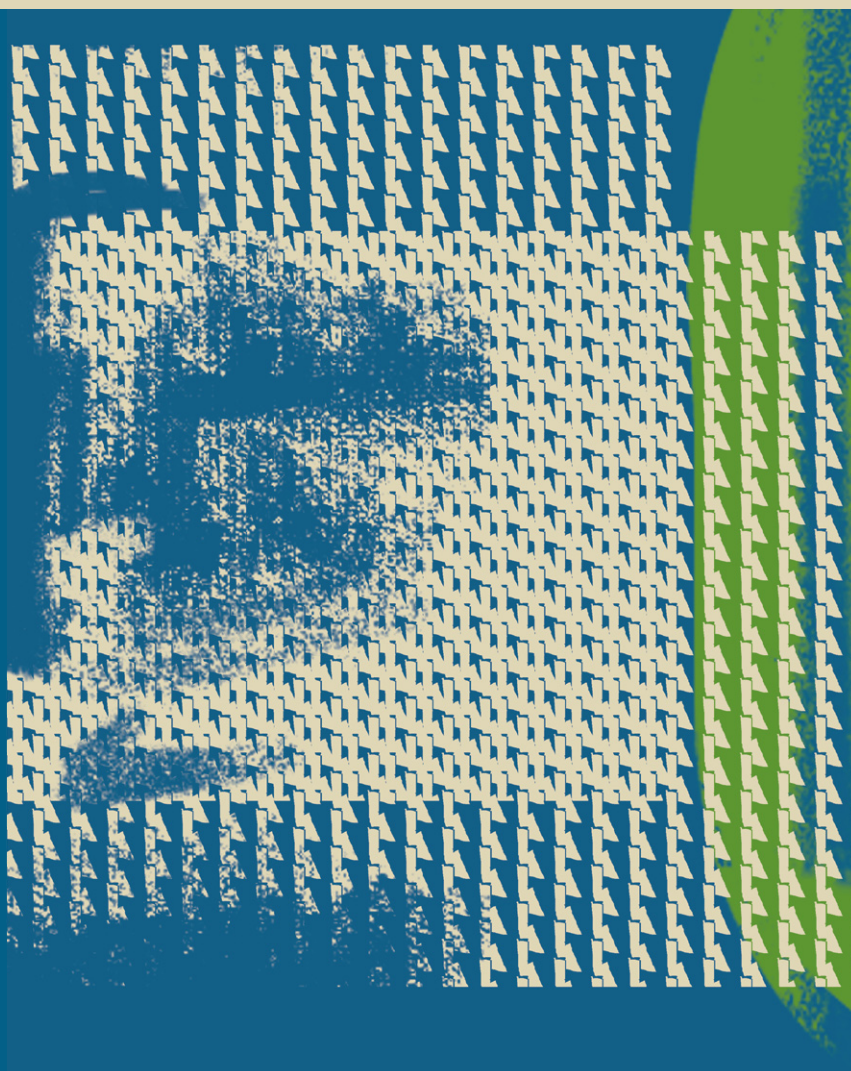


MAKING the LINK

Promoting **HELPSEEKING** for Cannabis Use & Mental Health



This program has been developed by Orygen Youth Health for the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC).

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A national reference group provided invaluable advice regarding the development and dissemination of the project.

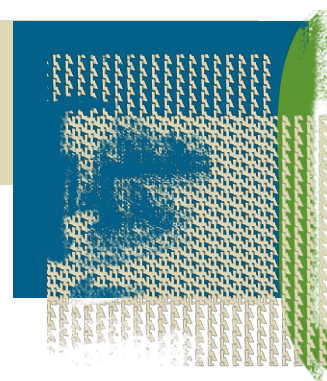
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Mates Help Mates DVD, written by Bonnie Berridge, produced by Orygen Youth Health Design and Digital Media.

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Teacher Manual and Classroom Activities

for Secondary Students

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Background Information

What is **MAKINGtheLINK**?

Orygen Youth Health, in collaboration with NCPIC, has developed a curriculum-based program for schools to promote helpseeking for cannabis use and mental health problems, called **MAKINGtheLINK**.

By seeking help early, young people are less likely to develop long term consequences as a result of mental health and substance use issues. However, research indicates young people are reluctant to seek professional help and tend to keep their problems to themselves or turn to their friends, parents or teachers for support – people who often don't know what to do.

Why aren't young people seeking help?

It is not uncommon for young people to believe that they should be able to sort out their problems on their own, or be too embarrassed to talk to someone about their problems.

They are also worried about the confidentiality of information they give a professional. Existing school resources do not teach students how to overcome these barriers to helpseeking nor do they focus on improving helpseeking skills for substance use and mental health.

Young people need to believe that the benefits of seeking help outweigh the fears they have about seeking help from a professional.

“Australian principals believe one in five students need mental health support and rated alcohol and drug abuse as having the biggest impact on the psychological wellbeing of young people” (Intercamhs survey, 2008)

- **MAKINGtheLINK teaches young people to help each other to seek professional help.**
- **It promotes the idea that 'Mates Help Mates'.**
- **It reduces the barriers to seeking help from professionals.**
- **It also educates teachers about how to assist their students to access professional help for cannabis use and mental health problems.**

How was MAKINGtheLINK developed?

The development of **MAKINGtheLINK** was informed by the scientific literature on barriers to helpseeking among young people and the real life experiences of teachers, school psychologists, mental health and substance use specialists working with young people with these issues.

The Project Team, which comprised former teachers, a school psychologist, an addiction psychiatrist specialising in youth, and a clinical psychologist specialising in co-occurring mental health and drug use problems, met regularly to monitor progress and ensure best practice of program development for schools. The National Reference Group, made up of education, helpseeking, substance use and mental health experts from across Australia, was consulted throughout the development of **MAKINGtheLINK**. Their role was to share information and provide advice on the development and dissemination of the program and recommend structures and strategies to maximise uptake in schools.

MAKINGtheLINK was specifically developed for teachers to facilitate the Student Helpseeking Program as part of the curriculum. The authors of **MAKINGtheLINK** subscribe to the view that teachers are the best resource in the classroom. Hence, the Teacher Manual and classroom

activities were developed in consultation with teachers, education experts and young people. Multiple teaching strategies are utilised in the program to meet the needs of different learning styles and abilities of students. The activities are interactive, engaging and provide many opportunities for discussion.

The classroom materials and DVD script were developed and focus tested with young people. The classroom materials were amended to ensure students found the activities meaningful and relevant and understood the key messages related to helpseeking.

The *Mates Help Mates* DVD was especially well received by students and in fact, surveys revealed it was one of the most useful activities in the program.

“It [the DVD] showed how you should approach a friend and what you can say to help. And they were our age so it was like watching someone in our school”. – Year 10 student

The Student Helpseeking Program includes the Teacher Manual, classroom activities and the *Mates Help Mates* DVD. The activities draw on various teaching and learning strategies to engage students. Alternative and extension options are provided for each activity in order for the teacher to cater to student and group needs and levels.



The authors of **MAKINGtheLINK** subscribe to the view that teachers are the best resource in the classroom.



MAKINGtheLINK Program Components

1

Implementation Guide –

describes the development of the program and outlines a general set of principles to consider when implementing **MAKINGtheLINK** in your classroom or across the whole school

2

Staff Professional Development Information Session –

explores helpseeking in young people, promotes helpseeking in schools and explains the Student Helpseeking Program

3

Parent Information Session –

explores helpseeking in young people and explains the Student Helpseeking Program

4

Student Helpseeking Program for senior secondary students which has four resources:

A

Teacher Manual – provides the teacher with relevant background information and instructions to facilitate the activities

B

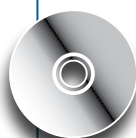
Classroom activities – six activities in total

C

Mates Help Mates DVD:
An interactive resource modelling how to facilitate helpseeking in peers

D

Information flier and program poster



The classroom activities cover:

Recognising when a friend needs help; what types of helpers are available; professional confidentiality; myths and facts about cannabis; barriers to raising concerns with a friend; barriers to professional helpseeking; assisting a friend to access professional help and accessing reliable helpseeking websites.

Each activity has background information, aims, instructions, and extension and alternative options.



Summary of Classroom Activities

The six classroom activities can stand alone as individual activities, although if all activities are going to be used, it is recommended they be delivered in the order presented below. Teachers can insert any **MAKINGtheLINK** activities they choose to enrich or extend their current programs.

Refer to the Implementation Guide for more information.

Activity 1 – Ranking Situations

- Task:** Students rank problem situations of young people according to how concerned they are and who they think needs help.
- Strategy:** Think, Pair, Share
- Alternative:** Whole-class discussion
- Extension:** Students write their own situations and rank them.
- Aims:** To enable students to explore their values and attitudes with respect to their friends' emerging problems.

On Sunday your friend had a few bongos and then drank a few beers and ended up vomiting on his lounge room floor.

Activity 2 – Myth or Fact?

- Task:** Students decide between myth and fact to learn about the detrimental effects of cannabis use.
- Strategy:** Whole-class
- Alternative:** Small group activity
- Extension:** Students write their own list of questions about the effects of cannabis based on information they find on the NCPIC website.
- Aims:** To improve students' understanding of the negative impact of cannabis use on mental health and daily functioning.

4: Myth? Fact? Unsure?
Using cannabis can make a person's mental illness worse.

Activity 3 – The Hot Seat

- Task:** Students take on the roles of 'for' and 'against' helping a friend in need.
- Strategy:** Role play
- Alternative:** Debate
- Extension:** Students brainstorm their own responses for the 'for' and 'against' arguments.
- Aims:** To explore when and why you would help a friend who has a mental health and/or substance use issue.



Summary of Classroom Activities continued...

Activity 4 – Helpers

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Task: | Students learn about different types of helpers and decide which helper the young person in the story should seek help from. |
| Strategy: | Whole-class discussion and role play |
| Alternative: | Small group activity |
| Extension: | Students compare helper choices depending on their knowledge of which helpers are bound by professional confidentiality. |
| Aims: | Identifying different types of help available, and overcoming barriers that stop young people from seeking professional help. |

Parent

Doctor

Sibling

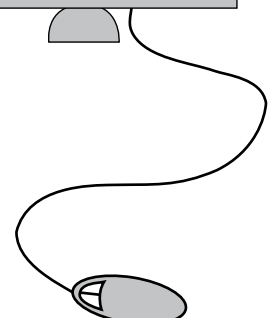
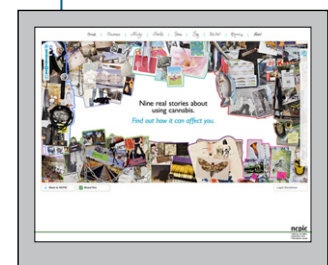
Activity 5 – Mates Help Mates

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Task: | Students watch the clips and discuss which approach is most helpful in talking to a friend about their concerns and assisting them to seek professional help. |
| Strategy: | DVD and whole-class discussion |
| Alternative: | Role play |
| Extension: | Students write their own scripts encouraging a friend to seek professional help. |
| Aims: | Overcoming barriers to helping a friend and seeking professional help for a mental health and/or substance use issue. |



Activity 6 – Web Quest

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Task: | Students are required to explore the <i>headspace</i> and NCPIC websites and answer questions relating to stories about helpseeking and young people. |
| Strategy: | ICT activity |
| Alternative: | Homework activity |
| Extension: | In small groups, students present information from <i>headspace</i> factsheets to the rest of the class. |
| Aims: | To introduce students to useful and reliable helpseeking sites for cannabis and/or mental health problems. |





The Principles for School Drug Education

Although **MAKINGtheLINK** is a helpseeking program, any classroom activities and discussions involving alcohol and other drug use should be conducted while being mindful of the following principles for school drug education.

These principles provide a broad conceptual tool to inform the planning, implementation and review of school drug education programs, policies and practices. The principles are intended to convey the essence of what is currently understood as effective school practice, without prescribing a specific set of actions or procedures within a school.

The specifics of effective practice are dependent upon the local context and needs and the principles have been developed so they can be interpreted at this level.

1

Comprehensive and evidence-based practice:

focuses on the evidence available to inform school-based approaches to drug education, particularly a harm minimisation approach.

Choose a teacher who is enthusiastic about the program, feels comfortable talking about mental health and substance use issues with young people, and is familiar with school policy and procedure around intervention.

2

Positive school climate and relationships:

highlights the importance of positive school environments and relationships as a supportive context within which to conduct school drug education.

Most secondary school students will have experienced some form of drug education while in years 7 to 10. They may or may not have learned about helpseeking for substance use issues.

3

Targeted to needs and context:

highlights the importance of schools identifying and responding to the developmental stage of the student and to local community needs.

The **MAKINGtheLINK** Student Helpseeking Program is aimed at Years 10, 11 and 12 and builds on or provides extension to what they may have already learned in health, drug education or a pastoral care program.

It empowers young people to seek professional help and also assist each other to seek help for substance use and mental health problems.

4

Effective pedagogy:

identifies the importance of delivering drug education programs and activities within a curriculum framework and ensuring use of appropriate learning and teaching strategies.

For more information refer to:

Principles for School Drug Education, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (2004).



Sample: Curriculum Assessment Criteria

Assessment Task Criteria using the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS):

These criteria relate to the activities presented in the **MAKINGtheLINK** Program. Teachers and students can use this rubric to assess the levels of understanding shown in each activity. While specific assessment tasks are not presented as part of this program, student participation and discussion can support assessment in these VELS standards which can easily be applied to standards used in other Australian states. Teachers can also use this rubric to develop more formalised assessment tasks for students.

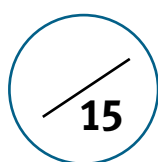
The strands, domains, dimensions and standards are shown in the table below:

| Strand | Domains | Dimensions | Standards |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Physical, Personal and Social Learning | Health and Physical Education | Health knowledge and promotion | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Compare perceptions of risk and safety.Identify health services and products provided by government and non-government bodies and analyse how these can be used to support the health needs of young people. |
| | Interpersonal learning | Building social relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students evaluate their own behaviour in relationships. |

Teachers can add to the table if extensions to the program are developed within a school's curriculum framework.

See Assessment Criteria Table on following page.

Score:



Comments: _____

Teacher's signature: _____ Date: _____

| | Very High (5 marks) | High (4 marks) | Medium (3 marks) | Low (2 marks) | Very Low (1 marks) |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Criterion 1 Compares perceptions of risk and safety within drug taking behaviours. | Is able to demonstrate links between the outcomes of drug use with risk-taking behaviours and behaviours of concern and discuss how these might impact on a young person. | Is able to demonstrate links between the outcomes of drug use with risk-taking behaviours and behaviours of concern and present reasons for their choices. | Is able to demonstrate links between the outcomes of drug use with risk-taking behaviours and behaviours of concern and present reasons for their choices. | Is able to draw some links between the outcomes of drug use with risk-taking behaviours and behaviours of concern and present reasons for their choices. | Draws minimal links between the outcomes of drug use with risk-taking behaviours and behaviours of concern. |
| Criterion 2 Students evaluate their own behaviour in relationships. | Students are able to identify a wide range of barriers to and benefits of helpseeking behaviour around alcohol and drug use and use them to make decisions about helpseeking in their own relationships. | Students are able to identify a range of barriers to and benefits of helpseeking behaviour around alcohol and drug use and use them to make decisions about helpseeking in their own relationships. | Students are able to identify some barriers to and benefits of helpseeking behaviour around alcohol and drug use. They begin to relate these to making decisions about helpseeking in their own relationships. | Students identify some barriers to and benefits of helpseeking behaviour around alcohol and drug use. They understand that these can support them to make decisions about helpseeking in their own relationships. | Students identify minimal barriers to and benefits of helpseeking behaviour around alcohol and drug use. They understand that these can support them to make decisions about helpseeking in their own relationships. |
| Criterion 3 Identify alcohol and drug and mental health services provided by government and non-government bodies and discuss how these can be used to support the health needs of young people. | Students are able to identify a wide range of professionals and non-professionals who can be accessed when helpseeking around alcohol and drug use. They clearly understand each person's role and know who is bound by professional confidentiality. They can present reasons for why they would choose a particular person to seek help from. Students can identify online support services. | Students are able to identify a range of professionals and non-professionals who can be accessed when helpseeking around alcohol and drug use. They understand each person's role and generally know who is bound by professional confidentiality. They can present reasons for why they would choose a particular person to seek help from. Students can identify online support services. | Students are able to identify some professionals and non-professionals who can be accessed when helpseeking around alcohol and drug use. They have some understanding about each person's role and professional confidentiality. They can present some reasons for why they would choose a particular person to seek help from. They know that online help services are available. | Students are able to identify some professionals and non-professionals who can be accessed when helpseeking around alcohol and drug use. They have some understanding about who is bound by professional confidentiality. They can present limited reasons for why they would choose a particular person to seek help from. They know that online help services are available. | Students identify a limited group of professionals and non-professionals who can be accessed when helpseeking around alcohol and drug use. They have minimal understanding of professional confidentiality. They are unclear about reasons for choosing someone to seek help from. They know that online help services are available. |



Activity 1: Ranking Situations

Background:

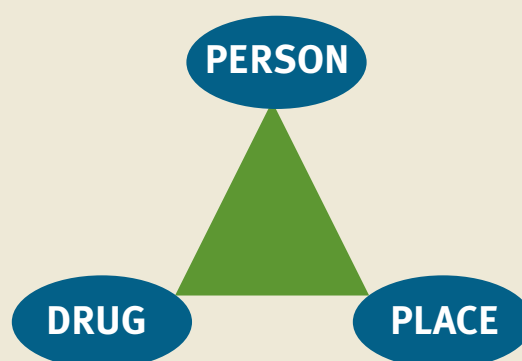
The following situations describe a young person whose mood or behaviour has changed lately. Some of these changes may be the beginning of a mental health problem. Most of the situations involve drug use in various environments.

Using the **THINK, PAIR, SHARE** strategy, students are asked to imagine the people in the situations are their friends, think about how concerned they would be about them and whether the person needs professional help.

Students will then need to rank the 'friends' in their small group, from the one who needs help the least up to who they think needs help the *most*.

Alcohol and other drugs affect people in very different ways, depending on the drug they use, the characteristics of the drug user and also the environment or place where the drug is used.

Figure 1: Person, place, drug interaction



Aim:

To enable students to explore their own personal values and attitudes with respect to their friends' emerging problems and whether their friend needs help

Resources:

- Large or small Situation Cards.
5 green (dots border) for half the class and 5 blue (line border) for half the class. *The number of envelopes depends on the class size.*
- Twenty situations are provided for you to choose those which are most relevant for your students.

Duration: Allow 25 minutes

**“I enjoyed the program.
I found it worth doing
and I learnt from it.”**

– Year 10 student

Teacher Tip:

Be aware that discussions about substance use and mental health can be sensitive issues for some young people.

Ranking Situations continued...

Instructions:

- Explain to students that this activity requires them to think about how concerned they would be if they had a friend experiencing these problems which involve substance use, changes in behaviour or the beginnings of mental health problems and whether they think the person needs help.
They will then rank the situations depending on their level of concern/need for help.
- Explain the ranking continuum; 1 at the bottom = least concerning/doesn't need help and 10 at the top = most concerning/needs help now!

THINK

Take out a situation from an envelope and read it out to the class. Ask students how concerned they would be about the person in this situation (Level 1 –10) and ask them why. Continue demonstrating until students have grasped the task.

PAIR

Ask students to find a partner and give each pair 5 situations to rank, either blue (line border) or green (dot border) on their desks.

SHARE

Ask each blue pair to find a green pair and rank the 10 situations as a group, either on their desks or on the wall using a suitable adhesive.

Alternative:

Instead of asking students to place the situations on their tables, ask them to place themselves on a continuum in front of the class, depending on where they think their situation belongs.

Extension:

Ask students to develop their own stories about young people using the Person, Place, Drug triangle (*Figure 1*), cut them out and ask a partner to rank them. The stories should be imaginary, not real.

“[This activity was useful] because you see many different types of problems and you get a bigger idea of the effects of cannabis.”

– Year 10 student

- Explain to the students that the value of this activity lies in the discussion that happens along the way and not how the situations are ranked.
- As a whole class, compare the situations students were least and most concerned about in each group.
- Conclude by saying that there may be differing levels of concern about young people who use drugs or have mental health problems, dependent on a range of factors. If they have a friend they are concerned about they should consider what is going on for that person and think about whether their friend needs help and what kind of help they might need.

Situations for ranking activity



Your friend hardly talks to you or anyone anymore. He doesn't return your calls or emails and every time you see him he is alone and looks miserable.

Your friend prefers to drink or smoke bongs at home rather than go out with friends.

Your friend has been smoking cannabis for a few months now. She seems much more on edge than she used to be and is always worrying about everything.

For the past few weeks your friend hasn't been able to concentrate in class and has started forgetting things. She even forgot to bring her text book for an open book exam.

Your mate used to be easy going but now he's really grumpy and snappy and you don't like hanging around with him anymore.

Your friend goes out every Saturday night and has more than 5 alcoholic drinks.

Your friend used to put in a big effort looking nice for school and parties, but now she doesn't seem to care what she wears or looks like.

Your mate told you he smokes cannabis in his bedroom every morning before school.

Your mate was picked up by police on the weekend for being drunk and vandalising a street sign.

Your friend is struggling to keep up in class. She keeps asking you to help her. You think she has learning problems.

Situations for ranking activity



Sometimes your mate smokes cannabis on the school oval at lunchtime. For the past few weeks he hasn't come to class after lunch because he doesn't want the teachers to find out he's stoned.

When your friend gets drunk she sends stupid text messages to people. She always regrets it the next day but then she keeps doing it.

On Sunday your friend had a few bongs and then drank a few beers and ended up vomiting on his lounge room floor.

On the weekend, your friend tried smoking cannabis for the first time. She said she might try it again.

Your friend is away from school a lot and says it is because she has a bad headache. Every time you see her she seems really on edge.

Your mate cheated on her boyfriend on the weekend when she was drunk and now she feels really bad.

Your mate has told you he smokes bongs because he can't cope with life.

Your mate takes crazy risks when he's stoned. Last weekend he jumped in front of a car to see if the driver would stop. Lucky for him they did.

Your mate has become really aggressive and yesterday at sports training he punched another guy in the face.

Your friend hardly ever comes to work anymore and you think he might lose his job soon.



Your friend hardly talks to you or anyone anymore. He doesn't return your calls or emails and every time you see him he is alone and looks miserable.

Your friend has been smoking cannabis for a few months now. She seems much more on edge than she used to be and is always worrying about everything.



Your mate used to be easy going but now he's really grumpy and snappy and you don't like hanging around with him anymore.

Your friend used to put in a big effort looking nice for school and parties, but now she doesn't seem to care what she wears or looks like.



Your mate was picked up by police on the weekend for being drunk and vandalising a street sign.

Your friend prefers to drink or smoke bongos at home rather than go out with friends.



For the past few weeks your friend hasn't been able to concentrate in class and has started forgetting things. She even forgot to bring her text book for an open book exam.

Your friend goes out every Saturday night and has more than 5 alcoholic drinks.



**Your mate told you he
smokes cannabis in his
bedroom every morning
before school.**

**Your friend is struggling to
keep up in class. She keeps
asking you to help her.
You think she has learning
problems.**



Sometimes your mate smokes cannabis on the school oval at lunchtime. For the past few weeks he hasn't come to class after lunch because he doesn't want the teachers to find out he's stoned.

On Sunday your friend had a few bongs and then drank a few beers and ended up vomiting on his lounge room floor.



Your friend is away from school a lot and says it is because she has a bad headache. Every time you see her she seems really on edge.

Your mate has told you he smokes bonges because he can't cope with life.



Your mate has become really aggressive and yesterday at sports training he punched another guy in the face.

When your friend gets drunk she sends stupid text messages to people. She always regrets it the next day but then she keeps doing it.



On the weekend, your friend tried smoking cannabis for the first time. She said she might try it again.

Your mate cheated on her boyfriend on the weekend when she was drunk and now she feels really bad.



Your mate takes crazy risks when he's stoned. Last weekend he jumped in front of a car to see if the driver would stop. Lucky for him they did.

Your friend hardly ever comes to work anymore and you think he might lose his job soon.



Activity 2: Myth or Fact?

Background:

Cannabis is the most widely used illicit drug by Australian secondary school students. The latest research informs us that cannabis use is a risk factor for the development of mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety or psychosis.

We also know that the more cannabis a young person is exposed to, the greater the risk is for developing mental disorders. While this risk is evident for young people with no history of mental health issues in their families, the risk increases further for those who do.

This activity teaches students about the mental health risks of using cannabis as well as other detrimental effects, such as impairing driving ability, decreasing sex drive and school performance.

Teacher Tip:

What is psychosis?

Psychosis involves changes in thinking, perception, behaviour and emotion. When people experience psychotic symptoms, they lose contact with reality. Symptoms include:

- Paranoia, odd beliefs and ideas (delusions)
- Unusual or weird perceptual experiences (hallucinations) such as seeing or hearing things that are not there
- Difficulty organising thoughts (thought disorder).
- Irritability and agitation

Aim:

- To improve students' understanding of the negative impact of cannabis use on mental health and daily functioning

Resources:

- Ten cannabis statements, choose which statements you want to use
- Myth, Fact and Unsure cards on A4

Duration: Allow 25 minutes

Instructions:

- This activity examines the effect that cannabis can have on mental health and the user's life in general.
- Stick the Myth, Fact and Unsure cards on the wall around the room
- Read a cannabis statement aloud to the class and ask students to stand near the 'Myth', 'Fact' or 'Unsure' card to indicate whether they believe the statement is true, untrue or they are not sure.
- Ask some students to explain their answer to the rest of the class.

- State the 'Fact' and count how many students responded correctly. Ask a student to tally the score on the whiteboard.
- Read aloud another cannabis statement.
- To conclude, ask students which facts about the effects of cannabis they found most interesting or surprising.

Alternative:

Ask students to form small groups and give each group a set of 10 statements and a 'Myth', 'Fact' and 'Unsure' card. Instruct the groups to discuss each statement and whether they think it is a myth or fact, or they don't know and sort the questions accordingly

Extension:

Ask students to search the NCPI website, www.ncpic.org.au, and write a list of questions about the effects of cannabis based on information they find on the website. In small groups, ask students to go through their questions to see how many in their group know the answers.

Myth or Fact Cannabis Statements & Answers

1: Using cannabis can make it harder for you to concentrate and remember things

Fact. If you start using cannabis early and keep on using, then your memory, attention span and your ability to think clearly can be affected, making it difficult to concentrate and learn new things.

2: Young people are less at risk of developing mental health problems from using cannabis than older people.

Myth. People who start using cannabis when they're young, especially if they use it a lot, are *more likely* to develop mental health problems. Young people's brains are still developing (until age 25) so they are more at risk of being damaged by using cannabis and other drugs.

3: Cannabis use is linked to anxiety and depression.

Fact. Cannabis use has been linked to a range of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety and psychosis. Psychosis is a term to describe a loss of contact with reality.

4: Using cannabis can make a person's mental illness worse.

Fact. If someone has a mental illness, using cannabis can make their symptoms worse. However, anyone who uses cannabis is at greater risk of developing a mental health problem whether they have a mental illness or not.

5: Using cannabis affects how well you do at school

Fact. Students who start using cannabis early usually have more days off school, get worse grades and leave school earlier than their classmates who don't use cannabis.

6: You cannot become addicted or dependent on cannabis

Myth. A lot of people find it very hard to stop using cannabis which means that they are dependent. When they try and quit they might get withdrawal symptoms like irritability, sleeping problems, anxiety, nausea, sweatiness and feeling depressed.

7: It is safe to drive if you have used cannabis.

Myth. Apart from being illegal, driving under the influence of cannabis increases the risk of a car accident 2 to 3 times. Also, if cannabis is used together with alcohol, it is even more dangerous.

8: Using cannabis increases your interest in sex

Myth. Many people who have used cannabis for a long time report a *lower interest* in sex. For males, using cannabis can affect sperm production as well as making it harder for them to get an erection. For some females, using cannabis can make their periods irregular.

9: Using cannabis gives you more energy.

Myth. A lot of people who use cannabis say they have *less energy* and motivation than people who don't use, and their performance at work or school suffers. When they stop using cannabis their energy and motivation usually return.

10: Young people who use cannabis are more likely to have behaviour and social problems than those who don't use.

Fact. People who use cannabis from a young age are more likely to have behaviour and social problems than people who don't use. They are also more likely to leave home earlier and get involved in crime.



Cannabis Statement Cards for Alternative Activity

1: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Using cannabis can make it harder for you to concentrate and remember things.

2: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Young people less at risk of developing mental health problems from using cannabis than older people.

3: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Cannabis use is linked to anxiety and depression.

4: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Using cannabis can make a person's mental illness worse.

5: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Using cannabis affects how well you do at school.

6: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

You cannot become addicted or dependent on cannabis.

7: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

It is safe to drive if you have used cannabis.

8: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Using cannabis increases your interest in sex.

9: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Using cannabis gives you more energy.

10: Myth? Fact? Unsure?

Young people who use cannabis are more likely to have behaviour and social problems than those who don't use.

Myth?

For a full

Unsure?



Activity 3: The Hot Seat

Background:

We know that young people talk to each other about their problems rather than seek help from a professional. For a young person, knowing what to say when their friend turns to them for support can be very difficult. Suggesting that their friend may need to think about getting professional help can be even more challenging. Young people may not want to facilitate helpseeking for their friends for a number of reasons, such as:

- **They believe it is none of their business**
- **They believe it is not their responsibility**
- **They fear risking the friendship or their friend will get angry with them**
- **Their friend isn't acknowledging their problem**
- **They are unsure what to say or who can help**
- **They believe that if they raise the issue it could make the situation worse**
- **They are consumed by their own problems**
- **They believe that if their friend wanted help they would ask for it**

In order to overcome these barriers we need to provide opportunities for young people to explore them with each other in order for them to work out what being a good friend means, how their friends want to be helped, when to tell an adult, and whether it may be worth the risk of their friend getting angry with them. If we want young people to facilitate professional helpseeking for their peers, we need to provide them with the skills and confidence to do so.

Aims:

1. To demonstrate how difficult it can be to assist people students are concerned about, particularly when they feel pulled in different directions
2. To explore the barriers that prevent young people from helping their peers who have mental health and/or substance use problems

Teacher Tip:

'Professional helpseeking' means seeking help from a professional, such as a General Practitioner, school counsellor, drug and alcohol worker or a mental health professional such as a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Duration: Allow 25 minutes

Resources:

Scenarios 1, 2 & 3 and 'for' and 'against' scripts

Teacher Tip:

Highlight how the benefits of helping a friend outweigh the risks and fears of helping a friend

The Hot Seat continued...

Instructions:

- Ask one student to sit in a chair, The Hot Seat, facing the class.
- Ask two more students to stand on either side of the chair and assume the role of either 'for' or 'against'. They should then read from the script and can also improvise if they wish. Their roles are to represent the different thoughts of the student in the Hot Seat.
- Read Scenario 1 aloud to the class.
- When the students have finished reading their scripts, ask the Hot Seat student to decide what they would do based on the arguments made by each role player, that is, 'for' or 'against' and to explain their answer. Ask the class if they agree with the person in the Hot Seat.
- Ask the students to get into groups of three and choose someone for the Hot Seat, and the 'for' and 'against' voices.
- Hand out Scenario 2 and give students 3 minutes to read their scripts.
- Ask various groups whether the person in the Hot Seat decided to help or not and to explain their reasons, why or why not?

- Time permitting, repeat the activity using Scenario 3.
- Ask the class to identify the barriers that would prevent them from approaching a friend about their concerns and list them on the whiteboard.
- To conclude, explain that this activity demonstrates how difficult it can be approaching a friend and knowing what to say and do to help someone you care about.

Alternative or if no-one volunteers:

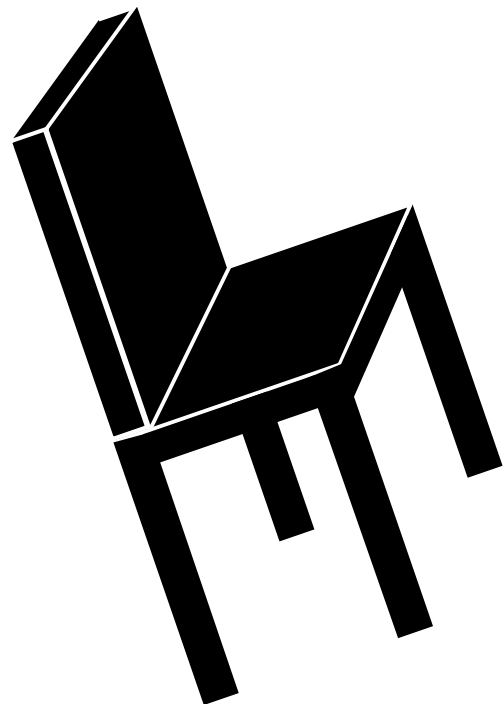
Place 2–3 students at the front of the class in chairs. Divide the class down the middle and ask half of the class to act as 'for' and the other half to act as 'against'.

Extension:

In small groups ask students to brainstorm possible responses for the 'for' and 'against' arguments, similar to preparing for a debate.

“[This activity was useful] because it gave a good indication on how someone might think about whether they should or shouldn't get help.”

– Year 10 student



Scenario 1

Your friend has been going out partying all the time and barely returns your calls anymore. She started hanging around with some older guys a few weeks ago who don't go to school and they all drink together. Most of the parties you go to she gets so drunk she usually ends up vomiting. She recently lost her part-time job because she got into a fight with her manager. She can't keep her mind on her studies and her marks have dropped. Her parents and friends are very concerned about what's going on.

Would you talk to her about it?

| FOR | AGAINST |
|---|---|
| You should definitely talk to her because she's a friend of yours and you care about her... | Just leave her alone, it's none of your business... |
| I would want her to help me if I was in her situation... | If she wanted help she would ask for it... |
| It's worth a try, you've got nothing to lose... | Why risk it, she'll probably just get angry with you! |
| Just talk to her, what's the worst that could happen? | Don't talk to her, she'll just tell you to leave her alone and you'll feel like an idiot... |
| It is better if she gets help now before things get worse... | You should let her hit rock bottom so she wakes up to herself... |
| She drinks so much more than others, and when she passes out, anything could happen to her! | Lots of people drink, it is part of being a teenager! |
| If you offer to go with her to see a counsellor she's more likely to go... | Why get involved? You are doing fine, she should sort her own life out. |

Scenario 2

A friend of yours is always worrying about what everyone thinks. He complains that everyone is out to get him and his parents are always on his back. He can hardly concentrate anymore, is always arguing with his teachers and is starting to wag school. You think he smokes cannabis on the weekends. The last few days he has been acting kind of weird. You have tried talking to him a few times but he told you to leave him alone.

What would you do next?

| FOR | AGAINST |
|---|--|
| Talk to him again and tell him you're getting really worried about him... | He has already told you to leave him alone, you should listen to him... |
| Just because he told you to leave him alone does not mean he doesn't need your help... | He'll probably be back to normal soon, he's just freaking out. It's not a big deal! |
| But he's been acting weird for a while now and things seem to be getting worse, not better... | You should just forget about it. If you keep bringing it up he's just going to avoid you... |
| Go and see the school counsellor and ask for advice about what to do... | If you tell someone then he's going to think you've told on him and not trust you anymore... |
| Look on a mental health website and see if you can get some tips about how to help a mate... | You wouldn't know where to start, it's too much hassle! |
| Talk to his older brother so he knows what's going on and you can make a plan together... | But then he might tell his parents and that could make things worse... |
| Even if his parents <u>do</u> find out at least they'll be able to help him... | But what if they want to talk to <u>you</u> about it, you wouldn't know what to say! |
| If it was you freaking out, you would want someone to help you! | It's his responsibility to look after himself, not yours. |

Scenario 3

Your friend has told you that she wants to be stoned all the time but she's worried about how much she's smoking now to get the same high. She seems tired all the time and has been missing a lot of school. She doesn't care what she looks like anymore and is really snappy when people try to talk to her. Recently, she showed you a cut she had made on her arm. She asked you not to tell anyone. You're really worried and you don't know what to do.

Would you help your friend to see a counsellor?

| FOR | AGAINST |
|--|---|
| <u>You</u> might not know how to help her but a counsellor will... | Just keep it to yourself, she told you a secret, no-one can help her anyway... |
| A counsellor can help her understand what's going on... | But they might tell her parents and then she'll think you told on her... |
| What is said in a counselling session is usually private, unless the person is going to harm themselves or someone else | Yeah, but how do you know you can trust them? She might not want to talk to a stranger... |
| You could find someone who is used to talking to young people about drug problems... | You don't even know where to go and you have your own problems to worry about! |
| You can ask your parents or a teacher where your friend could go without telling them who you're talking about... | But if she goes to a mental health professional everyone will think she's going 'mental'! |
| Lots of young people have problems and it doesn't mean they're 'mental'. The earlier she gets help the better... | What if the counsellor tries to make her talk about things she doesn't want to? She'll be angry with you! |
| She doesn't have to say anything she doesn't want to. She can decide when she's ready... | Yeah. But what if she doesn't even know what's wrong? It would be so embarrassing just sitting there not knowing what to say... |
| A counsellor will ask her questions and help her work out what's going on, that is their job. There is no right or wrong answer... | You should leave it up to her parents to notice and let them do something about it... |
| Her parents might not know what's going on but <u>you</u> do so you should do something about it. | You shouldn't do anything, she asked you not to tell anyone. |



Activity 4: Helpers

Background:

Some young people keep their problems to themselves whilst others speak to their friends. Many do not choose to seek help from a professional, who is trained to help them, for a number of reasons. These reasons are often referred to as ‘barriers’.

The following are some common barriers to seeking help from a professional identified by young people^{1, 2}:

- **They are unable to recognise or acknowledge they have a problem**
- **They are unsure about where to go and what will happen**
- **Stigma, embarrassment, shame**
- **Fears about confidentiality**
- **They believe that they should manage their own problems**
- **They believe that no one can help**
- **Cannabis use itself as it can increase anxiety and decrease motivation**

To begin the process of overcoming these barriers we must inform young people that there are different types of helpers for different kinds of problems. If they know who to go to for which problem then they will feel more confident and therefore, more likely to seek help. Knowing what a mental health professional is and how they can help will empower young people in their helpseeking for mental health problems.

Teacher Tip:

Highlight how the benefits of seeking help outweigh the risks and fears of seeking help from a professional.

Aims:

1. To identify different types of help
2. To identify barriers that stop young people helping their friends who are experiencing mental health and/or substance use issues
3. To identify barriers that stop young people from seeking professional help
4. To increase understanding about professional confidentiality

Duration: Allow 35 minutes

Resources:

- Make a copy of each helper card that you want to use from the following: (1) school counsellor, (2) school nurse, (3) parent, (4) teacher, (5) sibling, (6) doctor, (7) mental health professional (outside of school i.e. counsellor, psychologist, psychiatrist), (8) friend, and (9) alcohol and other drug worker.
Print them on card or laminate them so you can use them again
- Copies of Mitch and Bree’s stories and the *Professional Confidentiality* statement if you want to give a copy to your students.

Teacher Tip:

‘Professional helpseeking’ means seeking help from a professional, such as a General Practitioner, school counsellor, drug and alcohol worker or a mental health professional such as a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Teacher Tip:

What does the ‘Other’ refer to in this helper’s title: Alcohol and ‘Other’ Drug worker?

This is to emphasise that alcohol is also a drug.

¹ Jorm, A. F., & Wright, A. (2007). Beliefs of young people and their parents about the effectiveness of interventions for mental disorders. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 41, 656-666.

² Rickwood, D., Deane, F.P., Wilson, C.J., & Ciarrochi, J. (2005). Young people’s help-seeking for mental health problems. *Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health*, 4(3), (Supplement).

Helpers continued...

Instructions:

1. Explain to the class that this activity is about the different types of help available and how they can each help young people with problems they may be experiencing.
2. Explain that some helpers are bound by 'Professional Confidentiality' and ask students if they know what this means. Use the box below to explain Professional Confidentiality.
3. Advise students that you will read a story about a boy their age who is experiencing problems and they need to decide who would be the best person to help him.
4. Hand out the helper cards relevant for your students. For example, if they don't have access to a school nurse then you may choose not to include the 'nurse' card.
5. Ask the helpers to stand around or in front of the class and read their helper description aloud about what kind of helper they are and how they can help young people.
6. Read Mitch's story asking students to think about which helper they think Mitch should go to for help.
7. After the story, ask students to stand behind the helper they think could best help Mitch.
8. You can ask a student to tally the results on the whiteboard, for example, 5 chose 'school counsellor', 8 chose 'sibling' and so on.
9. Ask a few students to explain why they chose that particular helper and whether past experience influenced their decision. Ask the helpers who no-one chose to explain why they believe no-one chose to go to them. List the barriers you elicit from the students on a whiteboard (refer to context box on previous page). Explain that if a helper is not effective, you can go to a different helper until you feel supported.
10. Repeat the activity using Bree's story.
11. To conclude explain that this activity shows that there are different types of helpers available and different barriers stopping young people from going to them. Emphasise the importance of overcoming the barriers to get professional help so you can get treatment and recover more quickly.

Teacher Tip:

Professional Confidentiality

Many professionals have a legal duty within their workplace, to keep information told to them by their patients or clients private (confidential). These professionals can only disclose information if you give them permission, if there is a risk of harm to yourself or others or there is a court order.

These helpers are required to talk to you about confidentiality before you begin your session with them (for example, a psychologist should talk to you about confidentiality before they begin counselling). If they don't, you have the right to ask them about it before you say anything about yourself.

Questions you can ask are:

- Will you ask my permission before you share my information with anyone?
- When will you have to tell someone about my circumstances without my permission?
- What information will you tell them and who will you tell?
- What happens to my information when my sessions are over?

Avoid discussion about finer details of legislation which can be different in each state, profession and setting. Rather, use this activity to empower students to ask professionals about when and why confidentiality may be broken, so they can make an informed choice about their relationship with the professional.

Helpers continued...

Alternative:

Divide students into groups and give each group a set of helper cards. Read either Mitch's or Bree's story and instruct the groups to discuss which helper Mitch or Bree should go to and explain the reasons for their choice to the class.

Extension:

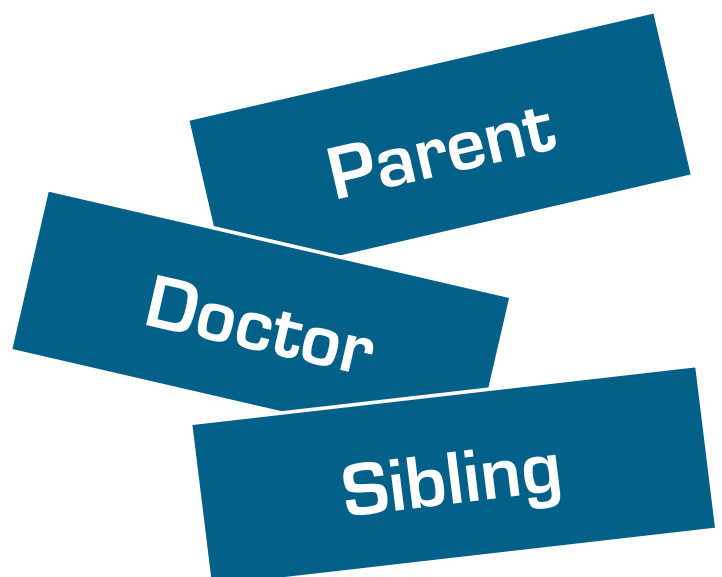
Ask students to read their helper cards without stating whether they are bound by professional confidentiality. Read Mitch's story and ask students to choose the most appropriate helper for Mitch. Ask the helpers who are bound by professional confidentiality to identify themselves, such as holding their cards up. Instruct students to move to a different helper if they want to change their choice of helper now they know who is bound by professional confidentiality. Explore the importance of confidentiality for the students individually and as a group. *Repeat using Bree's story.*

Teacher Tip:

The issue of **duty of care** comes up in this activity and is referred to in the 'Teacher' helper card. Ensure that students understand that they can talk to teachers about their problems, however, illicit drug use is something that a teacher is required to pass on to the Principal because the Principal is responsible for all students in the school. Emphasise that the reason for this is not because teachers want to tell on students or gossip, but because they have to make sure that their students are safe. If they receive information that a student is at risk they cannot ignore it and have a duty of care to do something about it.

“[The Helpers activity was useful] because it tells you about the different types of help you can get and the boundaries they have when helping people.”

– Year 10 student





Mitch's story

Mitch is in Year 10 and works part-time job at the local supermarket. His older brother moved out 3 months ago and now it is just him and his mother at home. Mitch started smoking cannabis in Year 9 with mates and now smokes much more than the rest of the group and often smokes alone. He feels pretty down most of the time and just wants to stay at home. In the past few weeks he has started skipping classes, not going to parties and has quit band practice which he used to do almost every day after school. Last Saturday he turned up to work stoned and was sent home by the manager. His friends at work had to do extra work to cover for him and now they are really annoyed with him and are wondering what is going on.

Mitch needs help but who should he talk to?



Bree's story

Bree is in Year 10 and lives with her parents and younger brother in the suburbs. She gets really nervous around groups of people, especially new people and boys. She thinks she is ugly and boring. She only has a few friends at school. In social situations she feels her mind goes blank and she cannot think of anything to say and feels stupid. She says alcohol and cannabis relax her and make her feel less anxious and more fun to be around. She goes out drinking most Friday and Saturday nights and for the past few weeks she has smoked joints as well. The next day she has felt so embarrassed about some of the things she did or said to people. Her friends are becoming really concerned about her.

Bree needs help but who should she talk to?

Professional Confidentiality

Many professionals have a legal duty within their workplace, to keep information told to them by their patients or clients private (confidential). These professionals can only disclose information if you give them permission, if there is a risk of harm to yourself or others or there is a court order.

These helpers are required to talk to you about confidentiality before you begin your session with them (for example, a psychologist should talk to you about confidentiality before they begin counselling). If they don't, you have the right to ask them about it before you say anything about yourself.

Questions you can ask are:

- Will you ask my permission before you share my information with anyone?
- When will you have to tell someone about my circumstances without my permission?
- What information will you tell them and who will you tell?
- What happens to my information when my sessions are over?

Professional Confidentiality

Many professionals have a legal duty within their workplace, to keep information told to them by their patients or clients private (confidential). These professionals can only disclose information if you give them permission, if there is a risk of harm to yourself or others or there is a court order.

These helpers are required to talk to you about confidentiality before you begin your session with them (for example, a psychologist should talk to you about confidentiality before they begin counselling). If they don't, you have the right to ask them about it before you say anything about yourself.

Questions you can ask are:

- Will you ask my permission before you share my information with anyone?
- When will you have to tell someone about my circumstances without my permission?
- What information will you tell them and who will you tell?
- What happens to my information when my sessions are over?



I am a School Counsellor.

I have training and experience in different strategies to help young people and together we can work out a plan to assist you with whatever you're going through.

A lot of students find talking to me really helpful but if you don't, that is totally fine, I can refer you to see another counsellor.

I am bound by professional confidentiality.



**Joelle Sutton
1004CS**



I am a School Nurse.

Of course you know I can help you with medical problems but I can also talk to you if something is upsetting you, like difficulties at school or home.

I will also know who else you can talk to if I am not able to help you out.

I am bound by professional confidentiality.

esjnn
100yos
Schools



I am your mother/father.

I know talking to me can be very hard and you probably think I won't understand. But I can assure you that I care about you and will do my best to help you.

I can take you to see our family doctor or a counsellor and I can be a good support for you along the way. Give me a chance!

Parent



I am your teacher.

I am your teacher. You might think talking to me about personal stuff is really silly but believe me, lots of students do! I am a good listener and have lots of information. However, if you tell me you are using drugs then I may have to tell the Principal. This is because I have a ***duty of care*** to make sure you are safe.

If something is worrying you, it is important to let me know so I can assist you and understand what is going on with you. I will do my best to help.

jejuceel



I am your brother/sister.

I am good to talk to as I know you well and care about you. I might have been through something similar to what you are going through but even if I haven't, I will try and understand from your perspective.

If you want, I can help you to make an appointment to see someone.

Also, don't forget I know mum and dad like no one else so I can help you talk to them!

bullying



I am a doctor, also called a General Practitioner or G.P.

I have been trained to deal with all sorts of physical and mental health issues. I can refer you to a mental health professional if I think you need more help.

I am bound by professional confidentiality.

10700



I am a mental health professional.

I have expertise in helping people manage a range of mental health and substance use problems as well as behaviour or learning problems.

I may be a psychiatrist, psychologist or other health professional. One of the ways I can help is by providing counselling which is the process of talking to a person about their problems and discussing different ways of managing them.

All mental health professionals are bound by professional confidentiality.

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I am your friend, your mate!

I know you really well and we have similar thoughts and feelings about some things so I can probably understand where you're coming from. I might not know how to help you but I can listen and support you.

If I am worried that you might hurt yourself or somebody else I will need to tell an adult straight away, even if you have asked me not to. This is because I care about you and want you to be okay. I am always here for you.

positive



I am an Alcohol and Other Drug Worker.

I can provide information and counselling and can talk to you about how drugs are affecting your life. We can also discuss ways to cut down what you're using if that is something you are ready to try. Even if you don't know if you have a drug problem, that's ok, you can still come and talk to me.

I am bound by professional confidentiality.

**JeKJOW Drug
Alcohol & Other**



Activity 5: Mates Help Mates



Background:

We know that young people talk to each other about their problems rather than seek help from a professional. Often, young people do not know what to say or do when their friend turns to them for support, or when they notice their friend is having some problems. There is still a lot of stigma around having a mental health problem and young people don't want others to think that they are 'crazy'. When drug use is involved it can be even trickier as young people don't want to 'dob' on their friends.

Often students will seek help on behalf of their friends and it is important not to dismiss them but to provide support and advice about how to be a good friend and how to assist their friend to seek help.

We need to up-skill young people to assist each other to seek professional help when necessary, because we know that early intervention leads to better outcomes. We need to show them *how* to help and provide them opportunities to develop and practice helpseeking skills.

DVD/Script Summary:

This activity uses a DVD or role play to explore with students helpful and not so helpful ways of talking to your friends about problems they may be having. It also models how to tell your friend you are concerned about them and how to raise the subject of seeking help from a professional in a gentle and understanding way.



- The **'Should we help Bree?' script** shows two girls talking about their friend Bree (from the previous activity). They are concerned about her alcohol and cannabis use and change in behaviour and are discussing whether they should talk to her about it.
- The **'Helping Bree' script** shows the two girls raising the subject with Bree. Claudia is not so helpful, whereas Amy models good helping and suggests Bree seek help from the school counsellor, explaining that she has seen her as well and can help her make an appointment.



- The **'Should we help Mitch?' script** shows two Year 10 boys talking about their friend Mitch (from the previous activity). They are concerned about his cannabis use and change in behaviour and are discussing whether they should talk to him about it.
- The **'Helping Mitch' script** shows the two boys raising the subject with Mitch. Lee is not so helpful, whereas Joe models good helping and talks about his cousin who was in a similar situation. He suggests Mitch talk to his cousin, looks online and/or considers seeking help from a counsellor.

Young people need to believe that the benefits of seeking help outweigh the fears they have about seeking professional help.

Mates Help Mates continued...

Aims:

1. To identify barriers that stop young people helping their friends with substance use and/or mental health problems
2. To identify barriers that stop young people from seeking professional help

Duration: Allow 35 minutes including 10 minute DVD

Resources:

- *Mates Help Mates* DVD (4 x 2.5 minute clips)
 - DVD includes slides with class discussion questions
- Television
- DVD player
- If a television and/or DVD player is not available use scripts for role play activity (*refer to the Alternative activity box on the next page*)

Instructions:

1. Explain to the class that they will watch a DVD about helpseeking and barriers; what stops young people from talking to their friends about their concerns, and also how to suggest a friend seek professional help.

Discussion Questions Clip 1:

- What are Amy and Claudia's concerns about Bree?
- Why does Amy think they should talk to Bree?
- Why is Claudia reluctant to talk to Bree?
- If Bree was your friend, would you talk to her about your concerns?

Discussion Questions Clip 2:

- What approach did Amy and Claudia take in talking about their concerns to Bree?
- Were these approaches helpful or unhelpful?
- Does Bree need help?
- What are the barriers to seeking professional help?

Teacher Tip:

Barriers to seeking professional help for Bree:

- Bree is reluctant to seek help as she thinks what she is going through is 'just a phase'; she doesn't know why she's feeling this way; she doesn't believe anyone can help or she can trust anyone; and she is worried her parents will find out about her smoking cannabis (confidentiality).

2. Time permitting, repeat the activity showing the clips about Mitch.



Discussion Questions Clip 3:

- What are Joe and Lee's concerns about Mitch?
- Why does Joe think they should talk to Mitch?
- Why is Lee reluctant to talk to Mitch?
- If Mitch was your friend, would you talk to him about your concerns?

Discussion Questions Clip 4:

- What approach did Joe and Lee take in talking about their concerns to Mitch?
- Were these approaches helpful or unhelpful?
- Does Mitch need help?
- What are the barriers to seeking professional help?

Teacher Tip:

Barriers to seeking professional help for Mitch:

- Mitch is reluctant to seek professional help because he doesn't think he is 'crazy'; he is concerned that a counsellor wouldn't know anything about cannabis; and he has been feeling down so possibly may be depressed and have a general lack of motivation.

Mates Help Mates continued...

To conclude, discuss with students some of the things they could say and do to assist a friend to get help:

- Listen non-judgementally
- Tell them you are concerned about them
- Explain to them gently how their behaviour is affecting you and those around them
- Ask if they have thought about getting professional help
- Tell them about the different helpers they could go to
- Talk about the barriers; what is stopping them, what are they worried about?
- Link them up with someone who has been through a similar experience and had a positive outcome from seeking help about it
- Offer to make an appointment with them/ go with them/get more information for them

“Most teenagers struggle trying to work out whether or not to get help especially for their friends so this was a good tool to show kids how to bring it up with friends.”

– Year 10 student.



Alternative:

If there is no TV or DVD player available or you choose not to use the DVD, this activity can be done as a role play. Photocopy 4 copies of each script (one for each actor and one for the teacher).

- Ask for 6 students to be actors.
- Have the actors stand at the front of the class and read out the script.
- Ask the rest of the class to be observers and answer the questions above.

Extension:

In small groups ask students to come up with their own way of raising concerns with their friend and encourage them to seek professional help. This could be done as a written activity (re-write the script) or a drama activity (perform a skit in front of the class).

Scripts: Clip 1. Should we help Bree?

Scene: Common room, study period, end of school day. Amy and Claudia are sitting at a desk studying and talking, Claudia is listening to music.

| Character | Dialogue | Action |
|-----------|---|---|
| Claudia | How fun was Tammy's party? I haven't danced that long for ages... | Takes out earphones |
| Amy | I know, the music was awesome, I can't believe how many people rocked up... | |
| Claudia | Hey, I know this is really mean but after what Bree did I'm thinking about un-inviting her to my party. She was so embarrassing... | |
| Amy | What do you mean? She's one of our best friends! She wasn't the only drunk person there... | Sitting upright, a bit alarmed |
| Claudia | Yeah but she was the only one who tried to hook up with half the guys, even Maria's boyfriend! She was so out of line. And it's not like it was the first time. You know she had a joint before the party? She's losing it... | |
| Amy | Yeah I know... it was so full on when she threw up everywhere and I had to call her sister to come get her... I feel a bit bad about that... | |
| Claudia | At least you didn't call her parents. I'm over it... if we stop inviting her maybe she'll get the message and get her act together | Paying attention now and getting a bit more riled |
| Amy | Yeah... but I don't think that would work, it could just make her worse. Something's going on. I mean she's constantly worrying all the time... and seems to think everyone hates her | Facing Claudia in a more empathetic manner |
| Claudia | Well everyone will if she keeps making a fool of herself... | |
| Amy | But it's just not like her, I don't even know who she smokes with... I think we should tell her we're worried about her | With more urgency |
| Claudia | She'll work it out, if she wants to talk all she has to do is call... I just don't think we should get involved | Putting earphones back in |
| Amy | But she's losing it, she used to be the one always looking out for everyone else... something bad could happen | Stops Claudia putting the earphones in |
| Claudia | Yeah, like, what if some guy does something to her when she's drunk? | A bit sarcastically |
| Amy | If it was me I would want my friends to try and help me, do you know what I mean? We should talk to her, don't you think? | |
| Claudia | I suppose, but what do we say? | |
| Amy | Umm... I don't know, I'll call you tonight and we can talk about it | |
| Claudia | Ok... Mum's picking me up, do you want a lift? | Looking at watch |
| Amy | Yeah thanks. Let's try and talk to her on her own tomorrow... (talking as they walk out the door) | They both grab their bags and head for the door |

Clip 2. Helping Bree

Scene: Empty classroom. Amy and Claudia approach Bree who is in an empty classroom during lunchtime drawing in her diary.

| Character | Dialogue | Action |
|-----------|---|--|
| Amy | Hey Bree, there you are! We've been trying to find you... We thought that after Tammy's you might be feeling pretty bad... is everything okay? | |
| Bree | I don't want to talk about it! I feel sick just thinking about it... | Not looking up |
| Claudia | Well how do you think Tammy feels, she was the one who had to clean up all your spew off the carpet... | Slightly aggressive tone crossing her arms |
| Amy | It's not like you Bree, why have you been getting so drunk lately? | Giving Claudia a 'you're not helping' look |
| Bree | I don't know... I didn't mean to, it's like all of a sudden I was really wasted | |
| Claudia | Yeah because you smoked weed before you even got there! And then you just kept drinking and drinking... | In an annoyed tone. |
| Bree | I said I didn't want to talk about it... | Amy gestures for Claudia to leave |
| Claudia | Whatever, I gotta go meet Sarah anyway... bye Amy | Claudia leaves, Amy gives her a quick wave |
| Amy | You don't have to talk if you don't want to, we are just worried about you that's all... You just don't seem yourself lately | |
| Bree | I know. I know... I just feel like I'm just losing it all the time... everything is getting to me... everything is just getting too hard... | Bree is close to tears |
| Amy | That's really awful Bree. Is that why you get so wasted? | Amy is more concerned now |
| Bree | Yeah I guess, I mean it helps my mind stop, it helps me relax and stop worrying... | |
| Amy | Yeah you always seem to be worrying lately about something someone did or said, what's that all about? | |
| Bree | Oh... everything, you know, my parents are freaking out about the business and blaming everything on me lately... at school I just feel really stupid when I talk, like everyone's thinking I'm an idiot... I can't explain it, it's stupid I know... | |

Clip 2. Helping Bree continued...

| | | |
|------|---|-----------------------|
| Amy | No no it's not, I totally get it... you get stressed out and then you drink and smoke to forget everything but then you end up doing things you regret the next day... | |
| Bree | Yeah that's pretty much it... It's just a phase you know, I can sort it out myself... | Quietly |
| Amy | Do you remember what you were doing at Tammy's? | |
| Bree | Part of it, not really... | |
| Amy | Well you trying to hook up with Maria's boyfriend, everyone was watching... | |
| Bree | Oh my god! I'm such an idiot, I hate myself... | Puts head in hands |
| Amy | What if something bad happened to you... we can't keep looking out for you Bree, at one stage I didn't even know where you were... | |
| Bree | I'm really sorry, I just don't know what to do... | |
| Amy | Have you thought of talking to someone about it... like getting some help? | |
| Bree | Kind of... but there's no one I can trust... what if they told my parents that I've been smoking weed? Anyway, I don't think anyone can help... | |
| Amy | That's what I thought before I went to that counsellor, remember when my parents split up?... but I actually found it really helpful. It's totally private and she's really nice... I mean, yeah, it was weird at first but then it was like, such a relief to talk to talk to someone about it. I can come with you if you want? | Eye contact with Bree |
| Bree | Really? Thanks, ok, maybe... do you think I could just meet her and see if I like her? | |
| Amy | Yeah good idea, she'd be fine with that, once you've met her you won't be so nervous... just let me know when you want to go and I'll help you make an appointment, ok? I've got the number | |
| Bree | Ok, hey, thanks a lot Amy | Looks a lot happier |

Clip 3. Should we help Mitch?

Scene: Lee and Joe sitting in corridor as if waiting for class, Joe is just finishing a text on his mobile phone.

| Character | Dialogue | Action |
|-----------|--|----------------------------------|
| Lee | I can't believe that Mitch turned up stoned at work on Saturday... | |
| Joe | Yeah, I heard, he might lose his job soon... | Puts mobile in pocket |
| Lee | Well it would serve him right, he was completely out of it, what was he thinking? And it's not like it's the first time, the weekend before he didn't even show up at all. I'm sick of covering for him. He's no fun at all. | |
| Joe | I know what you mean, he's just not the same anymore. I mean, something's going on. He didn't come to Simon's party and he hardly ever comes to practice anymore... | |
| Lee | Maybe he's just not that into you... | Lame joke, interrupting Joe |
| Joe | Shut up! nah... seriously, it reminds me of my cousin, Paul... | |
| Lee | What? You mean that guy who had all those problems with weed? | |
| Joe | Seriously, Paul was smoking heaps of the stuff and he reckons if his mates hadn't said anything to him he wouldn't have known how bad he was getting... | |
| Lee | I don't know... if he wanted our help he would ask for it, wouldn't he?... not like he is going to get any from me, especially if he doesn't show up for work next week | Not really paying much attention |
| Joe | I'm serious, we're his mates, we gotta do something. He wouldn't just stop practice for no reason... there's something going on. | |
| Lee | Alright, alright, he has changed but what can we do? I mean I wouldn't even know what to say to him. What if he completely loses it? We could make things worse... | |
| Joe | Yeah, I know what you mean but I think we've gotta do something.... | |

Clip 4. Helping Mitch

Scene: Empty hall, assembly has just finished. Mitch is packing up his things, Joe and Lee approach him.

| Character | Dialogue | Action |
|-----------|---|---|
| Joe | Hey, Mitch... how's it going? Hey, you missed work again. What's going on? | |
| Lee | Yeah man, I'm sick of covering for you... hey, you know what you should do? You should just leave so they can find somebody that will actually show up | Sarcastically |
| Joe | Shut up Lee... what happened? | Rolls eyes at Lee |
| Mitch | ...couldn't be bothered... I can't stand the boss, just chilled out at home... | Looking down not looking at Joe |
| Joe | Yeah... hey you missed an awesome party on the weekend too, everyone was asking where you were... | |
| Mitch | Yeah? (surprised) nah I just... just didn't... (pause) who was there? | Asking in a disinterested way |
| Lee | Everyone... all of Stu's mates and you know remember those girls we met at Kelly's party? | Joe indicating to Lee he needs to get lost. |
| Mitch | Sort of... | Disinterested |
| Lee | What's up with you lately? You guys are boring, see ya | Irritated Lee leaves |
| Mitch | See ya... (trailing off) | Clearly uncomfortable |
| Joe | Hey Mitch, are you ok? It's just that things have changed... you turn up to work stoned, never want to party anymore... never answer your phone... | |
| Mitch | Yeah I dunno know I just... I've been feeling a bit crap lately and just... haven't wanted to do much, you know what I mean? I just can't be stuffed... | |
| Joe | Yeah but something's changed, what's going on? | |
| Mitch | Well my brother moved out and Mum's on night duty all the time... when she's home all she does is freak out and get on my back about school. | Looking a little uncomfortable |

Clip 4. Helping Mitch continued...

| | | |
|-------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Joe | Yeah, same here... they just don't understand. Is that it? | |
| Mitch | I'm having heaps more cones than I used to but it's just not the same... it sort of makes me feel worse... I dunno. It's boring... I'm in the house every night on my own. But I can't be stuffed doing anything anyway... | |
| Joe | Yeah, that's not good... but you never come out when we ask ya cos you just want to stay home and smoke (pause). Have you thought about getting help? | |
| Mitch | What, like a counsellor? I'm not crazy! Anyway, what would they know about weed? | Looking annoyed and disbelieving |
| Joe | Maybe you should talk to someone... I saw what my cousin Paul went through when he was smoking heaps... you know Paul. He finally went and saw a counsellor and said it really helped heaps | Mitch nods |
| Mitch | Yeah, I've sort of thought about it... you know I tried to cut back, but I started getting really edgy... | |
| Joe | Maybe you should see someone... do you want me to get the name of the guy Paul saw? | |
| Mitch | I dunno... | |
| Joe | Or maybe you could talk to Paul about it? | |
| Mitch | Yeah... yeah, ok | |
| Joe | I think he actually found a counsellor online, you should check it out | |
| Mitch | I'll think about it, thanks.... you know, I'm gonna try harder to get to work and hang out with you guys more... | Looking at Joe in a more friendly way |
| Joe | Ok cool, hey, you staying for practice after school? | |



Activity 6: Web Quest

Background:

Increasingly, young people are turning to the internet for information about their concerns and problems. This is why it is important to introduce them to helpseeking sites which we know have accurate and up-to-date information about mental health and substance use issues, and how to seek help.

Aims:

- To introduce students to useful and reliable helpseeking sites for cannabis and/or mental health problems

Duration: Allow 30 minutes

Resources:

- Computer with internet access
- Copy of worksheet for each student

Instructions:

- Hand out worksheets to students and explain that they will need to use the internet to complete this activity as they will be accessing two helpseeking websites.
- Instruct students to log on to the *headspace* website for the first part of the activity.

Alternative Activity:

If students have internet access at home this can be a homework activity to be discussed in class at a later date.

Extension Activity:

Divide students into small groups and click on the 'Information' tab on the *headspace* website. Assign each group either a mental health or drug and alcohol fact sheet they have to find and print, e.g. anxiety or cannabis. Ask students to summarise and present the information to the class.



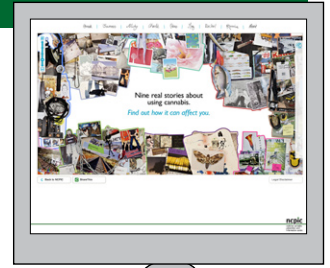


MAKINGtheLINK Web Quest

Name: _____

Form: _____

Date: _____



Part 1: Log onto www.headspace.org.au

1. There are many **headspace** sites around Australia. Which one is the closest to where you live?

2. Using public transport, work out how to get to your local **headspace** from your house.

How many minutes/hours would it take? _____

3. If there is no **headspace** in your town or suburb, where else could a young person go if they had a mental health and/or cannabis use problem? _____

Part 2: Log on to www.ncpic.org.au

- Click on the 'young people' tab then click on 'Nine Young People Tell Their Cannabis Stories'.
- You will see that there are 9 names of young people to choose from across the top of the page. Click on the young person's name to answer these questions:

1. Why was Ahmed's friend 'freaked out' by what happened to the girl who used cannabis?

2. Why did the sniffer dog pick out one of Nicky's mates?

3. Why does Brad think his friend is dependent on cannabis?

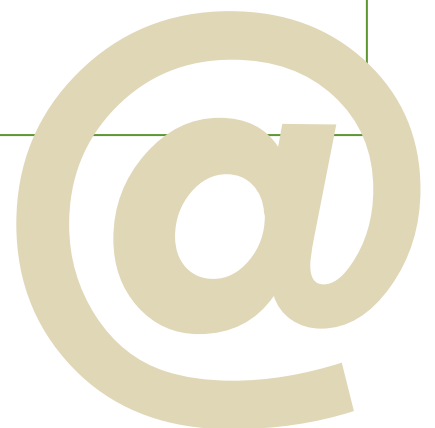
4. Ming's friend had a 'psychotic episode'. What were some of the warning signs Ming describes?

5. Why did Rachel have a fight with her friend?

6. What happened to Annie when she ate 'weed cake'?

7. Click on **'What should you do if a friend freaks out after using cannabis'** next to Annie's story and list the five things they suggest:

Well done, you have finished!



Appendix 1 – Evaluation Tools

MAKINGtheLINK Facilitator Survey

Date:

| 1. Reflect on your teaching by completing the following: | Date completed | Notes: Did the students engage with the activity? Did you use the extension or alternative options? Did you need more time? | Duration of Activity |
|--|----------------|---|----------------------|
| Activity 1: Ranking Situations <i>Who needs to get help?</i> | / / | | |
| Activity 2: Myth or Fact? <i>Making the link between cannabis and mental health</i> | / / | | |
| Activity 3: The Hot Seat <i>To help or not to help a friend</i> | / / | | |
| Activity 4: Helpers <i>Who you can go to for help</i> | / / | | |
| Activity 5: Mates Help Mates DVD – <i>How to get your mates to seek professional help</i> | / / | | |
| Activity 6: Web Quest <i>Looking up helpseeking sites online</i> | / / | | |

| 2. Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| a. I would use the MAKINGtheLINK classroom activities again | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| b. I felt comfortable facilitating the MAKINGtheLINK activities with the students | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| c. Most of the students in the class enjoyed the activities | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| d. The DVD was useful at showing students how to talk to their friends about getting help | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| e. There was sufficient time to teach students about helpseeking | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |

Facilitator Survey Continued...

3. Which MAKINGtheLINK activity was the most useful for the students? (please tick and explain why):

- ☐ Activity 1: Ranking Situations – Who needs to get help
- ☐ Activity 2: Myth or Fact – Making the link between cannabis and mental health
- ☐ Activity 3: The Hot Seat – To help or not to help a friend
- ☐ Activity 4: Helpers – Who you can go to for help
- ☐ Activity 5: *Mates Help Mates* DVD – How to get your mates to seek professional help
- ☐ Activity 6: Web Quest – Looking up helpseeking sites online

Please explain why: _____

4. Which activity was the least useful for the students? (please tick and explain why):

- ☐ Activity 1: Ranking Situations – Who needs to get help
- ☐ Activity 2: Myth or Fact – Making the link between cannabis and mental health
- ☐ Activity 3: The Hot Seat – To help or not to help a friend
- ☐ Activity 4: Helpers – Who you can go to for help
- ☐ Activity 5: *Mates Help Mates* DVD – How to get your mates to seek professional help
- ☐ Activity 6: Web Quest – Looking up helpseeking sites online

Please explain why: _____

Any other comments/feedback:

MAKINGtheLINK Student Survey

Date:

1. Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Ensure that you don't miss any questions.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

a. MAKINGtheLINK was interesting

①

②

③

④

b. MAKINGtheLINK was easy to understand

①

②

③

④

c. MAKINGtheLINK was fun

①

②

③

④

d. I felt comfortable participating in MAKINGtheLINK

①

②

③

④

e. MAKINGtheLINK made me more aware of the link between cannabis use and mental health problems

①

②

③

④

f. MAKINGtheLINK made me more aware of the consequences of cannabis use

①

②

③

④

g. There was enough time to talk about all the things I wanted to during MAKINGtheLINK

①

②

③

④

h. MAKINGtheLINK made me more aware of how to seek help for a cannabis use and mental health problem for myself or a friend

①

②

③

④

i. MAKINGtheLINK made me more confident to seek help for a cannabis use and mental health problem for myself or a friend

①

②

③

④

j. MAKINGtheLINK made me more aware of what Professional Confidentiality means

①

②

③

④

k. I believe learning about how to seek professional help is important for young people

①

②

③

④

l. Most of the people in my class enjoyed the activities

①

②

③

④

m. The *Mates Help Mates* DVD was useful at showing us how to talk to our friends about getting help

①

②

③

④

n. OVERALL, I was satisfied with the MAKINGtheLINK program

①

②

③

④

Student Survey Continued...

2. Which MAKINGtheLINK activity was the most useful? (please tick and explain why):

- ☐ Activity 1: Ranking Situations – Who needs to get help
- ☐ Activity 2: Myth or Fact – Making the link between cannabis and mental health
- ☐ Activity 3: The Hot Seat – To help or not to help a friend
- ☐ Activity 4: Helpers – Who you can go to for help
- ☐ Activity 5: *Mates Help Mates* DVD – How to get your mates to seek professional help
- ☐ Activity 6: Web Quest – Looking up helpseeking sites online

Please explain why: _____

3. Which activity was the least useful? (please tick and explain why):

- ☐ Activity 1: Ranking Situations – Who needs to get help
- ☐ Activity 2: Myth or Fact – Making the link between cannabis and mental health
- ☐ Activity 3: The Hot Seat – To help or not to help a friend
- ☐ Activity 4: Helpers – Who you can go to for help
- ☐ Activity 5: *Mates Help Mates* DVD – How to get your mates to seek professional help
- ☐ Activity 6: Web Quest – Looking up helpseeking sites online

Please explain why: _____

Any other comments/feedback:

MAKINGtheLINK Staff Observer Survey

Date:

1. Please rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Ensure that you don't miss any questions.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

a. **MAKINGtheLINK** made me more aware of the link between cannabis use and mental health problems

①

②

③

④

b. I have a greater understanding of the barriers to seeking help for young people

①

②

③

④

c. **MAKINGtheLINK** made me more aware of how a student could seek help for a cannabis use or mental health problem

①

②

③

④

d. I think teaching young people how to seek professional help is important

①

②

③

④

e. Teachers have an important role to play in assisting students to seek professional help

①

②

③

④

f. It is important to teach students how to assist their peers to seek professional help

①

②

③

④

g. Students found the classroom activities engaging and fun

①

②

③

④

h. There was sufficient time to teach students about helpseeking

①

②

③

④

i. Helpseeking for cannabis use and mental health problems is relevant for our students

①

②

③

④

j. I would consider using the **MAKINGtheLINK** classroom activities with my students

①

②

③

④

k. I feel confident that I could run the **MAKINGtheLINK** classroom activities now that I have seen them

①

②

③

④

l. The *Mates Help Mates* DVD resource is useful to use with students

①

②

③

④

m. OVERALL, I was satisfied with the **MAKINGtheLINK** student helpseeking program

①

②

③

④

Staff Observer Survey Continued...

2. What kind of support would a teacher need to use the **MAKINGtheLINK** classroom activities with their students?

Tick all that apply:

- ☐ a. Teacher Manual and Implementation Guide
- ☐ b. A co-facilitator from within the school
- ☐ c. A co-facilitator from outside the school
- ☐ d. Staff professional development

Other, please state:

3. Which **MAKINGtheLINK** activity was the most useful for students? (please tick and explain why):

- ☐ Activity 1: Ranking Situations – Who needs to get help
- ☐ Activity 2: Myth or Fact – Making the link between cannabis and mental health
- ☐ Activity 3: The Hot Seat – To help or not to help a friend
- ☐ Activity 4: Helpers – Who you can go to for help
- ☐ Activity 5: *Mates Help Mates* DVD – How to get your mates to seek professional help
- ☐ Activity 6: Web Quest – Looking up helpseeking sites online

Please explain why: _____

4. Which activity was the least useful for students? (please tick and explain why):

- ☐ Activity 1: Ranking Situations – Who needs to get help
- ☐ Activity 2: Myth or Fact – Making the link between cannabis and mental health
- ☐ Activity 3: The Hot Seat – To help or not to help a friend
- ☐ Activity 4: Helpers – Who you can go to for help
- ☐ Activity 5: *Mates Help Mates* DVD – How to get your mates to seek professional help
- ☐ Activity 6: Web Quest – Looking up helpseeking sites online

Please explain why: _____

Any other comments/feedback:
