

Everybody's Doing It: An Inside Look at Substance Abuse

Students will explore concepts of health and wellness. They will identify serious health issues that can be prevented or controlled through healthier choices and produce public service announcements that promote healthy living.



KSPN

Knowledge Sports Production Network



Effective Integration of Technology Into K-12 Curriculum

Everybody's Doing It: An Inside Look at Substance Abuse

Core Value: **Healthy Living and Personal Responsibility**

Students will explore topics related to substance abuse issues among teenagers. They will identify the damaging effect of substance abuse and produce public service announcements that promote *healthy living* and *personal responsibility*.

Grade Levels: 6-12

Curriculum Areas: Science, Health, English Language Arts, and Technology

Approximate Time Frame: Approximately 2 - 4 weeks¹

Introduction:

How many students in your school are using illegal drugs?

How many suffer from a substance abuse problem? Sometimes it seems like everybody is doing it, but according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse², the illicit use of drugs among teens has actually decreased in recent years. The statistics seem to suggest that the education and awareness programs have begun to impact young people making better decisions regarding drugs.



In this learning activity, students will become part of the solution as they work cooperatively to create a public service announcement (PSA). They will identify a serious issue related to substance abuse among teens. They will research this issue and develop an ad campaign designed to persuade teens to make responsible decisions regarding illegal drug use. They will evaluate their own finished PSA as well as peer-review their classmates' PSAs. Finished PSA's will be aired on KSPN.

¹ You may need to adjust this time frame to meet the needs of your students.

² <http://www.nida.nih.gov>

Standards and Learning for this Activity:

Science: <http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/nses/>

- **Content Standard F:** Students will develop an understanding of personal and community health; natural and human-induced hazards; and science and technology in local, national, and global challenges.
- **Content Standard C:** Students will develop an understanding of the interdependence of organisms.

Health: http://www.aahperd.org/aahe/pdf_files/standards.pdf

- **Standard 2:** Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- **Standard 5:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- **Standard 7:** Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

English Language Arts: <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards>

- **Standard 4:** Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
- **Standard 8:** Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Technology: <http://www.cnets.iste.org>

- **Standard 1 – Creativity and Innovation:** Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
- **Standard 2 – Communication and Collaboration:** Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

Required Materials and Resources:

Students will need access to computers with desktop publishing applications such as *Microsoft Publisher*, *Apple Pages*, or *Adobe Pagemaker*. In addition, student will need access to video-production equipment, such as:

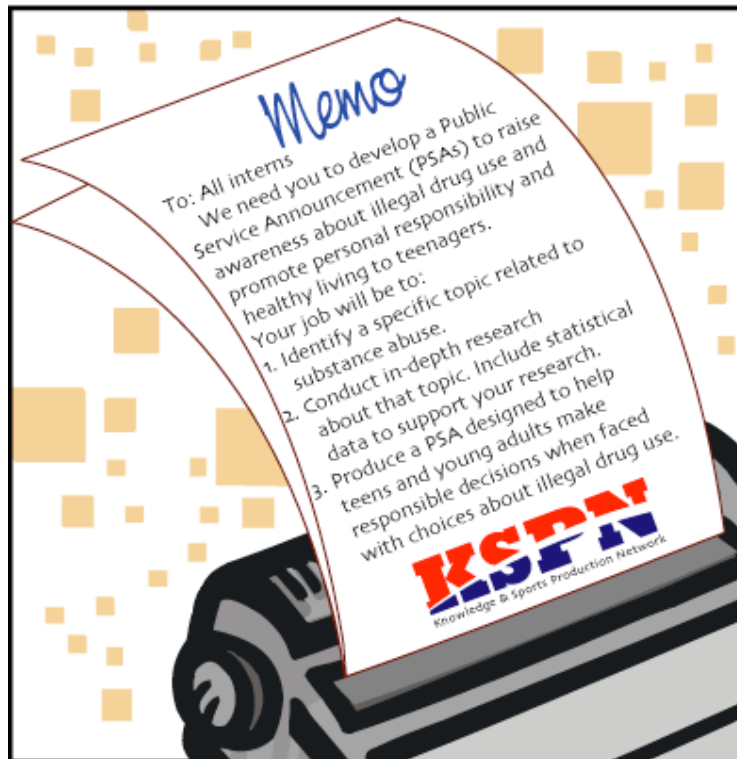
- ✓ Video and still digital cameras
- ✓ Video editing software, such as *Apple iMovie*, *Windows Movie Maker*, or *Adobe Premiere*.
- ✓ Tripod (optional)

Activity Procedure:

Introduction and Motivation

Tell your students that they have just been hired as interns by KSPN, the *Knowledge & Sports Production Network*. Their job will be to produce public service announcements (PSAs) designed to deliver critical messages to American teenagers.

Provide students with a copy of the handout for this activity:



This handout is a memo from the KSPN production team explaining the intern's next task. As a class, review the content of the memo. You do not have to go into much detail, but make sure students understand what they are being asked to do.

Begin by asking students to write a personal reflection about drug use and abuse. Ask them to consider why teenagers would use illegal drugs, knowing they are harmful. Next, divide students into pairs or groups of three to discuss what is meant by "Personal Responsibility." Ask them to consider how a PSA might help a teenager make better, more responsible decisions.



Next, discuss the concept of PSAs. Make sure your students understand that a key element of an ad campaign is to *persuade*. The best-known producer of public service announcements is the *Ad Council*.³ Your students may be familiar with many of their ad campaigns, such as “Friends don’t let friends drive drunk,” or “Take a bite out of crime.” Have students visit the *Ad Council* website to see current and historic ad campaigns. Students can also use information from this site as a resource for their own PSA.

Provide students with some time to look at various PSAs. As a class, develop a list of qualities of good PSAs. Some examples might be: informative, interesting, powerful, provocative, etc. Next, ask students to identify some techniques various PSAs use to “hook” the viewers attention. Some possible answers might include: asking provocative questions, dramatizing events, displaying shocking statistics, using music to evoke emotions, etc. Record responses from these discussion on chart paper and display in the classroom for later use.

Finally, provide students with the rubric that will be used to assess their finished work. A sample rubric is included with this activity, however, you may need to customize this rubric to meet the needs of your students.

The Background

Students will work in cooperative groups of 2 – 4 students. Each group will be assigned or will select a different topic on which to focus. Some example topics might include:

<i>Alcohol</i>	<i>Inhalants</i>
<i>Anabolic Steroids</i>	<i>Marijuana</i>
<i>Crack/Cocaine</i>	<i>MDMA (Ecstasy)</i>
<i>Hallucinogens</i>	<i>Methamphetamine</i>
<i>Heroin/Opiates</i>	<i>Prescription Drugs</i>

Have students conduct some initial research about their topic. Each group should prepare a fact sheet or brochure about their topic that:

- ✓ Describes the drug. (What does it look like, smell like, how is it taken, etc.)
- ✓ Explains the effect of the drug on the mind and body.
- ✓ Lists laws related to the drug. This should include an explanation of when, if ever, it is legal to take the drug.
- ✓ Lists other names (street names) for the drug.
- ✓ Provides statistics related to young people using/abusing this drug.
- ✓ Includes graphics demonstrating what the drug looks like in various forms.

³ <http://www.adcouncil.org/campaigns/>

Remind students, as they prepare their research for the publication, that they should be looking for a topic for their PSA.

Web Sites To Visit:

- NIDA for Teens: <http://teens.drugabuse.gov/>
- NIDA InfoFacts: <http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofacts/>
- Teen Drug Abuse: <http://www.teendrugabuse.us/>
- Check Yourself: <http://checkyourself.com/>
- Focus Adolescent Services: <http://www.focusas.com/SubstanceAbuse.html>



Each group should use the information they learned in developing their publication to help them develop their PSA. Before students begin to work on their PSAs, have a discussion about the goal of this commercial/ad campaign. Remind students that the purpose of their campaign is to persuade teens to make responsible decisions about drug use and to help teens with substance abuse problems.

As students develop their PSAs, they may need to conduct additional research about their topic. While facts and information are important, you should also remind students that their PSAs must be powerful and persuasive. They will need to “hook” their audience using more than just facts.

The Pitch

Before students begin filming, each group should “pitch” their idea. In the advertising business, a pitch is when the people who want to make a commercial verbally present their ideas to the people who pay for making the commercial.⁴ Make sure students understand that the purpose of their pitch is to persuade the KSPN (here represented by you, the teacher) to accept the idea they developed and produce the PSA.

The pitch should explain why the topic is a good choice for the PSA. The group should be persuasive and demonstrate how producing this PSA will promote health and wellness. The pitch should also provide some of the relevant data and statistics as support.

The pitch can be submitted in writing, presented orally, or published on a blog. As “Executive Producer,” make sure you determine the topic is appropriate and the approach outlined by the group can be realistically produced in the time allotted, before you “green light” (that is, approve) any group’s pitch.

⁴ To learn more about “pitching” a movie idea, visit: <http://pbltech.org/wiki/index.php?title=Pitch>.

The Theme Song [optional]

Chances are that few students in your class can name the capitals of all 50 states, but most will be able to name the ingredients to a “Big Mac.” Advertisers use jingles or songs to help make a product or concept memorable. A jingle is a catchy tune repeatedly played in advertisements. You can emphasize the impact of jingles by playing or singing some of the popular jingles from commercials and see how many your students recognize.

- Popular Jingles:*
- *You Deserve a Break Today*
(McDonald's)
 - *M'm, M'm Good* (Campbell's Soup)
 - *I Wish I Was an Oscar Meyer Wiener*
(Oscar Meyer)

Ask students to think of other jingles they remember for television or radio. Ask students to consider why advertisers use jingles. Generally, students will be able to name many different jingles and understand that these short songs help people remember a specific product or service. Discuss the characteristics that make a jingle memorable and successful. Some possible answers might include rhyming words, repeating words or sounds (alliteration), or catchy tune.

Tell students that they should create a jingle or song to go along with their PSA. *While it is important to encourage students to use their imagination as well as the facts and data they collected, it is acceptable for students to borrow or adapt familiar tunes for their own purposes. Under the “Fair Use” clause of the Copyright Act, this should be considered parody and not plagiarism.*⁵

From Conception to Production

Once students have had their topic and approach approved, they will need to develop a script and/or storyboard to layout their PSA. It will be important to place a deadline for the completion of the PSA and to stick to this deadline.

This is a wonderful opportunity to provide students with creative freedom in developing their PSA. This will give them ownership and invest them in the project's outcome. At the same time, students often have ideas that expand beyond the scope of what is possible with the available time, technology, or resources. If this should happen, try to find creative ways to adapt their ideas into something manageable, without taking away control or extending beyond the deadline.

Students will need time to edit their video and prepare it to be aired on KSPN. Also, you can have students create posters, brochures, and/or presentations to “get the word out.” Each group will present their PSA to a focus group (one or more of the other groups) and the Executive Producer (the teacher). The focus groups will evaluate the work, using the rubric, and provide feedback on the completed PSA. Each group will also submit a self-review of their process and their final product. This feedback will assist the Executive Producer in determining which segments will be broadcast on KSPN.

⁵ To learn more about “Fair Use”, visit: http://pbltech.org/wiki/index.php?title=Fair_Use

Handout: Everybody's Doing It?

Memo

To: All interns
We need you to develop a Public Service Announcement (PSAs) to raise awareness about illegal drug use and promote personal responsibility and healthy living to teenagers.

Your job will be to:

1. Identify a specific topic related to substance abuse.
2. Conduct in-depth research about that topic. Include statistical data to support your research.
3. Produce a PSA designed to help teens and young adults make responsible decisions when faced with choices about illegal drug use.

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Rubric for Everybody Is Doing It: An Inside Look at Substance Abuse

Criteria	Above Standard (4 pts)	Meeting Standard (3 pts)	Getting There (2 pts)	Not Yet (1 pt)
Content	The PSA provides in-depth information about a substance abuse concern. Facts and statistics are introduced with a sense of style that engages the viewer.	The PSA provides a good amount of information about a substance abuse concern. Facts and statistics are accurate and informative.	The PSA provides some information about a substance abuse concern. There are few facts or some information is not accurate.	The PSA provides little information about a substance abuse concern. There are no facts or most information is not accurate.
Organization	The PSA demonstrates a clear and logical story. The organization enhances the viewer's understanding of the topic.	The PSA is organized. The viewer has a clear understanding of the topic.	The PSA is somewhat unorganized. This may lead to misunderstanding or misinterpretation at times.	There is no clear or logical order to the information, which interferes with understanding.
Power of Persuasion	The PSA is powerful and persuasive. It will clearly influence viewers to make responsible decisions regarding illegal drug use.	The PSA uses persuasive techniques. Viewers understand what responsible choices they should make regarding illegal drug use.	The PSA is somewhat persuasive. Viewers may not clearly understand what decisions they should be making.	The PSA is not at all persuasive. It includes little or no persuasive language. It provides no insight to viewers.
Production	The PSA is perfectly produced with good sound and picture quality. Transitions, titles, and special effects are used tastefully. The length keeps the audience interested.	The PSA is fairly well produced with good sound and picture quality. There is appropriate use of transitions, titles, and special effects. The length is appropriate to the subject matter.	The PSA has some production problems and/or sound quality issues. Some transitions, titles, or special effects are missing or inappropriate. It is either too long or too short for the topic.	The PSA has significant production problems. Transitions, titles, or special effects are missing or interfere with the PSA. It is either too long or too short for the topic.
Collaboration and Communication	You work well with others. You assume a clear role and related responsibilities. You motivate others to do their best.	You work well with others. You take part in most decisions, share information, and contribute a fair share to the group.	You work well with others but have difficulty sharing decisions, information, and/or responsibilities. You contributed less than a fair share to the group.	You did not work with others in most situations. You did not share information and/or did not contribute to the group.
Score	18 - 20	13 - 17	8 - 12	5 - 7