

## 9 Myths about Substance and Youth

### Facilitator Guide for Substance Presentation

**Objective:** for students to have a better understanding of the variation in substances and that substances have varying effects on the body and body functions.

**Legend:**



= Speaking notes



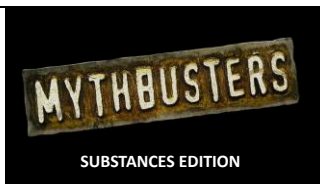

= What you are looking for in the student's responses








= Additional information

**Notes:**



Each slide is provided in order with a main objective as well as speaking notes, what to look for in conversation with students and additional information where necessary.

<b>SLIDE 1</b>		<b>Objective:</b> To break the ice, get a laugh,
	<p><i>Is it too early in the day to start talking about drugs? I don't know about you but I actually find it hard to start my day without a good hit of my favourite psychoactive substance.</i></p> <p><i>Any guesses what it might be?</i></p>	







**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 2</b>		<b>Objective:</b> Pave the way for a discussion about the broad range of substances – they are not all illicit but each needs to be managed.
	<p><i>As a nurse, my schedule is all over the map with day shifts and night shifts and that can be difficult to manage. It's not uncommon to drink coffee/tea to wake up in the morning.</i></p> <p><i>Coffee/Tea is a great example of the complex world of drugs and substances. Generally speaking, caffeine is a safe and socially accepted substance, but when taken in large quantities, it can be dangerous.</i></p> <p><i>Have you heard of caffeine being used in a way that isn't typical or the norm?</i></p>	
	<p>Looking for the following: caffeine drink mixed with alcohol like Redbull and vodka, caffeine weight-loss pills...</p>	
	<p>If asked why it is a problem to mix the two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When alcohol is mixed with caffeine, the caffeine can mask the depressant effects of alcohol, making drinkers feel more alert than they would otherwise. As a result, they may drink more alcohol and become more impaired than they realize, increasing the risk of alcohol-attributable harms. (<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/caffeine-and-alcohol.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/caffeine-and-alcohol.htm</a>)</li> </ul>	
	<p><i>We are going to review 9 myths about substances and youth – by the end of this conversation you should have:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>a better idea about what substances are,</i></li> <li>- <i>how they affect the body,</i></li> <li>- <i>and strategies for safer consumption</i></li> </ul>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 3</b>	<p>True or False #1:          Illegal substances are <u>more</u> dangerous than legal substances</p> 	<p><b>TRUE OR FALSE #1: Illegal substances are more dangerous than legal substances</b></p> <p><b>Answer is: FALSE</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> legality does not matter, being informed and making healthy choices is key</p>
	<p><i>The legal standing of a substance does not help you decide if it is safe to consume. For instance, legally prescribed medication can be extremely dangerous when taken improperly. It's really important to understand that different substances can have different effects on the body. Some of those effects can be mild and some can be severe and even deadly.</i></p>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 4</b>	<p>True or False #2:          Psychoactive drugs are chemical substances that, when taken affect how the brain works, and changes thinking, mood and behaviour?</p> 	<p><b>TRUE OR FALSE #2: Psychoactive drugs are chemical substances that affect how the brain works, and changes thinking, mood and behaviour</b></p> <p><b>Answer is: TRUE</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Understand there are a variety of substances</p>
	<p><i>We have already talked about caffeine, but what are some other psychoactive drugs?</i></p>	
	<p>Looking for the following: Alcohol, Cocaine, Cannabis, Opioids, Caffeine</p>	
	<p><i>What are some of the ways these types of drugs can affect your thinking, mood and behaviour?</i></p>	
	<p>Looking for the following: Euphoria, tired, happy, relaxed, wild, anxious, confused, energized, no pain, no fear, excited, sad...that support the three categories of <b>depressant</b>, <b>stimulant</b> and <b>hallucinogenic</b> properties</p>	
	<p><i>These are all great answers and they fit nicely into three categories of: Depressants, Hallucinogens and Stimulants</i></p>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

SLIDE 5



Categories of psychoactive substances

**Objective:** Understand the classification of psychoactive drugs and what effect they have on the body systems.



*What might be an example of a depressant drug?*



**Depressants include:** alcohol, opioids (e.g., heroin, fentanyl, oxycodone, hydromorphone, morphine, etc.), sedatives and medications for anxiety and sleep (e.g., lorazepam, diazepam, diphenhydramine, etc.).



*Can you guess what effect depressants might have on the brain?*



Depressants slow down brain function and lead to calmness or drowsiness. Depressants have this slowing effect because they affect certain neurotransmitters that act as the brakes in the brain.



*What is an example of a stimulant substances?*



**Stimulants include:** cocaine, methamphetamine, methylphenidate, pseudoephedrine and caffeine.



*What do you think is the effect of stimulants on the brain?*



Stimulants increase brain activity, especially in areas that are part of the reward system. Because of this activity, stimulants lead to pleasurable and rewarding effects.



*What are examples of hallucinogenic substances?*



Hallucinogenic drugs include: LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), PCP (phencyclidine), cannabis and jimson weed.



*Finally, what do you think are the effects of hallucinogens on the brain?*



Hallucinogens produce their effects by acting on several areas of the brain, and can result in major changes in mood, experiences and thinking.

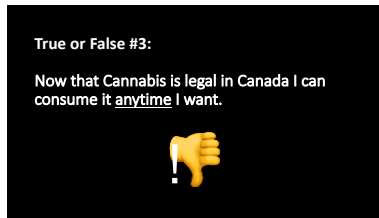


**BONUS QUESTION:** *What category of substances does CANNABIS fall under?*

**ANSWER:** *It's not an easy answer because the effects can vary from person to person and different strains can produce different effects. Cannabis can be classified under all three categories. Let's take a closer look at cannabis...*

ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE

SLIDE 6



**TRUE OR FALSE #3: Now that Cannabis is legal in Canada I can consume it anytime and anywhere I want**

**Answer is: FALSE**

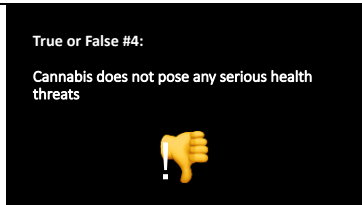
**Objective:** To know there are rules for consumption of cannabis as there are for alcohol and smoking.



*Each province has mandated the age at which a person can legally consume cannabis, in Ontario its 19 years. Further, each city or town has created rules about where cannabis can be consumed. In many places it is only in one's home or in a designated smoking area. The legality of cannabis does not take away from the effect it has on a person's ability to function well at work, at school or to perform tasks like driving a car.*

ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...

SLIDE 7



**TRUE OR FALSE #4: Cannabis does not pose any serious health threats**

**Answer is: FALSE**

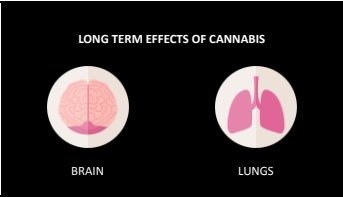
**Objective:** To know there are health effects of cannabis







Let's have a look at the health threats to two important organs – the Brain and Lungs

ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...





**SLIDE 8**



**Objective:** To understand the long-term effects of cannabis on the brain and lungs

	<p><i>First, let's look at the brain. Cannabis can have long-term effects on different parts of the brain. Long-term effects develop gradually over time, with daily or near-daily (weekly) use that continues over: weeks, months and years. Long-term cannabis use can also harm your: <u>memory</u>, <u>concentration</u>, <u>intelligence (IQ)</u>, and <u>ability to think and make decisions</u>.</i></p>
	<p><i>Let's look at the health risks for your lungs. Do you know what your lungs do?</i></p>
	<p>Looking for role in breathing, oxygenating blood, removing CO2...</p>
	<p><i>Long-term effects of smoking cannabis are similar to the effects of smoking tobacco. These effects can include risks to lung health, such as bronchitis, lung infections, chronic (long-term) cough, increased mucous build-up in the chest.</i></p>

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 9</b>	<p>True or False #5: All cannabis products are equally dangerous to your health</p> 	<p><b>TRUE OR FALSE #5: All cannabis products are equally dangerous to your health</b></p> <p><b>Answer is: FALSE</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To understand the difference between CBD and THC</p>
	<p><i>There is a difference in cannabis products and the ratio between two “cannabinoids” can have an impact on the effects. Can someone tell me the two cannabinoids (or chemicals) I am referring to?</i></p>	
	<p>Looking for THC and CBD</p>	
	<p><b>THC</b> - The most researched cannabinoid is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC is responsible for the way your brain and body respond to cannabis, including the high and intoxication. THC has some therapeutic effects but it also has harmful effects. Harmful effects may be greater when the strength of THC is higher.</p> <p>The potency (concentration or strength) of THC in cannabis is often shown as a percentage of THC by weight (or by volume of an oil). THC potency in dried cannabis has increased from an average of 3% in the 1980s to around 15% today. Some strains can have an average as high as 30% THC.</p> <p>Cannabis that contains very low amounts of THC in its flowers and leaves (less than 0.3%) is classified as hemp.</p> <p><b>CBD</b> - Cannabidiol (CBD) is another cannabinoid. Unlike THC, CBD does not produce a high or intoxication. There is some evidence that CBD may block or lower some of the effects of THC on the mind. This may occur when the amount of CBD in the cannabis is the same or higher than the amount of THC. CBD is also being studied for its possible therapeutic uses.</p>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

**SLIDE 10**

True or False #6:

There is no way to reduce the health risks related to Cannabis use



**TRUE OR FALSE #6: There is no way to reduce the health risks related to Cannabis use**

**Answer is: FALSE**

**Objective:** To know there are strategies for reducing health risks related to cannabis use



*The Canadian Mental Health Association, or CAMH, has developed 9 recommendations to reduce the health risks associated with cannabis use*

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

**SLIDE 11**

Reducing health risks related to cannabis use:

1. Cannabis use has health risks best avoided by abstaining
2. Don't use synthetic cannabinoids
3. Avoid smoking burnt cannabis—choose safer ways of using
4. If you smoke cannabis, avoid harmful smoking practices
5. Limit and reduce how often you use cannabis
6. Don't use and drive, or operate other machinery
7. Avoid cannabis use altogether if you are at risk for mental health problems or are pregnant
8. Avoid combining the risks identified above





**Reducing health risks related to cannabis use**

**Objective:** To understand the recommendations for reducing health risks related to cannabis use







1. ***Cannabis use has health risks best avoided by abstaining***
  - a. *To avoid all risks, do not use cannabis.*
  - b. *If you decide to use, you could experience immediate, as well as long-term risks to your health and well-being. Any time you choose not to use, you avoid these risks. (Secondary point)*
2. ***Delay taking up cannabis use until later in life***
  - a. *Using cannabis at a young age, particularly before age 16, increases the likelihood of developing health, educational and social problems.*
  - b. *Avoid cannabis use during adolescence. Generally, the later in life you begin to use cannabis, the lower the risk of problems.*
3. ***Identify and choose lower-risk cannabis products***
  - a. *High-potency cannabis products, with high tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content, are more likely to result in harms.*
  - b. *Some products contain a higher dose of cannabidiol (CBD), which counteracts some of THC's adverse effects.*
  - c. *This means that products with high CBD-to-THC ratios reduce some of the risks. Know what you're using. Ideally, choose cannabis products with lower risk of harms.*
4. ***Don't use synthetic cannabinoids***
  - a. *Compared with natural cannabis products, synthetic cannabis products (e.g., K2 or Spice) can lead to more severe health problems, even death.*





	<p><i>b. If you use, give preference to natural cannabis products and abstain from synthetics.</i></p> <p><b>5. Avoid smoking burnt cannabis—choose safer ways of using</b></p> <p><i>a. Smoking burnt cannabis, especially when combined with tobacco, can harm your lungs and respiratory system.</i></p> <p><i>b. Choose other methods, such as vaporizers or edibles instead—but recognize that they also come with some risks. For example, <b>edibles</b> are safer for your lungs, but you may consume larger doses and experience more severe impairment because psychoactive effects are delayed.</i></p> <p><b>6. If you smoke cannabis, avoid harmful smoking practices</b></p> <p><i>a. If you smoke cannabis, avoid “deep inhalation” or “breath-holding.” These practices are meant to increase psychoactive experiences, but they increase the amount of toxic material absorbed by your lungs and into your body.</i></p> <p><b>7. Limit and reduce how often you use cannabis</b></p> <p><i>a. Frequent cannabis use (i.e., daily or almost every day) is strongly linked to a higher risk of health and social problems.</i></p> <p><i>b. Limit yourself—and ideally your friends or others you may be using with—to occasional use, <b>such as on weekends or one day a week at most.</b></i></p> <p><b>8. Don’t use and drive, or operate other machinery</b></p> <p><i>a. Driving while impaired by cannabis substantially increases your risk of being involved in a motor-vehicle accident resulting in injury or death. Don’t use and drive, or use other machinery. Wait at least six hours after using cannabis—or even longer if you need. Combining cannabis and alcohol further increases impairment, so be sure to avoid this combination if you plan to drive.</i></p> <p><b>9. Avoid cannabis use altogether if you are at risk for mental health problems or are pregnant</b></p> <p><i>a. Some individuals should not use cannabis because of specific risk profiles. If you or an immediate family member has a history of psychosis or substance use disorder, your risk of cannabis-related mental health problems increases, and you should abstain from use. Pregnant women should not use cannabis because it could harm the fetus or newborn.</i></p>
	<p>Source: <a href="https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---reports-and-books---research/canadas-lower-risk-guidelines-cannabis-pdf.pdf">https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---reports-and-books---research/canadas-lower-risk-guidelines-cannabis-pdf.pdf</a></p>
	<p><i>Any questions so far about cannabis before we move on?</i></p>

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 12</b>	<p>True or False #7: Canadian youth first consume alcohol at an average of 18 years old</p> 	<p><b>TRUE OR FALSE #7: Canadian youth first consume alcohol around the age of 12 years</b></p> <p><b>Answer is: FALSE</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To understand that Canadian youth generally try alcohol before the legal age and to understand there are increased risks associated with drinking alcohol</p>
	<p><i>The average age is actually 16 years of age. The legal age to consume alcohol is 19 years - so why do you think so many young people start drinking at a younger age?</i></p>	
	<p>Looking for answers about accessibility – it’s everywhere and not expensive, socially acceptable</p>	
	<p><i>Like Cannabis, alcohol was illegal in Canada for a period of time as well. In Ontario it was illegal between 1916 and 1927. In the time since, there has been considerable research into the subject of alcohol and what we know today about youth and drinking is considerable.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>For instance, we know that most young people do not drink in moderation on a regular basis, but <b>alternate between abstinence and binge drinking</b></i></li> <li>- <i>We know that drinking alcohol can lead young people to make <b>unhealthy decisions</b>, such as driving after drinking or getting into a car with a driver who has been drinking.</i></li> <li>- <i>Drinking is also related to <b>increased chances</b> of violence, suicide, drowning and experiencing or committing physical or sexual assault because alcohol impairs judgment, reasoning and the ability to evaluate risk.</i></li> <li>- <i>Additionally, like adults, youths who regularly consume alcohol above recommended amounts <b>increase their risk of developing chronic illnesses such as cancer, stroke, heart and liver disease.</b></i></li> </ul>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 13</b>	<p>True or False #8: Alcohol poses serious health threats</p> 	<p><b>TRUE OR FALSE #8: Alcohol poses serious health threats</b></p> <p><b>Answer is: TRUE</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To understand there are health risks associated with alcohol consumption</p>
	<p>Let’s have a look at the health threats to three important organs – the Brain, Heart and Liver</p>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

## SLIDE 14

### Effects of Alcohol on the Body:



BRAIN



HEART



LIVER

**Objective:** To understand the specific health risks associated with consuming alcohol on the brain, heart and lungs

### ***The Brain:***

*Effect of alcohol on the brain can include:*

- *Interference with how the brain communicates*
- *The ability to think clearly is often inhibited, and enough alcohol consumption can drastically affect motor functioning via its effects on the brain.*
- *Common effects on the brain and the rest of the central nervous system (CNS) include slurred speech and issues with coordination.*
- *Just like the body, the human brain is still developing throughout adolescence and early adulthood, until about 24 years of age. The frontal lobe is the last part of the brain to mature and is involved in planning, strategizing, organizing, impulse control, concentration and attention. Drinking alcohol while these changes are occurring can have negative effects on the brain's development.*
- *In addition to this risk, puberty causes neurochemical and hormonal changes that make adolescents more likely to engage in risky behaviour and seek thrilling experiences.*

### ***Heart:***

*Effect of alcohol on the heart can include:*



- *Heartbeat Irregularity*
- *Increased blood pressure*
- *Stroke*
- *Stretching of the heart muscle*

### ***Liver:***



*Effect of alcohol on the liver:*

- *Liver damage is commonly associated with the consumption of alcohol as well.*
- *Cirrhosis of the liver is a condition that results in scarring of the liver tissue*



**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 15</b>	<p>True or False #9: Like Cannabis, there are guidelines for consuming alcohol in safer manner?</p> 	<p><b>TRUE OR FALSE #9: Like Cannabis, there are guidelines for consuming alcohol in safer manner</b></p> <p><b>Answer is: TRUE</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To understand there are strategies for reducing health risks associated with alcohol consumption</p>
	<p><i>Some people might say that since anyone younger than 19 cannot legally buy alcohol, the only guideline for them should be, “don’t drink”, but the reality is that many young people do drink alcohol. The Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines for youth are based on research and were created to provide recommendations for alcohol consumption that could limit their health and safety risks.</i></p>	









**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 16</b>	<p>Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines for Youth:</p> <p>Canada’s LRDGs recommend that youth up to the legal drinking age:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Speak to their parents about drinking;</li> <li>2. Never have more than one to two drinks per occasion; and</li> <li>3. Never drink more than one or two times per week.</li> </ol> 	<p><b>LRDG</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To understand the specific recommendations for reducing health risks related to alcohol use</p>
	<p><i>If you decide to drink, these are the recommended guidelines:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Speak to your parents about drinking;</i></li> <li>2. <i>Never have more than one to two drinks per occasion; and</i></li> <li>3. <i>Never drink more than one or two times per week.</i></li> </ol> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> What do we mean by one drink??</p>	



**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 17</b>		<p><b>One drink</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To understand what one drink actually means</p>
	<p>1 - 341 ml can of beer  1 – 341 ml bottle of cider or cooler  1 – 5oz glass of wine (no Keg sizing)  1 43 ml shot of alcohol like rye, gin, vodka</p>	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 18</b>	<b>Wrap up</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Psychoactive substances are categorized into three groups: <u>Stimulants</u>, <u>Depressants</u>, <u>Hallucinogens</u></li><li>2. Effects of substances varies</li><li>3. Lower-risk guidelines for alcohol and cannabis provide strategies for reducing the harm of consumption</li></ol>	<b>Wrap up</b>
	<i>So, we have talked about the different kinds of substances – do you remember the three categories?</i>	
	Looking for stimulants, depressants and hallucinogens	
	<i>Do you remember my favourite substance??</i>	
	Looking for caffeine	
	<i>We talked about the effect substances can have on different body systems and organs, specifically cannabis and alcohol effects. What effects did you find surprising or concerning?</i>	
	Looking for any retention of content about effects. May need to prompt about the brain, lungs, liver, central nervous system, etc.	
	<i>Last, we looked at some strategies for reducing the harm associated with consuming cannabis and alcohol. If you could pick one tip, what would you share with a friend who isn't here today?</i>	
	Looking for retention about delayed start, reducing quantity, reducing amount of times per week, looking at the type of products consumed, reducing THC, reducing alcohol content by volume, talking to parents, etc.	

**ADVANCE TO NEXT SLIDE...**

<b>SLIDE 19</b>	<b>QUESTIONS??</b> 	<b>Questions</b>
	<i>That wraps up this conversation for now. If you have any questions about this content, please do not hesitate to ask, or now, or when we have a break or at lunch time.</i>	