

Theme 3: Drug use and others

Suggested content

Teacher notes

Effects of drug use on behaviour

Reducing risks to myself and others in different situations

- motor vehicles
- as a pedestrian
- work sites
- aquatic activities
- relationships
- sporting and recreational activities
- sexual relationships

Risk taking is more widespread in the 15-24 year age group than in most other age groups. The risks associated with activities such as driving are increased in the 18–25-year-old group. Young males (18–25-year-old group) are involved in more road accidents than are young females or the general population.

Recognising and managing dangerous behaviour involving drug use

- risk taking
- aggression
- domestic violence
- mood swings
- socially unacceptable behaviour
- fatigue
- peer expectations

Engaging in risk taking behaviour is a normal part of growing up and is necessary to build confidence, enhance competence and provide reinforcement for taking initiative. Risk taking behaviour can be seen as gaining peer acceptance and respect, establishing autonomy from parents, rejecting norms and values of conventional authority, coping with such factors as failure, stress, anxiety, affirming maturity and confirming self to significant others.

Students could identify strategies for avoiding high risk behaviour, such as drink driving and driver fatigue, and ways of managing such situations if they occur.

Drug use and employment

Occupational health and safety (OH&S) issues associated with drug use

- definition of OH&S
- legal responsibilities of employers and employees
- other responsibilities as employees e.g. social, moral, economic

The OH&S Act places responsibility for occupational health and safety matters not only on the employer, but also on individual employees.

Many students during Years 11-12 become part of the workforce and this involves additional responsibilities.

Some of these issues could be explored by investigating the procedures and actions of the school's OH&S committee. For more information on OH&S you can also refer to the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Drug use and employment (continued)

Effects of misuse of drugs on future employment prospects

- travel restrictions
- economic implications
- legal implications
- social implications

Students need to consider employment issues surrounding the use of legal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and prescribed medications. Other Occupational Health and Safety issues may arise in the workplace because a drug is illegal, and these need to be addressed. There is an increase in the number of companies testing employees for drugs. Some work contracts have specific clauses e.g. airline pilots, train drivers.

Parties and celebrations

Responsibilities to ensure parties are safe

- as a host
- as a participant
- as a parent or caregiver
- as a friend

It is important that senior students explore issues concerning safe end-of-year celebrations.

Students need to consider potential risk situations associated with parties and celebrations and plan ways of avoiding or reducing negative consequences or harm.

Helping those in need

Drug-related medical emergencies

- seeking medical assistance
- first aid (DRABC)
- seeking assistance from others
- recognising an emergency

While the general effects of drugs are known, these may vary from individual to individual. It should be reinforced that basic first aid procedures for drug use are the same as for general first aid procedures. Students should be able to demonstrate emergency procedures.

Calling for help

- reasons why people might be reluctant to call for help
- positive consequences of reporting and supporting a friend in need
- identifying the most appropriate source of support

Other issues which need to be addressed include when to call 000, why people are reluctant to report incidents involving drug use to medical staff, and confidentiality matters.

Students should discuss different situations and be able to discriminate between whether or not to call for assistance from people such as responsible adults, parents, doctors, ambulance and police.