

Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week



GETTING THE WORD OUT! DRUG AWARENESS ACTIVITY!



Suggested Grade Level: 9 to 12

Drug Awareness Activity - Activity 1

Goal: Students will create "public service" ads about the dangers associated with substance use. During the process they will learn about the negative effects of drugs, how to critically analyze an ad and how to create an effective ad promoting healthy choices.

Part 1 - Meth - Risks and Realities

Method: Have students:

- ⇒ Brainstorm and list what they think they know about specific drugs such as Meth? Both the "for sures" and "maybes"!
- ⇒ Review the *AFM The Basics* series fact sheets included in this kit.
- ⇒ Brainstorm and list additional information they would like to find out:
 - Have them research the answers using reputable sources,
 - Bring in an "expert" speaker to share facts, see *Speaker's Forum* in the Supporting Resources Section of Kit,
 - Share a video on Meth from the **Addictions Foundation of Manitoba Library**.

Part 2 - Advertising - Tools of the Trade

Method: Encourage critical thinking!

- ⇒ Identify a popular television ad, together with students brainstorm what it is about that ad that makes it so effective. Have students answer such questions as:
 - Who is communicating and why? Who's profiting from this message?
 - What is the purpose of and point of view of the message?
 - Who is the intended audience, what might be their beliefs, values and attitudes, and how are these being influenced? What is not being said and why?
- ⇒ For additional research, have each student bring in their favourite ad from a popular magazine. In groups have the class analyze what it is about these ads that make them so appealing and share the results of their analysis. By now they will have a growing list of advertising's "tools of the trade" or "glamorization appeals/promises" such as:
 - Success, popularity, romance, independence, health, happiness, good times, etc.
- ⇒ To further explore this subject, borrow and use some videos/kits from **AFM Library** that focus on advertising. These include: *Deadly Persuasion*, *Ad-libbing It* and *Media Sharp: Analyzing Tobacco and Alcohol Messages*.

Part 3 - Creating the Ad - Getting the Word Out!

Introduction: Remind students that while advertisers use these tools to create desire for a product that may or may not be needed, advertising can and has been used successfully to inform and educate people about important health and social issues such as drinking and driving, smoking, child abuse, etc. Students are being given the chance to become advocates for their schools and communities by creating their own advertisement about the dangers of Meth to our bodies, our communities and our environment.

- ⇒ Organize students into "advertising agencies", have each agency discuss and plan the:
 1. **Focus of the ad** - Physical impacts (psychosis, paranoia, brain damage, violence, etc.), personal impacts (loss of friends, family, job, future, etc.), community impacts (violent crime, disease, domestic abuse, etc.), impact on children (abuse, neglect, dangerous drug exposure, etc.), environmental impact (toxic waste, lethal gases, contamination of buildings, soil, water and air, etc.)
 2. **Target Audience** - Who do you want to reach with your ad? Who would be most interested in the focus/impact you have chosen?
 3. **Purpose of the ad** - What info do you want to share? What behaviour would you like to change? What do you want the audience to do after viewing the ad?
 4. **Medium** -
 - Print - newspaper, poster, billboard - create a layout of text and image,
 - Internet - create a layout of text and image, include animation and sound,
 - Radio - write a 30 second script and include sound effects,
 - TV Commercial - draw a storyboard (a script with pictures)

Create an ad that is informative and entertaining with a clear memorable message - share it with the school and community!