

# ON THE EDGE

**CD-ROM Teacher Guide**

**A Commonwealth Government Initiative**

Australian governments are strongly committed to reducing the harms associated with drug use. The *National Drug Strategy* provides a framework for a coordinated, integrated response to reducing drug-related harm in Australia. It is a cooperative venture between Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and the non-government sector.

The *National Drug Strategic Framework* (NDSF) provides a shared vision and structure for cooperative action. It aims to improve health, social and economic outcomes by preventing the uptake of harmful drug use and reducing the harmful effects of licit and illicit drugs in Australian society. This includes reducing harms caused by the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs. Key initiatives developed under the NDSF include the *National Illicit Drug Strategy*, the *National Alcohol Campaign* and the *National Tobacco Campaign*.

The National Illicit Drug Strategy – ‘Tough on Drugs’ – was launched by the Prime Minister in November 1997 and forms a major phase of the National Drug Strategy. It provides a balanced and integrated approach to reducing the supply of and demand for illicit drugs. In April 1999 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to make a new investment in combating drugs by combining strong national action against drug traffickers with early intervention strategies to prevent a new generation of illicit drug users emerging in Australia.

The *National School Drug Education Strategy* (NSDES) and COAG ‘Tough on Drugs in Schools’ Agreed Measures have been funded under the ‘Tough on Drugs’ initiative. They are complementary initiatives supporting school drug education. The NSDES strengthens the provision of educational programs and supportive environments that contribute to the goal of ‘no illicit drugs in schools’ and the COAG Agreed Measures aim to increase the capacity of schools and their communities to manage drug-related issues and incidents in school.

For further information, go to:

National Drugs Campaign at <http://www.drugs.health.gov.au/index.htm>

National Alcohol Campaign at <http://www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au/>

National Illicit Drug Strategy at <http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/drugs/illicit/index.htm>

National Tobacco Campaign at <http://www.quitnow.info.au/index1.html>

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# Foreword

The Commonwealth Government is committed to supporting national efforts to reduce the harm caused by drugs in our society and to our youth. I am pleased to be able to provide the REDI – Resilience Education and Drug Information – resources to strengthen the ability of school communities to respond effectively to the harm caused by drugs.

The REDI resources are the first Australian school drug education resources to focus on preventing and reducing harm from drug use by building more resilient young people. Australian and international research is showing that young people who have strong relationships – with their friends, family, school and within their community – are more resilient than other young people. Resilience is the ability to cope with and bounce back from life's challenging and difficult experiences. It can help our youth deal with life's stresses and instil in them the confidence to deal with issues and problems that may arise in their everyday life, including those relating to drugs.

The REDI resources include multimedia materials for upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary students and professional development resources for teachers and school staff. *On the Edge*, the resource for upper secondary school students, explores issues of drug use, in particular around alcohol, ecstasy and cannabis for young people who will be leaving school and entering the world of work or further study. *On the Edge* explores balancing study, work and social life, dealing with stress, increasing independence and looking to the future. In this resource, young people talk about issues that are affecting them now. It is a credible and valuable source of information for upper secondary students.

I commend this important resource to you in the belief that it will help schools to equip generations of students with the confidence and resilience to deal with any drug-related issues they may encounter and to achieve and succeed in their everyday lives.



BRENDAN NELSON

May, 2003

# Acknowledgements

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Newtown Performing Arts High School, Newtown (NSW)  
Northmead High School, Northmead (NSW)  
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## Overview

### ***On the Edge* is ...**

*On the Edge* is a set of classroom resources for students in upper secondary schools that explores issues of drug use, in particular around alcohol, ecstasy and cannabis. It also emphasises the development of resilience and transition skills from school to adulthood. Resilience is ‘the ability to bounce back from adversity’.<sup>1</sup> It has been called ‘the happy knack of being able to bungee jump through the pitfalls of life – to rebound and spring back after the hard times’.<sup>2</sup>

Skills addressed include:

- decision-making
- critical literacy
- evaluation and judgment
- finding information
- being assertive
- forming and maintaining relationships
- independent thinking
- developing a sense of identity
- communication
- developing coping strategies.

The *On the Edge* resources are made up of:

- The **CD-ROM**, designed for small group and individual work. Students are introduced to a range of experts and young people via dozens of short video interviews, or vox pops. Students can follow up the ideas and issues raised in the interviews by exploring interactive activities. It also contains direct links to many websites that provide online information and support.

The CD-ROM can be used with the video or as a stand-alone resource. It is accompanied by this teacher guide, which provides background information on the *On the Edge* resources, notes on drug information and student welfare issues, suggested extension activities, a full transcript of the vox pops and interviews, a website list, website review questions and information on using the CD-ROM.

- The **video**, designed to be viewed by the whole class as a prompt for identifying key issues, and as a trigger for discussion. It focuses on the perceptions and opinions of young people towards drugs, relationships, stress, goals and self-esteem. It runs for approximately 15 minutes. The video is also accompanied by a teacher guide.

<sup>1</sup> Wolin, S. and Wolin, S. (1999) *Project Resilience*, <http://projectresilience.com>

<sup>2</sup> Fuller, A., McGraw, K. and Goodyear, M. (1998) *The Mind of Youth*, Department of Education, Victoria

### Curriculum context

*On the Edge* aligns to the following outcomes:

- Analyses the ways individuals and groups may seek to influence the behaviour of others.
- Analyses how different contexts and situations influence personal values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.
- Explains how social and cultural factors influence what people feel and do about their own personal identity.
- Identifies the knowledge and skills required by communities and individuals to promote a healthier environment.
- Plans strategies to manage identified hazards in the community.
- Researches the influence on relationships of different understandings about human nature and beliefs about people.
- Critically analyses how groups justify particular actions and behaviours by linking them to values they regard as universal.
- Uses critical thinking, interpersonal skills and ethical theories to make judgments on moral issues and dilemmas.

Specific learning outcomes for the video appear later in this teacher guide.

### REDI set of resources

*On the Edge* belongs to a larger collection of multimedia resources, REDI – Resilience Education and Drug Information – which includes these materials for upper secondary along with materials for:

- Upper primary – *The Big Move* focuses on change and peer pressure, and includes negotiating relationships with friends, family and new people and in unfamiliar situations. In this context the issues of alcohol and tobacco are raised.
- Lower secondary – *My TV* explores issues of drug use, in particular alcohol, tobacco and cannabis, through the use of drama. It addresses skills such as decision-making, self-talk and being assertive. Students will be able to engage in problem predicting and solving and in help-seeking behaviour.
- Upper secondary students – *On the Edge* focuses on the perceptions and opinions of young people towards drugs, relationships, stress, goals and self-esteem. It discusses the transition from school to beyond and includes comments and opinions from a wide variety of experts.
- Website ([www.redi.gov.au](http://www.redi.gov.au)) – containing information on drug education and incident management for all school staff. The website features:
  - a resource list of key school drug education policies and resources available nationally
  - a drug dictionary
  - a Reading Room containing current research, useful statistics, examples of good practice in school drug education and key school drug education documents.

Technical support for the CD-ROM resources is available on the REDI website (at [www.redi.gov.au/support/](http://www.redi.gov.au/support/)).

## Drug information

The three main drugs addressed in the *On the Edge* set of resources are:

- alcohol
- cannabis
- ecstasy.

These, along with tobacco, are the drugs that upper secondary students are most likely to come into contact with.

Because alcohol is a legal drug, its use is commonly sanctioned by adults and it is readily accessible, often in the home environment. It remains a leading cause of disease, death and disability. Alcohol is also associated with violent crime, drink-driving and public disorder.

Cannabis is generally the most accessible and widely used of the illicit drugs. The quality of the drug is unregulated and its use can lead to increased contact with the criminal justice system. While smoking cannabis has been shown to cause similar damage to the lungs as cigarette smoking, the long term effects of cannabis use are under-researched, although an association with mental health problems, such as paranoia and schizophrenia, has been proposed.

Ecstasy became available in Australia in the 1980s. While not as widely used as other drugs, it has become more accessible to young people.

### Consequences of substance use

The negative effects of drug use are addressed throughout the *On the Edge* resources, and are included in relation to the following:

- short term physical effects
- long term physical effects
- mental health impact
- effect on relationships with parents
- effect on relationships with friends
- contact with police and the criminal justice system
- financial impact.

The website links on the *On the Edge* CD-ROM (listed in Part 6 of this teacher guide) provide quality information on a range of drugs, both licit and illicit.

The legal status of young people and tobacco, alcohol, cannabis and ecstasy is detailed in the Info sheets which you can find in Part 8 of this teacher guide.



## Class climate

Teaching drug education involves discussing sensitive issues, and so it is important to establish an appropriate class climate where students can explore their own values and understandings in a safe and supportive environment.

### Disclosure

Students may have personal experience where someone's drug or alcohol use has led to:

- drink-driving
- domestic violence
- family fragmentation
- criminal behaviour and incarceration
- mental health problems
- abuse or neglect of children or young people
- illness
- death.

During drug and resilience education, a young person who has been affected by these or other traumas may become distressed or they may disclose information about their experiences. If this occurs, it is important to take steps to both minimise any negative consequences for them and to connect them with appropriate support as needed.

### Setting ground rules

Disclosing in a classroom situation is not appropriate or safe for the student. For this reason teachers of resilience and drug education often request that students and teacher agree not to reveal personal information in class, and instead use the third person. For example, 'I know someone who ...', 'A friend told me ...' and so on.

When a student discloses experience of abuse or other trauma to a teacher it can be confronting, but if handled well, may be of benefit to the student. Early disclosure can lead to a reduction in the long term effects of abuse or trauma. However in some cases, disclosure can also lead to alienation from family or friends.

### Protective interrupting

As the teacher, when disclosure occurs in the classroom you will need to interrupt the student tactfully but firmly, acknowledging that you have heard the student and indicating that he/she may want to tell you more later. Then speak to the student individually to arrange a follow-up conversation, ideally straight after the lesson.

### **Appropriate support**

General principles include the need to:

- believe the student
- be calm and supportive
- avoid making promises that can't be kept
- refer the student to professional counselling if requested
- maintain confidentiality.

Note that, in some States and Territories, mandatory reporting requirements may impose additional responsibilities on teachers and other school staff. In such cases, teachers may need to explain their responsibility to the student, and any limitation to confidentiality that can be offered.

## Classroom extension activities

In this part you will find the learning outcomes for the *On the Edge* CD-ROM and some extension activity suggestions using the CD-ROM.

### Learning outcomes

Using the *On the Edge* CD-ROM and extension activities, students will be able to:

- locate, evaluate and select drug-related information on the internet
- identify a range of opinions and attitudes related to drugs
- analyse their own attitudes and opinions related to drugs
- examine a range of opinions and attitudes related to drugs
- examine a range of possible outcomes related to alcohol and drugs
- identify motivating factors in the use of alcohol and other drugs and suggest alternatives to drug use
- identify sources of support and advice for drug-related problems
- examine the goals of other people and explore their own goals
- explore a range of opinions and attitudes related to coping with stress
- develop strategies related to coping with stress.

The *On the Edge* CD-ROM is designed to be used by students working on the computer individually or in groups of two or three. After students have completed some work using the computer, you may follow this up with interactive whole class and/or group work. Some suggestions are outlined below.

While this teacher guide contains a range of activities, there may be other drug education resources available in your school that complement or extend this package. You are encouraged to integrate *On the Edge* with other resources where appropriate.

### What is on the CD-ROM?

The CD-ROM is divided into seven topic areas – Final Years, Stress, Drugs, Alcohol, Ecstasy, Cannabis and Beyond School. Each topic area comprises three sections – vox pops, websites and activities. Students are free to explore the CD-ROM in any sequence. Some suggested sequences are outlined in this teacher guide.

Selected activities on the CD-ROM are knowledge-based multiple-choice or true/false questions that test the current level of knowledge. Students are encouraged to investigate other information sources, including websites, and re-visit the knowledge-based activities. The remainder of the activities on the CD-ROM allow students to acknowledge their personal views on a range of issues and think about how the issues relate to them and their own situation. There is generally no correct or incorrect feedback for these activities although further questions are usually provided as a stimulus. Users have the option of printing each activity screen to keep a record of their response. Activities are summarised in Table 1.

Topic area	Activity name	Description	Interaction
<b>Final Years</b>	24/7 (24 hours a day, seven days a week – you need a balance.)	Students summarise the activities that fill their own time and assess the balance between work, rest, study and play.	Students enter the number of hours spent on a range of typical activities.
<b>Stress</b>	De-stressing (How do you relax and reduce stress?)	Students summarise stress reduction techniques that are relevant to themselves and their situation.	Students click a series of check boxes.
<b>Drugs</b>	Recognising drugs (Do you know how to recognise drugs?)	Students are presented with a range of questions related to recognising the common forms of a range of drugs.	Students select a multiple choice answer and click to display feedback.
<b>Alcohol</b>	How much do you know? (Try this quick quiz to see how much you know about alcohol.)	Students are presented with a range of questions related to alcohol.	Students select a multiple choice answer and click to display feedback.
<b>Ecstasy</b>	Ecstasy quiz (How much do you know about ecstasy?)	Students are presented with a range of questions related to ecstasy.	Students select a multiple choice answer and click to display feedback.
<b>Cannabis</b>	Cannabis quiz (How much do you know about cannabis?)	Students are presented with a range of statements related to cannabis and must determine if each is true or false.	Students select either a true or false answer and click to display feedback.
<b>Beyond School</b>	Goals (What goals and dreams are you looking forward to?)	Students create a summary of their own goals and dreams.	Students click a series of check boxes.

Table 1: Summary of *On the Edge* CD-ROM activities.

### How students can work with the CD-ROM

#### Group work

While students can work individually on the CD-ROM, the process of discussing issues and sharing ideas as they work in groups of two or three may be more productive and enjoyable. Students can work together on the computer in the following ways.

- Small groups can explore different vox pops, reporting the issues and their opinions to the rest of the class.
- Different groups can explore the same vox pops, comparing the issues and opinions they encounter and their own responses to them.
- Small groups can explore different websites, and report to the rest of the class.
- Different groups can explore the same websites, comparing the information and issues they encounter and their own responses to them.
- Small groups can explore different activities, and report to the rest of the class.
- Different groups can explore the same activities, comparing the issues and opinions they encounter and their own responses to them.
- Small groups can explore the vox pops, websites and activities for each of the different topic areas, reporting the issues and their opinions to the rest of the class.
- Different groups can explore the vox pops, websites and activities for the same topic areas (for example Alcohol), comparing the information and issues they encounter and their own responses to them.

#### Individual use

Students can work individually on the computer by exploring any combination of vox pops, websites and activities. Depending on the student's knowledge, experience and personal preferences, it may be useful to provide some tasks and suggested sequences similar to those outlined in 'Group work' above.

#### About the extension activities

Following are some suggestions for interactive classroom strategies that build on the CD-ROM. The activities are not in any particular sequence and can be chosen to best suit your curriculum outcomes. Activities A to C are suggested core activities while D to I are suggestions for activities that build on the *On the Edge* CD-ROM. They are samples only and illustrate how the problems, opinions and websites on the CD-ROM can be used to achieve the learning outcomes.

Many of the activities on the CD-ROM itself, listed in Table 1, can be easily adapted for classroom use and may form the basis for a class discussion.

More activities that can be adapted for use with the CD-ROM can be found in the teacher guide for the *On the Edge* video and on some of the website links on the CD-ROM.



indicates an appropriate activity for discussion of non-use of substances as the safest option.



indicates an activity that involves the investigation of the consequences and risks of early use and early uptake.

**Teacher's note:** There are significant risks and consequences for young people who use substances from an early age. For current research and information about these, go to the research part of the REDI Reading Room at <http://www.redi.gov.au/ReadingRoom/ViewList.asp?room=Research>

## A – Mapping issues

The goal of this activity is to help students identify issues introduced by the *On the Edge* CD-ROM.

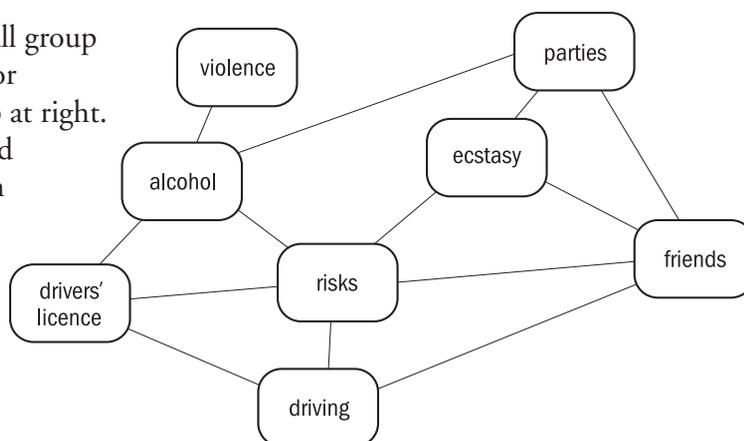
Work with the whole class to create a mind map of the issues raised in the CD-ROM. This can be done for one topic area (for example Final Years), or a combination of topic areas (for example Alcohol and Stress), if different groups have worked on different topic areas.

As students provide information, draw and name a circle for each topic area, and add notes under each. Join the topic areas by lines, identifying the issues they may share.

Prompt questions may include:

- What are the topic areas in the CD-ROM?
- What are the issues raised in each topic area?
- Do any topic areas share the same issues?
- What opinions are expressed in the vox pops?
- Can you bring your own issues and opinions to the topic areas?
- What information is available for each topic area?
- Are these issues and concerns for you? Why/Why not?
- Are these issues and concerns for most young people? Why/Why not?

If you prefer to run this as a small group activity, a useful starting point for students is the simple mind map at right. Start with pairs who have worked on the same topic area, then join these pairs with other pairs who have worked on different topic areas, to exchange information and build up the 'big picture'. This may be developed into a class discussion.



### **B – Developing coping strategies**

The goal of this activity is to help students identify sources of stress and constructive ways of coping with stressful situations, and develop a variety of coping strategies.

The activity can be used in different ways, for example use it immediately after students have explored the vox pops, websites and/or activities for topics areas on the CD-ROM, including Stress, Final Years and Beyond School.

Preparation:

- Provide each group with large sheets of paper and a thick pen.

#### **1 Sources of stress**

Introduce the activity by asking the whole class to think about the vox pops, websites and activities they have explored, and describe the issues, opinions, information and attitudes they have encountered.

Compile these on the board or on large sheets of paper for the whole class to see.

Explain that times of change and transition have the potential to be times of tension, anxiety, pressure and stress. The final years of school, exams, study, family expectations, uncertainty and making decisions beyond school all have the potential to be sources of stress and anxiety.

Discuss with the whole class the sources of stress identified in the vox pops. Extend the discussion by asking students to contribute their own sources of stress. Explain that stress may be positive (such as deadlines that help you get work completed on time) or negative (such as unrealistic deadlines that don't give you enough time to complete work). Pose the question, "When does stress become a problem?"



#### **2 Managing stress**

Once you have compiled a list of sources of stress, explain that it is good to have ways of managing and dealing safely with this stress and to have things that you can do that will help you cope.

Ask the whole class to identify some of the ways the people in the vox pops, websites and activities deal with stress. Compile these on the board or on large sheets of paper for the whole class to see.

Some stress relieving strategies may include painting or drawing, listening to or playing music, playing sport or talking to a friend. Be sure to point out to students that different people deal with stress and transition in different ways – different things work for different people at different times.

When you have compiled a list of stress relieving strategies, discuss the following questions with the class:

- Are all coping strategies the same?
- When do certain coping strategies become a problem?

### 3 Students think about themselves

Self-reflection is an important part of this activity and may be best done individually. Working through the coping strategies introduced on the *On the Edge* CD-ROM and completing part 2 of this activity will assist with this part of the activity.

Ask students to think about some of the things that cause them stress and the ways they like to de-stress, or ways they manage and cope with this stress. Students should then write their ideas down.

Ask students to then form pairs to share their coping ideas with a partner. After this, students can volunteer to describe their coping ideas to the whole class, or develop a display of ways to de-stress and cope.

Again, encourage students to think about a variety of coping strategies, for example, the student who says he/she would always withdraw and watch TV whenever he/she becomes stressed may not be developing a variety of constructive coping strategies. Teachers should also be prepared to respond to students who may identify inappropriate coping strategies, such as self-medication.

Ask the following questions to form the basis of a discussion:

- Are there positive and negative ways of coping with and managing stress?
- When do certain ways of coping become a problem or an area of concern? Why?

## C – Problem predicting

The goal of this activity is to help students transfer problem solving and decision-making skills to situations they may face themselves.

Preparation:

- You will need large sheets of paper or cards for each group.

### 1 Three problems

In groups of two or three, and working on large sheets of paper or card, write three scenarios showing common problems that can occur between friends or classmates. Use the situations and issues introduced in the vox pops, activities and class discussion as a starting point, for example:

- when a friend gets too clingy and says you aren't spending enough time with him/her but you want to spend time doing other things
- when all your friends are drinking and seem to be having fun and you don't want to drink but don't want to be left out either.

### 2 Ranking the problems

Ask the whole class to rank these scenarios by laying them out on a continuum – from the scenario that would cause most distress or upset to the one that is the easiest to deal with.

### 3 Solving the problem

Groups then choose a problem and discuss ways of solving it. Groups can:

- write or tell a story in which the problem is brought to a solution
- act out a scene showing how to deal with the problem
- develop a mind map diagram based on the class discussion (see Activity A – Mapping issues)
- use resources from other activities in this teacher guide, such as Activity B – Developing coping strategies.

## D – Information report

The goal of this activity is to locate, evaluate and select drug-related information on the internet and to present the information clearly.

### 1 Discussion

Ask students to think about what they already know about alcohol, cannabis, ecstasy or another drug. This may form the basis of a discussion.

### 2 List of questions

Ask students to compile a list of questions and issues they want to know answers to. Students may work on this research independently, in pairs or in small groups.



### 3 Information report

In response to the list of questions they have compiled, students use the website links on the *On the Edge* CD-ROM to locate information on alcohol, cannabis, ecstasy or another drug.



Raise with students the need to critically analyse information, including information found on the internet. You can use the website review questions from the CD-ROM to help with this. These questions are reproduced in Part 6 of this teacher guide.

Ask students to present this information as a report, and include:

- a description of the drug and how it is used
- the legal status of the drug
- the short term and long term physical and psychological effects of the drug
- the effects of the drug on relationships with family, friends and other young people
- a list of the websites and other resources used.

## **E – Self-talk**

The goal of this activity is for students to explore the concept of self-talk – the talk and reflection that goes on inside your own head – and to consider the range of options for self-talk in stressful situations.

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One of the things that can happen is that if you stuff up or don't do something the way you want to, you can entirely blame yourself for that and say "it's because I'm no good, I'm useless, that is why I didn't get the grade I wanted" – but you might actually say "hey, that test was pretty hard and the fact that I did 70% of it OK or 50% of it OK means I'm on the way" – so that is a different way of explaining to yourself what happened.

Helen Cahill, *On the Edge* CD-ROM, Stress (self-talk).

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### **1 Discussion – what is self-talk?**

Discuss with the class what 'self-talk' is. Prompt questions may include:

- What are some of the things people tell themselves when something goes wrong?
- What might you tell yourself before sitting an exam?
- What is an example of positive self-talk?
- What is an example of negative self-talk?
- What is the difference between positive self-talk and negative self-talk? Which is more helpful? Why?
- Can people change the kind of things they say to themselves?

### **2 Examples of self-talk**

Ask students to provide examples of negative self-talk and practise changing these to examples of positive self-talk. For example: "We lost out this time, I've wasted my time" may be changed into positive self-talk: "Although we lost out this time, I have learned a valuable lesson." Give students time to practise identifying their own examples of negative self-talk and devising positive self-talk substitutes.

### **3 Whole class review**

Review the student suggestions with the whole class. Suggest to students that the next time they hear themselves use negative self-talk they stop and change the statement into a more positive one.

### **4 Role play**

Role-play some scenarios based on the examples provided.

## F – Getting the pitch right

The goal of this activity is for students to explore the concept of assertiveness and to make appropriate language choices for assertiveness in different contexts.

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When people tell you just to be assertive with your friends, I think they underestimate how much practice you haven't had in doing that. And a lot of us haven't even seen too many people around us be assertive all that well – we've seen people manipulate and be aggressive and be wimps and be a rollover, so getting the pitch right, if you want to stick up for yourself without offending anyone can be quite hard. How you work that out, I think is you rehearse it a bit in your head first and get clear what you want to say.

Helen Cahill, *On the Edge* CD-ROM, Final Years (getting the pitch right).

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### 1 Discussion – what is assertiveness?

Discuss with the class what assertiveness is. Remind students that assertiveness is sticking up for yourself to protect your own rights, while respecting the rights, feelings and thoughts of others; and that aggressiveness is sticking up for yourself to protect your own rights, while not respecting the rights, feelings and thoughts of others.

Prompt questions may include:

- In what kind of situations do people need to be assertive? Model some examples of the different ways people may respond to these situations.
- Are there times when it may not be appropriate to be assertive?
- What is the difference between being assertive and being aggressive?
- How do people look and behave when they are being assertive? How does this make others feel?
- How do people look and behave when they are being aggressive? How does this make others feel?
- In what situations or with what people is it more difficult to be assertive?
- How can alcohol or other drug use affect your ability to stay in control and avoid becoming aggressive?

Explain the need to address the feelings of others when discussing assertive behaviour and responses.

### 2 Examples of assertive behaviour

Ask the students to work in pairs or small groups, to discuss each situation and provide examples, word for word, of what the person could say in each situation.

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<b>A</b>	I'm 18 and my problem is with the family I baby-sit for. They live about six kilometres away and always drive me home. Often they seem to be a bit drunk when they get in, but they seem to drive OK. What should I do? I don't want to lose the baby-sitting job.	What can this person say to the people he/she baby-sits for?
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<b>B</b>	I've had this friend since kindergarten. We always used to agree about things, like how brain-fried people get after they've taken ecstasy, and the risks involved in taking it. Now I feel really let down because she's started taking 'e' and going to Rave parties. I don't want to lose the friendship, and she says it's just that she sees things differently now. She wants me to try taking ecstasy before I criticise it ...	What can this person say when his/her friend encourages him/her to take ecstasy?
<b>C</b>	I can't drink alcohol because of my religion and I don't see any point in drinking or smoking anyway. My friends and I like to go to parties to dance and have a good time ...	What can this person say when people want him/her to have a drink?
<b>D</b>	My parents are pretty good. I'm turning 18 and they're letting me have a party with some beer and wine. But they are dead-set they don't want any dope at the party. Some of my friends say dope is much safer than alcohol, and when I say I don't want them to bring it, they don't take me seriously. They just say my parents will never find out.	What can this person say to his/her friends?

**3 Whole class review**

Review the student suggestions with the whole class.

**4 Role play**

Ask students to imagine that they are a friend of the person in each scenario above, and that they want to support their friend in the situation. What could they say? Role-play the scenarios.

**5 Class discussion**

Discuss with the whole class: "Sometimes people continue to influence friends to do things they do not really want to do, such as drink alcohol, use drugs or take risks."

Questions might include:

- What could you do in this situation?
- Why might a person succumb to such pressure, even though they know it could be harmful?

## G – Alternatives

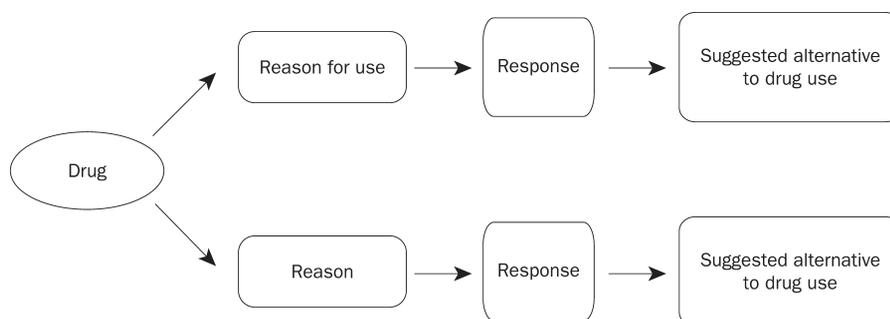


The goal of this activity is to identify motivating factors in the use of alcohol and other drugs and to consider alternatives to drug use.

Ask students to use the vox pops, websites and activities on the *On the Edge* CD-ROM to make a list of the reasons why people might use alcohol or other drugs.

Ask students to respond to each reason, suggesting an alternative to using drugs where appropriate. You may choose to introduce a flow chart, such as that shown below, as a structure to help students identify reasons and alternatives.

Reasons for use may include: to have fun, to fit in with their peer group, addiction, to relax, to blot out problems, to see what it's like.



## H – Seeking help

The goal of this activity is for students to identify sources of support and advice for drug-related problems.

### 1 Locating advice and support services

Ask students to use the CD-ROM vox pops, websites and activities to produce a list of people, organisations and websites that young people can turn to for advice and support. Encourage students also to use resources such as the telephone book, local newspaper or library to identify support agencies and personnel from the local community.

### 2 Guest speaker

Invite a counsellor or representative of a support organisation to speak to the class. At least a week before the visit, ask students to write a question for the visitor on a piece of paper and submit it. Collate appropriate questions and forward them to the guest speaker. If appropriate, ask them to bring a list of other support organisations in the local area and to talk to students about how to access these services.

## I – Working with the media

The goal of this activity is for students to locate and analyse an existing health promotion campaign or message, then create and communicate their own health promotion messages effectively.

### 1 Research

Provide a range of magazines, newspapers, posters, pamphlets, flyers, videos, websites, handouts and examples of health promotion messages and/or campaigns.

Choose one campaign and discuss the following:

- Who is the target audience?
- What is the key health promotion message?
- Will the advertisement (or campaign in whatever form it takes) be effective? Why/Why not?
- Why was this medium (print, audio, video, web) chosen?
- What is the intended effect of the advertisement (or campaign in whatever form it takes) on the target audience? Consider emotions, attitudes and behaviour.
- Was the promotion/campaign effective or did it influence your behaviour? Why/Why not?



### 2 Students' own health promotion advertisement



Work with students to plan, design, produce and evaluate their own advertisement with a health promotion theme such as 'Why most young people choose not to get drunk'. The project could be print, audio, video or web based.

Students should include a report detailing:

- the target audience for the advertisement
- the key health promotion messages incorporated
- a rationale for why the advertisement will be effective
- the reason for choosing the medium (print, audio, video, web)
- the intended effect of the advertisement on the target audience (consider emotions, attitudes, behaviour).

# Transcript

## Introduction

Chanelle

I've been in school for almost 13 years now, I know adults are always saying, "It's the best years of your life", but I want to get out. I'm sick of it.

Grant

When we got to Year 11 they are like "choose your subjects and this will be whatever shapes the rest of your life".

Michael

Being in Year 12 is like being on the edge – you've got so many decisions to make at the end but it's like a new beginning.

## Final Years

### Helen Cahill

Balancing friends and study

I don't know how you choose between your friends and your study. I think everyone is trying to work out a balancing trick of how to maintain both. One way, maybe, to do that, is to be prepared to be pretty honest with yourself about what you are really doing with your time and why you are doing it. Some people can balance both, other people it's pretty normal to use one as an excuse not to do the other, but if that excuse wasn't there, you might find another excuse. So it's about being honest – am I using my friend as an excuse, or am I using my part-time job as an excuse not to study, or am I going to say "hey, I'll do both"?

Choices

Finding a balance in your life is a problem most adults are struggling with, but then they turn around and tell, particularly Year 11 and 12 students, you've got to live a balanced life. What they really mean is make sure you put lots of study in. Even when your parents sound like they are nagging you, I guess underneath, for most parents, what they really want, is for their kids' lives to work out as best as possible. They want their kid to have a choice, lots of choices.

Getting the pitch right

When people tell you just to be assertive with your friends, I think they underestimate how much practice you haven't had in doing that. And a lot of us haven't even seen too many people around us be assertive all that well – we've seen people manipulate and be aggressive and be wimps and be a rollover, so getting the pitch right, if you want to stick up for yourself without offending anyone can be quite hard. How you work that out, I think is you rehearse it a bit in your head first and get clear what you want to say.

### **Michael**

#### Pressuring yourself

There is more like, I don't know, internal pressure from yourself is the worst part I reckon. The parents are bad enough, but when you are pressuring yourself heaps, you just sort of crack and all the teachers around you don't really seem to help, they just want to teach, they don't want to counsel, so it's hard on you. I don't think it's as important as it's all cracked up to be. It's not worth killing yourself over.

#### Something at the end

Everything I did wasn't really directed towards a goal or a point, so I went lower and lower and lower. If I had something at the end, you know, if I wanted to get into uni or something to do a particular course, I probably would have done quite well if I'd wanted to, because I could do that, but I just had no direction at all, no dreams or anything. That was my downfall.

#### Reacting to pressure

Everyone has pressure on them, but people react in different ways. I reacted in a downward way and I couldn't cope, because I'd never had that sort of pressure on me, but yes, it was the worst pressure I'd ever had – it was the only pressure I'd ever had – I was pretty spoilt. But nowadays I thrive on that sort of pressure, it's part of the job I do, so if I went back I'd probably do a lot better.

### **Darrell**

#### The pressure builds

I didn't really have that much pressure from parents, but you can't really look at Year 12 in isolation, because the pressure does build up from Year 10, 11 and 12 and you know what you would like to do and whether you want to go to uni or go and work and do an apprenticeship or take over your parents' business, but for myself, I didn't really have that pressure to do exceptionally well from my parents.

#### Motivation and burn out

I think for me the problem was maintaining that level of energy and that level of motivation throughout. So I found that a lot of my other friends really started to get maybe burnt out towards the last couple of months near the exams so that was quite difficult and that was where a lot of the stress came as well. You just really didn't have the motivation.

### **Intan**

#### Leaving school friends behind

I think the scariest thing that I started to realise is that, about Year 12, people are so stressed and so caught up in exams, you don't realise how many people are slipping away and at the end of the year you're not going to see three-quarters of the people that you have spent seven years of your life with, that is so scary.

### **Billie**

#### Relationships and respect

I've seen too many relationships where a guy or girl gets too clingy and says "you are not spending enough time with me", and I say "c'mon, you know, there are more important things", like ... "you obviously don't respect me if you can't leave me to put my time into this and this and this".

#### Head on into study

Because Year 11 was such a big learning curve, when you started getting head on into the study. You have been going hard core since Year 7, but I've been pretty much taking that big step up, and I found it pretty weird.

### **Simon/Chanelle**

#### Relationships and balance

Basically for me, this year, I can't really afford to focus on relationships basically at all. This year, it's a year of my life I can't focus for a year. I can't really do anything, it's just a test to myself as well I think ...

I tend to disagree, I think it helps this year to have, maybe not so much a serious relationship, but just a balance between and something to have fun and even someone to just sort of, a separate life, to get away from school.

### **Drew**

#### Someone out there

I think friends are a very important thing, I think you really need someone to talk to in really heated times. I think you have your family of course, but it's good to have someone out there who is doing the same thing as you and going through the same experiences and being able to discuss that between yourselves.

### **Michael 2**

#### Balancing, juggling and coping

For me I thought Year 11 personally was a big jump. I think maybe it was a reflection of my work ethic in Year 10, I really didn't do much, I was concentrated on my music and I let my school work slip behind. Year 11 came in and I carried that across and didn't do too well in Year 11. But now I've changed everything. But for me it was this whole big juggling my outside commitments with my schoolwork.

### **Chanelle**

#### I want to get out

I've been in school for almost 13 years now, I know adults are always saying, "It's the best years of your life", but I want to get out. I'm sick of it.

### **Heidi**

#### A set routine

I like the idea of school when you have everything set routine, and because I don't know what I'm going to do after school, so I'm left with that situation going "at least school is there" and then I might go to uni, but I don't know.

### **Rebekah**

#### Balancing a social life

Going into my final year though, I have had a lot of people saying "it's not the end of everything" – so I went in very conscious of that and tried to keep up all of my extra-curricular activities, dancing and orchestra and sport, all of that sort of thing. It's when you start adding a social life to that as well that it gets very hard to balance it.

## **Stress**

### **Helen Cahill**

#### How do you hear it?

There's a lot of pressure put on kids, but you can hear that pressure as encouragement, like "go for it, do your best" or you can hear it like "good if you don't measure up" – so I guess one of the tricks is how you hear it. If you hear your parents nagging as a form of support because they want to be on your side, then it probably won't bug you as much. And if you hear your teachers drumming it into you, like "gotta put something into this" – if you hear that as support, it might be easier.

#### Self-talk

One of the things that can happen is that if you stuff up or don't do something the way you want to, you can entirely blame yourself for that and say "it's because I'm no good, I'm useless, that is why I didn't get the grade I wanted" – but you might actually say "hey, that test was pretty hard and the fact that I did 70% of it OK or 50% of it OK means I'm on the way" – so that is a different way of explaining to yourself what happened.

#### Life pressures

I think a lot of the pressure that kids at that top end of school think they are dealing with, think maybe it's mostly to do with school, but actually they're the life pressures they are going to have right through as adults, and it's about balancing things like work and play and friendships and loyalty within friendships, even thinking up and thinking through things like, "What is right for me?" as opposed to, "What is right for my friends?", like "Do I always want to be the same as them?" or "How am I different?"

### **Robert**

#### Coping with stress

The final year for many students is actually a really hard one, they are trying to think of what they are going to do with the rest of their life and often many young people are faced with a whole lot of stress and sometimes young people end up turning to drugs as a way to try and deal with that, try to cope with that stress.

### **Sandro**

#### Family issues

And a lot of kids that is where they go off track, because they feel like they have got problems and they have to perform for their parents. They can let their teachers down, yes, that's alright, it doesn't matter if they go bad at school. But when it comes to family, that is the big issue, and you don't want to let your parents down in life. So you have to put up with that and a lot of kids can't handle that. So they leave home, turn to drugs.

### **Intan/Billie**

#### What do you want from it?

You can stress as much as you like about everything, but really you have just got to work out what you really care about and ...

What you want from it as well – do you want a mark, or do you want to just get as much out of it intellectually?

### **Billie**

#### Get over it

You can still get bad marks and stuff, but you get over it ...

You don't dwell on things that you haven't done. You can only learn from them. The more you dwell, the less likely you are to get something done in the future.

### **Group**

#### Stressbusting

It's good to go out and have fun, because it takes the stress off study. Because if you don't take stress off, you are just going to crack.

I have to sit down in my room, just relax, turn on some music, Jimi Hendrix ...

Relief when studying ... I often found because I was doing art, just the process of sitting down and relaxing and doing something that I enjoyed, I really enjoy painting and so I found that was an excellent escape ...

I love popping on my favourite album and just dancing on my own, or hula hoop or whatever ...

She's really good with the hula hoop ...

My release was going out for a surf with my mates, going for a swim, then coming back and doing a bit of study ...

When I got to my final exams, I went, "this is my last year of high school, I've got to show 13 years of hard work" and I went "I'm going to stop for a year, give up my social life entirely for a year". I did it for a couple of weeks and then went "there is no way, I'm going to go insane". Like you really do have to find a balance ...

For me in my final year, it would have been better I think, if I'd managed my time more. But I did get my mix of study and also of my fun too ...

It isn't until now that I've finished my second semester at university and I'm going into my second year, that I'm a lot more comfortable with myself in terms of study, and I think that's got a lot to do with having a goal. Whereas in Year 12, I just wanted to leave school ...

After finishing my exams I sort of walked through a shopping mall and thought “everyone should be staring at me, because I’ve just done my final exam” – like “wow, I’ve finished my life” that is how it felt. Like, who knows what is going to happen next.

## Drugs

### Helen Cahill

#### Despair and hope

How do you encourage someone to feel hope, when they are in the middle of feeling despair or depression? That is a big question that a lot of young people sit with to do with their friends, and they might try to encourage them, or talk them up, or take them off to parties to try and cheer them up, but I think if none of those things are working, that is the time when the best thing you could do for a friend is to risk talking to them about how worried you are about them. Just say, “I’m worried about you, and I think it’s time we got someone else in to help”.

#### Coping in the long term

I think the real reason to avoid using drugs to help you cope is that they are not going to help you cope in the long term, and what you want really deep down is for your life to start working out better than it is. So go for something else that’ll give you what you want, long term, not just a short term dull the pain.

### Robert Bosi

#### Getting help

Sometimes drug use does get out of hand and when it does, people need help. Where do you turn to for help? Well if you’re at school try the school counsellor. If you are at university, go to the student services and there will be a counsellor there. Or if you are at work, workplaces too have an obligation to help out people with problems. It’s really important to find somebody who knows what they are talking about and it’s also important to find somebody who you feel comfortable with, so you probably want to look for a specialist drug and alcohol agency.

#### Dependency

Sometimes people when they are under stress try to use a drug to deal with that feeling and end up becoming dependent on it. What that means is that they rely on the drug in order to be able to manage that difficult emotion, that difficult feeling, and quite often what happens is that it takes more and more of the drug to try and get exactly the same feeling.

#### Choosing to use

When people are leaving school they are often faced with the question of “well I’m an adult now and I can do what I like” so they are trying to make money choices about what they do and then there is the question of whether or not they choose to use drugs. Many people wonder about, “Well, what’s going to happen if I do start to use drugs, am I going to fit in with other people, or will it make me feel left out?” or “What’s it actually going to do to my body?” or “What’s it going to do to my brain, what is it going to do to my mind?”

### **Sandro**

#### Influenced by friends

A lot of times they don't have the right friends around them, and because your friends are doing it, it's OK to do it, or it's OK to try it. A lot of the times when they try it, they are not informed of what this drug can really do and what it's made up of, and so they learn the hard way.

### **Group**

#### Pros and cons

Sometimes the first time could be your last, so is it OK to try?

Or you get addicted to it, you can't stop by the time you realise that it's doing you damage ...

There is addiction and there is psychological addiction. There are addictive drugs like heroin and cocaine, but with ecstasy you can get psychologically addicted.

### **Chanelle**

#### Save money and brain cells

I think you have to look at the positive things of not doing drugs, like the fact you'll have more money, you'll have better health and stuff like that. Also like, I think it's hard to go well at school when they are on drugs, because they just don't have the brain capacity to do it.

### **Kristy**

#### Influenced by friends

Obviously it's not expected, you can say no. But if all your friends are doing it and they seem to be having fun, then it almost makes you feel, why not?

Yes, you say I want to try it too ... it's there ...

## **Alcohol**

### **Robert Bosi**

#### Binge drinking

Really common in young people is binge drinking. That becomes a problem, because they are binge drinking every weekend. That causes physical problems, because the body is not used to the alcohol and suddenly it's got a whole lot to deal with and the other problem associated with that is risk-taking.

#### Unplanned sex

People often ask about the health problems associated with different drugs and most of the short term problems associated with alcohol use are risk-taking behaviours, like drink-driving, you know mucking around while you are drunk and of course the big one is unplanned sex.

### Violence

Some of the risks associated with alcohol are those about violence. It's very common for people to get drunk and then become violent, either to complete strangers or to people that they actually know and care about.

### Skye

#### Licences, alcohol and work

It was hard because there were lots of people who were getting their licence around that time and being able to go into pubs and clubs and being able to get alcohol, but you also have all the schoolwork to do.

### Kristy

#### People you can trust

Well, first of all know your limit and then if you are planning on getting drunk or drinking a lot, then do it around people you can trust, who will be able to take care of you or whatever.

#### Violent drunks

And if people are drunk, like people get really violent, and if there are bottles around it's just scary ... bar brawls ...

### Lara

#### Getting plastered

Sure when you are younger and you just first get into drinking, you don't know how much you can drink and you think, "OK I'll be a tank, I'm gonna drink heaps" and then you get plastered and legless and you are on the floor. It's not a pretty sight ...

No-one really thinks that's cool, getting plastered ...

No, everyone looks down on you ...

#### Really scary situations

Everybody knows that drinking, like we were talking about this before, drinking you are free of inhibitions and you just go for it, and if you get too drunk, you can put yourself in a really scary situation. Nobody wants to be in that situation.

### Wendy

#### Family attitudes to drinking

I've got strict parents and Mum would always go "you shouldn't be drinking, because it's not just affecting yourself, but you are affecting others as well".

### Thomas

#### I don't need to drink to have fun

It's a big self-esteem thing too. Like people feel a need to drink in order to do things, like dance or sing. I find with me, I don't need to drink to have fun.

### Drink-driving

And everything is like “how am I going to get home, if I’m so trashed, who is going to look after me?” – even driving, drink-driving, like are you going to go out with a bunch of people where the driver drinks and so you are going to be in their care?

## Ecstasy

### Robert Bosi

#### What is ecstasy?

Ecstasy is a stimulant, it’s a drug that speeds you up. It’s got similar properties to things like amphetamines, speed, go-ey, whizz. They’re the kind of things people use to stay up all night, but not many people use it, it’s mostly a party scene drug.

#### Effects

The short term effects of ecstasy, if you get ecstasy because remember you are buying an illegal drug so there is no quality control about it, but those effects are to do with coming down, feeling anxious, and having trouble concentrating. And that can make it really difficult for your final year at school.

### Lara

#### Filtering through

There’s all, like, the high schoolie kind of drugs like pot (marijuana) and speed (otherwise known as go-ey) and ecstasy. They, like, they filter through.

### Josephine

#### Downside to ‘e’

There is an extreme downside to e-tabs. Like, I’ve seen people have the worst experiences, like coming off them and things like that.

## Cannabis

### Robert Bosi

#### Damage from smoke

Smoking anything is basically unhealthy, so whether you are smoking a legal or an illegal drug, it’s basically an unhealthy thing to do. It’s going to damage your breathing system, your lungs, your throat, your tongue. It’s also going to go into your blood as well. So smoking has problems associated with carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide.

#### Paranoia and mental health

It’s really common for people who are smoking dope, marijuana, to end up feeling a bit paranoid and that is at the more subtle end of it. That is sort of feelings like you are being watched or people are listening to you, or people are sort of worried about your every move. Then what you will find is that at the more extreme end, you have an association between schizophrenia and smoking marijuana.

### **Michael**

#### Dumber and dependent

A lot of people I know binge on it, and I know that they've grown dumber. They've lost jobs and lost girlfriends and stuff like that. When you sort of see other people go through that, it's sad, but at the same time you realise that you don't want to go through it either. So you gain a respect for it. But a lot of other people don't see that, and then they become those people you see addicted or just screwed up.

### **Darrell**

#### Pot triggers mental problems

There is this guy in my year who started taking pot. He was the sort of person that really shouldn't have taken it in the first place because he actually ended up becoming a bit schizophrenic, it triggered that little thing in his mind. You don't really know if you have more of a tendency to go insane, if you have a little bit, even though other people might be having the same sort of quantity of drugs, you don't really know. So it could affect you quite severely.

### **Billie**

#### Pot interferes with study

You can't be coming home after school every day just going for a casual smoke after school or something. It interferes. People can make up a million excuses – "Oh but I'm not going out and smoking a stick", or "I'm taking a couple of tokes or whatever and I'm coming home and getting into my work" and "Oh yes actually I didn't do anything last night".

### **Lara**

#### A few cones

I know people who just – it's one way to escape from reality isn't it? Like: "My homework is pissing me off, I'm going to go and have some cones."

### **Grant**

#### Effects of dependency

Because I've seen the effect it can have on people, just the social effects basically, and the effect on your family is pretty bad. They have to have it to feel good. If they are not on it, they are really down and depressed and when they are on it, they are exactly the same, but they feel better.

## **Beyond School**

### **Helen Cahill**

#### 18–25 year olds

We know that the time after young people leave school is actually the time in their lives when they are most likely to suffer from a mental health disorder. So that 18 to 25 year old age group has the highest incidence of mental health problems, like depression,

anxiety, substance use disorders and so I guess when you are in that phase between the end of school and the next four or five years is the time when you are going to be around, your friends might be going through a fair bit of distress, or it might be a distressing time for you. Even though it's wrapped up with a time of so-called more freedom.

### Life after school

When people have come a long way past Year 12, they look back on it as maybe a small part of their life. But at the time when you are in it, you get told all the time “this is it, this is the most important thing” – but there is life after school and I think young people who do well in that transition from school to what's next for them, are those who set up some links for themselves. So they make sure they work out how to maintain some links with friends. If they have given up doing stuff in the community, like given up a sport, something like that, they look at how to put that back, because that is part of what's going to be needed in that transition, to keep them connected with other people. Then when they go, if they go to another institution or tertiary or a workplace, to look to actively seek to make new connections with people, make new friends, new memberships in new interest groups. People who've got that kind of new community that they make are going to cope better with the new section of their life, because they have lost their school.

### Another year of your life

I don't think there is any such thing as a year off. It's just another year of your life. So whether you are in study, or you are travelling or you are working, whatever combination you are doing, it is just the next year of your life after school and what you get out of it is going to be a lot to do with what you put into it, how you think about it, how you use it as an opportunity to connect with new people, learn new stuff.

### Robert Bosi

#### A fantastic time

It's a fantastic time, you have just finished your final year at school, maybe you are going to uni, maybe you are going to work, maybe you are just going to take a year off and play. And it is a time to play and that is what a lot of people do and that means that it's also a time of risk. It's worth keeping that in mind. There are all sorts of decisions about drink-driving, about drugging, about what you are going to do where and with whom and if you want to keep playing, keep having fun, it's important to make sure that you make good choices.

#### Discovering yourself

For some of you, you have spent the last 13 years with the same people and now you are going to end up maybe in different places. You might even be at a place on your own, you might be in a course or a job where there is nobody that you know. That can be really tough, but it's also a fantastic opportunity to discover yourself, to do a whole bunch of new things, to understand yourself and to be what you want to be.

### Sandro

#### Going your own way

A lot of my friends went a different direction to what I wanted to do and I was sort of singled out. It was a big step, just leaving school and being on your own. I had a part-time job that I'd just started. It was in a café. I was learning a lot, how to interact with people, especially older crowds, but when TAFE started, it was a different ball game totally. Just getting along with teachers and it was different atmosphere in the room, it wasn't so much like you have to learn this and that, it was more hands-on.

Yes, more up to yourself ...

Yes, just finding yourself and where you stand in society and those kind of issues start popping up in your head.

Families are all different

A lot of families are different, you can't just say "Mum and Dad I'm moving out", "Oh no you're not, you are too young, and this and that" – because they haven't fulfilled their role as a parent yet.

A while to mature

I didn't mature that quick. It took me a while, but I'm thankful in a way that it's taken this long, because I'm happy where I am now today.

### **Michael**

Schoolies car crash

I think everyone knows that schoolies week is just about going up to Queensland or somewhere, just trying to get really drunk every night and get a lay every night, I think everyone knows that, but everyone is just scared to admit it. I knew some people who had a car crash up there. They were drunk and they were driving and they all died. That was really sad. It was their own fault in a way. It's all hyped up to be this huge thing and everyone goes up there and gets really drunk and people have accidents, so I've kind of turned off it. I was turned off by that.

### **Darrell**

Developing workplace skills

In a work environment, you have different responsibilities than you might have compared to when you were studying. And so you have to deal with other people in the workplace, you have to work in teams, work according to the system, the rules, that govern that sort of workplace. I moved from being a runner to a waiter and had to work with – and be able to – learn how to deal with customers and things like that, it was quite interesting.

### **Chanelle**

Goals set high

At this age we have the highest goals set to be successful, like we just think "Alright I will go to uni, I'll get this job, and I'll get rich", but tend to forget that there are many other things in the world we can do, and that's what I have been thinking about this year. I can do anything.

Make your own decisions

Because in school they have this set timetable for us and everything, but now when we leave school we have to make all these different choices, I can do this or we can do this.

### **Drew**

Balance beyond school

Workloads as well. Like getting a job and doing uni as well is hard to balance. I know a lot of people do it in high school as well, but getting more of a full-time job when you are doing uni, you need to know when to study and when not, and how much the work is part of your life.

### **Grant**

#### It's not the end of the world

You are still young too, like the oldest you are is 18. So you still have ages, you can go and work for a couple of years or go to TAFE. You don't have to go to uni straight away. If you don't get in, it's not the end of the world.

#### Overwhelmed by the city

First year uni is really overwhelming, especially if you are not from where the unis are. If it's in the big city, if the uni is in a big city and you are not from that big city, it's hard to get adjusted to. You just get overwhelmed by it and just taken up by the crowd.

#### Taking care of yourself

Just basically learning how to take care of myself. The simple things like cooking dinner, washing clothes, making your bed, you know.

#### Teachers won't chase the work up

Because at uni you don't have a lot of help from your teachers. They just expect you to do it and if you don't hand it in, well they don't care because there are hundreds of other kids who are doing the same thing.

### **Richard**

#### Being comfortable with yourself

People are a lot more open after school as well, so it's a lot easier to blend and to be yourself and to be comfortable being yourself, without being picked on about it.

### **Wendy**

#### Freedom, parties, alcohol and drugs

Back in school, right, you have the parent thing and basically have the parents telling you not to do this, stuff like that. But when you are out in uni that means you have more freedom, and that means you can just do whatever you want. So you can be renting different places or something, that means you can party the whole night and that means you will get alcohol and drugs and things like that being involved.

### **Group**

#### New friends at uni

There are no groups of friends when you come to uni, everyone is finding their friends at the same time. Pretty scary ...

... Fun ...

... Totally lost ...

You have to start again, if you are not from there, you have to start again and make new friends ...

### **Lindsay**

#### Turn to a puddle

Because the city is like a big party, you get there and think there are so many things to do, "I'm going to have a great time". You do that and then when you come home and you

sit back and you're not there with your Mum and Dad and you have this strange flatmate who never tidies, and there are cockroaches everywhere and you have books to read that have to be read otherwise you are going to fail, you can just turn into a puddle on the floor which I have done ...

## Websites

<a href="http://www.adin.com.au">www.adin.com.au</a>	<p>Australian Drug Information Network</p> <p>Portal with search facilities. Information and links to over 900 reviewed websites.</p>
<a href="http://www.somazone.com.au">www.somazone.com.au</a>	<p>Somazone</p> <p>A site developed by and for young people. Includes information and personal stories on drugs, relationships and body image.</p>
<a href="http://www.curriculum.edu.au">www.curriculum.edu.au</a>	<p>Curriculum Corporation</p> <p>Contains links to various publications including <i>MindMatters</i>, a mental health program for secondary schools.</p>
<a href="http://www.drugs.health.gov.au">www.drugs.health.gov.au</a>	<p>Australian Department of Health and Ageing</p> <p>The Australian Department of Health and Ageing is Australia's federal government department responsible for health issues.</p>
<a href="http://www.fcs.wa.gov.au">www.fcs.wa.gov.au</a>	<p>Family and Children's Services</p> <p>Offers tips for getting on better with your parents and getting connected with other young people.</p>
<a href="http://www.thesource.gov.au">www.thesource.gov.au</a>	<p>The Source</p> <p>A federal government youth site featuring programs, information on getting a job, career information and youth health issues.</p>
<a href="http://www.reachout.com.au">www.reachout.com.au</a>	<p>Reach Out!</p> <p>A service that uses the internet to help young people get through tough times.</p>
<a href="http://www.edsn.asn.au">www.edsn.asn.au</a>	<p>Eating Disorders Support Network</p> <p>Information and support for people with eating disorders.</p>
<a href="http://www.headroom.net.au">www.headroom.net.au</a>	<p>Headroom</p> <p>Information about and ideas to support mental health.</p>
<a href="http://www.kidshelp.com.au">www.kidshelp.com.au</a>	<p>Kids' Help Line</p> <p>Website of professional counselling service accessible to all Australian children.</p>
<a href="http://www.achper.org.au">www.achper.org.au</a>	<p>ACHPER</p> <p>The Australian Council for Health and Physical Education and Recreation.</p>

<a href="http://www.drugsafe.org">www.drugsafe.org</a>	<p>Drug Safe</p> <p>Life Education Australia site. Life Education Australia's mission is excellence in drug education, especially for young people.</p>
<a href="http://www.adf.org.au/drughit/">www.adf.org.au/drughit/</a>	<p>Drughit</p> <p>Australian Drug Foundation featuring accurate and up to date drug information. Also try <a href="http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au">www.druginfo.adf.org.au</a></p>
<a href="http://www.dotu.wa.gov.au/drugs/">www.dotu.wa.gov.au/drugs/</a>	<p>Drugs and Young People</p> <p>A government funded project intended to educate and provide facts and statistics about drugs.</p>
<a href="http://www.youth.nsw.gov.au/links/drughelp/">www.youth.nsw.gov.au/links/drughelp/</a>	<p>Alcohol and Other Drugs</p> <p>Drug-related information written for young people.</p>
<a href="http://www.quitnow.info.au">www.quitnow.info.au</a>	<p>Quit</p> <p>Features a wide range of information related to quitting smoking.</p>
<a href="http://www.drinkingchoices.com">www.drinkingchoices.com</a>	<p>Drinking Choices</p> <p>Youth website of the National Alcohol Campaign. Designed for 15–17 year olds.</p>
<a href="http://www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au">www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au</a>	<p>National Alcohol Campaign</p> <p>Alcohol-related information for parents, the media and students.</p>
<a href="http://www.100incontrol.com">www.100incontrol.com</a>	<p>100% in control</p> <p>100% in control offers tips and suggestions for drug-free, alcohol-free and tobacco-free partying.</p>
<a href="http://www.adca.org.au">www.adca.org.au</a>	<p>Alcohol and Other Drugs Council of Australia</p> <p>The Alcohol and Other Drugs Council of Australia is a national body representing the interests of Australian alcohol and other drug non-government organisations.</p>
<a href="http://www.health.org">www.health.org</a>	<p>Prevline – Prevention Online</p> <p>Website based in the United States which features useful information related to drugs and alcohol.</p>
<a href="http://www.heartfoundation.com.au">www.heartfoundation.com.au</a>	<p>Heart Foundation National Schools</p> <p>Information and advice on how to maintain a healthy heart.</p>

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<a href="http://www.aihw.gov.au/drugs/index.html">www.aihw.gov.au/drugs/index.html</a>	<p>National Drug Strategy Household Survey results</p> <p>Log into the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website for useful health data and the results of the latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey.</p>
<a href="http://www.fds.org.au">www.fds.org.au</a>	<p>Family Drug Support</p> <p>A website designed to assist families throughout Australia to deal with drug issues in a way that strengthens relationships and achieves positive outcomes. Features a section related to alcohol.</p>
<a href="http://www.drugarm.com.au">www.drugarm.com.au</a>	<p>Drug Awareness and Relief Movement</p> <p>The Queensland based Drug Awareness and Relief Movement's website offers links to education, prevention, counselling and outreach sites for drug issues.</p>
<a href="http://www.adf.org.au">www.adf.org.au</a>	<p>Australian Drug Foundation</p> <p>The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) is an independent, non-profit organisation working to prevent and reduce drug problems in the community.</p>
<a href="http://makeanoise.ysp.org.au">makeanoise.ysp.org.au</a>	<p>Make a Noise</p> <p>A website for young people on a range of health topics.</p>
<a href="http://www.druginfo.nsw.gov.au">www.druginfo.nsw.gov.au</a>	<p>NSW Drug Information website</p> <p>Features information on a wide range of drugs including alcohol.</p>
<a href="http://www.oxygen.org.au">www.oxygen.org.au</a>	<p>OxyGen</p> <p>This site was launched by the Smarter than Smoking Project. It is supported by Quit (South Australian Smoking and Health Project), Western Australia Smarter than Smoking Project and Quit Victoria.</p>
<a href="http://www.aic.gov.au">www.aic.gov.au</a>	<p>Australian Institute of Criminology</p> <p>The Institute is the national focus for the study of crime and criminal justice in Australia and for the dissemination of criminal justice information. The Institute draws on information supplied to it by a wide variety of sources and its policy advice is objective and independent.</p>
<a href="http://www.lawstuff.org.au">www.lawstuff.org.au</a>	<p>Lawstuff</p> <p>National Children's and Youth Law Centre website, with information for each State.</p>
<a href="http://www.youth.nsw.gov.au">www.youth.nsw.gov.au</a>	<p>Youth NSW</p> <p>Looks at a broad range of youth issues such as money, law, environment and housing.</p>

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<a href="http://www.abc.net.au/triplej">www.abc.net.au/triplej</a>	Triple J Listen to Triple J online. Features information on tours, festivals, sports and the top 50 music chart.
<a href="http://www.jobsearch.gov.au">www.jobsearch.gov.au</a>	Australian Job Search Looking for a job? This is the site that will find you a job, traineeship or an apprenticeship.
<a href="http://www.theprogram.net.au">www.theprogram.net.au</a>	The Program Online creative arts space for young people.
<a href="http://www.myfuture.edu.au">www.myfuture.edu.au</a>	Australia's career information service A joint Commonwealth, State and Territory government initiative.

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Because of the nature of the internet, web addresses may change. Well managed sites, however, will direct you to the new address.

### Website review questions

*Here are some questions to think about when you are evaluating a website.*

Is the site up to date?

Is the information accurate?

Is the source of information documented?

Is it clear who owns the site?

Is the owner the government? a not-for-profit organisation? commercial? an individual?

Does this person or organisation have any bias or personal interest that might influence the content of the site?

Who is the site for?

Are the design, content and activities suitable for the target group?

What are the main topics addressed?

Are the topics covered comprehensively?

Does the writer/owner have relevant expertise?

Does the site have good links?

Is it easy to find your way around the site? Does it have a search facility?

# Using the CD-ROM

## CD-ROM map

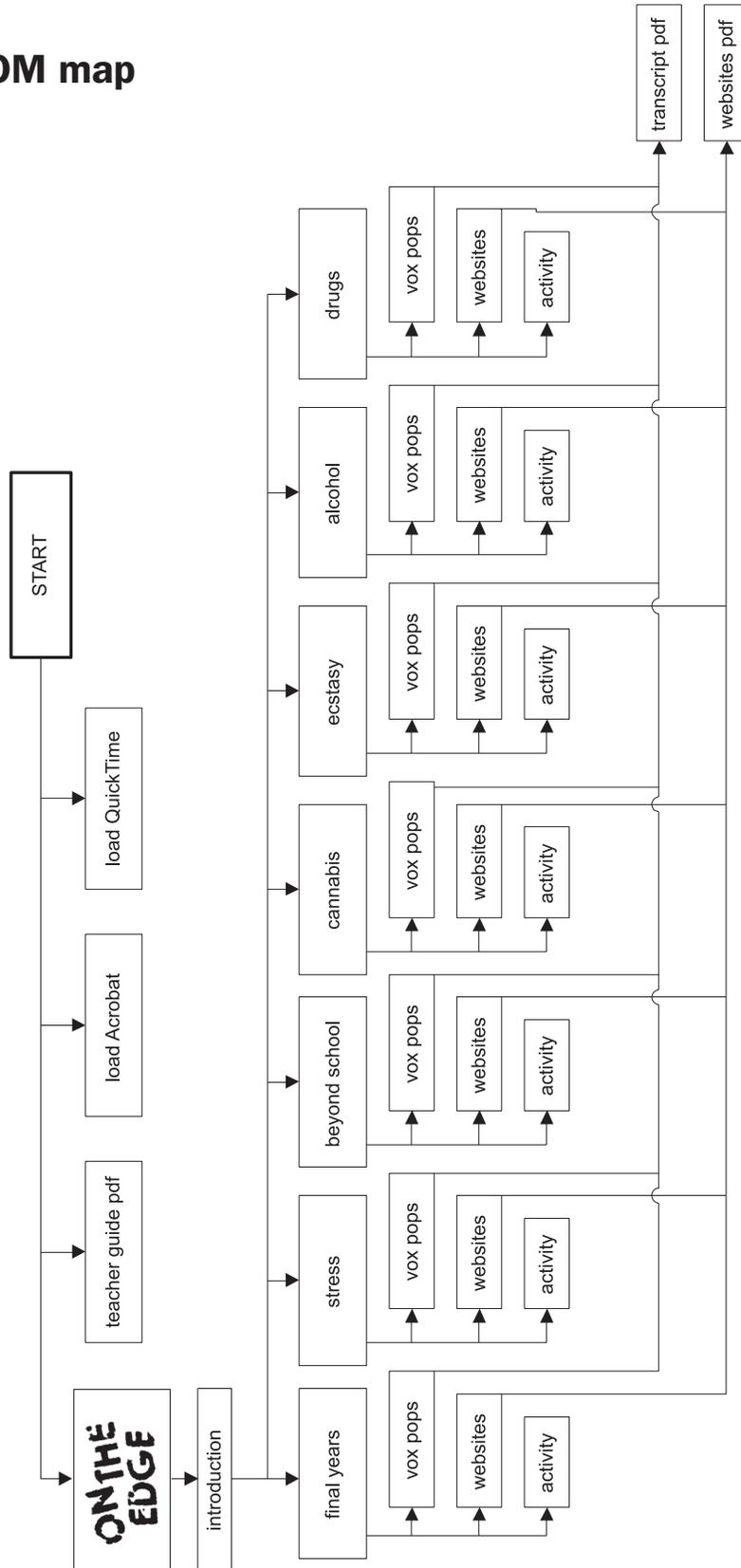


Figure 1: Flowchart of the *On the Edge* CD-ROM.

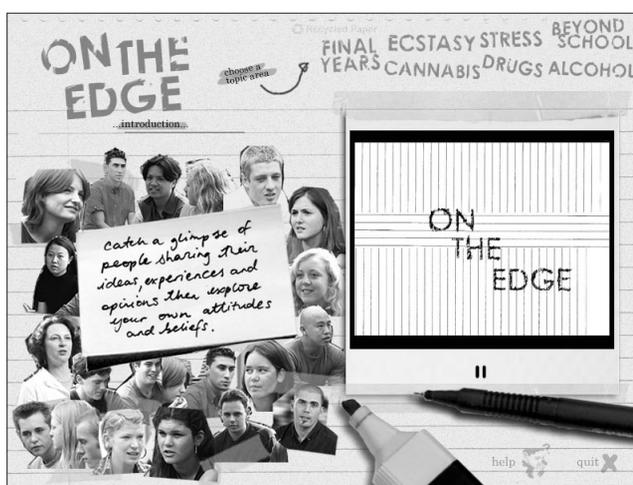


## Hardware and software requirements

PC recommended minimum specs	Mac recommended minimum specs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pentium 450 MHz</li> <li>• Windows 98SE; Windows NT 4.0 SP4</li> <li>• 128 Mb RAM</li> <li>• Sound card</li> <li>• 40 x CD-ROM drive</li> <li>• 8 Mb video card</li> <li>• Colour monitor set to 800 x 600 and True Colour (16 bit)</li> <li>• Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0 (included on the CD-ROM)</li> <li>• QuickTime 5.02 (included on the CD-ROM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• iMac 233 MHz</li> <li>• Mac OS 9</li> <li>• 128 Mb RAM</li> <li>• 24 x CD-ROM drive</li> <li>• 6 Mb video card</li> <li>• Colour monitor set to 800 x 600 and thousands of colours</li> <li>• Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0 (included on the CD-ROM)</li> <li>• QuickTime 5.02 (included on the CD-ROM)</li> </ul>

Technical support for this CD-ROM is available on the REDI website (at [www.redi.gov.au/support/](http://www.redi.gov.au/support/)).

## Introduction

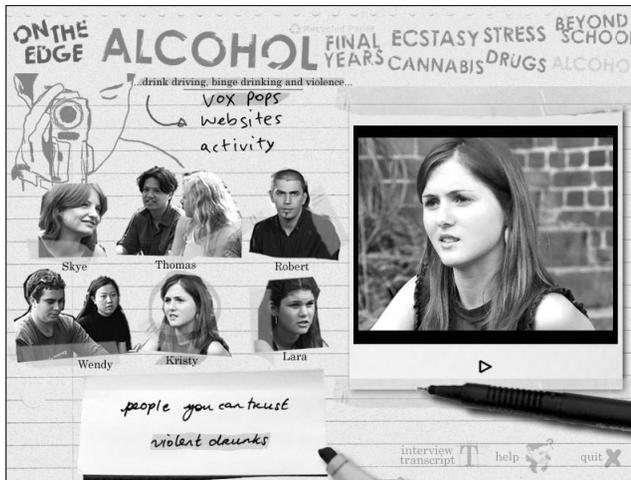


When the CD-ROM is first launched, an Introduction screen is displayed and a short video clip is shown. Click a topic area from the menu at the top right-hand side of the screen to skip the introduction and proceed.

## Help

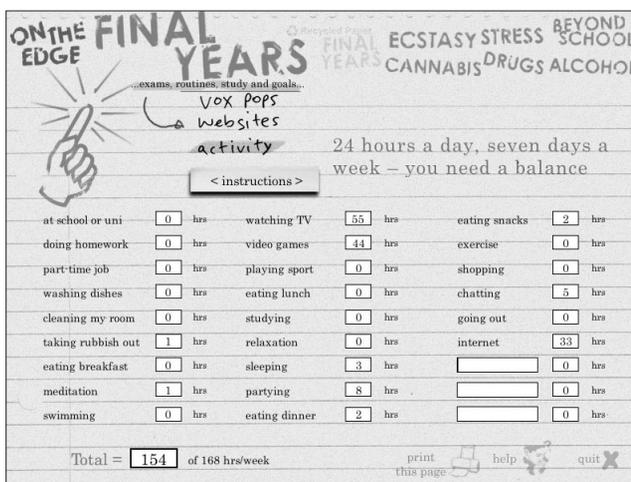
The Help function gives a brief description of each area of the CD-ROM. With the Help function turned on, roll your mouse over each area of the screen to display more information in pop-up windows. The Help function is turned on and off by clicking the **help** button in the lower right corner of the screen.

## Vox pops



To load an interview in the vox pops section:

- 1 Click on an icon of a person (or group) from the left-hand side of the screen.
- 2 Select an interview from the list of descriptions that appears below the icons. (Note: Some people may have only a single interview clip for that topic area; others may have several to choose from.)
- 3 Click the **play** button under the video window on the right-hand side of the screen. Click **pause** if required.



## Activities

The activities on the *On the Edge* CD-ROM let students find out how much they already know and give them time to explore the issues introduced in the other areas of the CD-ROM.

Each activity works in its own way. Instructions for each activity are provided in the yellow pop-down note found above each activity. To hide the instructions, click on the tab at the top of each note, shown by the **click to hide** button.





## Resources

The following pages contain masters of Info sheets that can be photocopied for use by students during activities or for their general information.

They can also be:

- provided to parents
- reproduced in appropriate school newsletters
- used at Local School-Community Drug Summits.

They include facts and information about the various substances and health, social and legal issues around their use and misuse. References are also provided for where to go for further information.

If they are being provided to parents, highlight that they can find very good information aimed at parents at the National Drugs Campaign website (<http://www.drugs.health.gov.au/index.htm>), the National Alcohol Campaign website (<http://www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au>) and the National Tobacco Campaign website (<http://www.quitnow.info.au/index1.html>).

### Info sheets

Tobacco _____	43
Alcohol _____	45
Cannabis _____	47
Ecstasy _____	49



## about TOBACCO

Cigarettes and cigars are made from the dried leaves of the tobacco plant. There are more than 4,000 substances found in tobacco smoke and around 200 of them, including nicotine and arsenic, are poisons.

Three of the most damaging substances that affect cigarette smokers are nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide.

- Nicotine is the main drug in tobacco. It stimulates the person's brain and increases the heart rate. Nicotine is addictive, so people who are used to having nicotine find it very difficult to go without it.
- Tar is the main cancer-causing substance in tobacco. It also stains people's teeth and skin.
- A lit cigarette produces the toxic gas carbon monoxide which, when inhaled, is absorbed into the bloodstream instead of oxygen. Carbon monoxide is associated with heart disease and contributes to the number of people who die from heart attacks.

## TOBACCO info sheet

### Laws about TOBACCO

It is illegal to sell or to supply tobacco products to people under the age of 18 years. Laws determine who can sell tobacco, where it can be sold as well as the age at which it can be bought. Each State and Territory has its own specific policies and laws about tobacco sales and use, including about smoking in restaurants, workplaces and on public transport.

**'... in reality the majority of teenagers don't smoke.'**

(Tom Carroll, *My TVCD-ROM*)

### Passive SMOKING

Breathing in other people's cigarette smoke is called 'passive smoking'. Passive smoking affects everyone, both smokers and non-smokers.

Passive smoking can:

- bring on asthma attacks in some people
- cause lung cancer
- cause heart disease
- irritate the eyes, throat and airways.

## effects Of tOBacco sMOKing

People who smoke tobacco have an increased risk of:

- cancer
- bronchitis and pneumonia
- developing emphysema, which makes it difficult to breathe and eventually causes death
- heart attack.

Smoking tobacco causes the deaths of about 19,000 Australians each year.

Women who smoke when they are pregnant have a higher risk of giving birth to smaller babies.

**'Young people who smoke often have problems with their lungs, with asthma. And if they start playing footy or cricket they'll often find that they're getting short of breath or wheezy and basically they can't keep up with the other people of their age.'** (Dr Martin Hocknell, My TV CD-ROM)

Other problems some people experience as a result of smoking tobacco include:

- reduced sense of smell and taste
- bad breath
- stained teeth and skin
- clothes that smell of smoke.

**'... When people start smoking they don't really realise the damage that they're causing to their body now, but perhaps 10 or 20 years later on, they're going to regret that they ever started smoking.'** (Dr Martin Hocknell, My TV CD-ROM)

## MORe ON t#e internet

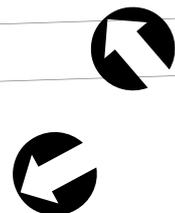
Australian Drug Foundation: <http://www.adf.org.au>

.u: <http://www.dotu.wa.gov.au/drugs>

Cancer Council Victoria: <http://www.quit.org.au>

National Tobacco Campaign: <http://www.quitnow.info.au/index1.html>

REDI website: [www.redi.gov.au](http://www.redi.gov.au)



## about alcohol

Alcohol is one of the most commonly used drugs in Australia. In the past 12 months, more than 80% of people in Australia aged over 14 will have consumed alcohol.

Alcohol affects different people in different ways – it is a depressant which slows the heart rate and slows reaction times.

The taste and the amount of alcohol in an alcoholic drink depend on what it is made from and how it has been made:

- fermented drinks include beer and wine
- spirits, or distilled drinks, include such things as brandy, gin, rum, vodka and whisky – they have a higher alcohol content than beer and wine.

**'While we see that the numbers of young people who drink increase as young people get older, it's certainly not the case that everyone drinks and nor do they drink on all occasions.'** (Tom Carroll, My TV CD-ROM)

## alcohol info sheet

### Laws about alcohol

The laws and penalties for young people and alcohol vary slightly from State to State, but generally, if you are under 18 years of age:

- you are not permitted to drink on licensed premises
- it is an offence to use a fake ID to buy alcohol
- anyone who buys alcohol for you could be committing an offence
- anyone who sells you alcohol can be fined.

Laws restrict how much alcohol a person can drink before driving. People who have just learnt to drive cannot drink any alcohol before driving. Other laws about drinking and driving are different in each State and Territory.

For further information about laws and penalties, go to the Lawstuff website at <http://www.lawstuff.org.au/>

### Social effects of alcohol use

Some people drink alcohol at social events because it makes them feel more relaxed. Unfortunately if they drink too much they have less self-control and may do things they later regret.

Some people get into fights when they have been drinking.

**'Some people drink because they're feeling lonely, they have low self-esteem or they're pretty unhappy with life. But the problem is that alcohol actually makes things worse. It makes them more depressed.'** (Dr Martin Hocknell, My TV CD-ROM)



## PHYSICAL effects Of Drinking ALCOHOL

Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream and travels to different parts of the body. It affects the control centres in the brain and thus the way a person behaves. The liver slowly breaks the alcohol down and removes it from the bloodstream.

Alcohol affects people in different ways:

- a small amount of alcohol may make you feel relaxed and you may find it a bit difficult to concentrate
- a lot of alcohol may make you confused, have difficulty walking, and become nauseated and vomit
- too much alcohol can make you become aggressive and violent
- in large amounts, alcohol can cause coma and even death.

Alcohol is an addictive drug. A person who is addicted to alcohol ('alcohol dependent') will experience withdrawal symptoms and find it very difficult to go without alcohol. Excessive alcohol drinking can damage the liver and heart and cause permanent brain damage.

Each year about 4,000 Australians die from alcohol-related causes.

## ALCOHOL increases the risk Of accidents

'In 1998 we saw over 1,500 young Australians die as a result of using drugs. Overwhelmingly alcohol is the major problem. Fifty per cent of young Australians who die from drug-related deaths die as a result of alcohol.'  
(Paul Dillon, My TVCD-ROM)

Drinking alcohol increases the risk of having an accident because it slows down the drinker's reaction time. It is not safe to drink alcohol and drive a car, ride a bicycle, or go boating, fishing or swimming or operate machinery of any kind.

People who have drunk too much alcohol are also more likely to take risks and injure themselves or put themselves in danger.

If a person has had too much alcohol it is important that someone sober stays with them because they may need help in case they get very sick or injure themselves.



## MORE ON THE internet



Australian Drug Foundation: <http://www.adf.org.au>

.u: <http://www.dotu.wa.gov.au/drugs>

National Alcohol Campaign: <http://www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au/>

REDI website: [www.redi.gov.au](http://www.redi.gov.au)

## about Cannabis

Cannabis is an illegal drug. The word 'cannabis' is used to describe the various substances made from the plant *Cannabis sativa*. The plant contains the active ingredient, *delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol* - THC - which depresses the central nervous system and has hallucinogenic qualities.

The most common forms of cannabis are:

- marijuana - made from the dried leaves and flowers - this is the least powerful form of cannabis
- hashish - small blocks of dried cannabis resin - THC is more concentrated in the resin than in the leaves
- hashish oil - the extract of hashish in the form of a thick, oily liquid - the most powerful form of cannabis.

Cannabis is also known as dope, mull, gunja, pot, grass, weed, hash, buddha, reefer, herb, joint, stick, buckets, cones.

## Cannabis info sheet

### Laws about Cannabis

Cannabis is illegal in all Australian States and Territories, but each one has its own policies and laws. Some States and Territories have decriminalised the use of cannabis. Decriminalisation means that a behaviour, such as personal use or cultivation of cannabis, remains illegal but is not treated as a criminal offence.

Driving a car while under the influence of a drug, including cannabis, is illegal. You can be disqualified from driving, fined or imprisoned if you break this law.

### SOME facts about Cannabis Use

- 29% of all secondary students aged between 14 and 17 years have reported the use of cannabis at some point in their lives\*.
- Although experimentation with cannabis has increased over the past few years, regular users remain a minority\*\*.
- Most users of marijuana do not use other drugs\*\*.
- The majority - about  $\frac{2}{3}$  - of people who have ever used cannabis are now ex-users\*\*.

\*Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug Survey (ASSAD), 1999.

\*\*2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey.

## effects Of Cannabis

The effects of cannabis use depend on the strength of the dose and the personal characteristics of the user. Cannabis use carries a risk of harm as there is no quality control of the drug – you don't know what you are actually using.

**'Smoking anything is basically unhealthy, so whether you are smoking a legal or an illegal drug, it's basically an unhealthy thing to do. It's going to damage your breathing system, your lungs, your throat, your tongue ...'**

(Robert Bosi, *On the Edge* CD-ROM)

Some first time cannabis users report that they experience no effects.

People who have taken cannabis will often have red eyes, feel hungry and/or dizzy and have impaired balance and coordination and may experience hallucinations, depending on the amount and strength of the drug they have taken.

It is not safe to operate machinery, drive a car, ride a bicycle, or go boating, fishing or swimming under the influence of cannabis.

**Short term effects: feeling relaxed, lowered inhibitions, talking and laughing more than usual, headaches, nausea, red eyes, feeling confused or anxious, memory loss.**

**Long term effects: damaged memory, impaired concentration, reduced motivation, lung disease.**



## Cannabis and Mental Illness

Some people experience very unpleasant psychological effects when they use cannabis, such as severe anxiety or panic attacks. At very high doses, confusion, delusions and hallucinations may also occur, but this is uncommon. These effects usually don't last after the effects of the cannabis wear off.

Recent studies have found a link between regular smoking of cannabis by girls and depression in adulthood, and between the use of cannabis by young people and mental illness such as schizophrenia.

The only way to avoid possible harms is not to use cannabis.



Drug use may be a way of controlling feelings and coping with emotional pain but it doesn't solve problems.



## More On the internet

Australian Drug Foundation: <http://www.adf.org.au>

.u: <http://www.dotu.wa.gov.au/drugs>

REDI website: [www.redi.gov.au](http://www.redi.gov.au)

## about ecstasy

Ecstasy is an illegal drug that is synthetically manufactured. It is *Methylenedioxymethamphetamine* - MDMA - and has the properties of amphetamines and hallucinogens. Amphetamines speed up the nervous system while hallucinogens affect the way a person perceives the world - they may see or hear things in a distorted way or that are not there.

**'Ecstasy is a stimulant, it's a drug that speeds you up. It's got similar properties to things like amphetamines, speed, go-ey, whizz. They're the kind of things people use to stay up all night, but not many people use it, it's mostly a party scene drug.'**  
(Robert Bosi, *On the Edge* CD-ROM)

# ecstasy info sheet

## Laws about ecstasy

Ecstasy is illegal in Australia. Throughout Australia there are penalties for possessing, using, making or selling ecstasy.

Driving a car while under the influence of a drug, including ecstasy, is illegal. You can be disqualified from driving, fined or imprisoned if you break this law.

## Effects Of ecstasy

Ecstasy use carries a risk of harm beyond the actual effects of the drug (MDMA) as there is no quality control - you don't know what you are actually taking or the conditions under which it has been manufactured. Tablets sold as ecstasy are just as likely to contain compounds of other drugs and include very little MDMA.

Immediately after taking ecstasy many people experience an increase in heart rate, body temperature and blood pressure.



## effects Of ecstasy (Cont)

Other effects of ecstasy:

- jaw clenching, teeth grinding
- nausea
- feelings of confidence
- feelings of wellbeing and closeness to others
- anxiety
- loss of appetite
- sweating
- convulsions
- insomnia
- vomiting
- hallucinations.

As the drug wears off the person may experience depression, anxiety, paranoia and fatigue and have difficulty concentrating.



## Health risks and ecstasy

Taking ecstasy can cause death through:

- heart attack or brain haemorrhage
- dilutional hyponatremia (where the person's brain swells from too much fluid intake, resulting in coma)
- overheating, where the effects of the drug combined with dancing raises the body temperature to dangerous levels and the body loses the ability to cool off.

The risks of physical and psychological harm are increased for people who have hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, liver problems, epilepsy and/or a history of mental illness or panic attacks.

Health risks are increased when ecstasy is mixed with other drugs.



## More on the internet

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