

My Factors, My Resilience, and My Choices

Activity

Resource: Cannabis Education Resources

Grade(s): 9

Overview

- Students engage using the **Think-Pair-Share** strategy, an **Inside-Outside Circle**, and use videos to explore the concept of resilience and the connection between protective and risk factors, and choices related to the use of substances such as cannabis.
- This activity may be used at the beginning of a unit in order to assess students' prior knowledge, stimulate discussion, and engage students, or at the end of a unit of learning in order to support students in demonstrating their understanding of resilience, protective and risk factors, and the connections to choices related to cannabis use. It may also be used as a lead-in to the Grade 9 Cannabis Education Activity "My Influences, My Skills, and My Choices".

Curriculum Expectations

1.1, C1.3

Materials Needed

- Balloons in various sizes, shapes, and colours
- Video clips about cannabis and protective and risk factors:
 - **Online resources** available via Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research's website

- See, Think, Wonder template
- Chart paper and markers
- Exit cards

Learning Goals

We are learning about resilience, protective and risk factors, and how these can all affect a person's choices related to cannabis use.

Sample Success Criteria

- I can identify protective and risk factors.
- I can describe how these factors may affect a person's choices related to cannabis use.

Opportunities For Assessment

- During the **Minds On**, use the Think-Pair-Share strategy to assess students' prior learning about resilience.
- During the **Action**, use the See, Think, Wonder template to assess students' understanding of factors that influence individuals and their choices related to cannabis use.
- At the end of the **Consolidation**, use exit cards to assess students' understanding related to the Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

Minds-On

- Have students stand in a circle. For a larger class, consider forming two circles.
- Have 8–10 balloons for each circle, enough that it will be challenging for groups to keep all balloons in the air at once.
- Explain to students that balloons will be sent into their circle one at a time and that their task is to keep all balloons in the air without allowing any to touch the floor.

- Introduce one balloon into each circle to start the activity, adding in more balloons at approximately 30-second intervals.
- After a designated period of time, conclude the activity and ask students to discuss the following questions in their group:
 1. How difficult was it to keep up all the balloons up in the air at the end compared to just the one at the beginning?
 2. What made it difficult to manage all the balloons at once?
 3. What strategies did you use to try to keep them all in the air?
 4. How did you feel at the beginning, middle, and end of the activity?
- Ask students to think about how their group demonstrated resilience as they attempted to keep the balloons in the air.
- Have students use the Think-Pair-Share strategy to generate ideas about what it means to be resilient.
- Share a definition of resilience with the class or a statement, such as: “A person may experience difficult situations or circumstances but being resilient allows them to bounce back from these difficult situations or circumstances and continue to move forward in a positive direction”. Then have the class consider how their own thinking aligns with the definition of resilience you provided.

Action

- Share the Learning Goals with students, and have them co-construct the Success Criteria.
- Have students view learning videos, such as Cycles, that are designed to communicate ideas and messages to youth about cannabis and protective and risk factors that might influence an individual’s use of cannabis.
- Have students use a See, Think, Wonder template to identify factors that influenced individuals in the video and their choices related to cannabis use. Make sure students identify factors that led individuals to use cannabis and factors that prevented an individual from using cannabis or from abstaining from continuing to use cannabis.
- Organize students into small groups in which they share the ideas they recorded on their See, Think, Wonder template, specifically about the factors that influenced individuals and their choices related to cannabis use.

- Have the class form an Inside-Outside Circle, so that pairs all students are facing a partner.
- Explain to students that there are factors in a person’s life that help them to become more resilient, which are called “protective factors”. Protective factors help people navigate difficult situations, support them in knowing that they can overcome difficulties and barriers, and support their mental health. Provide students with a few examples of protective factors, such as having supportive family and friends, having a positive self-image, feeling connected, and having goals for the future.
- Have students think about other protective factors that help an individual manage difficult situations and overcome barriers.
- Have Inside-Outside Circle partners share their thinking, starting with the person on the inside circle.
- Have students on the outside circle rotate clockwise so everyone has a new partner to talk with, and repeat the process. Students may share their original discussions or add new ideas to the conversation.
- After the second round of sharing, have students stay in the circles as they share what they discussed about protective factors with the rest of the class.
- Record the protective factors students identified during the partner sharing.
- Explain to students that there are factors in a person’s life that can compromise a person’s resilience and ability to overcome difficulties or barriers. These are called “risk factors”. Some risk factors may also play a role in influencing use of substances such as cannabis. Provide students with a few examples of risk factors, such as feeling disconnected, family history of substance abuse, and stress.
- Have students think about other risk factors that might affect an individual’s ability to overcome difficulties or barriers and make them less resilient.
- Have students on the outside circle rotate clockwise again, so everyone has a new partner. Have partners share their thinking about risk factors, starting with the person on the inside circle.
- Have students on the outside circle rotate clockwise again, so everyone has a new partner, and repeat the process. Students may share their original discussions or add new ideas to the conversation.
- After the second round of sharing, have students share what they discussed about risk factors with the rest of the class.

- Record the risk factors students identified during the partner sharing.

Consolidation

- Review the protective and risk factors that might influence individuals and their choices related to cannabis use, by having students recall the factors they identified on their See, Think, Wonder template and during the Inside-Outside Circle.
- Explain to students that it is important to understand that every person has both protective and risk factors. Some risk factors cannot be controlled, such as genetics, but others can be changed to minimize their influence, such as a health condition that is managed well. Similarly, everyone can build their protective factors to help them manage difficulties and build their resilience.
- Have students complete an exit card by reflecting and responding to the following:
 1. Identify one protective factor that you possess that can help support your personal resilience and mental health.
 2. Identify one risk factor that you will need to manage in order to continue building your own resilience and one thing you might do to minimize the impact of this risk factor.
 3. What are some ways to strengthen your resilience?
 4. How might knowing more about your own protective and risk factors and building your resilience help you make healthy choices when dealing with situations involving cannabis?

Ideas For Extension

- Have students create an infographic to educate their peers about the relationship between risk and protective factors, resilience, and making healthy choices involving cannabis.
- Have students share their infographic by posting them in the school community or via the school's social media networks.

Notes To Teachers

Providing opportunities for students to explore concepts from multiple perspectives and through a variety of lenses enriches their learning.

- Explore cross-curricular opportunities, such as students reading literature related to youth struggling with situations involving cannabis as part of their English course.

- Encourage students to develop critical thinking and inquiry skills, including questioning, predicting, analyzing, synthesizing, identifying values and issues, and exploring alternatives to help guide their choices related to cannabis use.
- This activity focuses on cannabis education, so students should be provided with additional opportunities to investigate the connections between resilience, protective and risk factors, using other substances, and developing addictive behaviours in order to fully address the learning as articulated in curriculum expectation C1.3. This may be included as part of this activity (as suggested in the Ideas for Extension section above) or as an additional activity.