


SUBSTANCE ABUSE*

▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

 **Time:** 60 minutes

 **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the difference between substance use, abuse and addiction.
- Understand the impact substances have on HIV.

In This Activity You Will...

- Conduct a brainstorm on the differences between substance use, abuse and addiction (10 minutes).
- Facilitate small group activity on use, abuse and addiction (20 minutes).
- Facilitate skits on use, abuse and addiction and process discussion (30 minutes).

Materials:

- Markers
- Flip chart
- Color-coded break up method
- Handout – Use/Abuse/Addiction Activities List
- Handout- 3 Substance Abuse Cards (1 category per color -should match the group)
- Answer Key – Use/Abuse/Addiction Activities List -- KEY
- Flipchart – Substance Abuse Continuum

(continued next page)

Instructions

1. Introduce topic of substance use and abuse.
 - When I say “substance abuse,” what kind of substances do you think of?
2. Give participants the opportunity to respond and list on flip chart.
 - Substances include marijuana, cocaine, heroin, inhalants, methamphetamine, alcohol, tobacco, steroids, caffeine and other psychoactive drugs.
 - Prescription drugs can also be abused. Some of these substances are legal while others are illegal. They may include: oxycontin, methadone, morphine, valium, xanax, dilaudide.
 - Alcohol, drugs and some prescription drugs like pain medications can change the way we feel – usually in a short period of time. What are some of the reasons someone might drink or use drugs to change their feelings? [Note to trainer: offer more responses if necessary. Other responses may include the following:
 - Celebrate, party
 - Reduce stress
 - Improve appetite
 - Sleep
 - Feel more comfortable socializing
 - Overcome hang-ups/fears about having sex
 - Forget bad memories/experiences
 - “Self medicate” depression
 - cope with stress
 - control anger
 - keep from “jonesing”, going into withdrawal
 - Not everyone who uses drugs or alcohol are substance abusers. Substance use occurs on a continuum.

* This module comes from Duke University, Partners in Caring; Center for Creative Education, 2006.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Preparation:

- Prepare Substance Abuse Continuum Flipchart
- Prepare Substance Abuse Cards
- Print handouts

- Recreational/Social Use -> Misuse/Abuse -> Addiction
 - Many people can drink alcohol or use recreational drugs from time to time without any problems. These are recreational/social “users.”
 - Abuse is when you develop a pattern of drug or alcohol use. It can be compared to a new romance: It feels good— euphoric— you look forward to the next time; it takes up a lot of your attention and thoughts. But it also takes your focus away from important activities like work, family and taking care of yourself.
 - Addiction is when the drug “takes over the person.” They use regularly and it takes more to get as high. It becomes everything: their lover, best friend, confidant, family. The drug, not the person, is in control. The drug becomes more important than children, lovers, work, self-respect and health. Addicts often “chase the high;” they want to feel as good as “the first time, but they can’t. Instead of euphoria, they use to escape pain and feel “normal.” Even though there it causes a lot of problems, it has become the only coping method. Quitting may seem impossible.
 - During addiction, some drugs cause “physical dependence. At this stage, people “jones” or go into withdrawal without regular use. Examples include opiates, like heroin, methadone, oxycontin. Without proper detox, many relapse because they can’t stand it. Unlike opiates, withdrawal from alcohol and tranquilizers can be life threatening. If someone is drinking or taking these pills daily, it is urgent that you get them evaluated. Severe symptoms include DTs, seizures, and hallucination. Other health conditions, like hypertension, can exacerbate the problem.
 - Now we’re going to do an activity to help you better understand the difference between social/recreational use, abuse and addiction.
3. Social/Recreation Use – Abuse – Addiction 2-part activity.
 4. Divide group into 3 groups. Explain PART 1 of the activity.
- This activity has 2 parts. After you have completed part 1, then

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

you will receive instructions for part 2. Note: Only complete PART 2 if there is time.

- PART 1: On the Use/Abuse/Addiction Activities List handout, you will see 15 scenarios or behaviors. As a group, you are to determine which category that behavior fits into—Recreational Use, Abuse, or Addiction—and discuss what excludes that behavior from the other categories. There will be a trainer/facilitator in the group with you to participate in the discussion and go over your answers. **Note: the trainer will have the answer key.**

5. Bring attention to the larger group for processing.

6. Ask group if they were surprised at any of the answers.

- Now that we've talked about the difference along the substance use continuum, what are some of the reasons you think people abuse substances?

Some answers might include:

- Hereditary or genetic – people with family members with addiction problems are more likely to inherit it.
- Environment – living conditions – living in neighborhoods where there is a lot of substance use, poverty, hopelessness.
- Undiagnosed or untreated mental illness, such as depression.
- Substance is a substitute for a condition or behavior that people desire – for example sleep, appetite.

7. Explain PART 2 of the activity.

- PART 2: Each group will present information to the rest of the class. The facilitator has been given a card with instructions for your group to follow during your presentation. Based on your

presentation, the rest of the class will guess which category you are reporting on.

8. Allow each group to present their skit.

9. Allow the rest of the class to guess the category then discuss.

10. Ask group for their thoughts on how substance abuse impacts the immune system. Take a few responses and lead into mini-lecture.

- Substance abuse compromises the immune system and makes it harder for the body to suppress the virus and use the medicine that you are taking to boost your immune system.

- Some street drugs interact with medication. The liver breaks down medications used to fight HIV. Protease inhibitors and non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors in particular are metabolized by the liver. It also breaks down recreational drugs, including alcohol. When drugs and medications are both “in line” to use the liver, they might both be processed much more slowly. This can lead to a serious overdose of the medication or of the recreational drug. An overdose of a medication can cause more serious side effects. An overdose of a recreational drug can be deadly.

- We know that it's very important to take every dose of anti-HIV medication. When we take all our doses, it's called being adherent. Drug use is linked with poor adherence and can lead to treatment failure.

- Missing doses can cause higher levels of HIV in the blood and can result in resistance to the very HIV medications that someone is taking to help fight the disease. Since there are only a certain number of anti-HIV medications, resistance to one or more of them limits what can be done to fight the virus.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

11. Ask if there are any remaining questions or thoughts about substance use and abuse.

Summary

- Many people can drink alcohol or use recreational drugs from time to time and not have a problem. Others cannot use drugs or alcohol without abusing them, and addicts who abuse drugs and alcohol regularly can create serious problems for their health and others.
- In order for us to help and educate others, it's important to remember the circumstances that contribute to people using substances. What are some risks with lecturing others about substance abuse? Answers might include the following:
 - Alienating your audience
 - Causing your audience to miss the take home message
 - It is important to understand the issues surrounding substance use, abuse and addiction.

* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit. This module comes from Duke University, Partners in Caring; Center for Creative Education, 2006.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SESSION HANDOUT # 1 of 2

USE/ABUSE/ADDICTION ACTIVITIES LIST

Social/Recreational Use	Misuse/Abuse	Addiction

1. Lost your job due to a series of absences because you were too hung-over to work
2. Kids went to foster care because you were out buying crack on the Child Protective Worker's last 3 visits
3. Took a drink to stop arms from shaking
4. Drank wine at a family reunion
5. Drinking causes you to be late to work, school, other appointments
6. Stopped by a friend's house and s/he invites you to smoke a joint
7. Sold your mother's car to buy heroin
8. Spent paycheck on drugs
9. Drank a few beers at a holiday party
10. Lost your keys after taking ecstasy at a bar
11. Smoke pot 1x/day to keep your appetite up
12. Got a DWI
13. Take double doses of pain medications to feel better emotionally
14. Blacked out the night before using a combination of crank and alcohol
15. Drink 6 beers about 4x/week

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SESSION ANSWER KEY

USE/ABUSE/ADDICTION ACTIVITIES LIST- ANSWER KEY

Social/Recreational Use	Misuse/Abuse	Addiction
Drank wine at a family reunion	Drinking causes you to be late to work, school, other appointments	Lost your job due to a series of absences because you were too hung-over to work
Stopped by a friend's house and s/he invites you to smoke a joint	Lost your keys after taking ecstasy at a bar	Sold your mother's car to buy heroin
Drank a few beers at a holiday party	Blacked out the night before using a combination of crank and alcohol	Kids went to foster care because you were out buying crack on the Child Protective Worker's last 3 visits
	Got a DWI	Took a drink to stop arms from shaking
	Smoke pot 1x/day to keep your appetite up	Spent paycheck on drugs
	Take double doses of pain medications to feel better emotionally	
	Drink 6 beers about 4x/week	

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 2

MISUSE/ABUSE

Group Instructions:

1. Create a skit using the scenario below to display the above category. Based on your skit, the rest of the class should be able to determine your substance abuse category.
2. Your skit should demonstrate:
 - What Misuse/Abuse looks like;
 - How it may affect possible transmission or re-infection of an STD/HIV

Scenario:

You went to a party with a friend. You had a few mixed drinks, but felt no side-effects. You were asked to try ecstasy by someone that you were attracted to and you did. This was the first time that you used it. The next morning, you woke up in bed together. You remember the entire night and had a great time.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 2 (cont.)

ADDICTION

Group Instructions:

1. Create a skit using the scenario below to display the above category. Based on your skit, the rest of the class should be able to determine your substance abuse category.
2. Your skit should demonstrate:
 - What addiction looks like;
 - How it may affect possible transmission or re-infection of an STD/HIV

Scenario:

After your car accident 6 months ago, you were prescribed oxycontin for pain. You took your pills everyday for 4 months. When you went back to the doctor for a check-up, you lied and told him that you needed more pills because your pain was still severe, though you were not having had pain at all. After that prescription ran out, you decided to stop but experienced withdrawal. A few days later you stole the oxycodin pills from your partner's brother who has cancer.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 2 (cont.)

RECREATIONAL/SOCIAL USE

Group Instructions:

1. Create a skit using the scenario below to display the above category. Based on your skit, the rest of the class should be able to determine your substance abuse category.
2. Your skit should demonstrate:
 - What recreational/social use looks like;
 - How it may affect possible transmission or re-infection of an STD/HIV

Scenario:

Every 1st Friday of the month there is a huge party at a local club. When you go with your friends, you tend to buy a few drinks for yourself and then drink whatever others purchase for you. By the time you head home you are usually pretty wasted. That is the only time you drink alcohol during the month.