Unit 1: Living with Drugs

Unit Overview

1. History of Alcohol and Drinking around the World, David J. Hanson, PhD adapted from Hanson, David J., Preventing Alcohol Abuse: Alcohol, Culture and Control, Westport, CT: Praeger 1995

Alcohol use by humans, probably tens of thousands of years old, has both comforted and plagued almost every society. In this discussion author David Hanson describes the drug's journey through time.


What do coronary stents, anemia, and schizophrenia have in common? Read on to learn how drugs and health influence Wall Street's impact on the state of the nation's economy.


The John Dewey Academy is a drug and psychotropic medicine-free high school for talented but troubled teens. In this article, the author argues against the pervasive trend of using Ritalin to medicate young people with ADHD.


Concern about kids' health, on the roads, at school, and even online is a given. This article discusses some of today's biggest worries relative to kids and drugs.


This article discusses the legacies of Prohibition from diverse historical perspectives. Is failure the correct word to associate with this complex social process?

6. Pass the Weed, Dad, Marni Jackson, Maclean's, November 7, 2005

Parents smoking dope with their kids—what are they thinking? Marni Jackson discusses the reality of children whose parents used marijuana and the effects this has on them.


Widely publicized as the most egregious American drug scourge in South Africa, Meth, or Tik, as it is known is now being described as, "the worst thing that ever hit Cape Town."

8. Living the High Life: The Role of Drug Taking in Young People's Lives, Karenza Moore and Steven Miles, Drugs and Alcohol Today, August 2005

The vast majority of young drug users see drug use as a positive experience. Read this article and discover the views the authors hold regarding the social roles of drug use.
Unit 2: Understanding How Drugs Work—Use, Dependency, and Addiction

Unit Overview


Mistreating pain, particularly that complicated by insomnia, anxiety, and stress can lead to drug addiction. This article discusses the detailed considerations for treating a patient's pain and reducing the risk of addiction.


How does alcoholism affect the brain's ability to interpret the world around it? This article discusses new findings relative to the ways alcohol disables the brain.

11. Neuropeptide Promotes Drug-Seeking and Craving in Rats, Lori Whitten, NIDA Notes, Volume 21, Number 4, 2007

This article discusses the scientific discovery about how one important brain chemical acts to promote craving for reward sensations. Important new implications for treating addiction are discussed.


How your mind and your body respond to stress is believed to be one of the important influences on becoming addicted to drugs. This article briefly discusses some of the latest research, and provides some advice about handling stress.

Unit 3: The Major Drugs of Use and Abuse

Unit Overview


More colleges are creating programs for students who are recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. Does 'social norm' strategy reduce drinking at colleges?


While the public continues to be bombarded with information about the effects and usefulness of marijuana, author Sherman Cole attempts to clarify some of the reasons fueling these debates.


This government study summarizes the severity of the problem of prescription drug abuse by young people. What are the factors that perpetuate this?


Major Colombian traffickers, reacting to increased pressure from U.S. funded counter-narcotics efforts, have moved smuggling operations to Venezuela where corruption and anti-American sentiments provide a profitable base for control.

Unit 4: Other Trends in Drug Use

Unit Overview

17. Salvia Divinorum, an Old Psychedelic Drug with New Appeal, Shari Roan, Los Angeles Times, April 28, 2008

Anyone can buy hallucinogenic salvia online or at a local head shop. The DEA and others want to limit its use, but scientists say making it a controlled substance would hinder research. Do you agree?
18. FATAL Breaths, Sean McCollum, Scholastic Choices, January 2008

Mixed with ground up sleep aids, this heroin concoction resembles crumbled up cheese and may sell on the street for as little as two dollars a snort. This article provides a heads-up about this dangerous new recipe.


This study’s findings suggest that students enrolled in the most selective colleges have high levels of past-year stimulant abuse. What variables are contributing to this trend?


Rather than continuing to allow bad decisions made by people with alcohol-soaked brains to cause almost 40% of all U.S. traffic fatalities, representatives from MADD discuss the use of technology to eliminate driving under the influence.


The Euro has become the currency of choice for Latin American cocaine traffickers as the drugs popularity among Europeans has soared. This article describes some of the global changes in today’s illicit drug market


Fieldwork in fast developing faces of epidemiology requires wads of cash and knowledge of sewer lines. How to give the entire world a drug test?


According to Professor Bryan Liang, you can make pills for a penny, sell them for 30 cents and still undercut the legitimate manufacturer. Is this process a way for terrorists to poison a population?


Among young people, prescription drugs have become the second most abused illegal drug. This publication provides some of the most recent survey data to describe this significant new drug trend.

Unit 5: Measuring the Social Costs of Drugs

Unit Overview


The psychological effects reported by crystal meth users include hyper-sexuality, euphoria, lower sexual inhibitions, and increased self-confidence. This article discusses the relationships between meth, sex, and HIV in the gay community.


Nearly 89 percent of juvenile arrests involve children and teens who are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. This article includes some discussion of the variables that influence this.

27. How Do Club Drugs Impact HIV Prevention?, Mike Pendo and Pamela DeCarlo, A publication of the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies and the AIDS Research Institute, University of California San Francisco, July 2004

This article discusses the popular use of club drugs and their relationship to partying, sex, and HIV transmission. What’s being done to mitigate this problem?

28. The Problem with Drinking, Cheryl Harris Sharman, Perspectives in Health, vol. 10, no. 1, 2005

The abuse of alcohol is an international issue. The wider problem of alcohol in the Americas is discussed in this article. Is this a good example of a world-wide epidemic of alcohol abuse?

Unit 6: Creating and Sustaining Effective Drug Control
Policy

Unit Overview


Authors Jonathan Caulkins and Peter Reuter argue that the nature and extent of the illegal drug problems in the United States have changed during the past two decades, and that *U.S. drug policy needs to adjust to these changes*. Do you agree?


*What's the difference between drug legalization and drug decriminalization?* What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Authors Sullum and Stimson discuss the pros and cons of each.


According to the author, *Americans have learned to stop worrying and love workplace drug testing*. Do you agree?

32. Methamphetamine Precursor Regulation: Are We Controlling or Diverting the Drug Problem? Rebecca McKetin, *Addiction*, April 2008

*One of the primary strategies to control methamphetamine* production has been to initiate a global effort to tightly regulate precursor chemicals. Author McKetin argues that this may not work.


Although cannabis has been used as a therapeutic agent throughout history, it has never been submitted to the FDA for approval. *Would it pass the test?*


As methamphetamine abuse spreads across the country exceeding even crack epidemic proportions, many in government say that federal *government officials have had* their heads in the sand. This is a proposal of some new legislation.


While traditional undercover enforcement tactics may be successful in areas with large populations, small communities often find them impractical. In terms of drug policy, *how do the police define their roles when everyone knows everyone?* Is this right?

Unit 7: Prevention, Treatment, and Education

Unit Overview


Author Joseph Califano argues that the price for parental pessimism and *ambivalence toward drugs* is high. This discussion centers on the importance of talking to kids about drugs.


It has long been recognized in the physical education community that physical *exercise can play a major role in detoxification and rehabilitation*. This article describes a British correctional program proving successful in helping prisoners recover from drug abuse.


*One of the most enduring relationships* is the one between mental illness, drug abuse, and criminal conduct. This article discusses what some jurisdictions are doing to assist young offenders who are dually diagnosed.


The recent flurry of findings on *marijuana's health risks may have baby boomers* wondering, "How can that be?" Marijuana is in the news and parents should be paying attention.

It has long been recognized in the physical education community that physical exercise can play a major role in detoxification and rehabilitation. This article describes a British correctional program proving successful in helping prisoners recover from drug abuse.


Harvey Shrum asserts that America has become so focused on prisons as the answer to social ills that, today, one in thirty-seven Americans is or has been incarcerated. Over eighty percent of those incarcerated committed their offense while under the influence of drugs. This article discusses two new ways to prevent drug-related recidivism.

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