

# Creative Ways to Say No

*Activity*

**Resource:** Ideas for Action

**Grade(s):** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

## What Is it All About?

This role-playing activity helps participants explore refusal skills that they would feel comfortable using with their peers to respond in situations involving cannabis.

## Why Do It?

Engaging participants in role-playing scenarios opens up a dialogue about cannabis, which helps participants apply problem-solving skills, consider ways to keep themselves safe, and make healthier choices about cannabis.

## How Do We Do It?

With the help of an adult ally or expert, lead a discussion about cannabis focusing on topics that are of interest and relevant to youth.

In a group discussion, generate ideas about situations involving cannabis in which youth might find themselves.

Using the ideas generated, create scenarios (or refer to the *Sample Scenarios*-section below) involving youth and cannabis/substance use.

Divide participants into groups and give each group a scenario.

Participants first take turns in their group expressing how they would handle the situation.

Have groups then create a role-play for their scenario showing what they would do in the situation.

Have groups perform their role-plays for the class. Alternatively, groups may choose to record their role-play to show the other groups.

Follow up the role-plays with a large-group discussion in which participants can share what strategies they found to be effective and/or how they might have resolved a situation differently.

## Ideas for Use in a Variety of Settings

Use a shared document to have team members generate ideas about situations involving cannabis in which youth find themselves, and then create scenarios (or refer to the- *Sample Scenarios*-section below) to use with participants.

Post the scenarios and have team members facilitate a group discussion with participants using available technology. Consider using breakout rooms/spaces for smaller group discussions and to facilitate a large number of participants.

Have team members re-enact and record the scenarios when face-to-face, then post scenarios online to facilitate participant discussion.

## Sample Scenarios

1. You are behind the school at the end of the school day with some of your friends waiting for team practice to begin. One of your friends has a joint and wants you to try it.
2. You are at a family gathering and your cousin is using cannabis. You are curious to know what it feels like to use cannabis and ask your cousin to describe the feeling. Instead, you are offered some cannabis to try.
3. You are at a friend's house working on a school project. No one else is home. Your friend offers you something to eat that has cannabis in it.
4. You are at a friend's house working on a school project, and you notice that there is a bag on the counter with something in it that looks like cannabis. Your friend is curious and wants to try some of it.
5. You are on your way to the bathroom with some friends during a class break. They are going to vape before going back to class and want you to join them.

## What Else Do We Need?

- Scenarios
- Group facilitator(s) – volunteer student(s) or adult ally/allies

## How Do We Get Creative?

Have participants use their role-play to create more elaborate skits or as the basis to write a script for a play.

Have participants perform their skit/play for their chosen audience.

Have participants videotape their skits/plays to share with a younger audience or as part of a school assembly.