

Choices to make

Drugs

Live life to the full

Romans 12:1-2

Setting the scene

You will all have heard of drugs and may even know someone who takes them. What is a drug? It is a substance that changes the way your mind and body work. There are lots of different types of drugs, all with different effects. Some are legal and some are illegal. Can you name some legal and some illegal drugs? Let's consider different types of drugs and what effects they have.

Legal drugs

All medicines are drugs but not all drugs are medicines. Medicines are usually given to make people healthy.

Can you name some medicines and say what they are for?

- Inhalers to keep people with asthma healthy.
- Insulin to keep diabetics healthy.
- Penicillin prescribed for chest infections
- Calpol for a child's cough / cold.

There are many other essential medicines.

Illegal drugs

The following are types of illegal drugs:

Depressants / Downers - they slow down the brain and stop it from sending the right message to the rest of the body. Users have slower reactions, lose their self control and may become violent. Valium, Barbiturates and alcohol are examples of depressants.

Stimulants / Uppers - these do the opposite to downers - they speed up the heart and make the user feel energetic. They can cause stroke, heart attack or paranoia (thinking everyone is getting at them). Cocaine, Ecstasy and nicotine are examples of stimulants.

Hallucinogens - they change the way the user sees things. They may see or feel things that aren't there and may have terrible nightmarish experiences. Cannabis and LSD are examples of hallucinogens.

Cannabis is the most easily obtained illegal drug in Britain. It affects the whole person physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually.

Using / not using drugs

Using drugs that are not medicines can cause all sorts of problems.

Why do people take drugs? Some of the reasons given are:

- It relieves boredom.
- It makes me forget my troubles.
- My friends do it.
- I like it.
- I look cool.

You may be influenced by friends, family, TV adverts or pop stars to do things you wouldn't normally do. This can be true with drug use.

It is important to remember that, if you take a drug, it will have an effect on you and it could be a bad one. Some who use Cannabis say that they can't remember much and become anxious and panicky. They may find that they can't cope without using the drug.

Drug dealers are not interested in the health or enjoyment of people they sell drugs to. They are out to get their money.

What reasons do people give for not using drugs?

- I want to show my friends that drugs are no good.
- I want to be in control.
- I don't need drugs to have a good time.
- Could affect my sport.
- Could affect my studying.
- It's a risk to my heart.
- It's illegal.

How can we decide whether or not to use drugs? We must ask, "How will a drug affect our bodies; will it affect our relationship with God?" Our bodies are described as the temple of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 3:16-17. Christians are encouraged to be filled with the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5:18. Read 1 Peter 4:7 and discuss whether someone under the influence of cannabis or other drugs would be clear minded and self-controlled enough to have a real relationship with God. Christians should set a good example to others. If we choose a drug-free lifestyle, it may help others to make a right choice - read 1 Corinthians 10:31-32.

Summing up

Drugs change the way the mind and body work. They can result in serious health problems and death for users. Each individual has to take responsibility for their own actions. God wants us all to follow a Christian lifestyle. It is clear that what we do influences others but we are responsible for choosing what to do. Will you live your life in such a way that you can be a role model for others?

Standard

Teaching aim

To make young people aware of different types of drugs and their effects.

Resources

Music

- MP 626 Teach me Thy way,
O Lord
- MP 664 The Spirit lives to
set us free
- MP 710 To Him who is able
to keep us

Activities

- Activity Sheet "Choices to make - 1"
- Activity Sheet "Choices to make - 2 and 3" give a summary of the whole course.

Discussion Points

- Why do you think so many young people get involved in drug taking?
- How could you be a role model for other young people?
- How could each of you do your bit to help create a world free from the abuse of drugs?
- When might it be necessary for young people to stand out from the crowd?

Prayer points

Thank God that:

- He designed our bodies for us.
- We can have a happy life as a Christian without using drugs.

Pray for:

- Strength from God to live our lives as He wants us to.

Drugs

1. Drugs are often known by nicknames. Follow the lines which join the name of the drug to its nickname and write them in the chart below.

	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">Nickname</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Drug</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Nickname	Drug								
Nickname	Drug										

	Legal	Illegal
Aspirin		
Alcohol		
Cannabis		
Cocaine		
Ecstasy		
Glue / gas		
Heroin		
Medicine		
Nicotine		
LSD		

3. Who or what might influence you to do something you wouldn't normally do? Unscramble the words.

snifred

readstv

opp srats

sadlut

4. Why do Christians believe we have a responsibility to look after our bodies?

Choices to make 2

Drug Awareness Activities

a) Drug Quiz

	True	False	Don't know
1. Sniffing lighter gas is illegal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Most crimes of violence occur under the influence of alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The main risk with crack is becoming infected with the HIV virus by sharing needles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Strong black coffee helps to sober up someone who is drunk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Allowing people to use illegal drugs in your home is a crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. You can obtain heroin legally in the UK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. One pint of beer contains the same amount of alcohol as a single measure of whisky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The same drug can affect you differently at different times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Cocaine was once an ingredient in a famous soft drink	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Stopping long-term use of tranquillisers is not easy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Ecstasy is a sedative type drug derived from opium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b) Dangerous Drugs

Tick the three most dangerous substances from the list below using the following criteria:

(a) Number of deaths (b) Death on first use (c) Harm to society

(d) Most addictive

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heroin | <input type="checkbox"/> Solvents | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannabis (Weed/Hash) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cocaine | <input type="checkbox"/> LSD (Acid/Trips) | <input type="checkbox"/> Magic Mushrooms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco | <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> Tranquillisers (Tranx) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ecstasy | <input type="checkbox"/> Amphetamine (Speed/Whizz) | |

Drug Quiz - Answers

1. False - It isn't illegal to use or possess solvents, but it is illegal to sell solvents knowing that they will be used for inhalation. It is illegal to sell butane gas lighter refills to under 18s. In Scotland misusers may be taken into care.
2. True - The British Medical Association estimates that alcohol is a factor in 60-70 per cent of murders.
3. False - Crack is prepared from cocaine and is usually smoked, not injected.
4. False - Only time helps to sober up a drunk person.
5. True - It is illegal to allow people to use controlled substances such as cannabis or heroin in your home.
6. True - Licensed doctors are allowed to prescribe heroin to registered addicts. (Diamorphine is pharmaceutical heroin.)
7. False - One way to measure the amount of alcohol in different drinks is to count them in units. All these drinks are the equivalent of one unit each and contain approximately the same amount of alcohol.
1/2 pint normal strength beer/lager = 1 measure of spirits; a glass of wine (125 ml) = a small glass of sherry (50 ml).
8. True - The effects of a drug can be modified to some extent by where you are, who you are with and what you expect to happen. For example, if you drank with friends at a party the feelings could be different than if you drank at home. When you are feeling down or depressed, using some drugs can amplify this mood.
9. True - Until 1904 cocaine was an ingredient in Coca Cola and was used in medicines such as tonic wine and throat lozenges.
10. True - Coming off tranquillisers can cause sickness, difficulty with sleeping, shaking and anxiety. People should come off tranquillisers under medical supervision and the help of counselling or a support group.
11. False - Ecstasy is a man-made drug. It has an amphetamine base, which makes it a stimulant drug, and it also has hallucinogenic properties. It is not a sedative type drug.

b) Dangerous Drugs

- (a) Number of deaths - Tobacco
- (b) Death on first use - Solvents
- (c) Harm to society - Alcohol
- (d) Most addictive - Heroin or Nicotine