

SECTION

1

CHAPTER

3

ACTIVITY

A

ACTIVITY 3A: KEEPING IT ALL TOGETHER

Objective:

Participants will:

- Identify sources of stress in their lives.

Life Skills Learned:

- Stress Management
- Concern for Others
- Teamwork

National Health Education Standard 7:

Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Time Needed:

30 minutes

Materials Needed:

- 1 larger round balloon for each group of 3 to 5 participants
- 2-4 round 9" balloons per participant
- 2 magic markers per group
- Chalkboard/Chalk or Flipchart/Markers
- Timer or watch with second hand

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Find out if anyone in the group has a latex allergy prior to the start of this activity. If so, they may need to sit out this activity, or act as recorder.

CONNECTING TO TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Welcome to the "Century of Stress." The "Information Age" is really just a new age of anxiety for many. Younger youth have to balance school, chores, friends, family, church, music lessons, sports, and other interests that are special to them. This all has to fit into a 24-hour day. Today's younger youth are pushed to the limit with too much to do in too little time. When our lives are out of control, we feel stress and one of the ways to handle stress is tobacco, alcohol and/or drugs ... even though they will only increase stress.

DRUGS - Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

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EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1.

Review lesson highlights from the last session to reinforce what participants have learned.

STEP 2.

Have participants share some of the activities and responsibilities they have. These might include school, chores, church, sports, etc. List these on the chalkboard or flipchart. Discuss how younger youth may have lots of activities and responsibilities, plus all the new technology and information that make younger youth feel they are constantly running a race and never getting to the end.

STEP 3.

Give each participant 2 to 4 smaller balloons. Have them blow up all of the balloons and tie them closed.

STEP 4.

With a magic marker, have participants write their activities and responsibilities on the balloons. More than one activity/responsibility may be written on each balloon.

STEP 5.

Divide participants into groups of 3 to 5. Give each group a magic marker and one large balloon. On the large balloon, have each participant write the name of a tobacco, alcohol, or drug that is harmful.

STEP 6.

When participants have added the name of a tobacco, alcohol, or drug to the large balloon, set it aside. Then, have each participant select one of his or her balloons. Using one balloon per participant, have them hit the balloon with their hands and keep it in the air for 30 seconds. The group must work together to keep the balloons in the air. If a balloon hits the ground, they must pick it up and start again. Have them keep track of how many times the balloons hit the ground during the 30-second time period. Record the number for each group on the chalkboard or flipchart.

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

For larger groups, balloons can already be blown up and tied to save time. Younger youth with asthma, colds, etc. may not be able to blow up balloons, so be aware of each situation. A pump may be used to blow up the balloons. Do not use helium.

STEP 7.

After each group has completed the first 30 seconds, have them add a second balloon for each participant. Again, they will track how many times the balloons hit the ground during the 30-second time period. If the group can easily handle two balloons per participant, add a third and even a fourth balloon per participant. Keep recording the number of times balloons hit the ground during the 30-second time period.

STEP 8.

When groups have added all of the small balloons, have them add the balloon marked with the name of a tobacco, alcohol, or drug. Explain that they must keep this large balloon in the air at all costs, even if one of the other balloons starts to hit the floor. No one may hit this large balloon two times in a row AND at least 2 other people must hit this large balloon before the first person may hit it again. Have groups track how many times the smaller balloons hit the ground during the 30 seconds.

Share:

- What kinds of activities and responsibilities did you write on your balloons?
- Are some of these activities and responsibilities more important to you than others? Why or why not?
- Are some of these activities and responsibilities more important to your parents or other adults than to you? Why or why not? Which ones?

Process:

- How did you feel when one of your balloons hit the floor?
- How hard was it for your group to keep two, three, or four balloons per participant in the air?
- How hard was it to keep the large balloon marked with the name of a tobacco, alcohol, or drug in the air?
- What did you have to do differently to make sure the large balloon did not hit the floor?

Generalize & Apply:

- How can we compare our lives to keeping the activity and responsibility balloons in the air?
- How do we know when we are “too busy?”
- Have any of your friends become so busy they don’t have time to relax and do what they want? Explain.
- How can we compare the addition of the large balloon to tobacco, alcohol, or drug use?
- What effect do tobacco, alcohol and/or drugs have on other activities?
- How can the use of tobacco, alcohol and/or drugs cause stress in life?

STEP 9.

Reflection:

What is stress? What might cause stress in your life?

STEP 10.

Discuss the “Family Corner” and “Community Corner” with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to do something as a group, help them follow through.

- Family Corner:** Talk with your family about stress. Ask what causes their stress. Share the balloon activity.
- Community Corner:** Do the balloon activity with a group. It could be with adults, youth your age or even younger youth. Share what you learned.