
Episode Five Debriefing: Teacher Guide



ACTIVITY 1 IT'S ALL IN THE CARDS

When does someone become addicted to a drug? After five uses, ten uses, or fifteen uses? In this activity, the students will play a game that will help demonstrate that a person never knows at what point addiction will occur.

Background

Addiction can be defined as the continued and compulsive use of drugs despite the effects on physical and social health. However, the use of a drug does not equal addiction. Initial drug use is voluntary. Some people may be depressed and find a few hours of happiness with a couple of alcoholic drinks or pills. Other people begin taking drugs to relieve the daily pressures of their fast-paced life. The question is: At what point does the use of drugs become addiction?

Any use of a mind-altering drug or inappropriate use of medication is drug abuse, but drug addiction is difficult to predict. The point at which a person moves from drug abuse to addiction is specific for each individual. This is because drug addiction involves environmental, social, behavioral, and genetic factors. Two individuals can use the same amount of a drug but react to it in very different ways. The difference between a drug user and a drug addict is that drug addicts have lost control of their drug use. Persons suffering from addiction usually become isolated from the people they care for, have difficulty at work or school, and can become involved in criminal activity. For addicts, their whole life revolves around their drug habit.

In this activity, developed by Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS) in conjunction with the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the students will play a card game that will show them that no one can predict when they will become addicted.

Episode Five Debriefing: Teacher Guide

Learning Objectives

The student will:

- Distinguish between drug abuse and addiction.
- Understand that no one can predict when abuse will become addiction.

Materials

- *It's All in the Cards Student Activity Sheet*
- Decks of playing cards (one deck for every three to five students)

Procedure

1. Before class:
 - a. Make a transparency of the game instructions on the *It's All in the Cards Student Activity Sheet*.
 - b. Separate each deck of cards into two stacks. Put the face cards in one stack and the aces and number cards in a second stack.
2. Tell the class that they are going to play a game similar to blackjack. The object of the game is to not go over the switch value.
3. Divide the class into groups of three to five students. Note: It might be beneficial if the instructor demonstrates the game by playing it once with a group of students.
4. In the teacher instructions below, the game is explained in relation to drug addiction. Suggestion: do not give the students the instructions in relation to addiction. This way they can play the game blindly. After they have played the game for the first time, hold a discussion about the meaning of the game. Then have the students replay the game, knowing this time that it relates to drug addiction. See if they change the way they play the game.
5. Teacher instructions:
 - a. Give each group a deck of cards with the face cards in one pile and the aces and number cards in a second pile. Leave both piles face down.
 - b. Each student will draw one card from the small pile of cards that contains only the face cards. This is their **switch card**. The student should place this card face up in front of them. *The values shown below for this card represent the point at which drug use has become an addiction.*
 - A jack has a switch value of 25.
 - A queen has a switch value of 35.
 - A king has a switch value of 45.
 - c. Make sure that everyone has drawn a switch card. Then set aside the smaller pile.

Episode Five Debriefing: Teacher Guide

- d. Now, each student will draw a card face down from the larger pile of cards (the pile containing aces and number cards).
 - e. THE STUDENT SHOULD NOT LOOK AT THIS CARD.
 - f. This card is the **risk card**. The student should place this card face down in front of them. *The value of this card will indicate the hidden risks involved in drug addiction. NOTE: You don't know this value until the game is ending.*
 - g. After each student has drawn a risk card, they will take turns drawing from the pile containing aces and number cards and will place these cards face up in front of them. These are the **choice cards**. *These cards indicate an episode of drug use.*
 - h. Each student can draw as many choice cards as they wish, but explain that **the object of the game is to not go over the switch value.**
 - i. The value of the risk cards and choice cards are:
 - An ace = 1
 - Number cards = the number on the card
 - j. Each person can stop drawing cards whenever they choose to do so.
 - k. When everyone is finished drawing choice cards, turn the risk cards over.
 - l. Ask each student to add up the value of his or her risk card and choice cards for his or her final total.
 - m. Ask who has a total over their switch value.
6. After everyone has finished, discuss the results. Questions and topics that can be covered:
- a. How do the students think the game relates to drug addiction?
 - b. What are the differences between drug abuse and addiction?
 - c. How many choice cards did everyone pick?
 - d. How many people went over or equaled their switch value?
 - e. Discuss who went over the switch value.
 - f. Did everyone have the same switch card? Why or why not?
 - g. Did everyone have the same risk card? Why or why not?
 - h. Why couldn't you see your risk card until the end of the game?
7. Have the students repeat the game now that they know that it represents the risk of addiction.
8. After everyone has played a few times, discuss whether people were less risky the second time they played. If so, why? If not, why?

Episode Five Debriefing: Teacher Guide

Extension Activities

- *Biology*: Research the physical changes that occur with drug use and addiction.
- *Geography*: Investigate the different types of illegal drugs that are used in the US.
- *Mathematics*: Calculate the amount of money an addict spends on a drug habit.

Standards

National Science Education Standards, Grades 5-8

1. Science Content Standard F: All students should develop understanding of personal health.
2. Science Content Standard F: All students should develop understanding of risks and benefits.

Books

- Johnson, M. 1999. Cross-Addiction: The Hidden Risk of Multiple Addictions. New York: Rosen Pub. Group.
- Lane, J. et al. 2001. Risk and Protective Factors for Adolescent Drug Use : Findings from the 1997 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. Rockville, MD: Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Gfroerer, J.D. 1994. Perceived Availability and Risk of Harm of Drugs: Estimates from the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. Rockville, MD: US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service.
- Shulman, J. 1991. The Drug-Alert Dictionary and Resource Guide. Frederick, MD: Twenty-First Century Books.
- Friedman, D. 1990. Focus on Drugs and the Brain. Frederick, MD: Twenty-First Century Books.

Web Sites

- Mind Over Matter
<http://www.nida.nih.gov/MOM/MOMIndex.html>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
<http://www.drugabuse.gov/>
- Druguse.com
<http://www.druguse.com/>

Episode Five Debriefing: Student Activity Sheet



IT'S ALL IN THE CARDS

People take risks every day. Some people are riskier than others. In this activity developed by the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study and the National Institute on Drug Abuse, you will play a game of risk and learn a little about how much you are willing to risk.

Materials

- Two stacks of playing cards
- *It's All in the Cards Student Activity Sheet*

Procedure

1. Divide into groups of three to five students.
2. Each group should obtain two stacks of cards from their teacher: a small stack and a larger stack.

Instructions for the Game

1. Each person draws one card from the small pile of cards. This is your **switch card**. Place this card face up in front of you.
 - a. If you drew a **jack**, your switch value is **25**.
 - b. If you drew a **queen**, your switch value is **35**.
 - c. If you drew a **king**, your switch value is **45**.
2. Make sure that everyone has drawn a switch card. Then set aside the smaller pile.
3. Now each person will draw a card face down from the larger pile (the pile containing aces and number cards). **DO NOT LOOK AT THIS CARD**.
4. This card is your **risk card**. Place this card face down in front of you. **NOTE**: You won't know this value until the game is ending.
5. Now, each person will take turns drawing from the larger pile. Place these cards face up in front of you. These are your **choice cards**.
6. Draw as many choice cards as you wish. The value of each card is as follows:
 - a. An ace = 1
 - b. Number cards = the number on the card
7. Each person can stop drawing cards whenever they want to.
8. When everyone is finished drawing choice cards, turn the risk cards over.
9. Determine whether or not you went over your switch value.
10. Participate in a discussion about the results of your game.
11. Your teacher may have you play the game again once the class has discussed what the different cards represent.