



loudmouth
education & training through theatre

LESSON PLAN E-BOOK FOR KS3 & KS4 Alcohol Awareness



Alcohol and Effects on the Body

Age Range:

12+, Years 9+,
KS3, KS4

Topics Covered:

Knowledge on Alcohol and the effects on the body

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

'Alcohol and the Body' sheet, a clear space, 2 signs one labelled 'True' and the other 'False'.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have increased knowledge of the legal and advised limits around alcohol use.
- Young people have increased knowledge of the health risks involved in the misuse of alcohol including liver damage, links with obesity and heart disease.
- Young people have an increased understanding of the reasons why people should drink responsibly.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- Personal Identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships

An exercise to increase knowledge about the effects of alcohol on the human body.

Introduction

This exercise uses creative thinking and reflective learning to help introduce young people to the topic of alcohol and learn about the physical effects on the body.

Exercise

This exercise uses 12 key statements about the effects of alcohol on the body as an introduction to understanding the physical effects of alcohol.

Place two cards out in a line stretching across the whole length of the room. On the left of the room place a sign reading 'FALSE' and on the right a sign reading 'TRUE'.

Read out the first statements from the 'Alcohol and the Body' sheet included and ask the group to decide whether they think that the statement is true or false. Ask them to move to the left hand side near the sign if they think it is 'FALSE' and to the sign on the right if they think that it is 'TRUE'. Use the whole length of the line so ask learners to stand along it depending on how confident they feel about their answer. So, if you they think the statement is definitely true then they should directly next to the right hand sign, if they are undecided or 50:50 then stand closer to the middle and so on. Encourage the group to debate their different views. Ask for volunteers to explain their choices to generate debate and discussion on the different answers. Work your way through all 12 statements.

Summary

Ask the group to see how many of the facts that they learned in the activity they can remember. Write these up on the board. You could also consolidate the learning by asking them each to do the activity again as a quick quiz where they write down the answers and swap with another learner or hand these in to be marked so you can assess their knowledge.

You could also invite someone from a local alcohol organisation to give a talk or provide literature on the effects of alcohol. There are some useful websites such as www.drinkaware.co.uk and www.talktofrank.com that can provide further information. There is an interesting article that was published a few years ago in The Independent which is available online and reproduced later in this document that could be used as a further exploration of the effects of alcohol over the course of a night as well as the short and long term effects.

ALCOHOL AND THE BODY

1. Alcohol is a stimulant and provides temporary improvements in mental and physical function.

FALSE – Alcohol isn't a stimulant, it's a depressant. That's why drinking too much often leads to impaired judgement, slurring of speech, a tendency to violent behaviour and loss of short-term memory. As alcohol also irritates the stomach, heavy drinking can cause sickness, nausea, and sometimes diarrhoea. Alcohol also has a dehydrating effect, which is the main reason why excessive drinking can lead to a hangover. It can also lead to temporary impotence in men.

2. Every year, 5,000 young people aged 11 to 17 are admitted to hospital as a result of drinking.

FALSE – In fact it is twice that number with 10,000 young people aged 11 to 17 admitted to hospital each year as a result of drinking. Over half of these, 6000 in fact, are young people under 16.

3. The weekly allowance of alcohol for men and women is 20 units.

FALSE – The weekly allowance is actually 14 units for men and women! The guidelines actually state that there's no safe amount of alcohol to be drinking, however to reduce risk they recommend that people cap their drinking to just 14 units per week. These units can't be saved up and consumed at once, however. They should be drunk over a period of 4-5 days with at least 2 days off!

4. Binge drinking is when someone drinks between 6-8 units or more?

TRUE – Binge drinking for a woman is 6 units or more and for a man is 8 units or more. It's slightly less for women as they have a higher fat to water ratio in their bodies compared to men! Binge drinking can increase risks for heart and liver disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and other health problems. Doctors say that due to binge drinking they are seeing much younger people with forms of liver diseases that they used to only see in people in their fifties or sixties.

5. Long term drinking helps the heart to pump blood more effectively.

FALSE – Long-term drinking and heavy alcohol consumption is linked with weakness of the heart muscle, known as cardiomyopathy. That means the heart can't pump blood as efficiently. Some research claims that red wine can help to keep the heart healthy but this is in small amounts.

6. Up to one in three adults drinks enough alcohol to create a risk of developing alcohol-related liver disease.

TRUE – According to drinkaware.org, up to one in three adults drinks enough alcohol to create a risk of developing alcohol-related liver disease. Rates of liver disease are dropping in the rest of Europe but are rising in the UK.

7. Experts estimate that alcohol is responsible for at least 20,000 deaths in the UK each year.

FALSE – Experts estimate alcohol is responsible for at least 33,000 deaths in the UK each year.

8. Women are more susceptible to alcohol-related liver damage than men.

TRUE – According to drinkaware, women are more susceptible to alcohol-related liver damage than men with one study suggesting the risk is almost 50% higher.

9. Heavy drinking causes a drop in testosterone levels in men, causes testicles to shrink and causes impotence.

TRUE – It can also affect women's fertility as their menstrual cycles can be disrupted by drinking alcohol. Studies have shown that women who drink up to five units of alcohol a week are twice as likely to conceive as those who drink 10 or more.

10. Alcohol is a poison.

TRUE – Alcohol is a poison and too much of it can kill. In fact over a 150 people die each year from acute alcohol poisoning. Acute alcohol poisoning is often caused by binge drinking as the alcohol content in the blood becomes dangerously high. More than 500 people a week are admitted to hospital with alcohol poisoning.

11. Liver damage due to alcohol nearly always leads to permanent damage or death.

FALSE – Although very serious there are different levels of liver damage due to alcohol. Some of the most common forms of liver damage such as 'fatty tissue' can be treated through abstaining from drinking alcohol. Other forms may require a liver transplant. Although, if somebody has liver damage and continues to drink alcohol they will not be allowed to have a liver transplant and the more advanced forms of damage can often lead to death.

12. If someone is suffering from alcohol poisoning you should let them sleep it off or give them coffee.

FALSE – You should never leave someone to 'sleep it off', as their condition could still be getting worse. Their blood alcohol level continues to rise even after they've stopped drinking, as alcohol in the digestive system will continue to be absorbed into the bloodstream. Coffee is also a bad idea as it will make the person even more dehydrated. Try to keep the person sitting up and awake, give them water, keep them warm and monitor their symptoms. If there are any concerns then you should call 999.

WHAT ALCOHOL REALLY DOES TO YOUR BODY -

Taken from The Independent newspaper

From heart to liver and brain to kidneys, a night on the tiles makes demands on us that we don't fully realise. Peta Bee reports

6PM ONE UNIT: IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY...

BRAIN: From the first sip, alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream and reaches the brain. Although you won't be aware of it, there is an impairment of brain function, which deteriorates further the more you drink. Cognitive abilities that are acquired later in life, such as conduct and behaviour, are the first to go. Early on you will experience mild euphoria and loss of inhibition, as alcohol impairs regions of the brain controlling behaviour and emotion. Most vulnerable are the brain cells associated with memory, attention, sleep and coordination. Sheer lack of mass means that people who weigh less become intoxicated more quickly, and women will feel the effects faster than men. This is also because their bodies have lower levels of water.

HEART: Your pulse quickens after just one unit. Alcohol is a vasodilator - it makes the peripheral blood vessels relax to allow more blood to flow through the skin and tissues, which results in a drop in blood pressure. In order to maintain sufficient blood flow to the organs, the heart rate increases. Your breathing rate may also speed up.

8PM FIVE UNITS: WHOSE ROUND IS IT THEN?

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM: The Government advises men to drink no more than three to four units a day and women no more than two to three, so after two pints of normal-strength beer (four units) or a large glass of red wine (3.5 units) we have already exceeded our healthy guidelines. The alcohol is absorbed through the stomach and small intestine and if you are not used to it, even small amounts of alcohol can irritate the stomach lining. This volume of alcohol also begins to block absorption of essential vitamins and minerals.

SKIN: Alcohol increases blood flow to the skin, making you feel warm and look flushed. It also dehydrates, increasing the appearance of fine lines. According to Dr Nicholas Perricone, a dermatologist, even five units will lead to an unhealthy appearance for days.

11PM 10 UNITS: SORRY, WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?

LUNGS: A small amount of alcohol speeds up the breathing rate. But at this level of intoxication, the stimulating effects of alcohol are replaced by an anaesthetic effect that acts as a depressant on the central nervous system. The heart rate lowers, as does blood pressure and respiration rates, possibly to risky levels - in extreme cases the effect could be fatal. During exhalation, the lungs excrete about 5 per cent of the alcohol you have consumed - it is this effect that forms the basis for the breathalyser test.

1AM 15 UNITS: LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY EX...

LIVER: Alcohol is metabolised in the liver and excessive alcohol use can lead to acute and chronic liver disease. As the liver breaks down alcohol, by-products such as acetaldehyde are formed, some of which are more toxic to the body than alcohol itself. It is these that can eventually attack the liver and cause cirrhosis. A heavy night of drinking upsets both the delicate balance of enzymes in the liver and fat metabolism. Over time, this can lead to the development of fatty globules that cause the organ to swell.

It is generally accepted that drinking more than seven units (men) and five units (women) a day will raise the risk of liver cirrhosis.

3AM 20 UNITS: WHERE AM I? I NEED TO LIE DOWN

HEART: More than 35 units a week, or a large number in one sitting, can cause 'holiday heart syndrome'. This is atrial fibrillation - a rapid, irregular heartbeat that happens when the heart's upper chambers contract too quickly. As a result, the heartbeat is less effective at pumping blood from the heart, and blood may pool and form clots. These can travel to the brain and cause a stroke. Atrial fibrillation gives a person nearly a fivefold increased risk of stroke. The effect is temporary, provided heavy drinking is stopped.

BLOOD: By this stage, alcohol has been carried to all parts of the body, including the brain, where it dissolves into the water inside cells. The effect of alcohol on the body is similar to that of an anaesthetic - by this stage, inhibitions are lost and feelings of aggression will surge.

THE MORNING AFTER: CAN YOU PLEASE JUST SHUT UP...

BRAIN: Alcohol dehydrates virtually every part of the body, and is also a neurotoxin that causes brain cells to become damaged and swell. This causes the hangover and, combined with low blood-sugar levels, can leave you feeling awful. Cognitive abilities such as concentration, coordination and memory may be affected for several days.

DIGESTION: Generally, it takes as many hours as the number of drinks you have consumed to burn up all the alcohol. Feelings of nausea result from dehydration, which also causes your thumping headache.

KIDNEYS: Alcohol promotes the making of urine in excess of the volume you have drunk and this can cause dehydration unless extra fluid is taken. Alcohol causes no damage or harm to the kidneys in the short term, but your kidneys will be working hard.

ONE YEAR ON: WHERE DID IT ALL GO WRONG?

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS: Heavy drinking causes a drop in testosterone levels in men, and causes testicular shrinkage and impotence. In females, menstrual cycles can be disrupted and fertility is affected. Studies have shown that women who drink up to five units of alcohol a week are twice as likely to conceive as those who drink 10 or more. It is thought it may affect the ability of the fertilised egg to implant.

BRAIN: Over time, alcohol can cause permanent damage to the connection between nerve cells. As it is a depressant, alcohol can trigger episodes of depression, anxiety and lethargy.

HEART: Small amounts of alcohol (no more than a unit a day) can protect the heart, but heavy drinking leads to chronic high blood pressure and other heart irregularities.

BLOOD: Alcohol kills the oxygen-carrying red blood cells, which can lead to anaemia.

CANCER: Excessive alcohol consumption is linked to an increase in the risk of most cancers. Last week, Cancer Research UK warned how growing alcohol use is causing a steep rise in mouth cancer cases.

Alcohol and the Law

Age Range:

12+, Years 9+,
KS3, KS4

Topics Covered:

Knowledge on the legal
aspects of alcohol and
young people

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

Copies of the 'Alcohol and
The Law' quiz and answers.

An exercise to look at the legal position around alcohol and the law and how it relates to young people.

Introduction

This exercise uses team work and reflective learning to increase knowledge of the laws on alcohol.

Exercise

Hand out copies of the 'Alcohol and The Law' quiz found on the next page. This contains ten questions with true or false answers to help the group to understand some of the basic facts on how the law relates to alcohol. The answers are supplied below.

The quiz can be done as a worksheet but can be more fun in teams. Teams can swap papers to mark at the end.

After the quiz ask the group to recap on the main facts they learned from the activity.

Summary

Sum up by asking the group to recap on the main laws they have learned about alcohol. Ask the group why they think these laws are in place and who they have been designed to protect.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have an increased understanding of the reasons why people should drink responsibly.
- Young people have increased knowledge of the legal and advised limits around alcohol use.
- Young people have an increased awareness of the effects of alcohol on personal safety, decision making, relationships and future career choices.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- Personal identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships

ALCOHOL AND THE LAW QUIZ

Please mark whether you think each statement is true or false.

1. It is legal for 16-17 year olds to drink alcohol in a pub as long as they are having it with a meal.

TRUE / FALSE

2. It is legal for an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol in an off licence or supermarket on behalf of someone under 18.

TRUE / FALSE

3. It is legal for 16-17 year olds to buy alcohol in a pub as long as they are having it with a meal.

TRUE / FALSE

4. It is illegal to sell alcohol to someone who is drunk.

TRUE / FALSE

5. It is against the law to be drunk when looking after a child under seven in a public place or on licensed premises.

TRUE / FALSE

6. It is illegal for parents to give young people some of their own alcohol when at home.

TRUE / FALSE

7. If somebody drives or attempts to drive whilst under the influence of alcohol they could go to jail for 6 months.

TRUE / FALSE

8. Any driver stopped by the police for suspected drink driving can legally refuse to take a breathalyser, urine or blood test and claim that it is an invasion of their privacy?

TRUE / FALSE

9. It is illegal to sleep in a car if the person is over the alcohol limit and in possession of the keys.

TRUE / FALSE

10. It is illegal to drink in public in the UK.

TRUE / FALSE

ALCOHOL AND THE LAW QUIZ

(ANSWERS)

1. It is legal for 16-17 year olds to drink alcohol in a pub as long as they are having it with a meal.

TRUE – This is the only time when someone under the age of 18 is allowed to drink alcohol in licensed premises. The 16-17 year old must be accompanied by an adult and must have the drink with a table meal. This only applies to beers, wines and ciders so young people can never legally drink spirits on licensed premises until they are 18.

2. It is legal for an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol in an off licence or supermarket on behalf of someone under 18.

FALSE – It is illegal to buy or attempt to buy alcohol for anyone under 18. Anyone who asks an adult to buy alcohol for them is putting that adult under the risk of prosecution. It is also illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy alcohol unless acting at the request of the police or a weights and measures inspector as part of an investigation into illegal activity.

3. It is legal for 16-17 year olds to buy alcohol in a pub as long as they are having it with a meal.

FALSE – Although it is legal to drink beers, wines and ciders when accompanied by an adult with a meal it is not legal for anyone under 18 to buy alcohol.

4. It is illegal to sell alcohol to someone who is drunk.

TRUE – Selling or even attempting to sell alcohol to someone who is drunk is illegal. The sentence, if convicted of this offence, is a fine of up to £1,000.

5. It is against the law to be drunk when looking after a child under seven in a public place or on licensed premises.

TRUE – It is illegal for a parent or adult to be drunk in a public place when looking after a child under seven years old.

6. It is illegal for parents to give young people some of their own alcohol when at home.

FALSE – Legally a parent can let their children drink alcohol in their own home from the age of five onwards. Some parents prefer to do this so that they can keep an eye on their children's drinking and educate about appropriate levels.

7. If somebody drives or attempts to drive whilst under the influence of alcohol they could go to jail for 6 months.

TRUE – They could also receive a £5000 fine and be banned from driving for up to 3 years. They could also find that future car insurance prices are much higher.

8. Any driver stopped by the police for suspected drink driving can legally refuse to take a breathalyser, urine or blood test and claim that it is an invasion of their privacy?

FALSE – It is an offence to refuse to give a sample and could result in a £1000 fine and points on the person's licence.

9. It is illegal to sleep in a car if the person is over the alcohol limit and in possession of the keys.

TRUE – Being in the car with the keys counts as being 'in charge' of the vehicle. It is an offence to be 'in charge' of a vehicle whilst over the alcohol limit. This also includes being over the limit in the passenger seat if the person driving is a learner driver.

10. It is illegal to drink in public in the UK.

FALSE – Although, many areas of the UK are designated as 'alcohol-free zones' where nobody can drink in public. Even where these zones aren't in place the police can take away alcohol or move young people on if they have been drinking. They could even be fined or arrested.

Alcohol and Risk

Age Range:

12+, Years 9+,
KS3, KS4

Topics Covered:

Knowledge on risks
involved with alcohol

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

Copies of the 'Alcohol and Risk' and the 'Alcohol and Staying Safe' handouts.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have an increased awareness of the effects of alcohol on personal safety, decision making, relationships and future career choices.
- Young people have an increased ability to identify a range of effective strategies for drinking responsibly and staying safe if using alcohol in the future.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- Personal identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships

An exercise to look at the effects of alcohol and subsequent risks.

Introduction

This exercise uses team working and reflective learning to increase knowledge of the effects of alcohol and the risks that these place on safety and relationships.

Exercise

Ask the group - 'why might people drink alcohol?' to establish the main reasons why people drink e.g. to relax, socialise, peer pressure or cope with issues in their lives etc.

Ask how alcohol can affect someone physically. Discuss briefly the different ways that alcohol can affect the way that someone looks and the effects it can have on the body (you could spend longer on the biological or health issues here. The website www.drinkaware.co.uk have some appropriate resources that can support here.)

Explain that you are going to look at how alcohol can affect the way people act. Stress that you are going to focus on risks and explore how alcohol can affect people's ability to stay safe.

Split the group into small groups of around 4-5. Ask each group to think of five different ways that drinking too much alcohol can put someone at risk. Give each group around ten minutes to think of five different examples and then ask each group to feedback. You could create a list on the board of the key risks that emerge. There can often be fun here with slightly less serious risks such as risks of 'not getting a boy/girlfriend', 'losing things' or 'embarrassing dancing'.

Using the handout 'Alcohol and Risk' start to explore the key risks that alcohol can present. You could either hand these sheets out or simply read through and discuss each one.

Ask the group 'how can alcohol affect a relationship?' (focus here on close intimate relationships i.e. boyfriends, girlfriends, husbands, wives etc.)

Summary

Sum up by looking at the main risks and exploring ways that people can use alcohol more safely. You could use the 'Alcohol and Staying Safe' handout taken from www.alcoholconcern.org.uk to help here.

ALCOHOL AND RISK

1. Alcohol makes it harder to make decisions.

Scientists have shown that alcohol can affect the brain's ability to make decisions and encourages risky behaviour. When someone is drunk they may be overconfident, may misjudge situations and make the wrong decision.

2. Makes safe sex less likely.

Many forms of contraception need to be used correctly in order to work. When somebody is drunk they are more likely to forget to take their pill or how to put on a condom correctly. They may even feel overconfident and risk not using contraception at all.

3. Makes people more vulnerable to abuse from others.

Sadly, because alcohol makes people more vulnerable they may be taken advantage of. People need to be careful so that others don't get them drunk in order to control them or make them go sexually further than they'd like.

4. Makes people more prone to accidents.

Alcohol can make people clumsy as it affects the body's ability to co-ordinate movements or assess whether a situation is safe. Even simple tasks like crossing the road are riskier.

5. Makes people more violent or aggressive.

The British Medical Association says that alcohol is a factor in 75% of stabbings, 70% of beatings and 60-70% of murders. Drinking alcohol can make someone feel angry, and more likely to start fights about things that might not seem important the next day.

6. Makes people ill.

Drinking more alcohol than someone's body can handle is very risky. If someone is not used to the effects of alcohol it's hard to judge how much is 'too much'. In serious cases alcohol will poison a person's system. If somebody drinks too much then this can have very serious effects and they may even have to be rushed to hospital to have their stomach pumped.

7. Makes people less able to judge situations.

Alcohol stops someone's ability to think clearly. They become less able to judge situations when they have been drinking. Dares or challenges when drunk can often lead to accidents and so are probably not a great idea. People may also put themselves into dangerous situations such as walking home alone.

8. Makes people less observant or able to help people around you.

Alcohol can make people less aware of what is happening around them. They are less likely to notice when something bad is happening around them or able to support anyone such as their partner if they need it.

9. Makes people less able to understand if you are injured or need help.

Alcohol temporarily numbs pain. If somebody is injured whilst they are drunk then they may not feel the pain and therefore not think that there is any problem. The injury could be much more serious than they think though and need looking at immediately.

10. Makes people more likely to commit intimate partner violence.

Home Office research showed 73% of domestic violence offenders had used alcohol prior to the offence, with 48% seen as 'alcohol dependent'. Alcohol is likely to contribute to intimate partner violence in a variety of ways. Women's Aid state that women experiencing domestic violence often turn to alcohol as a way to cope with intimate partner abuse. Women experiencing domestic violence are up to fifteen times more likely to misuse alcohol and nine times more likely to misuse other drugs than women generally.

ALCOHOL AND STAYING SAFE

Know your limits

Know your units and try to keep a rough idea of how many drinks you have had. There are some apps for smartphones that help you do this. Keep an eye out for the percentage of alcohol in the drinks. The higher the percentage the more alcohol there is and you could be clocking up units very quickly. Remember that binge drinking is 6 units or more for women and 8 units or more for men.

Avoid mixing drinks / mixing alcohol with drugs

Mixing drinks is a quick way to be sick. You might feel drunker much faster than you expected and the different types of alcohol may not sit well in your stomach. It is more dangerous to mix drinks with drugs. Mixing alcohol with cannabis can also make people feel very sick. It can also cause feelings of panic and make people go very sweaty and pale (known as a 'whitey' or 'greening out'). The most serious mixing of alcohol and drugs is mixing alcohol and cocaine as this forms another drug (Cocaethylene) in the liver which puts stress on the liver and heart and can cause sudden death. The effect might be felt 10 hours after the drug has been taken and so someone might feel fine and then suddenly die.

Avoid drinking neat spirits

The amount of alcohol in a drink is different depending on the drink. The amount of alcohol by volume (abbreviated as ABV) is a standard measure of how much alcohol (ethanol) is contained in an alcoholic drink. Spirits such as vodka and gin have very high percentages of alcohol (often up to 40%) which means that 40% of the liquid is alcohol. This is very high compared to say beer where the ABV might be 4-5%. Although spirits are usually drunk in small measures it can be hard to keep track of how much has been drunk especially if people are drinking at home or swigging from the bottle so not measuring. If someone isn't paying attention then they could drink a lot of alcohol in a very short space of time.

Keep phone charged / credit / have number of adult if in trouble

If someone does face difficulties when they are drunk then they may need help. It is always useful then to have a mobile phone with you that is charged and has credit. You could also make sure that you have the number of a responsible adult who you could call if you were in trouble.

Carry a condom

People can get into all kinds of situations when they are drunk or find themselves in sexual situations they had not planned for. Being drunk and having sex often means that contraception is forgotten and can lead to unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. If someone always carries a condom or femidom then they will always be prepared.

Never get in a car if driver is over the limit

Alcohol can make people feel confident and think less about consequences. It can mean people do things that they would never do when they were sober. It is against the law to drive when over the legal limit for alcohol. If somebody offers you a lift and you think or know that they have been drinking it is probably not a good idea to accept. Even after a couple of pints of beer someone could be over the limit making driving dangerous. Their reaction time will be reduced and they make take more risks than usual. It is also an idea to avoid getting into unlicensed cabs as these are taxis that are operating illegally. They are unlikely to have any guarantees of passenger safety and may not be roadworthy or insured. They may charge random and excessive fares because the passenger might be too drunk or desperate for a cab.

Keep an eye on your friends (and ask them to keep an eye out for you)

One big way to stay safe is for people to look out for each other. This can help to stay safe, check that drinks aren't being spiked and making sure no-one has to walk home alone so that everyone gets home safely at the end of the night.

Drink plenty of water

Alcohol dehydrates so you need water to deal with the thirst rather than drinking more alcohol. Water will help keep you healthier and more alert. You'll be more likely to last the night.

Eat well, don't drink on an empty stomach

Having food inside you can help to slow the absorption of alcohol. Although the body will still absorb it all, it will be at a slower rate and can reduce symptoms. One way to control alcohol intake is to have 'dinner only drinking' where someone only drinks whilst they are having food.

Have a soft drink to help quench your thirst or to have in-between alcoholic drinks

Remember you don't have to drink alcohol all night just because it is there. It can help to make your first drink a non-alcoholic drink or alternate between alcoholic and soft drinks. Another tip is to arrive later so you are not drinking for as long as others are.

Alcohol and Sexual Health

Age Range:

12+, Years 9+,
KS3, KS4

Topics Covered:

Alcohol, Sexual Health,
Bystanders.

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

A clear space.

An exercise to look at the impact that alcohol can have on choices and actions regarding sexual health.

Introduction

This exercise uses creative thinking and team work to help groups to think about the impact alcohol can have on a young person's sexual health.

Exercise

Ask the group to move their chairs into one large circle. Read out the extract below and ask the group to imagine the scene.

This scene takes place at a house party. It is late on a Saturday night and there are lots of people at the party. Jack and Stella are both 15. They have been drinking all night and kissing passionately. They are clearly both drunk and are staggering and slurring. Jack and Stella push their way through the crowd at the party and head upstairs to find a bedroom.

Ask the group to imagine the types of people who might be at the party and would have seen or heard what was happening. Ask them to imagine that they can overhear the conversations that are happening about this incident.

Go round the group (a circle works very well here) and ask each person to say what they heard. Ask each person to start by saying "I heard someone say..." as it should be very clear that it is not necessarily their own opinion. You can also give the opportunity to pass or to repeat a comment. Run a discussion that explores why the people in the situation might have made the comments. What attitudes or views came through from the overheard conversations?

- **What impact might being drunk have on Jack or Stella? What consequences might there be? i.e.** Pregnancy, STIs, assault, regret, inability to have sex, issues with consent.
- **Would it make a difference if only one of them was drunk? Why?** Continue to explore consent issues here. If spiking drinks comes up then it is worth commenting that the most common date rape drug is alcohol on its own. Also explore gender issues – What if it was Stella who was sober and Jack the one who was drunk? Would there be a difference?
- **What could Jack or Stella do to avoid any of the issues we have talked about?** i.e. Don't have sex, wait until they are sober and over 16, carry and use contraception etc.
- **What could / should the people at the party do?** Explore the role of the bystander. Should they do anything to support or stop Jack or Stella?

Summary

Sum up by recapping on the effects of alcohol on sexual health. Explore other ways that alcohol can impact a sexual relationship such as the way it can affect people differently, affect moods the next day, and make people think less about the possible consequences of their actions.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have an increased understanding of the reasons why people should drink responsibly.
- Young people have increased understanding of the risks alcohol can present to both self and to others.
- Young people have an increased awareness of the effects of alcohol on personal safety, decision making, relationships and future career choices.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- Personal identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships

Alcohol and Drinking Safely

Age Range:

12+, Years 9+,
KS3, KS4

Topics Covered:

Alcohol, Drinking Safely

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

Whiteboard or flipchart,
Pens

An exercise to increase knowledge and develop an understanding of the skills and techniques needed to drink alcohol safely.

Introduction

This exercise uses creative thinking and reflective learning to help introduce young people to the topic of alcohol and learn about the physical effects on the body.

Exercise

Ask the group to think of as many issues or risks that someone may face because of either their drinking, or others around them drinking. Record these on a flipchart or whiteboard.

Split the group into pairs and ask them to think of as many ideas that they can that a young person could use to make sure that they were drinking more healthily.

After 10-15 minutes ask the group to feedback their ideas and record the collective ideas together on the board. There are a list of ten ideas included with this exercise which may be useful to include if they don't come up from the group.

Ask the group to think of how these ideas for safer drinking could be put across to young people. Ask them to imagine that they have been employed by an advertising agency to put together a 'Safer Drinking' campaign. Ask the group to think of how they would get the messages across in a way that other young people would understand, relate to and remember.

Summary

Recap on the main healthy drinking approaches and if needed provide further information on strategies such as those in the accompanying list. You could also discuss how not drinking at all or having time away from drinking could be used.

This activity could be extended and run over several lessons to run a campaign in school with posters, presentations in assembly or information on the school's network to pass the messages on to other students. You could split the class into groups and have a competition for the most effective campaign which could then be used across school.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have an increased ability to identify a range of effective strategies for drinking responsibly and staying safe if using alcohol in the future.
- Young people have increased knowledge of the health risks involved in the misuse of alcohol including liver damage, links with obesity and heart disease.
- Young people have an increased understanding of the reasons why people should drink responsibly.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- Personal identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships

ALCOHOL AND STAYING SAFE

Know your limits

Know your units and try to keep a rough idea of how many drinks you have had. There are some apps for smartphones that help you do this. Keep an eye out for the percentage of alcohol in the drinks. The higher the percentage the more alcohol there is and you could be clocking up units very quickly. Remember that binge drinking is 6 units or more for women and 8 units or more for men.

Avoid mixing drinks / mixing alcohol with drugs

Mixing drinks is a quick way to be sick. You might feel drunker much faster than you expected and the different types of alcohol may not sit well in your stomach. It is more dangerous to mix drinks with drugs. Mixing alcohol with cannabis can also make people feel very sick. It can also cause feelings of panic and make people go very sweaty and pale (known as a 'whitey' or 'greening out'). The most serious mixing of alcohol and drugs is mixing alcohol and cocaine as this forms another drug (Cocaethylene) in the liver which puts stress on the liver and heart and can cause sudden death. The effect might be felt 10 hours after the drug has been taken and so someone might feel fine and then suddenly die.

Avoid drinking neat spirits

The amount of alcohol in a drink is different depending on the drink. The amount of alcohol by volume (abbreviated as ABV) is a standard measure of how much alcohol (ethanol) is contained in an alcoholic drink. Spirits such as vodka and gin have very high percentages of alcohol (often up to 40%) which means that 40% of the liquid is alcohol. This is very high compared to say beer where the ABV might be 4-5%. Although spirits are usually drunk in small measures it can be hard to keep track of how much has been drunk especially if people are drinking at home or swigging from the bottle so not measuring. If someone isn't paying attention then they could drink a lot of alcohol in a very short space of time.

Keep phone charged / credit / have number of adult if in trouble

If someone does face difficulties when they are drunk then they may need help. It is always useful then to have a mobile phone with you that is charged and has credit. You could also make sure that you have the number of a responsible adult who you could call if you were in trouble.

Carry a condom

People can get into all kinds of situations when they are drunk or find themselves in sexual situations they had not planned for. Being drunk and having sex often means that contraception is forgotten and can lead to unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. If someone always carries a condom or femidom then they will always be prepared.

Never get in a car if driver is over the limit

Alcohol can make people feel confident and think less about consequences. It can mean people do things that they would never do when they were sober. It is against the law to drive when over the legal limit for alcohol. If somebody offers you a lift and you think or know that they have been drinking it is probably not a good idea to accept. Even after a couple of pints of beer someone could be over the limit making driving dangerous. Their reaction time will be reduced and they make take more risks than usual. It is also an idea to avoid getting into unlicensed cabs as these are taxis that are operating illegally. They are unlikely to have any guarantees of passenger safety and may not be roadworthy or insured. They may charge random and excessive fares because the passenger might be too drunk or desperate for a cab.

Keep an eye on your friends (and ask them to keep an eye out for you)

One big way to stay safe is for people to look out for each other. This can help to stay safe, check that drinks aren't being spiked and making sure no-one has to walk home alone so that everyone gets home safely at the end of the night.

Drink plenty of water

Alcohol dehydrates so you need water to deal with the thirst rather than drinking more alcohol. Water will help keep you healthier and more alert. You'll be more likely to last the night.

Eat well, don't drink on an empty stomach

Having food inside you can help to slow the absorption of alcohol. Although the body will still absorb it all, it will be at a slower rate and can reduce symptoms. One way to control alcohol intake is to have 'dinner only drinking' where someone only drinks whilst they are having food.

Have a soft drink to help quench your thirst or to have in-between alcoholic drinks

Remember you don't have to drink alcohol all night just because it is there. It can help to make your first drink a non-alcoholic drink or alternate between alcoholic and soft drinks. Another tip is to arrive later so you are not drinking for as long as others are.

ALCOHOL – UNITS, CALORIES AND COST

Age Range:

12+, Years 9+,
KS3, KS4

Topics Covered:

Alcohol, units, calories,
cost

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

Flipchart paper or Whiteboard,
pens, 'Create a Character'
instruction sheet (included in this
document), internet access or
handouts on alcohol units,
calories and cost.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have increased knowledge of the legal and advised limits around alcohol use.
- Young people have an increased awareness of the effects of alcohol on personal safety, decision making, relationships and future career choices.
- Young people have increased understanding of the risks alcohol can present to both self and to others.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- Personal Identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships

An exercise to explore understanding of alcoholic units, calorie content of alcohol and the financial implications of drinking alcohol.

Introduction

This exercise uses creative thinking and reflective learning to look at the impact that alcohol can have on young people.

Exercise

First read through the 'Create a Character' instructions contained in this exercise. Explain that you would like the group to create a character called **Maz** who is **14 years old** who they are going to follow on a storyline. You may want to adjust the age to suit your group.

Explain to the group that recently Maz has started been drinking a lot of alcohol. It had been mainly at weekends but she has started to drink more in the week too. Ask the group -

- Why might Maz have started drinking more frequently?
- Where might this drinking be taking place?

Split the group into smaller groups of 4-5 learners. This works well if the group have access to the internet so they can look up information about units, calories and cost. Websites with alcohol and calorie calculators such as www.drinkaware.co.uk are useful here. Ask the group to answer the 5 questions below. If you do not have access for everyone then you could look up the information for key drinks in advance or set this element as homework. Remind the group to keep things realistic so that Maz reflects the teenage drinking that happens in their area.

1. What kinds of drinks do you think that Maz drinks and how many do you think she drinks during a night / week?
2. How many units of alcohol is Maz drinking per week?
3. How many times a week is she 'binge drinking'?
4. How many calories is Maz consuming per week from alcohol?
5. How much would Maz have to spend if she was paying for the alcohol herself?

Bring the group back together and ask them to feedback their findings and thoughts using the 5 questions.

Summary

Discuss what issues this level of units, calories and cost could have on Maz. Draw on any previous work on the effects of alcohol on health as well as exploring issues such as how Maz would be able to afford or obtain alcohol so regularly. Make it clear that using all a person's daily calories (2000 for a woman, 2500 for a man) on alcohol is very unhealthy and an eating disorder sometimes referred to as 'Drunkorexia'. Round off with a quick exploration of where Maz or her friends could go to for support if she / they had concerns about her drinking.

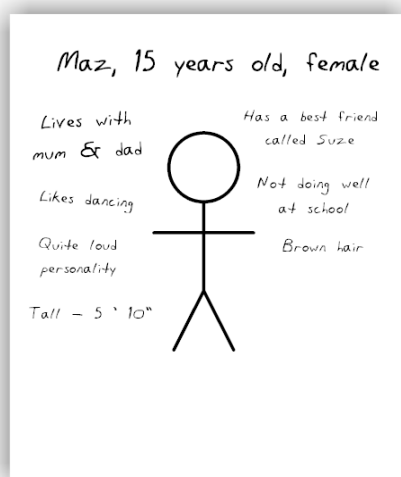
CREATE A CHARACTER

This very simple technique is a great way to engage learners into talking and thinking about an issue.

The learners work together to create a realistic character by each providing a suggestion on the character's appearance, interests, family etc. The aim is to work together to build a realistic and consistent character that can be used to discuss and explore issues.

On a sheet of flipchart paper or on the board, draw a stick figure. Draw this in the middle of the sheet with plenty of room around to write the groups' suggestions. Give the stick figure a name (not the name of anyone in the group!), age and gender and write these at the top of the sheet. Usually the character is similar in age and background to the group to allow them to connect quickly and relate to the character's situation and feelings.

This works best when the learners are in a circle. Go round the circle asking each person to give one fact about the character. The two rules are that the suggestions must be realistic and consistent. They must all follow on from what is already written so if someone has said that the character is very tall then someone else can't say that the character is short. The aim is to build and develop the character as a group. You should have something that look a bit like the illustration below.



Once everyone has had a chance to contribute (and you are happy that the character is realistic and there are no contradictions) then you can use the character to explore a situation. You could pick up on any issues that the group have added or simply add a new piece of information that places the character in a situation that focuses on the issue you want to cover. If we were using the character above we could add 'Maz's period is late, how might she be feeling and why?' and then explore the different feelings and reasons etc. You could follow a character's journey as they face decisions exploring different feelings the character might have and the different options and strategies available to them.

This technique can be adapted to work with many, many different issues and provides a safe and creative way to engage young people on an issue. Loudmouth run training courses that go into more depth and build confidence in using this and other interactive PSHE techniques. Ring 0121 4464880 for more details.

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