



What's the Big Deal?

Drug sessions aged 11-16 – New Psychoactive Substances

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What's The Big Deal?

Lesson One

Introduction to New Psychoactive Substances or 'Legal Highs' – clarify what these names mean. The fact that some are illegal and emphasis that new is appropriate as they are constantly changing.

- 1) Establish learning objectives, this can be done individually on a 'what do you know, what do you want to know, what have I learned' (KWL) sheet. They can then develop these in pairs or groups to create one for the class:
 - What do you know about these substances?
 - What do you want to know?
 - Give one reason why you think a person would take them?
 - Give one reason why you think a person would choose not to take them?

The responses to these should then inform planning the second lesson (see page 3).

A given objective is being flexible to work in groups of varying sizes and to organise tasks effectively ensuring the work conducted in smaller groups contribute to the coherence of the larger group in the final presentation.

- 2) Divide the class into three groups and designate one to focus on the dealers' perspective in the film, another group to focus on the parental/adult perspective and the other group to focus on that of the users. Depending on the class, they might need to watch the film and watch it a second time to focus on the perspective of particular characters.
- 3) The class watch the film, 'What's The Big Deal?'
- 4) Gather initial reactions to the content and first impressions of the characters involved. Points for discussion may include:
 - a) The attitude of the dealers and the tactics they use
 - b) The vulnerability of the young people, particularly Martin, with no money to pay and appears to be dealing with the situation on his own

- c) Christine's mother knows about her smoking and drinking alcohol, there is potential to explore people's attitudes to tobacco and alcohol use compared to that of other substances.
- d) The issue of children as young as 10 being approached by dealers
- e) Knowing what is safe to consume, what has potential risks and how do you know?

Link this back to learning objectives, in terms of what they have learned that they wanted to know from the film? It should raise more questions for the students.

- 5) Staying in the three designated groups, but working in pairs/small groups, they are going to use the website www.strangemolecules.org.uk to do some independent research.
- 6) Use the Health section with the whole class so they all have that information.
- 7) Allocate the section on The Law to the students focusing on the dealers' perspective, the section on The Industry to the students focusing on the parental/adult perspective and the section on Harm Reduction to the students focusing on the users' perspective.
- 8) An alternative or additional resource is <http://www.solveitonline.co.uk/>
- 9) Each group design a presentation for the other two groups based on what they saw in the film combined with the class discussion and what they have found out from using the website(s).
- 10) Before the end of the lesson, students add to the KWL sheet.

Lesson Two

Introduction – revisit learning objectives, what did they learn from the film and the website www.strangemolecules.org.uk and /or www.solveitonline.co.uk/

What do they still want to know?

- 1) Students complete and prepare to do their presentations to the class.
- 2) If time allows, take feedback, questions between groups.
- 3) Students individually complete assessment sheet about the three groups of characters.
- 4) An extension/homework activity could be to design a festival safety leaflet giving information about New Psychoactive Substances.