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

Quick activity

The Effects of Cannabis: 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: Cannabis

Tags: OurFutures

Time Allocated: 1 lesson

Links to National Curriculum:
ACPPS077 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS098 (Yr 9–10)

Origin: Australian

Cost:
Free

Attachments

Worksheet: Effects of cannabis

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

Individual activity or class activity.

Preparation

Print or electronically share the "Effects of Cannabis" worksheet.

Activity

The aim of this activity is for students to learn about the effects of cannabis. These include psychological, physical and social effects.

Give each student a copy of the individual worksheet and ask them to work through it. Alternatively you can write headings on the board and complete as a class activity.

Background Information

The short-term consequences

Like many other substances, cannabis use produces a period of acute intoxication that includes a range of psychological and physical changes in the body. In general, the acute effects of cannabis become evident within a few minutes of smoking it and are felt most strongly after about 2 hours of using cannabis. The effects last for about 4 to 6 hours. The short-term effects of cannabis vary from person to person and can be either pleasant or unpleasant. Some of the possible effects that cannabis can have are listed below.

Social Effects

- Get in trouble with parents
- Concerned and frustrated friends
- Choosing not to spend time with friends
- Spending money on cannabis instead of other social activities

Physical Health Effects

- Dry mouth
- Sleepiness
- Increased heart rate
- Feeling hungry (“the munchies”)
- Poor coordination (affecting the ability to perform complex tasks such as playing sport or operating machinery)
- Red or bloodshot eyes
- Vomiting.

Psychological Effects

- A feeling of well-being, euphoria and relaxation
- Talking and laughing more than usual
- Altered sense of time and heightened sensory perception
- Feeling anxious (nervous, worried or paranoid)
- Panic attacks
- Decreased inhibitions (doing or saying things you would not normally). This can lead to engaging in risky behaviour such as dangerous driving or unsafe sex
- Confusion (not being able to think clearly)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Hallucinations after large doses.

Benefits

- Students gain an understanding of the social, physical and psychological effects of cannabis.

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 & Cannabis Module.

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