

COCAINE

ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

5 Minutes

Introductory Group Discussion (Prior to viewing the video)

- Why is cocaine considered a dangerous drug?
- Is it more or less dangerous than other drugs?
- What is addiction?
- What type of behavior might be expected from a heavy cocaine user?
- How old are most addicts?
- What are some possible consequences of cocaine addiction?

Things to think about while watching the video

- How did the user's behavior affect his or her family?
- How did the user pay for drugs?
- Find something you didn't know about cocaine or its effect on the user.
- Do you know someone who is a regular cocaine user? If so, note if there are any similarities to the person you know in the stories you hear while viewing the video.

VIEW THE VIDEO

15 Minutes

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

25 Minutes or Longer

- What do you wish they talked about more in the video?
- Which person was closest to you in attitude or situation? How and why?
- What were the reasons each person started using cocaine? Were there similarities? Can you draw conclusions about what kind of person is likely to become addicted from the three stories you saw?
- What do you think is the main reason people begin using any drug?
- Take a consensus on three top reasons young people take drugs. (Be honest, even if you decide that fun or boredom are top reasons, discuss them and put them down for large group discussion.)
- What relevance did the "monkey story" have to the lives of Michelle, Sara and Mike?
- What were the main things these young people gave up when they became involved with cocaine?
- Did anyone's life remain unchanged after he or she began taking drugs?

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FAST FACTS

These facts contain information that is supplementary to what is in the video. They can be used to stimulate more discussion, written on the board, or incorporated into the discussion generated by the Group Discussion Questions.

- A cocaine high lasts a very short time, leaving a craving for more.
- The body develops a tolerance to cocaine so that the more you take, the more you need to get high (this is known as chasing the high).
- When the tolerance level escalates quickly, it is quite common to take an overdose, which can lead to death.
- Addiction is not a “weakness” or a “lack of willpower.” It is a combination of mind and body conditions that cause a person to crave the high of a mind altering substance.
- Withdrawal from the cocaine high can lead to a “crash” which can cause despair, anxiety, and the inability to sleep.
- 50% of chronic cocaine users develop cerebral atrophy—shrinkage of brain tissue!

ROLE-PLAY

Try this role-play with your students after they have thoroughly discussed the video. It can be presented as a skit, written assignment, or a small group discussion topic.

Characters: A guy and a girl who have been dating for a while.

Situation: She suspects he is using cocaine but she has no proof. He invites her to a party to meet some new friends. She is very sure that this party will involve drugs.

What should she do?

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ACTIVITIES FOR ANOTHER SESSION

Learning about the possible consequences of an action

This assignment is about consequences and learning to think through the decisions we make. It is important to think about our choices in life and how they can change our life forever. Many times, bad decisions are preventable. But we have to take the time to think through how it can affect us and others. Below is a list of scenarios. Make sure when responding to each scenario that the questions that follow are answered. This can be used for class discussion or written assignments.

1. Trying cocaine once.
2. Studying extra for a big exam.
3. Taking classes to prepare for college.
4. Letting peer pressure affect your decisions.
5. Letting your guard down just once to take a drug a friend of yours wants you to try.
6. Helping a friend with a paper when you could be out with other friends.
7. Smoking cigarettes.

- What are the possible consequences of this action?
- Will any of these consequences interfere with or enhance my dreams and goals?
- Will these consequences affect others?
- Who is responsible for the consequences, ultimately?

MORE QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the consequences people in the video have to face?
2. What are some of the possible consequences NOT brought up in the video?
3. What are some of the consequences in your own life that you can remember?
4. Did you learn from these experiences?

RESOURCES

Teachers can present these ideas in a handout or as a further discussion topic.

- There are many options for you if you are looking for a way to avoid taking drugs.
- Most important—you need support! Peer pressure is not easy to deal with.
- Find a trustworthy adult who can listen to you and understand you.
- Find a peer group that is into other things.
- Look for job opportunities to keep you busy and focused with some responsibility.
- Be a leader. Not a follower.