

Respect Your Brain: the effect of drugs on the developing brain



Evidence ratings:

This resource has undergone expert review. See our [Help/Q&A section](#) for more details.

Year: Year 7–8, Year 9–10, Year 11–12

Targeted Drugs: Alcohol, Cannabis, Drugs (General), “Party Drugs”/MDMA/Ecstasy

Tags:

Time Allocated: Partial lesson (under 45mins)

Origin: Australian

Cost:

Free

Developers

- NSW Health, Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs
- The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, the University of Sydney
- Square Cell Visual Science Communication

Available

Summary

The Respect Your Brain animated video series for young people explores the effects of alcohol, cannabis and MDMA on the development of the adolescent brain, as well as the impacts on behaviour.

A teenage brain is considered by scientists to be highly 'neuroplastic'. Because adolescence and emerging adulthood (up to 25 years old) is a time of organising, construction and strengthening of connections in the brain it is a time of growth, but also means the brain is vulnerable to damage.

Expected Benefits

- Information on how alcohol, cannabis and MDMA use interferes with the development of the brain.
- Increased knowledge of drug-related effects and harms.

Evidence Base

Expert Review*:

The **Respect Your Brain** videos explain how three different drugs affect brain development and which areas of the brain are affected. The videos are supported by more **in depth information** including where a you person can seek help for alcohol and other drug issues and links to more alcohol and other drug facts on the **NSW Health drug and alcohol website**. Additionally, the videos map onto several Alcohol and other Drugs (AD) components of **Australian Health and Physical Education curriculum** for Year 9–10.

* Review provided by researchers at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney.

Page last reviewed: 29 July 2020.