



The Choice Game™

Teacher Guide

How Drugs and Alcohol Can Change Your Life





The Choice Game™

The Choice Game™ Curriculum is fun, serious fun. Because it is fun, youth like to play the game. In making their own choices they don't feel "they are being talked down to". Instead, the interactive quality of The Choice Game™ Curriculum gives youth a sense of empowerment in determining what direction their learning will take. This kind of participation optimizes learning because it's motivated by individual desire and personal interest. We think you and your students will truly enjoy The Choice Game™ Curriculum.

Focus group experiences have made abundantly clear The Choice Game's™ ability to initiate lively and meaningful discussions on the subjects it contains. Many possibilities are presented by the game; however, it's potential far outreaches the confines of classroom time, as we often experienced long after a student focus group. This gives individual teachers the opportunity to carefully select and guide what issues are most appropriate for their classes without ever worrying about exhausting the material.

More About Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory

The Choice Game™ is based on Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory, which emphasizes the importance of learners observing and internalizing the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions modeled to them. The theory can be summarized in four segments:

1. **Attention.** If our students are going to learn something, they must be paying attention to it. The Choice Game™ actors, music, and scripts make it easy for students to pay attention.
2. **Retention.** Our students must be able to retain and remember what they have paid attention to. Learning takes place when we store what we have seen modeled to us in the form of mental images or verbal descriptions.
3. **Reproduction:** Learners must translate the images or descriptions into actual behavior by internalizing what has been modeled to them. The Choice Game™ settings and situations are from the real world experiences and challenges of the youth in our focus groups; therefore, they can be easily duplicated by all students.
4. **Motivation.** Effective learning will not take place unless students are motivated to imitate the models they have observed. By engaging students in an interactive mode, The Choice Game™ inspires this motivation.



Choice Game Applications and Educational Strategies

The Choice Game™ was designed as a highly flexible instrument that has many possible applications. These range from a highly structured course meant for the classroom setting to less formal group settings and even for private individual use. For your convenience a sampling of possible applications follows, in the introduction section.

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Several Sources Foundation History	

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Other Choice Game Materials:

The Student Journal

The Journal for Youth is a youth-friendly “diary” that encourages reflection, introspection and evaluation. In it, the Substance Abuse curriculum is presented in a factual and visually appealing manner. The Journal for Youth follows the weekly game segments with student diary prompts that can be at home assignments to help students think about the subjects once they have played the game and read the Journal’s factual information. Journal assignments can be followed by discussions in the subsequent classes, which help students to focus their ideas and reflections and allows the teacher to answer any new questions on the segment.

Focus Group Students expressed much interest and satisfaction in a journal strictly for their private and personal use.

Focus Groups on the Issues

Successive chapter in the Teacher’s Guide will begin with a small sample of what the Focus Groups had to say about the issues in that segment of The Choice Game™ Curriculum.

Parent Workbook

The Parent Workbook provides parents and guardians with the information and topics that their youth consider when playing The Choice Game™. It also gives them an outline of the Student Journal.

The Parent / Guardian Workbook includes tips on communication skills specifically aimed at youth. It repeatedly encourages these adults to engage their children in conversation on these and other important subjects.

Back Stories

Each segment of The Choice Game™ includes “Back Stories” about the current issues being dealt with in the game.

These are brief interviews with the actors, musicians and others who helped in the making of the game.

In the computer version these are on the left side of the screen.

You will see examples of the Back Stories in each chapter of this guide.



The Choice Game™

Chapter 2

Drugs & Alcohol

This Weeks Objectives:

Drugs/Alcohol – Explores the responsibilities that come as young people grow older and are allowed freedoms to act in a trustworthy or an inappropriate manner when it comes to drinking, drugs and moral decision-making. The young people are allowed to decide whether they want to be in a high-risk situation or take a more conservative approach to a party without adult supervision. The consequences of their choices can be life-long.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Objectives: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How to handle verbal harassment ◆ How to handle temptation ◆ Alcohol ◆ Marijuana ◆ Cocaine ◆ Huffing ◆ Peer Pressure ◆ Parental Controls ◆ Grounding ◆ Date Rape ◆ True friends vs. users ◆ Police Intervention ◆ Death from a drunk driver ◆ Fighting ◆ Sibling role models |
|-------------|--|

The story:

In this segment of the game Adam's parents are on vacation and he has decided to have some of his friends over for an unsupervised party with beer, marijuana and other substances. As the segment begins, some friends can decide to go to the movies instead of being at the party. If the choice is made to go to the party the consequences can be as simple as a messy house with parents who ground Adam, to a possible date rape, an arrest, an accident with a resulting death and other serious consequences.

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Alcohol and Drugs: Focus on the Issues

More than five million high schoolers binge drink at least once a month; according to *Teen Tippers: America's Underage Drinking Epidemic*, a report released by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA*). The 145-page report, the result of two years of research and analysis, also found that the gender gap in alcohol consumption that for generations separated girls and boys has disappeared among younger teens: male and female ninth graders are just as likely to drink (40 percent vs. 41 percent) and to binge drink (22 percent vs. 20 percent).¹

Key Findings About Underage Drinking

Underage drinkers are a critical segment of the alcohol beverage market. Since most heavy and problem drinkers begin drinking before they reach age 21, underage drinking is key to the profitability of the alcohol industry.

- 83 percent of adults who drink had their first drink of alcohol before age 21.
- Individuals who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcohol dependent than those who begin drinking at age 21.
- The prevalence of lifetime alcohol abuse is greatest for those who begin drinking at age 14.

Teens have easy access to alcohol. Parents are too often unwitting co-conspirators who see underage drinking and occasional bingeing as a rite of passage, rather than a deadly round of Russian roulette.

- One third of sixth and ninth graders obtain alcohol from their own homes.
- Children cite other people's homes as the most common setting for drinking.



Alcohol and Drugs: Focus Group On The Issues-

Conduct your own classroom focus group on drugs. Ask your students what drugs they can identify and their impressions of drug related issues. Chances are good that alcohol will not be mentioned and very good that beer won't come up at all. Notwithstanding, ask them if beer is really a drug or not?

¹⁾ *Teen Tippers: America's Underage Drinking Epidemic*, a report from The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA), February 2002.

Drugs & Alcohol Script Flow Chart - The Beginning

Narrator -

Total Time: 19.20
(All 25 choices)

Opening: (Setup) Time: 1:07

Starts: Adam: "Come on, Denise. It's a chance to relax and enjoy yourself."

Ends: Denise: "Who's there?"
Adam: "Everybody."

Temptation, alcohol and peer pressure.

The Pro: (Girl Speaks) Time: 0:38

Starts: "A party with no supervision. Hummmm. Stop and think for one minute?"

Decision making skills evaluated, peer pressure, real-life vs wishful thinking.

The Con: (Guy Speaks) Time: 0:38

Starts: Starts: Look, you deserve a good time. Thing is ... you've had a lot of stress lately. Right?

Peer Pressure, Drinking, Drugs, Escapism, boredom vs excitement explored.

Script Flow Chart - Continued on page Drugs/Alcohol 5

The story begins with Adam's invitation to a party, where you can relax and enjoy yourself without any adults being around. How cool is that? An unsupervised party can go in many directions, and this party is no exception. Denise has the first choice, whether to accept the invite or to turn it down.

It's a FACT



Based on SAMHSA's 2003 National Survey on Drug Use & Health, 74.5 million (61%) females aged 12 or older and 30.0 million (70%) males aged 12 or older used alcohol during the past year. Also, 15.2 million (12%) females and 19.8 million (17%) males used an an illicit drug during the past year. ²

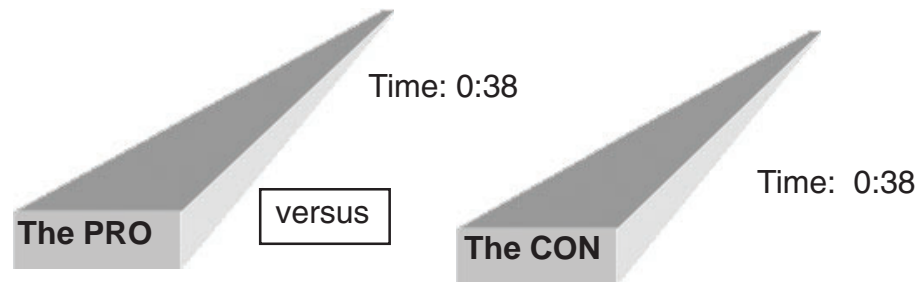


²⁾ SAMHSA, 2003 NSDUH. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Prior to 2002, this survey was called the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA).

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How common is this scenerio?

One in five young adolescents (aged 12-14) report they have been at a party in the past six months with boys and girls where there were no adults in the house, according to a 2003 survey conducted by a national organization. ³



The PRO versus The CON

An unsupervised party presents one of the most alluring temptations teens must regularly decide on. It is not an easy decision when personal friends are involved. The PRO clearly understands how easily it is to be seduced by the thought “What’s the chance something could go wrong?” and challenges teens to answer the question honestly. The CON holds no punches with the response “There’s nothing worse than being bored”. The CON’s distracting half-truths are something youth must learn to see through. There are lots of things worse than being “bored”,



Activity:

The Top 10 Reasons Why I Don’t Want Adults Around At A Party

Have your students write their top 10 list (ala David Letterman) for reasons they want to have parties without their parents around. Using this humorous ploy, conduct an expose discussion on this subject.

Student Journal

Alcohol continues its devastation as the most commonly abused drug. In the Personal Journal are some sobering facts about the “socially acceptable drug” are provocatively aimed at youth’s self image.

The “it’s harmless myth” about marijuana is challenged in this chapter.

Harmful results of drug use – like jail time, death, STDs, pregnancy, ruined dreams, reputations and hurt families – are reviewed and the individual is asked to write a news story about a friend whose life was swallowed up by their choice to do drugs.

³⁾ *Parent Power: What Parents Need to Know and Do to Help Prevent Teen Pregnancy*, a report from National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, September 2003.

Script Flow Chart - Continued from page Drugs/Alcohol 3

