

## Effects of Substance Use, Misuse, Abuse, and Addiction

Ages 11-14

**Activity Card 1**  
**75 Minutes**  
**Topics: Addiction, Emotions,**  
**Peer Pressure, Personal Skills,**  
**Substance Use**



### Activity Overview

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Youth will examine personal and societal effects of substance use and misuse, addictions, and related behaviours.

### Assessment

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The educator observes the youths' demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the warning signs of substance misuse or abuse.

### Equipment

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Markers, Poster paper, 1–2 small soft balls

### Minds On

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As a large group, have youth brainstorm the definitions of the words, use, misuse, abuse, and addiction. Divide youths into small groups of 4-5 youth. Each group will have one ball.

Youths will carefully toss the ball to each other. Each time they catch it they will identify a personal or social outcome of substance use.

Encourage youths to think beyond the immediate to include effects 10, 20, and 30 years down the road.

### Consolidation

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Have the youths summarize the warning signs into a "Top 5" list. Consider having youths share their lists in creative ways (e.g., digital poster, digital image collage, 140-character poem) through personal or school social media feeds. Responses may include that substance misuse or addiction could:

- affect a person's mental and physical health
- involve breaking the law (e.g., drinking and driving, using illegal drugs, or stealing money to gamble or buy drugs)
- cause financial difficulties
- harm relationships and friends
- cause problems at home, work, or school
- cause changes in behaviour
- cause withdrawal from social circles
- cause a drop in academic performance