

Cannabis – Know the Facts

Activity

Resource: Cannabis Education Resources

Grade(s): 11

Overview

- Students create a **Mind Map** to examine the connections between cannabis use, addictive behaviours, and physical and mental health; identify strategies to make safe choices; and learn how to access appropriate sources of support.
- Students adopt the role of youth entrepreneurs to pitch their cannabis education campaign ideas to their local public health unit to promote youth awareness of the effects of cannabis use.
- This activity may be used as part of a unit of learning about substance use, addictions, and related behaviours.

Curriculum Expectations

1.5, C2.2, C3.3

Materials Needed

- Information about cannabis and physical and mental health, risk factors, and making safer choices about cannabis use, such as:
 - **Health Effects of Cannabis**
 - **Canadian Youth Perceptions of Cannabis**

- Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines
- Cannabis Education: What Parents/Guardians and Caregivers Need to Know
- Tracking Sheet – Assessment for Learning (page 86)
- Chart paper and markers
- Question Builder Chart

Learning Goals

- We are learning about the connections between substance use, addictive behaviours, and physical and mental health so we can make safer choices about using substances such as cannabis.
- We are learning about factors that may increase an underage person's risk of using cannabis.
- We are learning to identify sources of support that can help someone avoid or overcome abusing substances such as cannabis.
- We are learning about strategies that can be used to make safe choices in dealing with situations involving cannabis.

Sample Success Criteria

- I can describe the connections between cannabis use, addictive behaviours, and an individual's physical and mental health.
- I can describe factors that might increase an underage person's risk of using cannabis.
- I can identify sources of support to help someone deal with situations involving cannabis.
- I can describe strategies to make safe choices about cannabis use.

Opportunities For Assessment

- During the **Action**, use the information gathered on the group Mind Map to assess student learning related to the Learning Goals and Success Criteria.
- During the **Action**, use the completed student Tracking Sheet – Assessment for Learning and completed Question Builder Charts to assess students' processing and critical thinking skills.

- During the **Consolidation**, use the group pitch to assess student learning related to the Learning Goals and Success Criteria and determine further learning that may be needed.

Minds-On

- Share the Learning Goals with students and co-create the Success Criteria.
- Explain to students that they will assume the role of youth entrepreneurs and create a cannabis education campaign to promote youth awareness of issues related to use of a substance such as cannabis and pitch their campaign idea to their local public health unit. Their campaign may take the form of a website, a series of public education posters, videos or Public Service Announcements (PSAs), a social media campaign, or a series of Youth Advocate Peer Sharing sessions.
- Have students assemble into groups of 4–6.
- Present groups with their campaign challenge and task:
 - **Campaign Challenge:** The local Public Health Unit is tasked with increasing youth awareness about issues related to use of a substance such as cannabis. In their campaign, they want to focus on the following topics:
 - Factors that increase a person’s risk for using cannabis
 - Helping youth understand the connections between substance use, addictive behaviours, and physical and mental health
 - Supporting youth in making safer choices about substance use
 - Providing information on where to find sources of support to avoid or overcome substance abuse
 - **Task:** Create and submit a proposal that will highlight how your campaign idea is best positioned to support the local Public Health Unit in meeting their objective to increase youth awareness about cannabis to support local youth aged 16–18. Your proposal will focus on increasing youth understanding of the concerns related to cannabis use, supporting youth in making safer choices, and communicating how they can find sources of support. The Public Health Unit also wants to include information about positive communication between youth and their

parents/guardians and caregivers about cannabis use.

- Explain to students that before they begin to gather their information and create their campaign idea, they must first create a name that best reflects their group and establish a Code of Conduct or Design Alliance for their group in order to promote positive contributions from all group members so they are effective in achieving the desired outcome for the task.
- Examples of Code of Conduct / Design Alliance items include:
 - Respect opinions
 - Be open to all ideas
 - Adopt shared roles
 - Use effective communication such as active listening
 - Make effective use of technology
- Have groups submit their group name and Code of Conduct / Design Alliance before moving onto the next stage of the task.

Action

A. Generating Information and Ideas

- Provide groups with chart paper and markers, information about the effects of cannabis on physical and mental health such as Health Effects of Cannabis and Canadian Youth Perceptions of Cannabis, and information on strategies for safe use such as Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines and Cannabis Education: What Parents/Guardians and Caregivers Need to Know.
- Instruct groups to use the chart paper, markers, and information provided to create a Mind Map that contains all the topics that their local public health wants to focus on in their campaign and displays their information visually, making connections between topics.
- Before moving to Product Development, have each group check that they have generated sufficient content to address the needs of the local Public Health Unit (for example, risk factors, facts about cannabis, addictive behaviours, physical and mental health, strategies for making safe choices about cannabis, local sources of support, strategies for increasing parent/guardian and caregiver awareness,

and best ways to display information to appeal to their audience).

B. Campaign Development

- Explain to groups that this part of the activity will help them generate ideas for the proposed campaign and decide on the best ideas to present to the Public Health Unit to increase youth awareness of cannabis use.
- Provide each group with a tool such as Question Builder Chart to generate questions about their audience and the content they will include in their proposed campaign and to help them reach a consensus about how they will best position their ideas for the Public Health Unit website.
- Have groups generate questions such as:
 - Who is our target audience?
 - How can we make sure we have gathered sufficient information to educate our audience based on the requirements of the Public Health Unit?
 - Which information that we have gathered would be the most important to include on the website?
 - How might we best position our ideas in order to provide our audience with the information they need in an engaging manner?
 - Who can help us solve any disagreements or concerns we have about our content and ideas before we pitch them to the Public Health Unit?
- Provide all students with a recording sheet, such as the Tracking Sheet – Assessment for Learning, to help them keep track of their contribution of key ideas to the group thinking.
- Have groups discuss each question to fine tune their content focus, consolidate their ideas, and generate their final campaign proposal.

Consolidation

- Inform groups that they will present their campaign proposal to a Public Health Unit in the form of a company pitch.

- Provide groups with sufficient time to prepare a 5-minute pitch that they will use to present the campaign proposal.
- Explain to groups that their pitch must meet the following criteria:
 - Have a compelling hook to start your pitch and capture the attention of your Public Health audience
 - Clearly state what your idea is, what makes it unique, and why Public Health should select your idea (website, a series of public education posters, videos or Public Service Announcements [PSAs], a social media campaign or a series of Youth Advocate Peer Sharing sessions).
 - Include the content you believe is most important for your target audience to know
 - State how you will position the content for youth in order to compel them to fully engage in your campaign
 - State how your solution benefits the user
 - State how your solution helps the Public Health Unit meet their mandate of increasing youth awareness about cannabis use
 - State what you will ask the Public Health Unit to do at the end of the presentation to act on your ideas
- Have each group present their pitch to the class.

Ideas For Extension

- Have students create a social media post using a co-constructed hashtag that could be used to support the awareness of the public health campaign they devised.
- Have each group create a sample content page for one of the key content areas of the new website that could be put on display in the class or throughout the school to help support youth awareness of cannabis use.

Notes To Teachers

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

- Invite colleagues or local experts as guest speakers to support student learning about business proposals, entrepreneurship, or Public Health services and mandates.
- Encourage students to develop critical thinking and inquiry skills for information related to cannabis use such as asking critical questions, predicting outcomes, analyzing the effects of cannabis use on their health and well-being, synthesizing the information they have gathered in order to detect bias, examining alternatives, and formulating their own conclusions about the use of cannabis and other drugs.
- This activity focuses on cannabis education, so in order to fully address the learning as articulated in curriculum expectations C2.2 and C3.3, students should be provided with additional opportunities to investigate the connections between other substances, addictive behaviours, and an individual's physical and mental health; making safe choices; and sources of support. This additional work may be included as part of this activity or in a follow-up activity.