



Discussion Guide for

THE TEEN FILES: THE TRUTH ABOUT DRINKING

Objectives:

- To relate that anyone who drinks, no matter how old, is in danger of abusing alcohol and suffering one of many life-altering consequences.
- To explain how vision, coordination and reaction time are impaired by alcohol, even when a person isn't fully intoxicated.
- To discuss how alcohol use causes a "shriveling" of the brain, the beginnings of which are apparent even in the brain scan of a sober teen who drinks socially.
- To relate how binge drinking can lead to alcohol poisoning and death before others realize what has happened to the victim.
- To discuss why it is never safe to get into a car being driven by someone who is intoxicated by alcohol or is under the influence of any other drug.

Hosted by Leeza Gibbons with appearance by Tyra Banks, actor Kevin Sorbo, and heavyweight boxing champion Evander Holyfield.

Synopsis

For today's teenagers, alcohol is the number one drug of choice. It is considered cool by many teens to drink as much as they can in social situations involving their peers. Few if any of these young people think about the consequences.

In this program, teens who are current drinkers see firsthand what the future may hold for them if they continue to drink. They experience the potential consequences of alcohol use from every perspective, including how drinking impairs a person's coordination, vision, and reaction time; how the brain and other organs suffer lasting damage from alcohol use; how a drunk person really drives; and how drinking can lead to spending months in a rehabilitation center.

The program culminates in a realistic simulation of the deaths of three participants who got into a car with a fourth who was driving drunk. The teens watch videotape of their parents' reaction to the news. The driver is then booked and sent to prison. The three victims visit the coroner's office to learn of the fatal injuries each suffered in the crash. Finally, they all attend the funerals of the three who died and listen as their parents read farewell tributes to their children.

By the close of the program, all of the young participants are moved to stop their reckless drinking behavior. An Arnold Shapiro Production.

Questions To Ask Before Viewing

1. What is the #1 drug of choice for today's teenagers?
2. Why do you think drinking alcohol is so popular among teenagers?
3. What experiences have you had or heard about involving drinking too much at one time?
4. At what point in a person's life do you think frequent consumption of alcohol has a physical effect on the brain or other organs?
5. When is it safe to drive after you have been drinking, or to get into a car driven by someone who has been drinking?
6. Since the legal drinking age is 21 where do teens get their alcohol?

Questions To Ask After Viewing

1. Manny talked about what would have to happen to make him stop drinking. What did he say? (He said something really bad would have to happen to him or to someone he cared about.)
2. What was demonstrated about the driving of drunk person when Chris attempted to drive the specially altered car? (The demonstration showed that a drunk

person's reaction time is delayed, so that the decisions he is making on the road might occur a few seconds too late.)

3. What do drunk drivers think about their ability behind the wheel? (They think they can drive as well as or better than when they are sober.)

4. What did Manny and Mary Ellen learn about how the liver is affected by alcohol? (They learned that the liver of a drinker becomes scarred and hard.)

5. Larry Ruten died from alcohol poisoning. How did his friends contribute to his death? (Tory assumed he would be OK and left him on the bathroom floor, where it seems he suffocated, probably from his own vomit.)

6. Alcohol kills more than how many times the number of people killed by cocaine, heroin, and every other illegal drug combined? (Five times)

7. What did Tara and Nathan learn about how and when alcohol affects the brain? (They learned that after prolonged alcohol use, the brain develops a scalloped or shriveled look which means there is decreased brain activity and damage to the person's ability to learn. The beginnings of this are apparent even in the brain of a young person who drinks, and even when that person is sober.)



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8. Do you think Nathan and Tara will stop drinking now that they see what is happening to their brains? Would you?

9. Is it true that only alcoholics are likely to abuse alcohol? (No-one who drinks runs the risk of abusing alcohol.)

10. What caused Jolene to finally realize that she needed help overcoming her alcohol problem? (She could not remember what she had been doing from Saturday night through Monday night, except that at some point she was bloody, dirty and alone. Then she realized she had been wrong-her friends were not there to make sure she was OK.)

11. In your opinion, what kind of future might Jolene have? Why?

12. Discuss Kelly's statement "If you really honestly think that it's all right for you to drink and drive, then by all means it's all right for you to drink and drive because all you can do is take care of your own self."

Additional Activities:

1. How did you feel about the scenario played out involving the four teens in which one was "driving drunk" and the other three "died" in the crash? What part of the simulation do you think made the greatest impact on the group? Why?

2. Try to imagine that your parents receive the news that you have died in an alcohol-related situation. How do you think our parents and other family members would react? Write a letter to your parents expressing what you feel or want to say to them now that you have died so tragically.

3. Many of the teens in the program said that they would not stop drinking unless something bad happened to themselves or someone close to them. Do you agree or disagree with this attitude? Why? Form small groups and discuss your opinions.

4. If you wanted to prevent a friend from abusing alcohol, how might you do it? In teams of pairs, make a list of the strategies you could use.

Related Titles:

1-9298SG The Teen Files: Smoking-Truth or Dare

1-9112SG Shatter

1-9115AG Blurred Lines

1-2251SG Binge Drinking Blowout: The Extreme Dangers Of Alcohol Abuse

1-9769SG Alcohol and Human Physiology

1-9954SG Alcohol, Addiction and Teens

PROGRAMS DETAILS

LENGTH:

46 minutes(Library Version)

SUBJECT AREAS:

Substance Abuse

AUDIENCE LEVELS:

Grades 6 - 12

ORDER NUMBER:

1-2255SG

CANADIAN LEARNING COMPANY

95 VANSITTART AVENUE

WOODSTOCK, ON N4S 6E3

INFO@CANLEARN.COM

TEL:(800) 267 2977

FAX:(519) 537 1035

