

Grade 9

Alcohol and Sex



Learner Outcomes

W-9.14 *Develop strategies that address factors to prevent or reduce sexual risk; e.g., abstain from drugs and alcohol, date in groups, use assertive behaviour*

How To Use

This lesson plan is designed to be completed AFTER the lessons on Consent.

This lesson plan contains several activities to achieve the learner outcome above. You may choose to do some or all of the activities, based on the needs of your students and the time available. Some of the activities build on the ones that come before them, but all can be used alone.

For a quick lesson, combine activities A, D and F.

Classroom Activities & Timing

- A. Ground Rules (5-10 minutes)
- B. Alcohol Facts and Experiences (10-20 minutes)
- C. Decision Making Discussion (15-20 minutes)
- D. Emerson and Bo Case Study (20-25 minutes)
- E. Understanding Alcohol Kahoot! Quiz (10-20 minutes)
- F. Question Box (5-10 minutes)

Required Materials

[KAHOOT! QUIZ](#) and ANSWER KEY: Understanding Alcohol

HANDOUT: Emerson and Bo

[SLIDES](#): Alcohol

All the diagrams/slides are also available as PDFs in [Grade 9 Diagrams](#).

Background Information for Teachers

The dried flowers, leaves, stems and seeds of cannabis are called marijuana, weed, pot and other names. Hashish and hash oil also come from the cannabis plant.

This lesson should be completed after the lessons on consent, which have more complete information about consent and sexual assault.

Adolescence is a time of change and may include experimentation with many things, including alcohol, cannabis and other drugs (such as ecstasy, methamphetamines, cocaine, heroin and fentanyl). This lesson provides a closer examination of decision making and the factors that affect teens' decision-making processes. It will look at how drugs and alcohol affect judgment, how they lower inhibitions and other facts about how the use of substances affects everybody.

When this curriculum outcome was written, the accepted method of reducing sexual assault was 'prevention messages' aimed at potential victims. Clearly, those messages did not reduce instances of assault and increased shame in the person who was assaulted. Thus, messages about 'sexual risk' are now directed to potential perpetrators with the aim of preventing them from assaulting people.

Key messages about sexual assault include:

- Sexual assault is the legal term used in Canada and is the appropriate term to use in the classroom. If a survivor uses the term 'rape', reflect back that language.
- The term 'survivor' is generally used when referring to a person who has been sexually assaulted. If the person identifies as a 'victim', reflect back that language. The word 'victim' is often used by police or in a legal sense. Sexual assault can happen to anyone of any gender and be committed by anyone of any gender.
- The terms 'offender', 'perpetrator' or 'assailant' are used for someone who commits a crime.
- Sexual assault can happen to anyone of any gender and be committed by anyone of any gender.
- Using gendered language when talking about consent and sexual assault reinforces unhealthy stereotypes, discourages men and boys who have been sexually assaulted from accessing services, and inaccurately suggests that women do not commit sexual assault.
- Sole responsibility for sexual assault lies with the perpetrator of that assault.
- If prevention messages are given, they are directed at potential perpetrators with the aim of preventing them from assaulting people.
- Sexual assault is a crime of power and violence, not a crime of sex, desire or passion.

Learning about healthy, unhealthy, and abusive relationships, developing healthy relationship skills, encouraging bystander interventions, promoting healthy sexuality, and empowering girls, women and LGBTQ2S+ people are other ways to reduce the incidence of sexual assault.

Bystander interventions may also be an effective prevention and safety strategy. Bystanders who intervene when they see someone at risk can prevent a sexual assault from occurring. Bystanders do not need to put their own safety at risk in order to help others.

Bystanders who see someone at risk of sexual assault can:

- **Create a distraction:** Interrupt a situation by offering food, starting a conversation or suggesting a new activity.
- **Ask directly:** Talk directly to the person who may be in trouble and ask if they would like your company or who they came with.
- **Refer to an authority:** Involve a security guard, employee, parent or call 911.
- **Enlist others:** Ask a friend to come with you to speak to the person who may be in trouble or enlist a friend of theirs to check on them.

This lesson contains basic information about alcohol. While obeying local liquor laws and delaying drinking at least until the late teens is advised, many teens choose to drink earlier. [Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health](#) recommend that people who are below legal drinking age delay drinking for as long as possible to reduce resulting harm.

Other ways teens can reduce the harm of drinking may include:

- talk to their parents about alcohol and drinking
- stick to one or two drinks on a single occasion
- never drink more than twice in a week
- understand that these suggestions decrease but do not eliminate risk of harm

Inclusive Language

Language is complex, evolving, and powerful. In these lessons, [inclusive language](#) is used to include all students, including those with diverse gender identities, gender expressions and sexual orientations. This includes the use of 'they' as a singular gender-neutral pronoun.

A person's sex can be assigned at birth as male or female. Some people are intersex (the reproductive, sexual, or genetic biology of a person is unclear, not exclusively male or female or otherwise does not fit within traditional definitions of male or female). Assigned sex is independent of gender.

Gender identity is a person's internal sense of identity as girl/woman, boy/man, fluid among genders or no gender (regardless of what sex they were assigned at birth).

For many people, their gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender). For some, their gender identity is different from the sex they

were assigned at birth. They may use terms like transgender, trans, non-binary, gender fluid, gender queer, agender or others, to describe their gender identity. The umbrella term ‘trans’ is primarily used here, to describe people whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth differ. While this umbrella term does not fit everyone, the intention is to be inclusive as possible.

A. Ground Rules

Ensure [ground rules](#) are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can help ensure a successful lesson.

Addressing the topic of sexual assault may cause some students to be distressed or show signs that they have experienced or witnessed sexual assault. This topic can also be troubling for those who may not be aware such situations occur. Be sensitive to the needs of all your students

Larger communities have specialized services for survivors of sexual assault. The following provincial resources are available for everyone:

- Alberta’s One Line for Sexual Violence: text or call 1-866-403-8000
- Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services: www.aasas.ca
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or kidshelpphone.ca
- Health Link: 811

B. Alcohol Facts and Experiences

Students examine some basic facts about alcohol and their perceptions of how it changes behaviour.

1. Share the following information with the students:
 - Drinking alcohol is illegal for anyone under 18
 - Drinking alcohol is associated with acute and long-term harm
 - For those who choose to drink alcohol, understanding more about how alcohol affects the body is part of being able to reduce their acute and long-term risks
 - About 40% of Alberta students in grades 7-12 have had more than just a sip of alcohol
 - About 30% of Alberta students in grades 7-12 have had 5 or more drinks on one occasion (binge drinking)
 - Just like learning about sexual activity doesn’t mean students are encouraged to become sexually active, learning about alcohol is not an encouragement for students to take up drinking
2. Show students the picture of the beer bottle found in the [Grade 9 Diagrams](#) PowerPoint, or display an empty beer bottle. Ask them to

See the report [Talk with Youth about Alcohol](#) for more information about teens and alcohol use.

name other drinks that have about the same amount of alcohol as contained in one bottle of beer. Encourage them to define the volume of the drinks they name (e.g. if they say “one drink of vodka”, ask them “how much is one drink of vodka?”).

3. Display or hand out the **Amounts of Alcohol** picture. Explain the equivalency and talk about the importance of understanding how much alcohol is being consumed if students choose to drink.
4. Ask students to brainstorm a list of the effects of alcohol. Encourage the students to think both about short-term effects of intoxication (lowered inhibitions, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, lack of coordination, memory loss, hangovers) and long-term effects (increased chance of cancer, heart disease, liver disease, weight gain, anxiety, depression, alcohol dependence/addiction, etc.).
5. Discuss as a class the reasons why some people choose to drink, and some people choose not to.

C. Decision Making Discussion

Students examine their decision-making processes and look at how the use of substances may affect decision making, specifically sexual decision making.

Discuss the following questions together as a class:

What influences people when they work through any decision-making process?

Decision making styles vary greatly from person to person. However, some common things people consider are: their personal beliefs, pros and cons of the decision, and physical, emotional and social consequences.

What do people consider when making decisions around sexual activity and sexual limits and boundaries?

It is important to weigh all the consequences and responsibilities involved with being sexually active. Some things to consider may be:

- What are my reasons for wanting to have sex? Do I feel lonely? Am I being pressured? Do I trust my partner? Do I love my partner? Do I need to love my partner to have sex with them?
- Will my moral, religious and family values be affected by my decision? Will I feel guilty or bad afterwards if I have sex?
- How will I protect myself from STIs and pregnancy, if applicable?
- Can we talk about safer sex, protecting ourselves from STIs and birth control? If birth control fails, are we ready to deal with an unintended pregnancy? Can we talk about previous relationships and STI history and testing?

Making decisions about sex involves not only values and beliefs, but also knowing who you are as a person, your wants and needs and likes and dislikes. Only you can decide when you're ready to be sexually active, there is no magic age at which you're ready.

There are many resources about addiction and substance use available from Alberta Health Services [Addiction and Mental Health](#).

How might mixing alcohol or other drugs with sexual decision making affect the decisions you make?

Youth may not necessarily make the same decision when they are intoxicated as when they're sober. They are more likely to make decisions they regret, less likely to practice safer sex and more at risk of committing a sexual assault.

Why do you think alcohol is so often associated with sexual activity in youth?

Alcohol impairs decision making abilities and decreases inhibitions. Some youth use alcohol as an excuse to have sex. They may have low self-esteem, be afraid, too shy, or embarrassed to act without alcohol. They may want to have sex, but do not know how to talk about it, or are uncomfortable with the situation and think alcohol will help.

The grade 9 Consent lesson plans go into further details about how to identify sexual assault, what to do, and where to go for help.

Other people use alcohol as a way to lower the inhibitions of a partner or potential partner – this is why alcohol is often called the 'most common date rape drug'. The media frequently portrays using alcohol in this way as an acceptable or even laudable strategy, particularly for men/boys. However, getting someone drunk enough so they cannot refuse sexual activity is sexual assault.

What are some consequences involved when alcohol or other drugs are mixed with sexual activity?

Consequences are often divided into four categories:

- Physical (e.g., pregnancy or STI due to failure to use protection)
- Social/ Relational (e.g., relationship may break up; friends would look down on you for the poor decisions you made when drunk)
- Emotional (e.g., feeling guilty, embarrassed or ashamed for making a decision that you didn't intend to make)
- Legal (e.g., sexual activity with a person too drunk to consent is sexual assault, drinking under 18 in Alberta is against the law)

D. Emerson and Bo Case Study

Students discuss the influences of substance use on sexual decision making and some of the possible consequences involved when alcohol and sexual decision making are mixed.

1. Distribute the **Emerson and Bo** handout.
2. Give students time to read the story and answer the questions on their page, in preparation for a class discussion.
3. Discuss the following information and questions as a class.
 - When a sexual assault occurs, survivors often blame themselves or the alcohol/ other drugs instead of the perpetrator. It will be important for Bo's friends to send the message that being sexually assaulted is not Bo's fault.
 - **What are things that Bo will need to hear from friends in order to help deal and cope with the sexual assault?**
 - "I believe you."
 - "I'm glad you told me."
 - "I'll help you get the help you need."
 - "I'm sorry this happened to you."
 - No matter what, sexual assault is never a survivor's fault. It's not a person's responsibility to prevent themselves from being assaulted. The only person responsible for a sexual assault is the person who commits it (perpetrator). Being drunk does not imply consent.
 - **Emerson would not have assaulted Bo if...**
 - Emerson asked Bo for consent and waited for a clear positive response.
 - Emerson stopped when Bo was no longer capable of giving or refusing consent.
 - Emerson understood that the 'absence of NO' was NOT the same thing as 'YES'.
 - **What are some things bystanders could have done in this situation?**
 - Bystanders could have encouraged Emerson and Bo to stay in a group/not go off alone.
 - Bystanders could have checked in with Bo and asked if Bo wanted to be alone with Emerson.
 - Bystanders could have encouraged Emerson to stop drinking or to go home once they were really drunk.
 - If bystanders witnessed Emerson being overly aggressive, they could have encouraged Emerson to 'back off.'
 - **What role did alcohol play?**
 - The use of alcohol impacted Emerson's ability to ask for consent and understand if consent was given.

Addressing the topic of sexual assault may cause some students to be distressed or show signs that they have been assaulted. This topic can also trouble students who have not experienced assault but were not aware such situations occurred. It is important to be sensitive to the needs of all of your students when teaching this topic.

- Emerson’s decision-making was impaired. Emerson made the choice to continue sexual activity without consent, a choice Emerson would likely not have made if sober.
- Bo’s drunkenness is not an excuse. It is not Bo’s responsibility to prevent Emerson from committing sexual assault. Unresponsiveness is a clear sign to stop all sexual activity.

E. Understanding Alcohol Kahoot! Quiz

This quiz can be a great review, wrap-up of the unit, or a fun energizer in between other activities. For more information on using Kahoot!, visit kahoot.com

1. Open the Kahoot! Quiz: [Understanding Alcohol](#)
2. As a class, answer the quiz questions and discuss the answers together. You can play the quiz in individual or team mode.
3. More information and discussion points can be found in the **Answer Key**.

F. Question Box

Answer any questions from the [question box](#) in the previous lesson. Have students submit any new questions and address them next class.

Addressing the questions at the next class allows you time to review the questions and prepare responses.

Self-Reflection

During the lesson, were:

- ground rules being followed?
- good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?

Student Assessment

During the lesson, did students:

Knowledge:

- outline the importance of learning about decision-making?
- identify how alcohol or other drugs can lead to impaired decision making?
- outline the importance of learning about drinking responsibly?
- identify ways bystanders can protect against assault involving alcohol or drugs?

Skills:

- exemplify appropriate listening and speaking skills during class discussion?

Attitudes:

- recognize their own responsibility not to perpetrate sexual assault?
- develop an appreciation that bystanders can play an active role in the prevention of sexual assault?

ANSWER KEY: Grade 9 Understanding Alcohol Quiz

Correct answers are in bold text.

1. Which has more alcohol?

- A bottle of beer (750 ml)
- A bottle of wine (750 ml)
- **A bottle of vodka (750 ml)**
- They all have the same amount of alcohol

Vodka is about 40% alcohol, beer is about 5% alcohol and wine is about 12% alcohol. So the same amount of vodka has much more alcohol than the same amount of wine or beer. Whether it is beer, wine or spirits, the basic ingredient, ethyl alcohol, is the same.

2. Which has more alcohol?

- A bottle of beer (341 ml, 5% alcohol)
- A shot of vodka (43 ml, 40% alcohol)
- **Both have the same amount of alcohol**

Whether it is beer, wine or spirits, the basic ingredient, ethyl alcohol, is the same. A 12-ounce (341 ml) bottle of beer, a five-ounce (142 ml) glass of wine or a standard shot (1.5 ounces or 43 ml) of spirits (40%) such as vodka, whiskey or rum all have the same amount of alcohol. Even though the volume is different, the percentage of each drink made of alcohol is also different, which is why those three all have the same amount of alcohol.

3. If you have been drinking alcohol,

- drinking coffee will help you sober up
- working up a sweat will help you sober up
- having a cold shower will help you sober up
- **only time will help you sober up**

Your liver eliminates alcohol at a certain rate. Caffeine, exercise, or exposure to cold will not change that rate. On average, your liver needs about 1.5 hours to eliminate one standard drink from your body.

4. Mixing energy drinks with alcohol

- **can have dangerous consequences**
- gets you drunk faster
- gets you drunk slower
- **can disguise how drunk you are**

Kahoot! Quiz Answer Key

Since energy drinks are stimulants and alcohol is a depressant, the combination of effects may be dangerous. The stimulant effects can mask how intoxicated you are and prevent you from realizing how much alcohol you have consumed. Fatigue is one of the ways the body normally tells someone that they've had enough to drink. The stimulant effect can give the person the impression they are not impaired. No matter how alert you feel, your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the same as it would be without the energy drink.

5. Drinking beer and cocktails on the same night:

- makes you get drunk faster
- **has no effect on how drunk you get**
- makes you feel more drunk than you are
- makes you feel invincible

The only thing that makes people more drunk is more alcohol. The type of alcohol in the drink, and the order in which they are consumed makes no difference.

6. It is possible to die from an alcohol overdose, just like a drug overdose.

- **True**
- False

Sometimes when a person drinks too much, they pass out. This is the body's way of protecting itself by not allowing the person to drink more. When someone drinks a lot of alcohol very quickly, they may not pass out in time and may drink enough to cause them to slip into a coma and die of an alcohol overdose.

7. If you take drugs and drink alcohol at the same time, the effect of each drug can be changed.

- **True**
- False

Some drugs will cause serious problems when used with alcohol, which is also considered a drug. Many illicit drugs, prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs can interact with alcohol, leading to increased risk of illness, injury or death.

Emerson and Bo



Emerson loved getting together with friends each weekend to PAAARRRRRTY! Unlike some of the people who attended the weekend parties, Emerson was not much of a drinker. In fact, friends often joked about how Emerson was the permanent designated driver. But the first summer party was the one where Emerson decided to “change their image”.

By midnight, it was obvious that Emerson was well on the way to being drunk. Emerson had worked up the courage to start talking to Bo, who Emerson had been crushing on for weeks. A little while later, Emerson and Bo found an empty room and started making out. Bo was even drunker than usual and seemed into it at first. Then Bo stopped talking or doing much and just laid there. Emerson removed Bo’s shirt. Bo didn’t stop Emerson or say “No”, so Emerson kept going.

Suddenly there was a loud knock at the door, and Emerson called out that the room was occupied. Soon after that, Emerson passed out in the bed next to Bo. The next morning, Emerson couldn’t really remember much of what had happened. Emerson was wondering about calling Bo, when they got a text from their friend Quinn.

Bo says you assaulted them last night. What happened???

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