



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Tshwane South  
TVET College

*"achieve the future"*

**SUBJECT: LIFE SKILLS**

**LEVEL: PLP**

**MODULE/CHAPTER NO: MODULE 3**

**UNIT 3 : DRUG ABUSE**

## UNIT 3 : DRUG ABUSE

After completing this topic, you will be able to:

1. Describe drug use and drug abuse
2. Name the reasons why people take drugs
3. Describe the effects of drugs



### 3.3. The effects of drugs

Psychoactive drugs are known as:

**Downers:** Sedatives, tranquilizers and alcohol

**Uppers:** Amphetamines, cocaine, caffeine, nicotine (tobacco)

## **Downers**

The use of these drugs helps a person to relax.

Examples are:

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is the most frequently abused drug in South Africa. When you drink a lot of alcohol your worries and shyness disappear. But alcohol affects your behaviour, your relationships and ability to work. It can also cause accidents, crimes and unsafe sex.

Health problems caused by alcohol are liver damage, brain damage, heart attacks, strokes, foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) and aggression.

How alcohol affects behaviour depends on how much you drink, and is measured by blood alcohol content (BAC). For most people the BAC level, 0.05g/100ml, is about one drink per hour. In South Africa it is illegal to drive with a BAC of 0.05g/100ml or higher.

**Narcotics:** Narcotics such as morphine and heroin are powerful painkillers and highly addictive. It is used to create a feeling of extreme happiness. But the long-term effects and dangers are loss of brain function, impotence and sterility, loss of interest in the outside world and eventually coma and death.

**Mandrax:** In small doses the user will feel relaxed and happy. It can also lead to drowsiness, restlessness,

headaches, vomiting, slurred speech, faulty judgement and emotional instability. An overdose causes convulsions and heart failure. When combined with alcohol, it can become fatal as both drugs affects breathing.

**Inhalants / solvents:** These household items such as glue; aerosols and paint-strippers are inhaled and cause drowsiness and hallucinations (seeing things that aren't there). It can result in forgetfulness, illogical thinking and irritability. It damages all the organs in a person's body.

**Rohypnol and Nyaope:** Rohypnol is also known as the "date rape drug" It is colorless, odourless and tasteless. It leads to drowsiness, impaired motor skills and amnesia (loss of memory). Nyaope is a mixture of dagga and heroin and causes huge damage.

## **Uppers**

These drugs cause people to become more active and alert and can also lift a person's mood.

**Amphetamines:** cocaine, Ritalin, nicotine and caffeine are included in this group. Regular use can cause dependence, unnatural excitement, loss of appetite, sleeplessness and a rapid pulse.

**Ecstasy:** It creates a feeling of optimism, love and warmth and the user has endless energy. It will damage the brain if it used for a long time.

**Nicotine:** Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body. Cigarette smoking causes many lung cancer deaths and also other cancers and health problems such as heart disease, strokes, bronchitis, asthma and emphysema.

**Marijuana and LSD** are included in this category. It causes a relaxed feeling and a feeling of euphoria. These drugs can produce delusions, paranoia and hallucinations. The long-term effects involve losing contact with reality, anxiety, depression and bronchial problems.

### 3.4 The Drug Dope Show

### 3.5 How to say no to drugs

Discuss the following three questions in smaller groups in class.

1. What makes it difficult to say “no”?
2. What do you do when somebody tries to make you do something you don’t want to do?
3. Why is it important to be able to say “no”?

We have all been asked to do something that we know is wrong, but sometimes we just don’t know how to say no. To learn to say no (and mean it) you can do the following:

#### 1. Know the facts

2. Look at what might happen if you do it
3. If it feels wrong, it probably is – know what is right and what is wrong
4. Stand your ground, even if you might lose a “friend”
5. Take a look at who your friends are – make friends with people around you who enjoys good, healthy fun

So how do you handle difficult situations?

1. Be direct and just say no. “No, I don’t want to”.
2. Keep saying the same thing over and over
  - a. Do you want to smoke some dagga?
  - b. No, I don’t do drugs.
  - c. Ahhhh come-on, besides its legal now.
  - d. No, I don’t do drugs.
  - e. Come-on, don’t be a spoil sport.
  - f. No, I don’t do drugs.
3. Suggest doing something else – No, I am going for a walk next to the river, do you feel like coming with?
4. Give a reason: I don’t want to use drugs, I know what it can do to my health, and it’s not worth it!
5. Just walk away: “Like I said, I don’t use drugs....see you tomorrow, I am going home”....and leave.

	Split into pairs and use the scenarios below to practice saying “No”. There are four scenarios, take turns to be the person who says “No”.
1	You are at another student’s house doing homework together. The parents are not home. The other student shows you a tube of glue. He or she suggests each of you take a few long sniffs. Your classmate says, “This will give you a nice high.” You have no idea what sniffing glue does to you, and you really don’t want to do it.
2	You are leaving a mall after having fun with some friends. Another person, who used to be in your PLP class but dropped out, stops you to say hi. After a couple of minutes of talking, he or she shows you a joint of dagga and asks you to go out to the parking lot to get high. You really don’t want to.
3	A class mate, who lives down the street from you, calls to you from his or her garage. When you get into the garage, he or she offers you some vodka and suggests you both get a little drunk. You do not want to drink the vodka.
4	You are on the bus with friends on your way back from a soccer match. Suddenly a guy pulls out a handful of Mandrax and starts handing them to everyone. He wants to give

	you some too. Everybody else is taking the pills but you really don't want to.
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