



Discussion Guide for

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: A ROAD TO NOWHERE

OBJECTIVES:

- To show that adolescent drug use has increased among teenagers, particularly the use of LSD.
- To list the side effects of marijuana and LSD
- To describe some of the reasons young people begin using drugs and how drug use in individuals escalates.
- To show how support from family, counselors and peers can assist teens in the recovery process.

SYNOPSIS

Substance abuse among young people peaked in the late 1970's and had been declining until recent years. Once again, kids from diverse backgrounds are turning to drugs as a result of peer pressure, loneliness, or the desire to fit in.

"Substance Abuse: A Road To Nowhere", explores drug abuse from the perspective of recovering teen addicts. A former girl scout and her parents tell how she began with alcohol and cigarettes and progressed to marijuana and eventually LSD. She abandoned her childhood friend and became part of a group of other drug users.

Another teen lost interest at age fifteen in everything but drugs. He ruined his reputation as a star baseball player, and came close to ruining his whole life.

These kids and others recount their painful journey to recovery. Some have joined the Daytop Treatment Centre, where adult counselors and older

recovering teens bond with new members and teach them to become sober, stay sober and behave responsibly.

The teens admit the road is hard and the temptation to return to drugs is always there. But by learning to be honest with themselves and others, to take responsibility for their own actions and to admit when they are wrong, these teens come to realize there is still much hope for them.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE VIEWING

- Do you know of anyone who uses drugs?
- How do you feel about drug use?
- Why do you think young people start using drugs?
- What are the consequences of marijuana use?
- What are the consequences of LSD use?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER VIEWING

1. According to Dr. Lloyd Johnston, how has drug use among teens changed since the late 1970s? (Drug use peaked in the late 1970s and was on a decline, but now teens are rediscovering drugs like marijuana and LSD. Drug use is again on the rise.)

2. Why does Dr., Johnston think LSD use has recently increased among teens? (since today's teens were not yet born when the harmful effects of LSD became known, they are unaware of the dangers and consider LSD a safe drug.)

3. What are some negative effects of LSD? (Hallucinations, erratic and violent behavior, flashbacks, convulsions, heart and lung failure.)

4. What are some of the negative effects of marijuana. (Sleeplessness, paranoia, loss of concentration and short-term memory, enhanced risk of lung cancer, psychological dependency.)

5. Dr. Johnston doesn't like the metaphor of a "war on drugs." Why not? (A war implies a resolution to the conflict and a winner. But drug abuse in this country is a recurring problem that must be fought with every new generation.)

6. What are some reasons teens in the program have for using drugs? (To fit in with the "in" crowd, to be cool, to forget about their problems.)

7. How did Holly's drug use progress? (She started by smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol. Then she started smoking marijuana. This led to LSD, which she was using every day.)

8. How has being in a treatment centre helped Holly? (She is off drugs, is learning to deal with life, can communicate with her parents and they can trust her.)

9. At the Daytop Treatment Centre, how has the number of heroin users in the program changed since they opened in 1992? (From 1992 through 1995, they had perhaps four

adolescent heroin users.. At the time the program was produced, they had recently admitted three in one month.)

10. What treatment does Daytop use for its patients? (The centre treats patients like members of a family, where older brothers and sisters teach the younger ones, or the ones who have just joined the program. The patients are taught responsibility, honesty and how to cope with the real world.)

11. what is a "haircut" at Daytop? (The patient sits down and their peers talk to them about the need to change a particular undesirable behavior they have displayed.)

12. According to Nick at Daytop, what is the most important step to rehabilitation? (Learning to be honest with yourself and others.)

PROGRAMS DETAILS

LENGTH:

14 minutes

SUBJECT AREAS:

Substance Abuse/Alcohol & Drugs

AUDIENCE LEVELS:

Senior High-Adult

ORDER NUMBER:

1-9260SG

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