix 3)

TIME REQUIRED

Approximately 30 minutes in class, and 30 minutes or more for a group discussion

HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- Ask students to answer the questionnaire and to write letters to themselves—reflecting their responses—which they will read in a year's time. After writing their letters, they will seal them in envelopes and put them in safe places until twelve months have passed. Participants can use computers to compose their letters.
- The moderator can also offer to send the students their letters in a year, either by email or regular mail.
- Next, get attendees to discuss the importance of being passionate about the things and interests they enjoy, and how having dreams and goals can help protect them from inappropriate behavior in the form of alcohol and drug use or gambling. (See information on protective factors in Appendix 1).

AND WHY NOT SHARE WITH OTHERS?

It can be interesting to go around the room one at a time and ask participants (either seated or standing before the group) to describe what they're passionate about, the activities they enjoy in their spare time...the things that "are intense to them". This can help everyone get to know one another a bit better. And who knows—perhaps someone will discover a new passion?

APPENDIX I

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

This is a factor that, due to its existence, lessens the likelihood that an individual will develop substance abuse problems, particularly involving alcohol or drug consumption or addiction to gambling. Protective factors can be acquired or reinforced.

INVOLVEMENT = A PROTECTIVE FACTOR

INVOLVEMENT IS DEFINED AS

Regular participation in one or more activities for an extended period, in a variety of settings (e.g., within the family, at school, or in community or extracurricular youth organizations). For young people, becoming involved in the environments around them has proven to be one of the most significant protective factors when it comes to preventing problems like those associated with alcohol or drug use.

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.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

- Community service and volunteering
- Social action
- Individual or team sports
- Music and the arts
- Extracurricular activities (serving on committees, working at a student radio station, joining an improv group, and more)

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

OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Having good self-esteem
- Knowing your strengths and weaknesses
- Setting specific goals and having confidence in your future
- Having a circle of trusted friends
- Having strong family ties
- Having good social skills (assertiveness, respect for others, etc.)
- Having a healthy lifestyle (daily physical activity, a healthy diet, good sleeping habits, etc.)

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF DEBATE SUBJECTS

SUBJECT 1

You can be sure what's in “designer drugs” because they're chemical products.

NO

Designer drugs are produced illegally by underground chemists or “cooks”. Concocting them is enormously risky: there's a serious chance of fire, explosion, or other hazards. Producing drugs this way also causes terrible environmental pollution.

Whatever form a designer drug may take—whatever its color or origin—it's impossible to know exactly what it contains.

Just one “dose” of a designer drug might contain:

- The desired substance, pure and unadulterated
- The substance mixed with other products
- A completely different substance than the user expects

And that means you may experience:

- No effect at all
- The effect you anticipated, partly or wholly
- A much stronger reaction
- A dangerous—or even toxic—reaction

SUBJECT 2

Only people with serious addiction problems will experience negative consequences when they use alcohol or drugs.

NO

Young people can experience negative consequences after substance use, even if they don't necessarily have abuse or addiction issues.

Here are some examples:

- An unprotected sexual encounter can result in sexually transmitted infections or an unwanted pregnancy, which take a toll on emotions and relationships
- Injuries as the result of a brawl or accident
- Physical problems like digestive issues, nasal irritation, or—very common—overdose
- Psychological problems like distress, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, etc.
- Problems at school, such as absenteeism, low motivation, suspension, and poor grades
- Relationship problems with friends and family members, including big arguments after drinking or taking drugs, or disagreements over their use

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF DEBATE SUBJECTS (CONT'D)

SUBJECT 3

Since the early 2000s, the number of young people age 15 to 24 who use alcohol or drugs has increased significantly.

NO

Generally speaking, since the 2000s we have noticed less alcohol and drug use among those age 15 to 24.

According to the Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey (July 2011):

- When it came to alcohol, 70.8% of young Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 stated that they had consumed alcohol during the 12 months prior to the survey. This was down from 82.9% in 2004.
- As for drug use, during the 12 months prior to the survey, marijuana (cannabis) use among the 15 to 24 cohort fell from 37% in 2004 to 21.6% in 2011.
- During the 12 months prior to the survey, consumption of drugs other than alcohol and marijuana among young people ages 15 to 24 was 4.8% in 2011, compared to 11.3% in 2004.

SUBJECT 4

There are surefire ways of winning at gambling; whether you're playing poker with friends or online, or video lotteries.

NO

There's no guaranteed way to win when you're gambling—the only real winner is "Lady Luck"! And it's generally acknowledged that the odds of winning online games are higher on practice sites, where people can play without wagering money, than they are on pay-to-play sites.

SUBJECT 5

Spending the night chugging is just a fun and harmless challenge!

NO

Chugging, or drinking large quantities of alcohol in a very short time, can cause severe intoxication that can result in a coma or even death!

The signs of severe intoxication are:

- Significant or total inability to react
- Loss of consciousness or deep sleep
- Respiratory distress
- Weak pulse
- Repeated vomiting
- Excessive perspiration
- Damp or cold skin (hypothermia)

WARNING: A person exhibiting these signs should never be left alone. Call 911.

APPENDIX 3

WHAT'S INTENSE TO ME!

QUESTIONNAIRE

Right now, my main interests—what's intense to me—are: _____

I've been interested in this since: _____

What I really like about it, and the thing that motivates me to do it, is: _____

When I do things associated with this interest, I feel: _____

What I love most about it is: _____

Today, I'd describe myself as: _____

In a year, I see myself as: _____

WHAT'S INTENSE TO ME! (CONT'D)

Dear (name), I want you to remember that a year ago...

[illegible]

PRODUCED BY

La Direction des communications du ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

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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