

SECTION

2



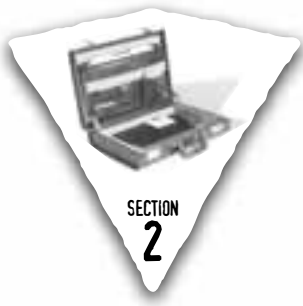
35

GRADE 7

LEARNING PLANS

A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE: CURRICULUM SUPPLEMENT





INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADE 7 UNIT

The overall goal of this grade 7 unit is to prevent or delay substance use, with an emphasis on alcohol and cannabis, the two most commonly used psychoactive substances among adolescents in Nova Scotia (aside from tobacco, which is addressed in another supplement¹). The approach taken is to encourage students to think about the decisions they make concerning alcohol and cannabis and to provide them with the resources to be aware of what is influencing them as they make those decisions. This process follows a sequence from understanding personal influences, followed by an examination of the influence of other people in their lives and the impact of the broader community and culture, and concluding with development and practice of skills to make informed choices.

Grade 7 Overview

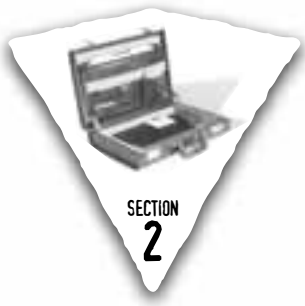
The grade 7 component of *A Question of Influence* covers the three spheres of influence—personal, social, and cultural—in the form of three learning themes: how I influence myself, how others influence me, and how I am influenced by the world around me. Each learning theme includes a set of activities and associated teacher and student materials matched to the Nova Scotia Healthy Living curriculum outcomes for grade 7. The three learning themes are preceded by an introductory session that introduces the complete unit to the students and lays the foundation for the learning theme activities. A fifth and final wrap-up session completes the unit. It is designed to encourage students to reflect on what they have learned about what influences their decisions around alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. It also provides the teacher with an opportunity to assess what students have learned from the unit as a whole.²

Each of the three learning themes, the introductory session, and wrap-up session begin with introductory notes to help orient the teacher to the content of that session or learning theme. A summary table is provided at the beginning of each session/learning theme to identify the Healthy Living curriculum outcome links, specific activity objectives, estimated time frame, and preparation required to work through each activity in class. Separate pages for teaching aids, referred to as “slides” throughout the unit, and student handout materials are found at the back of the unit.

The time estimates included here are based on the actual outcomes of the resource field test in the winter and spring of 2006. The complete unit is intended to be delivered in five to six hours of instructional time or a maximum of eight 45-minute classes. Not every teacher will have Healthy

¹Tobacco use is not addressed in this supplement; however, it is the entire focus of another curriculum supplement: *Smoke-Free for Life, Grades Seven to Nine. A Smoking Prevention Curriculum Supplement*.

²Suggestions for assessing other aspects of student performance throughout the unit can be found in the Appendix D: Assessment Rubrics.



Living classes that run for 45 minutes, and the delivery of the activities will have to be adapted based on the length of class time available.

It is strongly recommended that none of the learning themes be dropped in an effort to shorten the time required to deliver the unit. Instead, suggestions for shortening individual activities include the following:

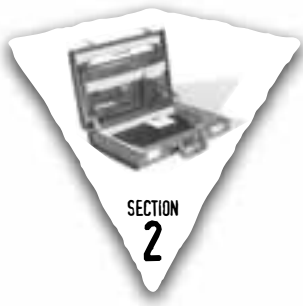
- Reduce the number of case studies or stories used for group activities.
- Reduce the number of groups and increase the group sizes. If increasing the size of small groups is not an option, assign the same story to more than one group, ask one group to report back on the story and, once they finish their report, ask the other groups with the same story if they have anything to add.
- Place strict time limits on brainstorming activities (five minutes, for example) rather than try to get every last idea or comment.
- Place case studies on slides and discuss them with the entire class.

A NOTE ON THE APPROACH TAKEN WITH THIS SUPPLEMENT

This supplement is based largely on the Social Influences Model—the drug education approach that has been shown by research over the past 25 years to be most effective for junior high school students. This model sees adolescent use of substances as the result of influences from peers, the media, and the general culture. These social influences take the form of messages that appear to condone substance use: for example, modelling of alcohol and other drug use by peers and media personalities, persuasive advertising appeals, and/or direct offers by peers to use substances. For the purposes of this supplement, personal influences stemming from normal adolescent development (e.g., need for independence, to experience risk) are also viewed as an important source of influence. This model aims to create greater awareness of these three spheres of influence—personal, social or interpersonal, and cultural or environmental—and to develop skills to analyse and minimize their impact.

A NOTE ON THE USE OF THE TERM “CANNABIS”

The term “cannabis” is used throughout the resource. During the field-test phase of resource development, some students commented that “cannabis” was a new word for them. Although junior high students are more familiar with the term “marijuana,” the resource continues to use “cannabis” as it is a more inclusive term, including marijuana, hash, and hash oil. It will be helpful to the students if teachers explain to them that the term cannabis will be used to refer to the substance they may know as marijuana, pot, weed, dope, grass, or hash/hash oil.



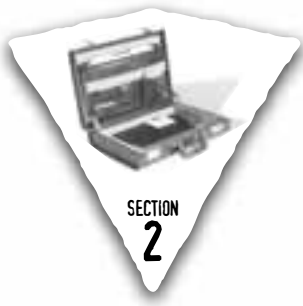
FIRST CLASS: INTRODUCING GRADE 7 STUDENTS TO THE UNIT

Introduction

While many grade 7 students state that they do not intend to use drugs or alcohol, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours change over the junior high years. According to the *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey 2007*, only 12 percent of grade 7 students used alcohol at least once in the past year, and only 6 percent will have used cannabis. By grade 9, however, 49 percent will have used alcohol at least once, and 31 percent will have used cannabis (according to the 2007 figures). In spite of what students state in grade 7, some will change their behaviour over the next two years. Why is that? In large part, it is because of the increasing influence of new personal, social or interpersonal, and environmental or cultural factors in their lives.³

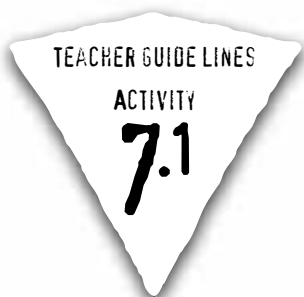
This first session in the grade 7 unit of *A Question of Influence* introduces students to the types of factors that can influence their decisions regarding alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. It describes some of the activities of the upcoming weeks and sets the stage for the rest of the unit.

³ See Appendix B for a detailed discussion of the three types of influencing factors included in Healthy Living 7.



Grade 7 Introductory Session

Healthy Living Curriculum Links	Activity Objective(s)	Activities	Time Frame	Preparation	Materials
Identify personal, social, and cultural influences related to alcohol, cannabis, and other drug use (B3.7)	To introduce students to the entire unit and set the stage for an ongoing discussion on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs	Activity 7.1 <i>Circles of Influence</i> —The teacher introduces the concept of multiple types of influences on student decision making and describes upcoming activities.	Up to 20 minutes	Prepare Slide 7.A— <i>Circles of Influence</i> . Diagram.	Overhead projector
Describe the effects of alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco on the body systems (B3.5)	To lay the foundation for a discussion of the immediate physical, psychological, and social effects of alcohol and cannabis use in Learning Theme One by looking at the students' preliminary knowledge level	Activity 7.2 <i>What We Know about Alcohol and Cannabis</i> —Students participate in a brainstorming session in which they complete graffiti walls around the room to identify what they know about the effects of alcohol and cannabis.	Up to 20 minutes	Transfer questions or headings listed in the activity to individual pieces of flip chart paper. Post around the room at the start of the class.	Flip chart paper Markers



TEACHER'S NOTES

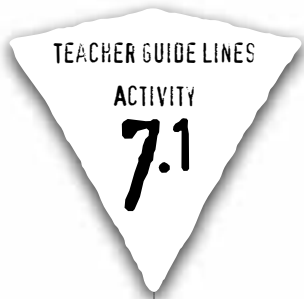
A vertical rectangular box with a white background and a black border, intended for teacher's notes. It is connected to the 'TEACHER'S NOTES' label above it. The box is empty.

ACTIVITY 7.1:

Circles of Influence

1. Begin the session by telling the students that, for the next few weeks, the focus of the Healthy Living class will be on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. Explain that statistics show that few students in grade 7 actually use alcohol, cannabis, or any other drug. However, by the time students reach grade 9, the percentage of students who have tried alcohol, cannabis, or any other drug has increased from the grade 7 percentage. Ask students if they have any idea why the percentage goes up between grade 7 and grade 9.
2. While the students are sharing their ideas about why they think the percentage goes up between grades 7 and 9, listen for examples of influencing factors. Explain that one of the reasons that more students have tried alcohol, cannabis, or other drugs by the time they reach grade 9 is because they experience a range of things that influence their thinking, behaviour, and decisions.
3. Share with the students that the three main types of influences that can affect decisions about alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs are the individual, other people in an individual's life, and the kinds of things an individual sees and hears in their community or the world around them. Using the *Circles of Influence* slide (7.A), explain to the students that, in the coming weeks, the class will be looking at the following influences:
 - how I influence myself
 - how others influence me
 - how I am influenced by the world around me
4. Explain to the students that one of the things the class will be looking at is a model for making decisions that each student can use to apply to their own day-to-day life. This will become one of the ways that they can influence themselves.
5. Indicate to the students that the class will also be looking at the ways friends have an influence on each of them. The students will get the chance to use the decision-making model and a few other tools in some possible situations where friends are trying to have an influence on individual decisions about alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs.

A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE



TEACHER'S NOTES

A vertical column of horizontal lines for taking notes, starting with a small rectangular box at the top and ending with a larger rectangular box at the bottom.

6. Tell the class that, towards the end of this unit, they will be looking at the potential influence of alcohol advertising on teenagers. To do this, though, everyone in the class will need to do some detective work in the next few weeks. Ask the students to start looking for alcohol advertisements when they go home today and keep on doing it until they are asked to bring what they have found to class.

Here are the guidelines for the advertising search to share with the class:

- Focus only on alcohol advertising.
- Any type of ad is okay. It can be a print ad from a magazine or newspaper. They can also videotape an ad from television or take a picture of a billboard ad or an ad in a store.
- If they do not have a way of taping or photographing a particular ad, they can write down a description of the ad. This will allow students to include radio ads and ads at sports or recreational events.
- Asking for help from family and friends is okay.
- Be particularly watchful for ads that could appeal to teenagers because they include animals, show young-looking people having a good time, include a well-known sports or entertainment celebrity, look like a cartoon, or use a well-known song as part of the ad.

Note

Throughout the first two learning theme activities, remind the students to keep collecting their ads throughout the first two learning theme activities. Watch for and collect ads yourself to avoid having no ads to work with for the third learning theme.

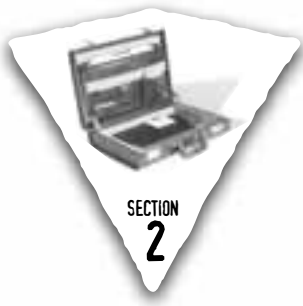
TEACHER'S NOTES

ACTIVITY 7.2:**What We Know about Alcohol and Cannabis**

By completing a graffiti wall, students will have the opportunity to expose some of their beliefs around the effects and the normative aspects of alcohol and cannabis use.

1. Post four pieces of flip chart paper around the class and label them “Alcohol effects,” “Cannabis effects,” “What people my age are doing,” and “What students in higher grades are doing.”
2. Ask the students to go to each of the pages and answer the following corresponding questions:
 - What do you know about how drinking alcohol affects you? Include physical effects, psychological effects, and social effects.
 - What do you know about how cannabis affects you? Include physical effects, psychological effects, and social effects.
 - What do you believe other grade 7 students are doing when it comes to alcohol or other drug use? What percent have tried alcohol? What percent have tried cannabis? How often do you think they use alcohol? Cannabis? How much are they using?
 - What do you believe older students in the higher grades are doing when it comes to alcohol or other drug use? What percent have tried cannabis? How often do you think they use alcohol? Cannabis? How much are they using?
3. When the students have written everything down and returned to their seats, spend a few moments reading some of the items on each sheet. Ask the class if they believe that the items read out loud are true or not.
4. Explain to the students that the next class will be spent on finding out the facts about how alcohol and cannabis can affect teenagers.

Alternative instructions: To avoid the potential chaos of having many students moving around the room, one field-test teacher had the students work in four groups and circulated the four pieces of paper among the groups. Each group had the opportunity to add to what previous groups had contributed. Finally, the class reviewed all the comments together.

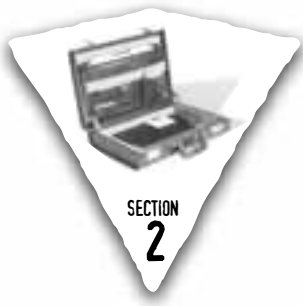


LEARNING THEME ONE: HOW I INFLUENCE MYSELF

Introduction

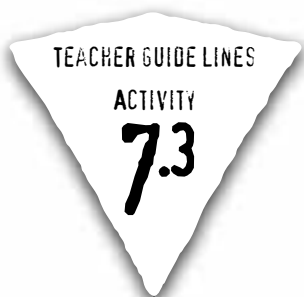
A significant source of self-influence is the amount of knowledge an individual has about a topic and the extent to which that knowledge is accurate or inaccurate. Accurate information is important to be able to make and act on informed decisions. Unfortunately, when it comes to alcohol and other drugs, there are numerous myths and misconceptions. This session will provide accurate information concerning some of the relative risks and harms of substance use and will correct common misconceptions. The emphasis is on alcohol and cannabis, the two psychoactive substances most commonly used among junior high students in Nova Scotia.

Good information is important in making sound decisions in situations involving substance use, but it isn't sufficient. It is also important for a student to have a clear understanding of his or her goals and values and to factor them into any important decision of this sort. Beyond that, it is also necessary for students to be familiar enough with a method for making decisions that they are able to apply it in these situations. This session will help students clarify their goals and values and introduce a decision-making model—WHOA (Wait, Have a Brain, Options, Action)—that students can incorporate into their day-to-day decisions.



Grade 7 Learning Theme One—How I Influence Myself

Healthy Living Curriculum Links	Activity Objective(s)	Activities	Time Frame	Preparation	Materials
<p>Describe the effects of alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco on the body systems (B3.5)</p> <p>Identify factors that influence the risk level of alcohol and cannabis use (B3.6)</p>	<p>To identify some of the effects of alcohol or cannabis use</p> <p>To identify some of the risks associated with the use of alcohol and cannabis</p> <p>To begin to look at what makes some patterns of use higher risk than others</p>	<p>Activity 7.3 <i>Separating Fact from Fiction</i>—Working in small groups, students respond to a series of true or false statements that provide accurate information on alcohol and cannabis effects.</p>	Up to 45 minutes	Make enough copies of Student Handout 7.A— <i>Fact or Fiction</i> and Student Handout 7.B— <i>Fact or Fiction Answers</i> for students to complete in pairs or groups of three or prepare a slide of the questions.	
<p>Identify and practise strategies for making decisions that involve risk (B3.4)</p> <p>Identify positive and negative reasons for taking risks (B3.1)</p>	<p>To identify the things students value so that this can be used as a strategy to weigh the drawbacks or benefits with respect to taking alcohol and other drug-related risks</p>	<p>Activity 7.4 <i>What Is Important to Me?</i>—Students discuss their personal goals and complete a list of what is important to them.</p>	Up to 20 minutes	Make a copy of the Student Handout 7.C— <i>Some Things That Are Important to Grade 7 Students</i> for each student.	
<p>Identify and practise strategies for making decisions that involve risk (B3.4)</p>	<p>To apply a series of decision-making steps to potential situations involving alcohol and drugs</p>	<p>Activity 7.5 <i>A Decision-Making Model</i>—Students are presented with the WHOA decision-making model and discuss how it can be applied to their lives.</p>	Up to 15 minutes	Prepare Slide 7.B— <i>WHOA!</i> Make a copy of the Student Handout 7.D— <i>WHOA!</i> for each student.	Overhead projector



TEACHER'S NOTES

A vertical column of horizontal lines for taking notes, starting with a box labeled 'TEACHER'S NOTES' at the top.

ACTIVITY 7.3: **Separating Fact from Fiction**

The purpose of this activity is to provide a “springboard” for discussion and an opportunity to examine some myths around alcohol and cannabis, two substances that grade 7 students are likely to encounter.

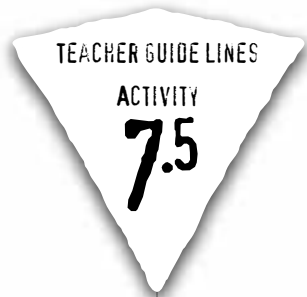
1. Explain that misinformation about alcohol and other drugs can have consequences. To avoid this, people need to know the facts.
2. Ask the students to form teams of two or three and distribute a copy of Student Handout 7.A—*Fact or Fiction Quiz* to each team. If you prefer, you can use a slide of all the questions and complete this exercise with the entire class as a group.
3. Instruct the students to respond to each statement with a T (True) or F (False) next the statement.
4. Once the teams have completed the quiz, review their responses to each quiz item with the entire class using Student Handout 7.B—*Fact or Fiction Answers*. Ask for one person from each team to be the official responder for their team. Then ask for a show of hands from each team that answered “true” and “false” for each of the 10 items. List the numbers 1 through 10 on the board and keep track of how many teams responded true or false for each question.
5. Once the responses from each team are recorded, review each statement using the provided answer key.
6. Once you have gone over the answers, the class can discuss the results with the following questions as discussion starters:
 - Did any of the correct responses surprise you? If so, which ones?
 - Were you surprised by #2 when alcohol is referred to as a drug? Do you tend to think of alcohol as a drug? Do you understand why it is a drug?
7. **Optional:** Ask the students to think back to some of the things they wrote about alcohol and cannabis on the graffiti wall in the previous class. Then, ask the following questions:
 - Did any of you notice that some of the things you wrote on the graffiti wall were not true? What things written on the wall were not true?
 - Is there anything on the wall that we haven’t discussed through the quiz?

TEACHER'S NOTES

ACTIVITY 7.4: **What Is Important to Me?**⁴

1. Explain to the students that our goals and values are among the personal factors that help us make any kind of decision, including those about alcohol and other drugs. Our goals are important because they help define who we are as individuals. Students in grade 7 may not have thought much about what their goals are, but they probably do have some. This activity is intended to bring those goals to light.
2. Ask the students to define the word goal. (A goal is something that we want to do, to be, or to achieve.) Ask for examples of some goals any of the students have right now. Is it something they think about a lot or hardly ever? Is the goal a long-term one or is it short term?
3. Tell the students that they will be working individually on this activity and hand out a copy of Student Handout 7.C—*Some Things That Are Important to Grade 7 Students* to each student. Explain that the items included in the list come from a survey of grade 7 students across Canada.
4. Ask the students as a whole to name any items that they think are missing from the list and have the students add the new goals to their list.
5. Have the students pick the three items that are the most important to them and ask them to write them down. Ask the students to share their three most important items with the class.
6. Ask the students: “How do you think the things that you’ve stated are important to you might be affected by using alcohol?” How might they be affected by using cannabis?” How do you think they might be affected by using any other drug?” If time is short, the focus can be on the alcohol question, followed by cannabis, as they are the substances the students are most likely to encounter. It is useful to have students consider alcohol independently from cannabis and other drugs as this may reveal some perceptions about alcohol as not having the same consequences and effects as other drugs.
7. Finally, tell the students that they will be using the model in a future class that will focus on making decisions about alcohol and cannabis. Ask them to keep the things they have identified as being important to them in mind as they work through the next activities and think about how the decisions they are being asked to make fit with the things they have identified.

⁴The ideas for personal goals in this learning theme are from the resource *Making Decisions—Grade 7* (1999) and are used with the permission of Alcohol-Drug Education Service, Vancouver, BC.



TEACHER'S NOTES

ACTIVITY 7.5: A Decision-Making Model

The focus of this activity will be presenting a concise decision-making model and explaining how it works in detail so that students can apply it in the activities of the next learning theme.

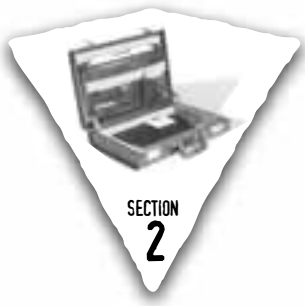
1. Explain to the class that all of us make decisions and choices all the time. We aren't always aware of this, and we don't always put a lot of thought into it. Decisions have consequences. When it comes to making decisions about alcohol and other drugs, the consequences may not always be what we anticipate. These are decisions that we need to be aware of as we are making them. What we will do next is look at one way of thinking about the decisions we face about alcohol and other drugs.
2. Hand out copies of Student Handout 7.D *WHOA!* to each student.⁵ Using the *WHOA!* Slide (7.B), present the four-part *WHOA!* decision-making model as follows:

WHOA

- **Wait.** No matter how urgent or important something seems, put on the brakes. Stop and think about what is happening and the risks involved before you decide what to do, not after. This may be an important decision. Slow down and give it the thought it deserves.
- **Have a Brain.** Identify the thoughts, pressures, and emotions at work when you are put on the spot about drinking or using other drugs. Understanding the influences at work may help you see beyond the present moment. Think about the problem, conflict, or dilemma and define it in one sentence.
- **Options.** Consider the options for solving the problem. There are always at least three options—accept, decline, or defer—and they each have pros and cons. Think about what might happen with each option considered.
- **Action.** Pick the option that best fits with your personal goals and take the action that will get you there.

3. Invite student comments and feedback on the model to make sure they understand it.

⁵The WHOA! model of decision making is from the resource *Own Your Zone* (2002) and is used with the permission of the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (2005).



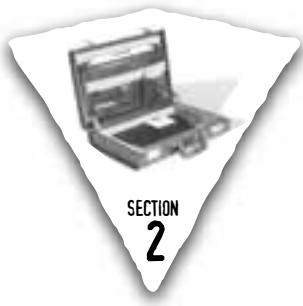
LEARNING THEME TWO: HOW OTHERS INFLUENCE ME

Introduction

According to the *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey 2007*, over 90 percent of the students who reported that all of their friends used alcohol or cannabis also reported that they themselves used alcohol or cannabis. On the other hand, 85 percent of the students who reported that none or only a few of their friends used alcohol or cannabis reported that they also did not use alcohol or cannabis. The substance use of peers appears to be a strong influence on students' behaviour.

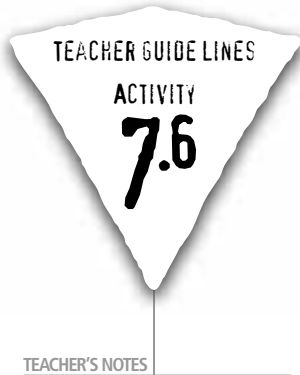
This learning theme will focus on the development of “assertiveness” skills in situations that grade 7 students may encounter (e.g., drinking from a parent's liquor cabinet at a friend's house; being offered a beer by a friend's parent; partying in the woods; smoking a joint behind the mall or recreation centre, etc.). In addition to these examples, teachers are also encouraged to develop locally relevant examples with the students in order for the session to be as practical as possible for them (e.g., what situation would you find most awkward to face?). The graffiti wall or team approaches used in previous sessions could be used to generate ideas.

Given that 12 percent of grade 7 students had been a passenger in a car with a driver who had too much to drink (according to the *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey 2007*) and that the percentage increases to 22 percent by grade 12 (with a higher percentage of females than males having done so), the role plays found in this learning theme include seeking alternatives to riding with an impaired driver.



Grade 7 Learning Theme Two—How Others Influence Me

Healthy Living Curriculum Links	Activity Objective(s)	Activities	Time Frame	Preparation	Materials
<p>Identify and practise strategies for making decisions that involve risk (B3.4)</p> <p>Identify positive and negative reasons for taking risks (B3.1)</p>	<p>To familiarize students with the concept of positive and negative peer influence</p> <p>To provide students with several ways of responding to negative peer influence</p> <p>To increase students' options for responding to peer influence</p>	<p>Activity 7.6 <i>True-to-You Tools</i>—Through class discussion, students learn to distinguish positive peer influence from negative peer influence and acquire skills for resisting negative peer influence related to alcohol and cannabis use.</p>	Up to 45 minutes	<p>Prepare the following slides for presentation: 7.B—<i>WHOA!</i> 7.C—<i>Range of Peer Influence</i> 7.D—<i>True-To-You Tools</i> 7.E <i>The ADD Options</i></p> <p>Make a copy of the Student Handout 7.E—<i>Get-out-of-it Techniques... When You Just Don't Want to .</i></p>	Overhead projector
<p>Demonstrate the ability to set and maintain personal limits in a variety of decision-making situations involving peers (B4.2)</p> <p>Identify and practise assertive ways of refusing a ride with a driver who is under the influence of alcohol or cannabis (B4.3)</p>	<p>To provide students with the opportunity to apply a series of decision-making steps to typical situations involving alcohol and drugs</p> <p>To provide students with an opportunity to experience peer influence and to find ways of choosing how to respond</p> <p>To provide students with skills to lower the risks associated with riding with an impaired driver</p>	<p>Activity 7.7 <i>Decision Stories Role-Play</i>—Working in small groups, students role-play several scenarios depicting real-life situations they may encounter. Students apply the tools they have learned to respond to the scenarios.</p>	Up to 45 minutes	<p>Make a copy of the Student Handout 7.F—<i>Decision Stories</i> and cut out the individual stories, one for each student group.</p>	

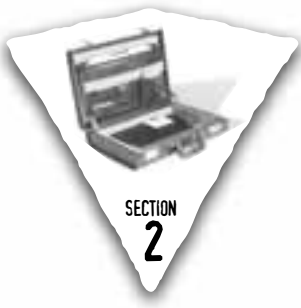


TEACHER'S NOTES

ACTIVITY 7.6: "True-to-You" Tools

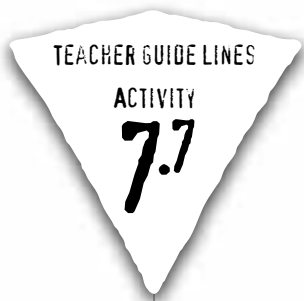
1. Explain to the class that today they are going to be given tools that will help them make decisions that seem right for them when influenced by friends to do something that they may not want to. In addition to receiving the tools, the session will also cover recognizing peer influence and getting a chance to practise using the tools.
2. Introduce the topic of influence or pressure from peers by asking the students what they think the term "peer pressure" means and if it is always negative. Discuss using the term "peer influence" rather than "peer pressure" to move away from something that is always negative.
3. Using the *Range of Peer Influence* slide (7.C), explain that peer influence can be positive or negative, direct or indirect.⁶ Ask the students to give some examples of each type of influence. Ask them "Is there a difference between negative pressure and bullying?"
4. Ask the students to reflect for a moment about what kind of influence they personally might have on their friends. Depending on your experience with and knowledge of the students in the class, you can have them share their responses out loud or just reflect on the following questions: "Do you see yourself as someone who is likely to be pressured by others, or are you the one applying the pressure?"
5. Finally, ask the students "Why do you think some teens try to directly influence others in negative ways? What do they gain from that?"
6. Tell the class that, although you have been looking at four different types of peer influence, the things you are going to do next focus on handling direct and negative peer influence around using alcohol and other drugs. Tell the students that they are going to be given a toolkit for handling negative direct pressure.
7. Using the *True-to-You Tools* slide (7.D), go over the first two of the four tools:
 - Remembering the things that you identified as important to you in an earlier activity (Activity 7.4) can serve as guideposts when deciding how to respond to negative influence.
 - Using the WHOA! model that has already been discussed can help you make less risky choices.

⁶The description of peer influence is adapted with permission from the British Columbia-based Alcohol-Drug Education Service's resource *Making Decisions—Grade 7* (1999).



A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE

8. Using the ADD slide (7.E), tell the students that they have the option to Accept the influence (and try to minimize the risks you are taking), Decline the influence (and use the “Get-Out-Of-It” techniques that will be described next) or Defer the decision until the next time (“No, not now. Maybe later.”).
9. Distribute copies of Student Handout 7.E—*Get-out-of-It Techniques... When You Just Don't Want To* to each student. Briefly go over each of the techniques. Ask the students to provide some examples of each technique using their own words.



TEACHER'S NOTES

Blank lined area for teacher's notes.

ACTIVITY 7.7: Decision Stories Role Play

1. Explain to the class that they are going to use their tools by role-playing some decision stories.⁷ Ask the group to break up into groups of three, four, or five, depending on the size of the class. Size-of-group guidelines for each story are as follows:
 - Story One:** A minimum of three students, can accommodate four or five
 - Story Two:** Three students
 - Story Three:** Three students
 - Story Four:** A minimum of three students, can accommodate four or five
 - Story Five:** A minimum of three students, can accommodate four or five
 - Story Six:** A minimum of four students, can accommodate more
 - Story Seven:** Three students
2. Distribute one of the seven decision stories from Student Handout 7.F to each of the groups. Instruct the students to read their story and decide who will take each individual part. Some of the roles involve exerting negative influence, and some of the roles involve resisting the influence and refusing alcohol or cannabis. In each role play, students are to demonstrate using some of the techniques they have learned. Give the students about 10 to 15 minutes to practise their stories. Each group has two to three minutes to present their role play.
3. Have each team present their role play. After each individual skit, ask the class the following questions:
 - What benefits did the person applying the negative influence identify?
 - What techniques did you see used to refuse alcohol or cannabis?
 - Where there other options you can think of?Limit each discussion to two or three minutes.
4. Once all of the groups have presented, wrap the session up by asking: What have you learned about standing up to negative influence from peers? Do you think that you will be able to use some of the techniques we've discussed in your real life?
5. At the end of class, ask the students to bring in the alcohol advertisements they have collected over the past few weeks for the next class (see the instructions for Activity 7.8 of Learning Theme Three).

⁷The ideas for personal goals in this learning theme are from the resource *Making Decisions—Grade 7* (1999) and are used with the permission of Alcohol-Drug Education Service, Vancouver, BC.



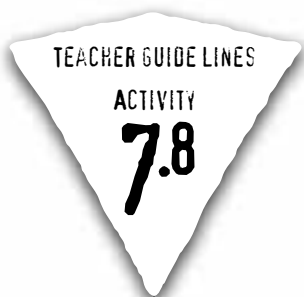
LEARNING THEME THREE: HOW I AM INFLUENCED BY THE WORLD AROUND ME

Introduction

Teenagers are faced with a variety of sources of influence in their communities and the world around them. They are exposed to the use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs in movies, television, the lyrics of popular songs, and the presence of alcohol outlets in their communities. They are also exposed to a wide range of advertising that promotes and normalizes the use of alcohol. In theory, alcohol advertising should be designed for young and older adults but not teenagers who are under the legal drinking age. In practice, the intended target audience of specific ads is questionable. This activity in this third learning theme is intended to encourage students to turn a critical eye on local alcohol advertising and evaluate the apparent messages as well as the various audiences that might find the ads appealing.

Grade 7 Learning Theme Three—How I Am Influenced by the World around Me

Healthy Living Curriculum Links	Activity Objective(s)	Activities	Time Frame	Preparation	Materials
Demonstrate an awareness of adolescents as a target population for consumer marketing (C3.2)	<p>To expose students to the multiple messages in alcohol advertising</p> <p>To foster critical and evaluative skills in students for looking at alcohol advertising</p>	<p>Activity 7.8 <i>Behind the Messages</i>—Using examples that they have been collecting, students discuss the messages in alcohol ads and their possible appeal to youth.</p>	Up to 45 minutes	Ask students to bring in their ads ahead of time for teacher review and response.	Possibly a VCR and TV



TEACHER'S NOTES

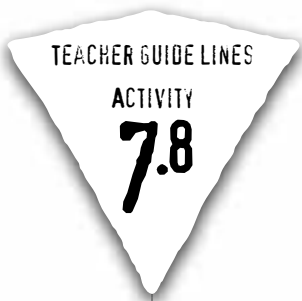
A series of horizontal lines for taking notes, starting from a rectangular box at the top and continuing down the page.

ACTIVITY 7.8: Behind the Messages

Note

There are two options for this session. One is to ask the students to bring in their ads during the class preceding this activity so that you can review the materials and make a decision about which ads will be used in class. Then ask the students who brought in the selected ads to comment on why they chose those ads. The second option is to ask the students to bring in their ads the day of the class, have each student present their ad(s), and explain why they think it might appeal to teenagers.

1. Begin the session by reminding the students that they were given an assignment about alcohol advertising during the first class on alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. That assignment involved collecting alcohol ads they thought might appeal to teenagers.
2. Ask the students to pick one of their ads to share with their class. Ask each student to show or describe their ad and indicate why they think it might appeal to teenagers. As the students talk about their ads, make a note of the reasons they give for the ad's potential appeal to teenagers so that you can present a summary at the end of the presentations.
3. Once all the students have presented their ads, ask the class the following questions:
 - Now that you have seen these ads, do you believe that alcohol advertising can get the attention of teenagers? [Be prepared to counteract a “no” response.]
 - What techniques or approaches do the ads use that make them appealing to teenagers? [Watch for things such as including animals, showing young-looking people having a good time, including a well-known sports or entertainment celebrity, having a cartoon-like look to the ad, or using a well-known song as part of the ad.]
 - Why do you think the companies that sell alcohol would want their ads to catch the attention of teenagers? [A possible answer is to lay the foundation for the next generation of alcohol product consumers.]



A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE

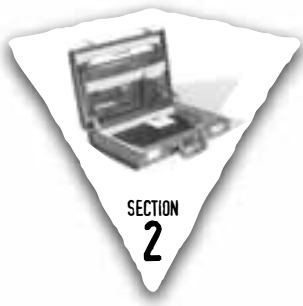
TEACHER'S NOTES

A vertical column of horizontal lines for taking notes, with a larger rectangular box at the bottom.

4. Wrap up the session by asking the students to discuss what messages they think can be found in the ads. Some examples include

- Drinking alcohol is fun.
- People always have a better time when they drink.
- People who drink alcohol have interesting lives.

Ask the students to comment on whether they think the messages are accurate or not.



FINAL SESSION: WRAP-UP AND ASSESSMENT— UNDERSTANDING OUR CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

Introduction

The first session of Healthy Living 7 introduced students to the types of factors—individual, social, and environmental or cultural factors—that can influence their decisions regarding alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. This final session asks the students to reflect on what they have learned about influencing factors from the previous learning themes and activities. It asks them to demonstrate what they have learned by describing what types of influences they personally experience.

By assigning the session’s single activity, teachers have an opportunity to assess student progress and learning from the unit by students’ responses to identifying their own influences or through the development of a rubric tailored by individual teachers for the activity.⁸

Grade 7 Wrap-Up Session

Healthy Living Curriculum Links	Activity Objective(s)	Activities	Time Frame	Preparation	Materials
Identify personal, social, and cultural influences related to alcohol, cannabis, and other drug use (B3.7)	To assess student learning and application of that learning about the factors that influence the use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs	Activity 7.9 <i>What Influences my Decisions and Choices?</i> —Students complete a diagram of the factors that influence their decisions.	Up to 45 minutes	Prepare Slide 7.A— <i>Circles of Influence</i> . Make a copy of Student Handout 7.G— <i>Circles of Influence</i> for each student.	Overhead projector Flip chart

⁸ See Appendix D for examples of assessment rubrics.

TEACHER'S NOTES

ACTIVITY 7.9:**What Influences My Decisions and Choices?**

- Remind the students that the focus of the previous classes has been developing an understanding of the way personal, social, and cultural factors affect the decisions they make about alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. Using the *Circles of Influence* slide (7.A), explain that these factors can be described as
 - how I influence myself
 - how others influence me
 - how I am influenced by the world around me
- Write the three factors on separate pieces of flip chart paper. Alternatively, make three columns on the board in front of the classroom using the same headings. Ask the students for examples of the things that might fit under each heading. Some typical responses might look like this

How I influence myself

The skills I have for making up my mind

My knowledge/information

My values and goals

My feelings

How others influence me

Friends

What others expect me to do

My parents and grandparents

My teachers and coaches

How I am influenced by the world around me

Laws related to alcohol and other drugs

How easy it is to get alcohol or cannabis

Television and movies

Advertising

- Once the students have completed this list, there are four key points to share:
 - We have control over some of these influences and no control over others.
 - Sometimes, the various influencing factors may be in conflict with each other (for example, what friends want us to do and what parents may want us to do).
 - Depending on our individual values and goals, some of these factors have a strong influence on the decisions we make, while others have only a minor or weak effect.
 - The factors that influence us change over time.

CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

How I am Influenced by the World Around Me

How others Influence Me

How I Influence Myself

WHOA!

Wait

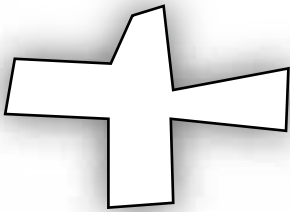
Have a brain.

Options

Action

RANGE OF PEER INFLUENCE

Positive



Direct

When someone encourages you to do something that is good for you.

Indirect

When someone sets a positive example by what they do.

Negative



When someone tries to get you to do something that is risky or bad for you.

When everyone else seems to be doing things that are risky or bad for you.

TRUE-TO-YOU-TOOLS

- The Things That Are Important to You
- The WHOA!
Decision-Making Model
- The ADD Options
- Get-out-of-It
Techniques

THE ADD OPTIONS

Accept

Decline

Defer

FACT OR FICTION QUIZ

Discuss each of the following statements in your group.
Decide if they are true or false.

1. It is safer to use cannabis than to drink or take any other drug.
2. You can overdose on alcohol the way you can with other drugs.
3. Getting caught with cannabis is illegal for all ages.
4. Drinking beer can cause as many serious health problems as drinking "hard" liquor can.
5. It is dangerous to drink and take prescription or over-the-counter drugs.
6. For teens, one of the riskiest things to do is to drink to get drunk.
7. Alcohol is a stimulant that makes you feel happy.
8. Nova Scotia students who responded to a survey have reported their drinking has caused tension with family and friends.
9. Using cannabis affects one's ability to drive a car.
10. There is evidence that smoking cannabis can lead to lung cancer.

FACT OR FICTION ANSWERS

1. *False.* Cannabis can affect short-term memory, impair decision making, and contribute to accidents. Longer-term regular use can cause lung damage and lead to dependency. Recent research shows that long-term regular use can lead to mental health problems among people who are vulnerable to these problems.
2. *True.* An alcohol overdose comes in the form of alcohol poisoning. If the blood alcohol level rises high enough (from drinking a lot of alcohol in a short time), this can shut down breathing and lead to unconsciousness and death. Drinking can also cause death when a person loses consciousness, vomits, and suffocates or chokes on their vomit. When someone passes out after drinking, they need help.
3. *True.* The possession and use of marijuana is illegal everywhere in Canada, regardless of age.
4. *True.* Beer drinkers can develop health problems that are just as serious as the health problems of people who drink spirits, such as whiskey, rum, gin, vodka, and liqueurs, and wines. Which type of alcohol one drinks has less impact on health as how much, how often, and for how long one drinks.
5. *True.* Alcohol when mixed with other drugs (prescription and over-the-counter medications as well as illegal drugs) can produce unpredictable results. Some combinations are potentially dangerous because they may multiply rather than simply add to each other's effects. For example, alcohol can have potentially dangerous effects when mixed with Aspirin products or antihistamines found in cold, cough, or allergy medications, or with marijuana, painkillers, tranquillizers, and sleeping pills, with consequences ranging from seriously impaired behaviour to overdose and coma.
6. *True.* Getting drunk means having poor motor coordination combined with lowered inhibitions and poor judgment. This combination of effects greatly increases the risk of being injured, having an accident, being in a fight, overdosing, or other dangerous behaviour. Over time, other problems can arise, ranging from distracting a person from their goals to alcohol dependence (alcoholism). This can result in many other problems, including conflicts with family, friends, and the law.
7. *False.* Alcohol is actually a depressant that slows down the functions of the central nervous system, including the brain. This is the reason why people feel relaxed soon after they consume alcohol. Alcohol also depresses the part of the brain that controls inhibitions, resulting in less self-control. However, if too much alcohol is consumed, the brain slows enough to cause sleep or unconsciousness. Since the brain



controls the heart and your breathing rate, muscle coordination, memory, and thought, the slowing of the brain's functioning will have a depressing effect on the body. Alcohol may give temporary relief to feeling sad or down, but it does not correct the circumstances that are causing the feelings.

- 8. True. Seventeen percent of students (or 1.7 out of 10) who reported they had consumed alcohol in the 12 months leading up to the survey reported tensions with family or friends as a result of drinking.

Other alcohol-related problems among those students included

Damaged things when drinking	23.5%
Personal Injury	23.7%
Money problems	12.6%
Drove under the influence of alcohol	9.9%
Trouble with Police	6.7%
Schoolwork problems	5.0%
Unplanned sex after alcohol or drug use among students in grades 9, 10, and 12 who consumed alcohol	22.2%

- 9. True. Cannabis can affect a person's balance, judgment, reactions, memory, and perceptions. Operating a vehicle while under the influence of cannabis is both illegal and dangerous, particularly when combined with alcohol.

- 10. True. Cannabis smoke contains up to 50 percent more tar and cancer-causing chemicals than cigarettes. This, combined with the fact that a cannabis smoker tends to bring the smoke deeper into the lungs and hold it for a longer period, means that lung problems (e.g., bronchitis and major lung diseases such as emphysema and cancer) can result from smoking fewer joints than cigarettes. The smoke also harms the immune system, which wards off infections and disease in the body.

NOTE

Note: Some of the survey questions and answers used in this exercise have been adapted from results of the most recent Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey found in Poulin, C and Elliott, D. (2007) *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use 2007: Technical Report*. Halifax, NS: Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection and Dalhousie University.



SOME THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO GRADE 7 STUDENTS

Look over the following items. Add others that you think are important at the bottom. Then, circle the three that are the most important to you.

- money and wealth
- getting good grades
- being part of a church
- being good at sports
- being physically strong
- being popular at school
- having a best friend
- having a lot of friends
- privacy
- having cool clothes
- being able to make my own choices
- my parents having a good opinion of me
- being a good role model for younger siblings
- having the same things (cell phone, iPod) that other kids have

Other:

WHOA! DECISION-MAKING MODEL

1. **Wait a minute!**
Don't **DO** or **SAY** anything.

2. **Have a brain.**
Figure out what the conflict or problem is. Define it in one sentence.

3. **Options**
List the possible choices/options that can be made. For each choice, list the possible outcomes or consequences of the choice.

4. **Action**
Make a choice. Pick the option that you believe will lead to the outcome you most want and take the action needed to get you there.

How comfortable are you with the outcome?

Would you make the same decision again?

GET-OUT-OF-IT TECHNIQUES... WHEN YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO

Turn the Tables

Explain that you would not ask that person to do something they don't want to do and you would appreciate them treating you the same.

Give an Alternative

Suggest something you could do instead, especially if it can bring about the same result.

Identify False Information

If someone uses a reason like "everyone else is doing it" or "what's the harm," point out that his or her information is incorrect.

Change the Subject

Start talking about something else as if you didn't hear what they say.

Leave

You don't have to stay when things make you uncomfortable. Leave the room or leave the situation.

Take a Stand

Say no and that you are not going to change your mind so don't bother trying.

Avoid the Situation

Plan ahead and try to anticipate what is likely to happen so you can decide to stay away.

Get Back-Up

Try to get someone else in the group to agree with you so that you are not alone.

DECISION STORIES—WORKING IT OUT

Story 1: Your Choice

You and your best friend are invited to a party on a Friday night at the home of a guy in your class and you go. At the party, you are invited by other kids that you don't know all that well to go into another room to listen to music and to share some cannabis. They tell you that taking a few tokes from the joint will make you feel great. You don't want to do this—what can you do or say?

Story 2: Your Choice Part 2

This story is exactly like the first one... with a twist.

You and your friend are invited to a party on a Friday night at the home of a guy in your class and you go. At the party, a close friend (who is usually with you and arrived at the party ahead of you) invites you to go into another room to listen to music and to share some marijuana. Your friend has just tried it and tells you that a few tokes from the joint will make you feel great. You don't want to do this—what can you do or say?

Story 3: It is a School Night

You are at a friend's house early one evening. It is the night before a math test at school, and you are studying together. Your friend's parents are out running a few errands, but her older brother is home. He comes into the kitchen where you are studying and gets a beer out of the fridge. He offers the two of you a beer, saying it will relax you and make the studying easier. You don't want a beer—what can you do or say?

Story 4: Beer Pressure

Two of your friends have invited you to come with them to one of their homes. They are bragging about the fact that there is beer in the garage, and they are going to drink. Although they are your friends and you like hanging out with them, you really do not think taking beer from the garage and drinking it is a good idea, and you don't want to do it. What will you do or say?



DECISION STORIES—WORKING IT OUT

continued...



Story 5: Bring the Booze

Your friends are planning a small party to celebrate Amanda's 13th birthday. Amanda is the first one in your group to turn 13, and you want to make it special. One of the girls suggests celebrating with drinks like parents do. They have all seen the fancy liquor cabinet with all the glasses and bottles at your house, so Stacey suggests that you take a bit of booze from each bottle in your parent's cabinet and bring it to the party. You don't want to—what can you do or say?

Story 6: Wine with the Meal

It is Thanksgiving weekend and your parents have gone away, leaving you to spend the weekend at a friend's house. The family is having a big meal with lots of food and relatives in attendance. At the beginning of the dinner, when everyone starts to enjoy their meal, one of the adults pours wine in everyone's glass, including your friend's and yours. You have never had a glass of wine at home. You don't want to do this—what can you do or say?

Story 7: Behind the Wheel

You are at your best friend's house working on a school project. You work longer than you had planned and now it is late. You pack up to go home, prepared to walk. Just as you leave the house and walk down the driveway with your friend, your friend's older brother pulls into the driveway in his car and offers to give you a ride home. You can smell cannabis coming from the open car window and notice a few empty beer bottles in the car. You don't want to get in the car but you are also worried about getting home late. What can you say or do?

The ideas for personal goals in this learning theme are from the resource *Making Decisions – Grade 7 (1999)* and are used with the permission of Alcohol-Drug Education Service, Vancouver BC.

CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

