Positive Choices
Drug and Alcohol Information
Get informed, stay smart, stay safe

Quick activity

Myths about alcohol: Class Activity

Evidence ratings:

This resource has undergone expert review. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Year 7–8, Year 9–10

Targeted Drugs: Alcohol

Tags: OurFutures

Time Allocated: 1 lesson

Links to National Curriculum:
ACPPS073 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS076 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS089 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS090 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS091 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS092 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS093 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS094 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS095 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS095 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS096 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS097 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS098 (Yr 9–10)

Origin: Australian

Cost:
Free

Attachments

Worksheet: Alcohol Myths

Developers

Previously known as Climate Schools, **OurFutures** was developed by researchers based at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney, Australia. See the OurFutures website for more information.

Format

Class discussion or research activity.

Preparation

Print or electronically share the attached class worksheet "Myths or facts about alcohol".

Activity

Class discussion: Hand out a copy of "Myths or facts about alcohol" to each student. Systematically work through the list of Myths and Facts on the sheet. Ask the class to determine which are myths and which are facts. Ask the class to try to explain the reason for why each point is a myth or fact.

Research activity: After distributing "Myths or facts about alcohol" to each student, give them time to research online about each statement. Encourage students to consider the credibility and reliability of their sources.

Background Information

Myth 1: Coffee will help to sober you up.

Truth: Coffee does not help to sober you up. Neither does a cold shower, fresh air, etc. The only way of getting rid of the effects of alcohol is for your body to metabolise it and that takes time! On average your body metabolises one standard drink per hour.

Myth 2: Alcohol makes it easier for people to socialise.

Truth: Alcohol in small quantities can make people feel more relaxed and sociable. However, alcohol is a “downer”. Drinking too much alcohol can make people want to withdraw from others. Alternatively, drinking too much alcohol can make people feel aggressive, which also doesn't help much with improving social relationships!

Fact 1: Fizzy (carbonated) alcoholic drinks affect you more rapidly than non-fizzy alcoholic drinks.

Fizzy (carbonated) alcoholic drinks affect you more rapidly as carbonation causes the valve between the stomach and small intestine to open. This allows the alcohol to enter the blood stream from the small intestine more quickly.

Myth 3: Alcohol makes people feel happy.

Truth: In small quantities that can be true. However, too much alcohol makes people feel depressed or sad!

Myth 4: The worst thing that can happen if you drink too much alcohol is a bad hangover.

Truth: Alcohol can lead to far greater evils than just a bad hangover. Alcohol is one of the causal factors in many traumatic and tragic accidents. Also, drinking too much alcohol can suppress the central nervous system to such an extent, that it can lead to coma or death.

Fact 2: Alcohol contains calories, but little of nutritional value.

Myth 5: Illicit drugs cause more harm than alcohol.

Truth: All drugs cause harm but alcohol causes more deaths than all other illegal drugs combined.

Myth 6: Drinking makes you adventurous and cool.

Truth: Drinking too much alcohol can lead to people feeling sick or vomiting. It makes people less concerned about what they say or do. Both of these factors can lead to socially embarrassing situations and certainly do not make people “cool”.

Myth 7: It's impressive if you can handle lots of alcohol.

Truth: People with a larger lean body mass may be able to handle more alcohol than the average person. Being bigger doesn’t necessarily make a person cooler or tougher. Another reason some people can handle more alcohol is because their bodies have become tolerant to the effects of alcohol. This means that their liver may actually already be damaged or has learned to work harder to clear the alcohol. Having a damaged liver is hardly tough or cool. It can actually be quite serious!

Myth 8: Alcohol helps your perform in the bedroom.

Truth: Alcohol may increase a person’s interest in sex, but it decreases their ability to perform. Alcohol may also decrease a person’s inhibitions resulting in unplanned situations and situations which they wouldn’t normally have consented to. These situations have the potential to result in pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, sexual assault, etc.

Myth 9: Most people my age drink alcohol.

Truth: This is not true. While most 13-14 year olds might have tried a sip of alcohol across their whole lives, very few drink to excess. Only 1 in 50 report drinking above a level that increases the risk of alcohol-related injury on a single occasion.

Fact 3: You can't give consent when intoxicated.

Myth 10: Alcohol is not a drug.

Truth: Alcohol is often not thought of as a drug because it is legal. Alcohol is a drug which slows down the central nervous system and is second only to tobacco as a cause of drug related deaths and hospitalisations in Australia. Alcohol belongs to a class of drugs called depressants.

Myth 11: Mixing drinks makes you more intoxicated.

Truth: It is the total amount of alcohol in all the different drinks combined, which will determine the level of intoxication, not the actual switching between different kinds of drinks. Alcohol is alcohol. However, people who mix drinks may be drinking more alcohol because they are trying different kinds, resulting in a higher concentration of alcohol.

Myth 12: Switching between drinks causes a hangover.

Truth: It is the amount of alcohol consumed and the concentration of congeners (toxic by-products from the production of alcohol), which will determine if a person suffers from a hangover, not the switching between types.

Benefits

- Students learn to critically evaluate health information.

Evidence Base

Secondary teachers reviewed this and other OurFutures activities, with 92.3% rating these activities as good or very good. This particular activity was among the most popular activities selected for implementation by teachers.

The benefits of implementing individual activities from OurFutures has not been examined. The benefits of implementing the entire 6 session OurFutures program has been supported by multiple research studies, see OurFutures: Alcohol Module.

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