



Substance Use Prevention

Fathers and Sons Program

Facilitator Script

(Read the text in the boxes as you go through the PowerPoint slides)

Today we are going to talk about the effects of drugs and alcohol. We will focus on common signs and symptoms of substance use among young people in order to help you prevent substance use among your sons.

Some substances like alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana cause a lot of problems for young people, so we are going to take a closer look at them.

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Substance Use Among Young People

Statistics

"7.6% of young people ages 12-17 have met the criteria for dependence on and/or abuse of illicit drugs or alcohol."¹

"African Americans are less likely than other racial/ethnic groups to abuse hard drugs. Yet, African Americans are disproportionately incarcerated for drug crimes."¹

First, let's go over some statistics about substance use among young people.

(READ SLIDE)



Alcohol

3

The first substance we are going to talk about is alcohol.

Why do you think they make it illegal for young people to drink alcohol?

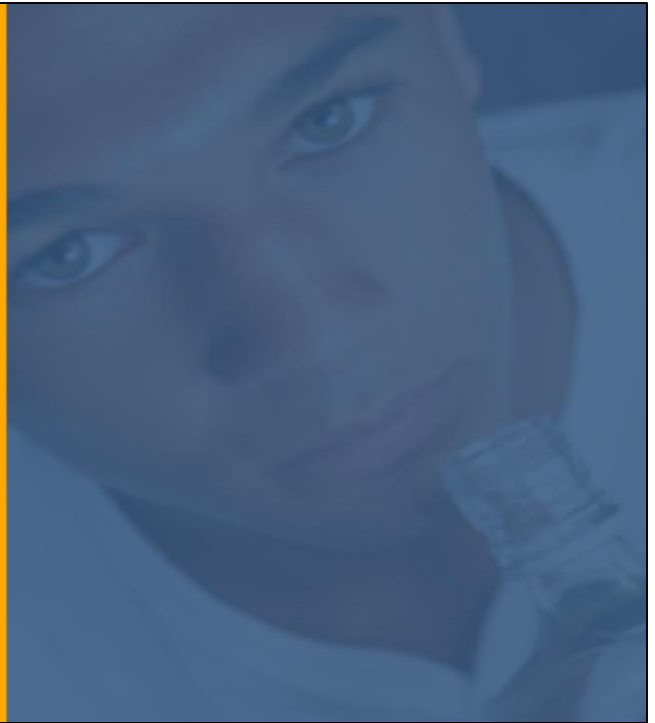
(WAIT FOR ANSWERS)

ANSWER: Alcohol has bad effects on the body and mind, especially for young people.

Let's discuss some of the short and long term effects.

Short-Term Effects of Alcohol

- Blurred vision
- Hearing problems
- Bad decision making
- Bad breath
- Silliness
- Clumsiness
- Hangovers



Some of the short-term effects of alcohol include blurred vision, hearing problems, bad decision making, bad breath, silliness, clumsiness, and hangovers.

CONSEQUENCES OF ALCOHOL

Long-Term Effects of Alcohol

- Loss of appetite
- Stomach problems
- Skin problems
- Memory loss
- Liver, heart, and nervous system damage

The long-term effects of alcohol include things such as loss of appetite, stomach problems, skin problems, memory loss, and liver, heart and nervous system damage.

Now let's talk about another drug that seems to harm many young people, tobacco.



Tobacco

6

As you know, there are a variety of products that contain tobacco including cigars, cigarettes, chewing tobacco/snuff, and pipes.

Effects of Tobacco

What's in tobacco?

What does it do to the body?

Why do people smoke?



What is in tobacco?³

Tobacco contains numerous chemicals like tar, lead, carbon monoxide which all can cause cancer. In addition, when these chemicals are let off in the body they clog up peoples lungs. Smoking is so bad for your health that tobacco products must have a warning label on them.

What does it do to the body?³

Smoking doesn't do anything good for the body. It makes the heart work faster, raises blood pressure, causes stomach ulcers, creates cancer, messes up skin, and leads to extensive mouth problems.

Why do people smoke?³

One of the chemicals in tobacco is called nicotine. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical. Once it gets in the body a person feels like they physically and mentally need to have it in their system. Once a person feels this way it is very hard to quite smoking but it can be done. If the body never gets nicotine inside then a person will never experience cravings. This is why it's not a good idea to ever experiment with cigarettes or any tobacco products.

So far we have talked about drugs that are legal for adults and illegal for children. Now let's talk about marijuana.



Marijuana

8

In the state of Illinois it is still illegal for most adults ages 21 and over to possess marijuana anywhere in the state.⁶

Medical marijuana is only for a people with certain illnesses, usually chronic illnesses, and requires written certification from a doctor.⁷

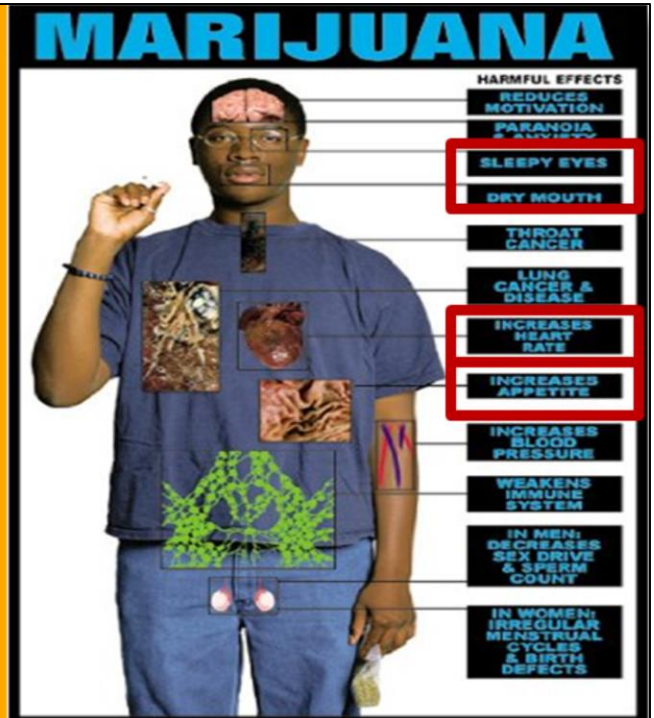
Marijuana grows from the cannabis plant and contains hundreds of harmful chemicals.⁸

The main chemical is called THC and when it gets in the blood stream it effects the brain in many negative ways.⁸

Let's look at some of the other effects of marijuana.

Short-Term Effects of Marijuana

- Red itchy eyes
- Excitement
- Feel tired and worn out
- The “munchies”
- Confusion
- Fail to remember things
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Clumsiness
- Problems thinking
- Fast heart beat



Short-term effects of marijuana include... **(READ SLIDE)**

Can someone give me an example of how one of these effects could be bad for your sons?

(WAIT FOR ANSWERS)

Does anyone know how long these short term effects last?

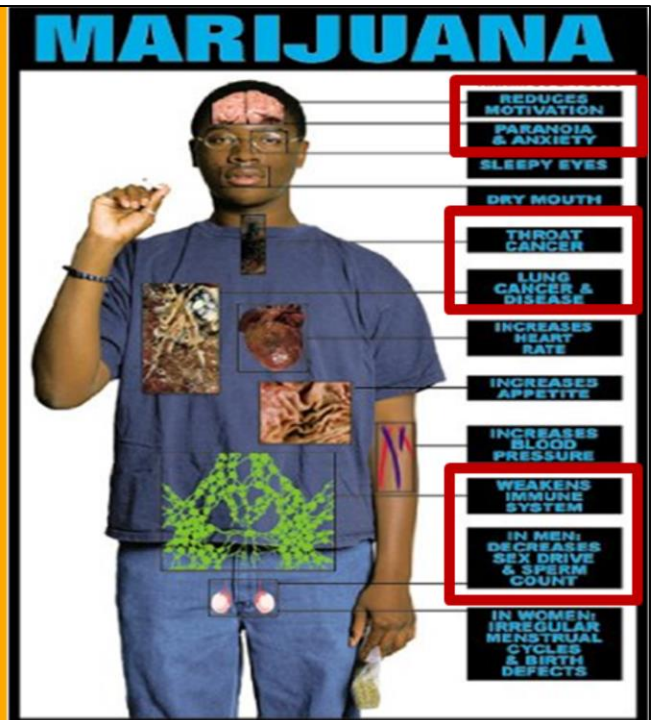
(WAIT FOR ANSWERS)

ANSWER: The effects on the screen, are the strongest immediately after smoking, but some can last for days.

In addition to feeling these things a person who uses marijuana also faces health consequences.

Long-Term Effects of Marijuana

- Drug addiction
- Cancer
- Brain damage
- Lung damage
- Slow thinking
- Respiratory, immune, and reproductive system problems
- Slow emotional development



What do you think are some long term effects of marijuana use?
(CLICK SLIDE)

Many of these long term effects cannot be corrected, meaning smoking as a young person can be harmful for the rest of one's life.

Common Signs and Symptoms of Teen Substance Use

Recognizing the Signs in Various Contexts

11

“There’s no easy way to figure out if your teen is using drugs or alcohol.”⁴

“As you’ll see, many of the signs and symptoms of teen substance abuse are also, at times, typical adolescent behavior.”⁴

“Many are also symptoms of mental health issues, including depression or anxiety disorders.”⁴

Now we will provide a general overview of common signs and symptoms for substance use.

Personal Appearance

- Messy, shows lack of caring for appearance
- Poor hygiene
- Burns on fingers or lips (from “joints” burning down)

What are some signs of substance abuse that you may notice from your son's personal appearance?
(WAIT FOR RESPONSES)

(CLICK SLIDE)

Your child's personal appearance may reveal signs of substance use. For example poor hygiene or burns on their fingers or lips may be indicators of substance use.

Signs in the Home

- Missing alcohol or cigarettes
- Constant excuses for behavior
- Breaking curfew
- Spending a lot of time in their rooms
- Lies about activities
- Find the following: cigarette rolling papers, pipes, roach clips, plastic baggies

You may also notice some signs that are home-related.

For example, missing alcohol or cigarettes, smells of different substances in the car or bottles, pipes, or bongs on the floor, the appearance of unusual containers or wrappers left on surfaces used to clean marijuana, and constant excuses for behavior may suggest substance use.



Signs at School

- Sudden drop in grades
- Sleeping in class
- Truancy or always being late to school
- Reduced memory and attention span
- Poor attitude toward sports or other after school activities
- Defiant of authority

What about at school? What are some signs of substance abuse that you may present themselves at school?

(WAIT FOR RESPONSES)

(CLICK SLIDE)

Some possibilities include a sudden drop in grades, truancy or always being late to school, and a reduced memory or attention span.

Physical and Emotional Signs

- Changes friends
- Negative, argumentative, paranoid or confused
- Sharing few if any of their personal problems
- Doesn't seem to be as happy as they used to be
- Always needs money, or has excessive amounts of money

There are also some physical and emotional signs that you may notice such as your son changing friends, acting paranoid or confused, always asking for money or having large amounts of money.

Personal Habits or Actions

- Clenching teeth
- Smell of smoke or other unusual smells on breath or on clothes
- Avoiding eye contact
- “Munchies” or sudden appetite
- Chewing gum or mints to cover up breath

Some personal habits for actions that may be related to substance use are clenching teeth, the smell of smoke or other unusual smells on their breath or clothes, avoiding eye contact and the “munchies” as we mentioned earlier.

Behavioral Issues

- Mood changes or emotional instability
- Loud, obnoxious behavior
- Unusually clumsy, stumbling, poor balance
- Inability to focus
- Slurred speech, rapid-fire speech
- Unusually tired
- Decreased motivation

You may also observe a change in your child's behavior such as mood changes, clumsiness and poor balance, the inability to focus and decreased motivation.

Health Issues

- Nosebleeds
- Frequent sickness
- Sudden or dramatic weight loss or gain
- Wetting lips or excessive thirst
- Headaches
- Sores, spots around mouth

Finally, what are some health issues related to substance use that you think you should look out for?

(WAIT FOR ANSWERS)

(CLICK SLIDE)

Some potential health issues you may notice are nosebleeds, frequent sickness, wetting lips or excessive thirst, and sores or spots around your son's mouth.

“

“Experiences and environments can increase or decrease the risk of substance use in children and adolescents.”¹

”

19

In addition to knowing some of the signs and symptoms of teen substance use it is also important to understand that...**(READ SLIDE)**

This means that you play a big role in decreasing your son’s risk of substance use by being someone he can talk to and being there to support him.

The Value of Early Identification

20

We share the different signs and symptoms of substance use because it can help you to identify substance use early on.

Early detection can help you to intervene and identify what type of services and support your son needs before their substance use worsens and creates long term consequences.¹

Don't Dismiss the Warning Signs

- "If you find that some of these warning signs fit your teen, take a look at the whole picture."²
- "Become more involved and find out what he's doing, where he's going and who he's with."²
- "If you suspect your son is using drugs, start by talking to your son."²

In order to best support your son it is important not to dismiss the warning signs.

Here are some things to remember to help you catch the warning signs.

(READ SLIDE)

What's your son's anti-drug?



22

One way for young people to avoid drugs is to get into things that make them feel good about themselves and what they can do.

Some people are good at sports, singing, playing a musical instrument, dancing, writing, drawing, speaking, and a lot of other things.

What are some things your sons are good at?

(WAIT FOR ANSWERS)

Thank you for sharing. One of the reasons it is important to address concerns about substance use is because it can have negative consequences that affect their talent and future goals.

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Where can you get help?

Friends



Church Community



Family



School Counselors



Local Health Department
Public Treatment
Programs



23

All these places offer help to people on drugs who would like to stop using them. They can help adults and kids who want to quit.

Can you think of any other places or people who might be able to help?

Now we are going to do an activity to help you talk to your father about drugs and alcohol.

ACTIVITY

A big part of helping your sons avoid drugs and other substances is being able to talk with them about your expectations and values. As a closing exercise, think about what you want to say to your son about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other drugs? Let's use our Drug Activity Sheets to write down some things you want your son to know about substances like alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. Make sure you are specific about what you want to say.

(END OF PRESENTATION)

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