

How to engage your students with evidence-based drug education

Speaker Key:

LS Dr. Lexine Stapinski

SL Siobhan Lawler

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:00:00	LS	Good afternoon, everyone. And thank you for joining us for the Positive Choices webinar series. So the focus of our webinar today is on how you can use the Positive Choices portal to assist with lesson planning and engage students with drug education. And my name is Lexine Stapinski. I'll be charring the session for today. And in a moment, I will introduce our speaker, Siobhan Lawler.
00:00:29		<p>And during the session, we'd really encourage you to shoot through any comment or any questions that you have. So at any time during the presentation, what you can do is submit your questions in the questions box in your control panel. And then we will have a Q&A session at the end where we will go through those questions.</p> <p>So just to tell you a little bit about the aim of Positive Choices, what we're trying to do is assist teachers, parents and students across Australia to access up-to-date and accurate information about alcohol and other drugs.</p>
00:01:05		And also drug prevention programmes that can be implemented in schools and that are proven to improve student well-being. So as part of this initiative, we will be providing a webinar series across the year that will be of interest to teachers, parents and school leaders and also anyone else who's working with young people.
00:01:26		So as you'll see on the slide you're looking at now, after today's webinar we have another webinar coming up in September which is presented by Dr. Louise Mewton and she'll be talking to us about mental health, substance use and adolescent brain development. So a very interesting topic coming up there. And we also do have a number of webinar recordings that are available on demand that have been already recorded. So Dr. Cath Chapman, a webinar on mental health and substance use disorders and when those two problems co-occur and how these issues affect young people.

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:02:05		<p>And in addition, Dr. Nicola Newton and myself, a presentation looking at how parents and schools can protect against drug-related harms.</p> <p>So for full details about all of these webinars, please do visit our website. And the best way to stay updated to find out about future webinars is to join our mailing list at the Positive Choices website.</p>
00:02:30		<p>So it's my very great pleasure to introduce now our speaker and topic for today. So Siobhan Lawler will be presenting for us today. Now she joined NDARC in 2015 after completed a bachelor of psychological science majoring in criminology with honours at the University of New South Wales.</p>
00:02:56		<p>And she currently works as research assistant and Positive Choices coordinator within the Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use. So we're very happy to have her today and the topic will be lesson planning with Positive Choices: how to engage your students in evidence-based drug education. So thank you, Siobhan.</p>
	SL	<p>Thank you, Lexine. I'm very happy and excited to present this webinar today. I'll start off by providing some of the background on the research on substance use among young people to provide some context for those listening.</p>
00:03:32		<p>And then I'll briefly go through the development of Positive Choices and what Positive Choices is and seeks to accomplish. And then we can get into some of the ways that teachers can really capitalise and benefit from Positive Choices in terms of lesson planning and finding the resources that...</p> <p>So what do we know about rates of use of alcohol and drugs among young people in Australia? How many young people in Australia have recently used alcohol or an illegal drug?</p>
00:04:00		<p>In the last year, 54% of young people between the ages of 14 and 19 consumed alcohol. And when interpreting this statistic, it's important to consider that this applies to young people who have consumed at least a full serve of alcohol in the last 12 months.</p> <p>So binge drinking, which is defined as more than four standard drinks on one occasion, 15% of young people between the ages of 14 and 19 reporting that they binge drink at least once a month. And 9% reporting binge drinking at least once a week.</p> <p>So we have 14% of young people between the ages of 14 and 19 using cannabis. 2.7% used synthetic cannabis, 3% used ecstasy and 1% used cocaine.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
		<p>So based on these numbers, we can see that alcohol and cannabis are by far the most common drugs that young people use with other types of drugs with a much lower prevalence among this group.</p>
00:05:00		<p>So substance use disorders are among the most common of all mental health disorders experienced by young people. In Australia, 12.7% of people aged 16 to 24 are estimated to have a substance use disorder with higher rates among men than women with 16% of men compared to about 10% of women.</p> <p>Research consistently shows that substance use peaks in adolescence between the ages of 10 and 19 and in young adulthood between the ages of 20 and 24 and tends to decline after about the age of 25.</p>
00:05:34		<p>And the harms related to early onset of drugs and alcohol use are significant both to society in general and for the individuals who are directly affected by it. Other negative outcomes include early school drop-out and poor performance at school, increased risk of developing co-occurring mental health problems such and anxiety and depression.</p>
00:05:58		<p>And an increased risk of related problems later in life such as dependency and mental illness in adulthood.</p> <p>There are a number of influences that have consistently been shown to be associated with either an increased risk of teenage drinking and substance use or having a protective benefit. And the research tells us that adolescence who perceive and receive less monitoring from their parents are more likely to use alcohol and other drugs.</p>
00:06:30		<p>And when it comes to substance use in adolescents, parental monitoring, good communication and strong relationships are effective and they have a protective effect. One study found that young people whose parents monitored their behaviour more closely demonstrated lower levels of drinking and were older when they first tried alcohol. Parental disapproval of alcohol also tends to be effective in reducing adolescent alcohol use and positive attitudes towards alcohol increase risk.</p>
00:07:00		<p>So a child's attitude towards alcohol is influenced by how their parents talk to them about alcohol. And research suggests that how parents talk about their experiences with alcohol, it really matters. And even when the intention is to caution or educate or warn teenagers about the harms, this can have the effect of normalising alcohol use and enhancing adolescents' positive</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
		views about alcohol and increasing the likelihood that they will drink.
00:07:28		And it's important to say here that I'm not trying to say that parents shouldn't talk to their children about drugs and alcohol. But just to be cautious and conscious about the way that they talk about this subject and the messages they could be sending. And there is a strong relationship between mental health problems and substance use among young people. So one in four young people will meet the criteria for either a mental health disorder or a substance use disorder.
00:07:58		<p>And 25% of the people that meet the criteria for one of these disorders will actually meet the criteria for both. And this is called co-morbidity and it's more common in females.</p> <p>The evidence also tells us that substance use and behaviour problems, anti-social behaviour and conduct disorder very commonly co-occur in adolescence. And there's a strong relationship between deviance and drug use in teenage years where high levels of deviance predict peer approval and use of alcohol.</p>
00:08:29		And also if a young person's friends outwardly approve of alcohol or are perceived to be using alcohol and drugs, this also predicts use. And the distinction between peer use and perceived peer use is really important here. And to illustrate this, we will be conducting a quick poll. So the question we'll be asking is out of 100 students between the ages of 14 and 19, how many do you think have tried methamphetamine?
00:09:01		So can choose one student, two students, six students would be 6%, ten students would be 10% or 20 students. And I'll give you some time to think about this and decide which answer you think is right and submit your answer on-screen.
00:09:30	LS	I just closed the poll, Siobhan, because most people have voted now. So interesting with the results. We've got by a slight majority people said two students, so 2% would have tried methamphetamine. But the next most common answer was six students, so 6%.
00:10:03	SL	Great. So in regards to those who chose 2%, it's very impressive because that's the correct answer. And typically people tend to overestimate rates of methamphetamine use. And this is understandable, given the intense media coverage that a methamphetamine, ice, is receiving at the moment.

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:10:30		<p>And it's really important to be aware of this tendency to overestimate prevalence of drug use when educating young people about drugs and alcohol. And this is because social influencers are really powerful predictors of youth substance use, particularly the influence of parents and friends, as we have seen. And in adolescence, young people start to gravitate more towards relying on their friends for what is normal or accepted behaviour.</p>
00:10:59		<p>And we know that many adolescents often overestimate, like some people have just done, the rates of substance use among their peers. And they tend to think that everyone is doing it and the behaviours are normal, particularly if they themselves are already using alcohol or drugs. And this is called a false consensus effect when teenagers assume that everyone is doing what they are doing. And the social influence approach to drug education comes from a harm minimisation standpoint.</p>
00:11:28		<p>So it's all about giving young people the facts and the evidence and the tools to make informed decisions. And providing resistance skills training and challenging this view that everyone is doing it, driving home the message that most young people do not use drugs.</p> <p>Adolescence is a period of significant developmental change and is a time where many structural and functional changes are occurring in the brain.</p>
00:11:56		<p>And because of and in spite of these changes, it's also a period where young people are more inclined towards impulsivity, risk-taking behaviour and seeking out new experiences. And during adolescence, children develop rapidly to become adults. And they develop intellectually, physically, hormonally and socially. One of the risks of using alcohol and drugs during this critical transitional period is that using these substances can disrupt and impair the cognitive and emotional development that is occurring in the brain. And there's a lot going on. Big life changes occur during adolescence and early adulthood.</p>
00:12:30		<p>You finish school, you're beginning to form intimate relationships with new partners, gaining more independence and embarking on university. There's a lot of uncertainty and a lot of potential. So adolescence is a period where it's really important in shaping future life outcomes. And we know that the younger a person is when they start using drugs and alcohol, the greater their risk of long-term problems including co-occurring mental health problems, juvenile offending and early school drop-out.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:13:03		<p>So this suggests that the best time to intervene is before exposure occurs and to provide young people with the knowledge and resilience tools to make informed decisions about these substances when they do inevitably come into contact with them, at whatever age that may be.</p> <p>So why is prevention important? Effective prevention is key in reducing the harms associated with drug and alcohol use.</p>
00:13:29		<p>And research tells us that even small reductions in alcohol and drug use in this group can have significant benefits for society. Evidence-based programmes exist but implementation is low due to various barriers. One of those barriers is time and resource demands. We understand that it's a time-consuming process finding up-to-date and relevant drug education resources and determining whether or not they're reliable. Also accessing and attending training to implement programmes isn't always feasible, particularly in more remote areas.</p>
00:14:01		<p>And in terms of costs of training, this can be another barrier. So a recent Australian survey of school principals reported that principals consistently expressed a need for additional support in this area. Positive Choices seeks to respond to these needs and address these barriers and support schools to become good providers of evidence-based drug and alcohol prevention.</p>
00:14:27		<p>So now I'll move forward and I'll briefly go through the development of the portal and explain what Positive Choices is and the types of prevention resources that are available for our target groups. That is students, parents and teachers. So Positive Choices is a one-stop shop for evidence-based drug education information and resources. The portal builds on existing research and resources and aims to provide a centralised resource where users can easily locate trustworthy and reliable up-to-date prevention resources that have been developed on the basis of evidence.</p>
00:15:05		<p>As well as information about drug and alcohol that is tailored to student, parent and teacher needs and requirements. All resources can be accessed online, which facilitates access for anyone who has an internet connection. Most of the programmes available can be rolled out without any additional training.</p>
00:15:26		<p>Positive Choices was developed through collaboration with researchers at the National Drug Research Institute and then the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and the Centre for Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use. And</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
		<p>the project has been made possible by funding from the Australian government Department of Health in Canberra and external experts such as the Principals' Australia Institute were consulted during development and testing prior to launch. But most importantly is the end users.</p>
00:15:55		<p>So the teachers, students and parents that significantly contributed to development by participating in focus groups and interviews to ensure that people who were going to use the portal found it useful and relevant, easy to use and understand and just found it to be a helpful and practical tool that provided the kind of information that they wanted and needed. So some of the content, such as the fact sheets and webinars have been developed by researchers here at CREMS.</p>
00:16:25		<p>Other resources such as some of the programmes, games, apps and videos were identified and approved for inclusion through a systematic scoping process that occurs annually where resources are selected according to set criteria. And there are many resources available on the site and today we're going to talk about some of them in the context of what's possible with Positive Choices. First, I'll quickly go through each role type and explain the types of resources that are available for different users.</p>
00:16:56		<p>So students can choose from a range of educational games, apps and videos and access accurate and up-to-date information about different drugs. They can also find information in the fact sheets and topics include how to help a friend who might have a drug problem, how different health workers can help in different ways. The difference between a school counsellor, psychologist, a youth worker and so on.</p> <p>Parents can find similar information about various drugs, their rates of use and effects. But there's also resources available that can help with challenging situations related to drugs and alcohol.</p>
00:17:32		<p>So for example, there's fact sheets and video demonstrations to assist parents in navigating difficult conversations around drug and alcohol use. And also information about how to help someone taking an illegal drug as well as these webinars which summarise the latest research on how drugs and alcohol affects young people and how parents can try and prevent these harms. So currently on the portal there are three additional webinars available on demand to stream any time as Lexine has explained at the beginning of this webinar.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:18:02		<p>So there are so many ways that teachers can benefit from Positive Choices. And that's what we're going to be focussing on in today's webinar. There'll be different reasons why teachers come to the portal. Some people might want a programme that they can implement for a full year and fulfil the alcohol and drug education curriculum components with one programme that's easy to implement and proven to work. So I'll begin by showing you a couple of programmes available that could apply in this case.</p>
00:18:32		<p>Alternatively, you may want a resource to fill a specific curriculum requirement that you haven't been able to meet in your previous drug education lessons. And I can show you how to search five relevant and specific curriculum items to find a resource that meets your needs. And then we'll go a little bit deeper into the search filters and browse through different resources that are designed for different classroom requirements. So for high-risk students or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.</p>
00:19:00		<p>And lastly, I will show you how to make an account so you can save your favourite resources and easily access them to plan your lessons. So we're going to keep moving on now to how you can use Positive Choices to plan fun and engaging drug education lessons for your students. So I'm going to begin here by going through and providing some information about some of the resources that we have available on the portal.</p>
00:19:28		<p>I'll start with the fact sheets and then I'll talk about video resources, a couple of games, quick activities and then the programmes. So we have a range of fact sheets that provide up-to-date and accurate information about alcohol and various illicit drugs, including what a substance is, what the short and long term effects are, how many people have tried it, how it is consumed, street slang names for the drug, what some of the risks are in using it and so on.</p>
00:19:59		<p>At this time, we have fact sheets about alcohol, benzodiazepines, cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy, emerging drugs, GHB, hallucinogens, heroine, inhalants, ketamine, methamphetamine and tobacco. And we're currently in the process of developing additional fact sheets on steroids and energy drinks. And we're always open to further suggestions for new content, so please email your suggestions through to us at any time to the email address info at Positive Choices dot org, dot AU or through the contact form on the homepage.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:20:34		<p>And other fact sheets available provide guidance and students, teachers and parents. And one of the fact sheets that we have that we know a lot of people are accessing focusses on various ways to start conversations with young people about drug use. And there are versions that are tailored for parents, carers and teachers and students.</p>
00:20:57		<p>And lastly, one of our most popular and downloaded items is the drug education booklet that you can see here on screen. And we have versions for students, parents and teachers. The booklets are a briefer, condensed version of the one-stop shop that is Positive Choices and they contain information from other fact sheets and those mentioned previously.</p> <p>So to give you an idea of the range of the information that they provide, you can see the contents page of the teacher version here on screen. So there's general information about different illegal drugs.</p>
00:21:30		<p>There's information about rates of use and legal information. How to help someone who's taken an illegal drug and put them in the recovery position. An overview of evidence-based programmes and information about where to get help. So you can order hard copies of this resource too. And they're still available to be ordered free of charge. They're very useful, particularly if an incident occurs at your school or in the media or you want to provide some additional information to your students, whether it's about a specific drug or just as a general resource.</p>
00:22:00		<p>They're really great as a general resource and they're really easy to distribute. So if you would like to order some hard copies, send your requests through to the Positive Choices email which is on screen or at info. Info at Positive Choices dot org dot AU. Or, like I said, you can submit your requests via the Positive Choices homepage.</p> <p>So there's two videos that I'll introduce you to today. There's Sophie's Story and Under Construction.</p>
00:22:30		<p>Sophie's Story is one of three videos in the Choices for life series developed by the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency and it's very well done in terms of production quality and effectively communicating realistic scenarios that are relatable in an engaging way. And in the video, the potential consequences of peer pressure and binge drinking are explored through Sophie's experiences at a teenage house bar.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:22:57		<p>On the resource page, you can access the video and an expert review of the resource. So there are links to the curriculum as well and also some discussion points that teachers can implement if they choose.</p> <p>So Under Construction is a resource developed by Turning Point and it discusses adolescent brain development and how early initiation to drinking alcohol or using cannabis can negatively affect different brain regions. It introduces neuroscience concepts about different parts of the brain and what they do in a way that's easy to understand.</p>
00:23:31		<p>And it explains how drugs like alcohol can disrupt important neuronal processes that are occurring during adolescence. The version that I have featured here is alcohol-specific but there's also a cannabis version available.</p> <p>So serious games have promising and in some cases demonstrated benefits. And they've also been shown to be associated with increased motivation, engagement and knowledge acquisition compared to other modes of learning.</p>
00:24:01		<p>And there's two games that I'll briefly introduce you to today and the first one is called Pure Rush and the second one is called the Reconstructors. So Pure Rush was developed by researchers here at CREMS and the game was developed through consultation with Year 10 students. In the game, players rush to a music festival and on the way, they encounter some obstacles like cannabis, pills, methamphetamine and hallucinogens. And when they avoid a drug obstacle by jumping over it, motivational messages appear on the screen that help to reinforce that behaviour.</p>
00:24:32		<p>The game reinforces the social influence message that I spoke about before that most young people do not use illicit drugs. Colliding with a drug obstacle results in impaired performance effects and the visual representation is specific to the type of drug. So players are also shown infographics which help to reinforce the key educational messages about the drug that they collided with. And they learn that by avoiding drugs, this is the secret to winning the game.</p>
00:24:59		<p>So the game is designed to be played in conjunction with an information booklet and it's not aimed to be preventive on its own. Rather, it has potential to engage students who might not be receptive to traditional drug education approaches or lessons and as a way of starting the conversation with young people about illicit drugs in a format that's fun and engaging. And we're</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
		currently finalising an evaluation of the benefits of the game in conjunction with the booklet. And these findings will be available soon.
00:25:31		<p>So the second game is the Reconstructors. And this game was developed in the U.S. where players help solve drug-related cases by gathering information, interpreting data and conducting experiments and consulting with experts.</p> <p>So there haven't been very many evaluations conducted on serious games in the drug and alcohol field and their effectiveness. However, the Reconstructors is a series of games that has been very well-evaluated.</p>
00:25:58		<p>And there's three versions of the game and they're all available on Positive Choices. And in the evaluation of one of the versions, Nothing to Rave About, which you can see at the bottom of the screen there, has demonstrated that the game significantly increases student knowledge about club drugs including drugs that have both stimulant and hallucinogenic properties and also the effects. And there are two other versions that are A Plaguing Problem about opioids and Uncommon Sense, which is about inhalants.</p>
00:26:31		<p>And both have demonstrated benefits in published studies. Definitely worth checking that out.</p> <p>In the quick activities section, there's a number of worksheets that are freely available that teachers can access online and print off for students to complete in class. And these activities were developed for use with the CLIMATE Schools Programmes which are also available on the portal but they can be implemented on their own without rolling out the whole programme.</p>
00:26:58		<p>This being said, the activities come from the CLIMATE Schools Programmes, which are evidence-based and evaluated. The value of implementing the activities on their own has not been evaluated. But these activities can be a fun way of sparking and guiding class discussion that can be used either for just discussion alone or there's also the option to have a worksheet and class discussion. And there are also quizzes available like the one that you can see here on the left-hand side of the page.</p>
00:27:28		<p>Some activities are about a page long, like the alcohol guidelines and some are a little bit longer like the decision-making, problem-solving. So teachers can decide if they want something really quick or something that takes up a little bit more time.</p> <p>Now I'm going to take you through a couple of the recommended</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
		programmes that we have available. So how to access them and then I'll point out different areas of information that you are going to find relevant when you're browsing the programmes yourself.
00:27:58		So the easiest way to access the available recommended programmes is to click on the resources link as you can see here in the middle of the page. And this will bring you to a page where you can see all the different resource types. This is just the top level but you can see recommended programmes, activities and fact sheets here. So if you click on programmes, it will bring you to a page where you can browse all the available programmes on site. As you can see, there's a total of 19.
00:28:28		And each year, we systematically cope, review and select resources for inclusion. And during this process, we apply a number of inclusion criteria to determine which resources can be added to the portal. And the recommended programmes must be developed on the basis of and with reference to published research evidence. And the programme must have been evaluated with evidence of prevention benefits in a published peer-reviewed journal. The programme must also be able to be accessed in Australia and relevant to an Australian audience.
00:28:59		So to give you an example, I'm going to go through a couple of programmes that we have available and how to access them. So the first one is SHAHRP, short for School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project. And the second one is the CLIMATE Schools cannabis and psychostimulant module. And both programmes were developed in collaboration with students and teachers and reflect the life experiences of young people while also fitting in well to the school curriculum. So on the recommended programmes list, you will find SHAHRP.
00:29:31		And if you click on it, it will bring to you an information page like this. So SHAHRP was developed by Dr. Nyanda McBride at the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University. You can see that here. And here you can find where the link to the programme access is on the Curtin University website.
00:29:58		Tells us that it's designed to be implemented over two years and the summary gives an outline of what the programme involves. So SHAHRP is a classroom-based prevention programme aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm and risky consumption. And the activities focus on provision of alcohol-related information, skill rehearsal, individual and small group decision-making and discussions based on scenarios suggested by students with an emphasis on identifying alcohol-related harm and strategies to

Time code	Speaker	Text
		reduce harm.
00:30:30		<p>About two thirds of the activities are interactive. And this is a really great programme because it has been trialled in multiple published studies as you can see indicated here. And it has been replicated in Northern Ireland and Brazil with similar results shown. And you can see this indicated on the top right-hand side and bottom of the page where links to key published studies evaluating the programme's effectiveness are.</p>
00:31:00		<p>And the various benefits are also clearly stated here. And on the left-hand side of the page, you'll be able to see some additional information such as links to relevant attachment documents, links to the Australian Curriculum and the costs involved. So as you can see, this a free resource.</p> <p>So the CLIMATE Schools Programme, similar. You select it from the list and it would bring you to an information page.</p>
00:31:32		<p>And so you can see it's been developed by researchers here at CREMS and UNSW. And the link to the resources available where it says available. And you can see the format. So it's designed to be laid out over six lessons and implemented one year after the alcohol and cannabis module, but this is not necessary. So the summary tells us that the CLIMATE Schools modules take a social influences approach.</p>
00:31:59		<p>Meaning that the focus is on, as we've discussed, acts and harm minimisation. Providing resistance skills training and incorporating normative education, which is all about challenging and countering the common assumption that everyone is doing it while actually we know that what the research says is that most young people don't use illicit drugs.</p> <p>The programme follows episodes of cartoon-based drama about teenagers and their experiences with illicit drugs. So you can see here the training and costs. So information is there. And this is a really great programme, because it's really easy to implement.</p>
00:32:32		<p>And the feedback from teachers and students has told us that they really enjoy the programme and find it really engaging. The benefits and evidence base are here also, so you can see that benefits are that it increases knowledge about cannabis and psychostimulants. It's been shown to decrease prodrug attitudes and also reduce cannabis use frequency in female students. And on the left-hand side of the page, you can see the additional information, including attachments.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:33:00		So there's a... And links to the Australian Curriculum. So search filters. You can use the search filters on the portal to find a resource that meets your specific curriculum needs. So whether you're filtering by a specific curriculum item, whether you're searching for an item for a particular group or if you need a well-evaluated resource to cover cannabis for Year 9, I'm going to show you how to find this.
00:33:32		So how can I find a resource that matches a curriculum item. Now the resources that we have on Positive Choices are aligned to version 8.1 of the Australian Curriculum, which is the latest version. And as you are aware, as teachers, we are in a national transitional period where the implementation of the Australian Curriculum is up to authorities in each state and territory to decide how and when it's implemented and what version is used.
00:33:59		So for details about particular state and territory systems, you can visit the Australian Curriculum website that is on the screen for more information and relevant contact details. But the reasoning behind having the national curriculum links is to be future-thinking and to be heading in the same direction as schools around Australia as they slowly implement the new framework over time. So resources aligned to national curriculum items will be applicable to all schools around Australia. And this helps to make Positive Choices easier to navigate for all users.
00:34:33		So on the left-hand side of the page in the teacher portal, you'll be able to see the filters and resources that match PDHP, curriculum items from foundation through to Year 10. So if you click on the item itself, it will take you to the Australian National Curriculum website description page for that item.
00:35:00		<p>And if you hover over a curriculum item, you can see what category it applies. And if you check the corresponding box and then press update, it will filter all resources to show you only those that align with the items that you require.</p> <p>So how can I find a resource for a certain group? Now as you can see on the screen, you can select from a drop-down menu on the side.</p>
00:35:28		And the specific groups that you can select include girls or boys, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, culturally and linguistically diverse students and high-risk students. So let's say you want a resource that's been developed specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. So you want to select the corresponding box and press update and it will bring

Time code	Speaker	Text
		<p>you to this screen.</p> <p>So the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre or NCPIC has developed prevention resources specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth students.</p>
00:36:05		<p>And these are Making the Link which is a prevention programme and Cannabis Yarns which is a series of information booklets. Now Making the Link is an educational resource developed by NCPIC in collaboration with Origin, Youth Health and Turning Point. And there are a number of activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people students that incorporate video content and role-play.</p>
00:36:29		<p>And aim to encourage and teach Indigenous young people how to seek professional help for problems relating to drug use and mental health.</p> <p>And Cannabis Yarns provides information about ganja or cannabis for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. So the illustrated flip book format has audio and read-along, so it's suitable for a range of literacy levels. And topics covered include what is ganja, ganja and the community, ganja and the law and the ganja brain story which covers brain functions, addiction and quitting</p>
00:37:04		<p>To find resources specific for high-risk students, it's the same process. So you select the box corresponding to high-risk students in the filters and press update. And the resources relevant to high-risk students that we have on the portal are SHAHRP, which we've discussed, Preventure, Project No Drug Abuse, Strengthening Families, Aspire, eCHECKUP TO GO and the NCPIC cannabis fact sheets.</p>
00:37:32		<p>So these resources are designed for this group as they target specific risk factors that are associated with an increased likelihood of using alcohol and drugs in youth. And these include specific personality traits or complex family problems. And there's a focus on developing and improving coping skills for young people and communication skills between parents and children to improve relationships in addition to more universal drug prevention approaches like resilience training and problem-solving.</p>
00:38:03		<p>So how can I find a resource that fits multiple selection criteria? So just say you want to find a resource... Let's say that you want a prevention programme that focusses on cannabis and that has benefits in multiple published studies and for Year 9 students.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:38:28		<p>So I'm going to click on teacher view and on the left-hand side where the search filters are, you can select based on your requirements. So drug type will be selecting cannabis and then Year 9, year level. Evidence rating we'll select supported in multiple published studies. Resource type we could select programme. And just keep in mind that you will need to update each time that you change the selection criteria.</p>
00:38:58		<p>So this will bring you to a page where you can see there's five programmes available that fit this criteria. And it's just a matter of looking through and choosing one that you feel is most manageable for your classroom.</p> <p>Now how can I make an account? So now I'm going to explain how and why you should make an account on Positive Choices. So if you can see on this on the screen, you click register on the top right-hand side of the screen and that will bring you to this page where you can enter your email and choose a password.</p>
00:39:31		<p>And then once you've logged in, if you find a resource that you like, you can see on the left-hand side you can click on add to my resources where it's circled. Then you press confirm. And then it will always be available for you and you can access it through the My Resources button at the top of the page.</p>
00:39:56		<p>And the benefit of making an account is that when you find a programme that you like and that you find works really well in your classroom or for your school, you can save it to your account and you can easily access it straight away simply in subsequent years.</p> <p>So we've gone through everything that we were going to talk about today but now I'm just going to recap. So first off, I gave you a bit of a background to substance use among young people. And we talked about rates of use of different drugs, highlighting that alcohol is by far the most common drug used by young people.</p>
00:40:30		<p>And we discussed how adolescence is a critical transitional period in terms of brain development, but it's also a peak time for the development of substance use disorders. So this really highlights the need to intervene early and focus on evidence-based prevention to reduce these harms.</p> <p>We then talked about the development of Positive Choices. That it was developed to meet a need for a centralised resource that could provide schools with access to reliable prevention resources that are both effective and engaging for young people.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:41:02		And take the guesswork out for teachers and parents and students on what's reliable. And then we went over how you can use Positive Choices to plan your lessons and so we went through various resources using examples, went through some of the programmes and games, videos, fact sheets and quick activities that we have available on the portal. And I showed you how to use some of the search filters.
00:41:27		How to find a resource that matches a curriculum item or meets a specific classroom need. How to make an account and save resources for future use. So I just want to thank you very much for tuning in this afternoon. I hope I have managed to convey why Positive Choices is important and useful and that you now feel more confident in using the portal to get students engaged about learning about drugs and alcohol. And prevention, it really is the best harm reduction approach that we have available and it's really up to parents and teachers to embrace the opportunity that they have to make a difference in this space.
00:42:04		So thank you.
	LS	Thanks so much, Siobhan. That was really comprehensive and a bit of a whirlwind tour to Positive Choices. So hopefully everyone has taken something away. So we've got some time now for some questions. So please anyone who has... I've got a few comments coming through already.
00:42:30		If anyone else would like to put a question out there, you can just use your question box to submit that question and we'll ask Siobhan. But just to start us off, you talked earlier and we had the poll which was quite interesting with a lot of people accurately guessing 2% in terms of methamphetamine use. But there were quite a few people that estimated it to be more like 6% and even 20%.
	00:42:58	And I guess this reflects what we're hearing in the media all the time about an ice epidemic and that kind of thing. So could you just talk us through what is actually happening for young people in terms of methamphetamine use and the patterns that are going on.
	SL	Yes, of course. People are understandably concerned about methamphetamine use in Australia and that's why it's so important that the government is directing all these funds into treatment and prevention initiatives to prevent the harms that we are seeing associated with the use of this drug.

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:43:34		But the short answer to the question is that while rates of methamphetamine use have remained relatively stable in recent years, it's the harms associated with its use that have increased. So to give you a bit more information, the survey research that we've used, that we've been looking at with the rates of drug use in the Australian population and among young people tells us that between 1995 and 2007 rates of use with methamphetamine among 14 to 19 year olds was actually between about 4.5 to 6%.
00:44:10		So that's what people were guessing, and 15 years ago that would have been correct. So that's quite high. But since 2007, methamphetamine use hasn't risen significantly. This is what the survey data tells us. And among this group... So data from different surveys tells us this as well.
00:44:31		So between 12 to 17 year olds or 14 to 19 year olds, it has stayed around 2% for young people having used methamphetamine in the past year. And this may be really hard to believe for some people because of the intense focus on ice in the media and reports from front-line workers that use has skyrocketed. But this is more reflective of a different trend we're seeing where there's been an increase in a preference for crystal methamphetamine or ice compared to other forms of methamphetamine like base or powder or speed.
00:45:05		So it's not that what we're seeing is... What we've been seeing is not necessarily more people using the drug methamphetamine but existing users and new users switching and favouring a more potent, more harmful form of methamphetamine which is ice.
	LS	Thanks, Siobhan. So just another question that's come through.
00:45:30		There's a question will all students need to register to use the resources. So, for example, if we want them to see a video or play one of the games, do they have to register to use the resources?
	SL	Thanks for that question. Absolutely not. So no, they don't need to register. They can register if they want to make an account and save resources. They're more than welcome to do that, we've had students registering. But anyone can access the portal at any time.
00:46:00		And access any of the resources. So they don't need to have an account to do that.
	LS	And we should know some of the resources... So the idea with

Time code	Speaker	Text
		Positive Choices is to bring together lots of different resources. So some of these are from external sites. So there may be costs involved with some of the resources as someone's noted in their question. However, there are also resources listed on there that are free as well.
00:46:30	SL	Yes.
	LS	So someone has also written in to say that they're overseas at the moment. Welcome. It's great to have you joining us. And we are seeing an increasing number of international users of Positive Choices. It's great to have you with us. And a very specific question come through there about data in Hong Kong. So I wonder if you mean data about prevalence in Hong Kong.
00:47:01		But that might be a question that's best to shoot through to our email address. So do contact us with more info on that question. Just having another look at what questions we have coming through. An interesting question here about whether the school-based drug and alcohol programmes are considered more effective than externally-delivered programmes? Now do you have any comments on that, Siobhan?
00:47:30		So externally-delivered programmes as in programmes that are delivered outside of the school?
	LS	Yes.
	SL	I think that the advantage of delivering prevention programmes in school is that you have the potential for wide reach and you have everybody in there at the same time and they're all receiving the same intervention. And you can do it in stages as well, so you can intervene early and incrementally.
00:48:00		It's a really good opportunity to intervene then rather than outside of that.
	LS	Fantastic. That's exactly right. It's not necessarily that there's been head to head comparisons that are saying that school-based programmes are effective but that's is such a great potential opportunity. But at the same time, we do realise... In talking to lots of teachers, we do realise there's so much work you already have to do.
00:48:34		And that's one of the reasons why there was that drive to develop Positive Choices was to try and make it easy to access programmes. And programmes like CLIMATE Schools that you

Time code	Speaker	Text
		mentioned, Siobhan, earlier where you really can just plug it in and press play, there's not a lot of training that's involved or there's not a lot of extra work that's involved in terms of implementing the programme.
00:49:01	SL	Exactly, yes.
	LS	I just wanted to query as well, when you mentioned the CLIMATE module, and that was one of three modules. And you said that there were benefits specifically or greater benefits for girls. Do the other modules do the same or do we also see benefits for boys with the other modules?
	SL	We do see benefits for girls and boys with the other modules.
00:49:32		Off the top of my head, I can't tell you the exact benefits of the... Lexine, maybe do you know off the top of your head?
	LS	I just wanted to clarify. It's one of multiple studies and we do have benefits in terms of reduced alcohol use and reduced cannabis use in a broader boys and girls with the other studies as well.
00:49:57		So the great thing that you've shown us is how that we can look up the research behind these programmes. So you can actually click on the different modules and see the benefits that have been demonstrated in various studies.
	SL	Yes, exactly.
	LS	A comment has come through in relation to our discussion earlier someone said that there are benefits to both school-based and external programmes that can offer different insight and opportunities and/or exposure. Thanks so much for that comment and I think we would certainly agree that they can offer different benefits.
00:50:33		I'm just having a look through the questions that are coming through. So an interesting one that's come through about our funding. Thank you for our funding. So will funding be ongoing for the portal? Do you want to take that one, Siobhan?
	SL	Sure. Yes, thanks for that question.
00:51:00		We have been approved for funding for the portal for the next few years, so that's great. We just found that out recently. And yes, that really helps us with continually updating and reviewing resources for inclusion and really putting in the time to make sure that it is up-to-date. So it's really important that we have that. But

Time code	Speaker	Text
		yes, thanks.
00:51:30		Did you want to add anything to that, Lexine?
	LS	No. I think you've covered that well. I've got a comment from someone here who's saying that they're frequently asked by teachers to present to their classes on these topics but I'm also asked for reference sites so that they can deliver the lessons themselves, so this is perfect. That's great. Thanks so much for that comment. That's really great to hear.
00:52:01	SL	Can other staff members see this webinar at any stage? It seems like a great tool to add to our toolbox.
00:52:31		So it should be available maybe tomorrow or...? Lexine, do you know?
	LS	Definitely by tomorrow, yes. Comment here. I've taught in remote WA and now I teach rural and have never come across this site. Any comment on that, Siobhan?
	SL	The site was launched in December last year, so it's relatively new. It hasn't been around for very long, although this year has flown.
00:53:01		But yes, so we're trying to get the word out about it. So please if you have friends or colleagues or you know people that would find it useful, it's a really great resource and a lot of time's been put into making it as good as it is. So it's definitely worth sharing.
	LS	So thank you for spreading the word around your department if people haven't heard about it yet.
00:53:31		So we've got a question here coming... Someone asking about using the resource in our youth justice department. How would you recommend implementation with young people? For example people who may have behavioural problems. What kind of resources might you recommend?
	SL	The one that comes to mind is one of the...
00:54:01		The prevention ones would probably be most appropriate but it also depends what the intention is. So if you want to try and reduce the incidence of behavioural problems or reduce the severity of the behavioural problems, then one of the prevention programmes that targets high-risk students that we discussed earlier would probably be most relevant. One of the ones that we

Time code	Speaker	Text
		didn't really go over was Preventure.
00:53:28		And this is a programme that's an international programme and I need to have a look at it to give you more information. But it targets specific personality risk profiles and studies that have been done that have shown that it is effective in reducing the severity and incidence of these types of problematic behaviours because one of the things that it does is it teaches young people coping skills.
00:54:58		And it's an intensive intervention to teach young people how to deal with these difficult feelings when they arise so that they can respond to them in more effective ways. It's definitely worth having a look at. It's a great programme. It's been very well-evaluated.
	LS	Yes, a great suggestion and just to add that that was developed by Professor Conrod who's based in University of Montreal now, that programme. So it's the Preventure programme.
00:55:30		So if you want more information, do look that up. You can search in the little search bar at the top of Positive Choices to find specific things like that. And the programme was developed because we do know that certain personality styles or behavioural problems might mean a young person is at greater risk. So if we can help them to cope with those for example feelings of hopelessness or being inclined to be impulsive or sensation-seeking.
00:56:58		<p>If we can help with coping with that, we might be able to reduce substance use. So that's the idea with that programme, which is actually being trialled in Australia for the first time at the moment. So watch this space for some results coming out from that trial.</p> <p>We've got a last comment that I'll mention. Someone's written in and said thank you for your time and expertise. I was one of the many teachers who worked on Positive Choices in the end stage before launching.</p>
00:56:30		<p>It's great to see how well it is working and can be most utilised. So thank you so much for contributing during the development stage and it's great to get your feedback there.</p> <p>We'll wrap up the session for today and let everyone get on with their afternoon. So thank you so much for joining us and we do hope that you might let other people know if you did enjoy the webinar and let them know that they can access it via the video as we mentioned or just look at the handouts.</p>

Time code	Speaker	Text
00:56:59		But in addition, join us for the next webinar that's coming up in September. So a really interesting topic about adolescent brain development, the relationship with mental health and substance use presented by Dr. Louise Mewton. So do register in advance for that one and we hope to see you again at one of our subsequent webinars. Thanks, Siobhan, and good afternoon everyone.
	SL	Thank you, Lexine. Bye.
00:57:30		
00:57:36		