

Lesson 11

Benefits of Not Using Substances



PROJECT
ALERT

Lesson Overview

Lesson Goals

1. Review and reinforce the negative consequences of using substances
2. Acknowledge the benefits of resisting substance use
3. Identify actions students can take to quit substance use

Scope and Sequence with Pacing Guidance

1. Introduce Lesson (~2 min.)
2. Play the *Information Review Game* (~5 min.)
3. Show & Discuss Video: *Saying “No” to Drugs* (~8 min.)
4. Write and Discuss Commitments to Choose a Healthy Lifestyle Free From Drugs (~15 min)
5. Wrap-up (~5 min.)

Brief Lesson Description

This lesson reviews the drug information taught in the previous Project ALERT lessons. You will once again display the graphic posters from those lessons as you review students' answers in the Information Review Game.

The video *Saying “No” to Drugs* provides additional examples of resisting pressures to use substances and modeling drug-free behavior by older teens.

After viewing the video, students will make a written commitment to choose a healthy lifestyle free from drugs. Several of these written statements are read aloud (anonymously). Such public commitments help students express their feelings through writing, increase behavior change, and provide an appropriate closure activity for the curriculum.

Background Knowledge: Pre-Reading

There is no new pre-reading for this lesson. Optional to review information about alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, and prescription drugs in Lessons 1, 2, and 8 Pre-Reading.

We recommend previewing the video Saying “No” to Drugs before delivering the lesson.

Materials and Supplies to Prepare

- **Visual** - Ground Rules: Students (saved from lesson 1)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Smoking and Vaping Make You Less Attractive](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Nicotine Is Addicting](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Smoking Affects Your Heart and Lungs](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Marijuana Can Affect You Right Away](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Marijuana Can Damage You in the Long Run](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Alcohol Can Harm You Any Time You Drink](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Alcohol Can Damage You in the Long Run](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Prescription Drugs Go Straight to Your Head](#)
- **Visual** - Poster: [Vaping Leads To...](#)
- **Handout** - Commitment Certificate, copied in color for each student
- **Materials** - Video: *Saying “No” to Drugs*

Legend

We use the icons below to indicate what to say during the lesson, what to keep in mind as you facilitate the lesson, and what to display in the classroom throughout the lesson.

What to say	What to keep in mind	What to display
		

Lesson Plan

1. Introduce Lesson



Display visual created in Lesson 1: *Student Ground Rules*



Today is our last Project ALERT lesson. You have learned so much in the program!

Today, we're going to play a game that reviews what we've learned in Project ALERT.

Then, we'll watch a video that tells us what some high school students think about using drugs.

After that, you'll have a chance to write how you feel about drugs and hopefully make a commitment to be substance free. Remember, ultimately you make the decision to use drugs or not.

2. Play the Information Review Game



Now we're going to play the Information Review game. Before we break into four (or five) teams, I'll give you an overview of the game. I'll ask a series of questions reviewing the knowledge we've gained in the earlier lessons, and the goal is to work as a group to come up with the most correct answers.

Each team will choose a Recorder who will write down their group's answer to each question. The recorder will also track the points for their group.

When I read a question, each team will have about 10 seconds to come up with a single answer that the recorder will write down. The answer has to be written down to earn a point. Teams must work together quickly and stop writing when I call time. After each series of questions, we'll reveal the correct answers, team Recorders will check-mark any correct answers, and we'll continue with the next series of questions.



Divide the class into four or five groups. Provide each Recorder with answer sheets. (Optional to have recorder type on laptop for example.)

Ask game questions #1 through #16.

Read the questions and allow 5 to 10 seconds for groups to work and write. At the end of each topic series of questions, display and review the relevant poster, as indicated, and reveal the correct answers for those questions.



Question 1.

True or False: Teens who vape or smoke can't have lip sores, throat irritation, yellow teeth, or smoker's breath because they're too young.

Question 2.

How does vaping or smoking affect your athletic performance?

Display posters:

Smoking and Vaping Make You Less Attractive,

Smoking Affects Your Heart and Lungs, and

Vaping Leads To

about vaping and smoking cigarettes immediate effects

Answer 1. False.



Answer 2. Reduces stamina, shortens breath.

Question 3.

An emotion is a feeling people have inside, like happiness or sadness. Name two emotions or feelings teens may have when they have a bad "high" using marijuana.

Question 4.

If you go to school "high," there is a good possibility you will forget which of the following: (a) your birth date, or (b) the answers to a school test?

Display poster:

Marijuana Can Affect You Right Away

about marijuana immediate effects

Answer 3. Fear, anxiety, stress, terror.



Answer 4. Choice (b) the answers to a test. Marijuana impairs short-term memory.

Question 5. When you drink alcohol, which of the following is affected: a) your judgment, b) your coordination, or c) both?

Question 6. How many drinks can you have and still drive safely?

Display poster:

Alcohol Can Harm You Any Time You Drink

about alcohol effects any time you drink

Answer 5. Choice (c) Both



Answer 6. None. Even one drink can put you at risk for an accident.

Question 7. What does vaping and smoking do to your lungs each time you smoke?

Question 8. True or False: It takes at least a year or two after you start vaping or smoking to become addicted to nicotine.

Question 9. True or False: Vaping is safer than regular cigarettes.



Display posters:

Nicotine Is Addicting, and

Vaping Leads To

about vaping and smoking physical effects



Answer 7. Causes lung infection, destroys lung tissue, and diminishes lung capacity.

Answer 8. False. If you smoke a few cigarettes a day for four or five days in a row or vape nicotine a few times a day, you can become addicted.

Answer 9. False. Vapes and e-cigarettes contain many cancer-causing and toxic chemicals - including nicotine, formaldehyde, arsenic, aluminum, and lead. Vaping has been linked to dangerous respiratory problems. Also, teens who vape are actually more likely to end up smoking cigarettes if they try vaping first.

Question 10. True or False: Since marijuana is “natural,” it is safer than other drugs.

Question 11. True or False: People can become addicted to marijuana.



Display poster:

Marijuana Can Damage You in the Long Run

about marijuana long-term effects



Answer 10. False. Many “natural” substances also have toxic properties (like tobacco and poisonous mushrooms). While marijuana is a plant, its main psychoactive component is THC (Tetrahydro-cannabinol), which affects brain function. Prolonged or frequent use of marijuana has long-term effects on brain chemistry and body function. High-potency THC has been linked to short-term memory and coordination issues and unexpected poisonings.

Answer 11. True

Question 12. If someone is addicted to alcohol, who are at least two people affected by this?

Question 13. List two ways that alcohol can hurt you in the long run.



Display poster:
Alcohol Can Damage You in the Long Run
about alcohol long-term effects



Answer 12. Self, family member, people at work or at school, friends

Answer 13. Liver damage, nerve/brain damage, heart damage, stomach damage, and death

Question 14. True or False: It's OK to share prescription drugs between relatives or friends.

Question 15. Which types of prescription drugs affects the brain's messages about perception of painful feelings and pleasant feelings?

Question 16. Fentanyl is up to how many times stronger than morphine?



Display poster:
Prescription Drugs Go Straight to Your Head
about prescription drugs



Answer 14. False. Prescription drugs are prescribed to one person, for a specific condition, dose, and use. Use of medications outside of a doctor's specific recommendations can be extremely dangerous, both immediately and long-term, and is illegal.

Answer 15. Opioids, prescription opioids, or prescription pain medications

Answer 16. 100 times. Fentanyl is a potent synthetic opioid that is up to 100 times stronger than morphine (a prescription opioid) and 50 times stronger than heroin (an illegal opioid). Fentanyl has contributed to an increase in drug overdose deaths in the United States. Even a very small amount of fentanyl can be deadly.



At the end of the game, have the teams' Recorders add up the scores. Announce that all teams did a great job.



**Great work during this game everyone!
Congratulations to group _____ for coming up with the most correct answers.**

3. Show and Discuss Video: Saying “No” to Drugs



Now we’ll learn what some high school students have to say about using and not using drugs. Look for reasons they had for resisting.



Show the video Saying “No” to Drugs



What did the high school students on the video say that you agree with?

What are some other things those high school students said about not using drugs?

Have you ever heard older students say things like what was said on the video?

If students say they have not heard such talk, ask if they have any idea why not.



- Validate students’ own concerns about drug;
- Remind them that there are benefits of nonuse; and
- Emphasize that nonusers are the majority of teens even though they might not talk about not using.

4. Write and Discuss Commitments to Choose a Healthy Lifestyle Free from Drugs



One thing that helps people stick to their decisions is to write them down as commitments. How do you think commitments help you?

The certificates I will be handing out are a chance for you to write, in your own words, why you have made the decision to choose a healthy lifestyle free from drugs.



Hand out blank certificates.



Take a few minutes now to write down your own thoughts. Be honest. There are no right or wrong commitments. Your statement may be long or short. I will collect your certificates at the end and will read some anonymous statements out loud. I will not read names or tell the class who said what. How might it help to share our commitments with others?

Allow five minutes for students to write. Ask students to raise their hands as they finish. Collect the certificates and quickly skim for content.

Read a couple summarized responses without identifying students. Praise their commitment statements. Hold onto the certificates until the end of the Wrap-Up next.

5. Wrap-up Lesson



We have now completed this series of Project ALERT lessons.

You now know how to resist pressures to use drugs. I hope you will use these skills.

You can use these skills in other pressure situations such as skipping school, dating, cheating on exams.

It's not easy to resist these pressures, but it does pay off. It also gets easier the more you do it.

You can always choose to say 'no' when you feel pressured.

You were great. You really learned a lot in Project ALERT I think you'll find it easier to resist all kinds of pressures in the future.

I hope you remember ways to say 'no' and what you learned during Project ALERT.

Now I will return your commitment statements to you. When your name is called, please come forward and receive your commitment statement, like a kind of Project ALERT graduation certificate to keep and remind you of your commitments.

Read off each name. Shake hands. Lead applause.

Optional to encourage students to share their certificates with their parents/guardians.