 What is a good night out?

Suggested duration: 30 minutes

Through these activities, students will discuss situations where they will make decisions about alcohol and other drugs. They will propose how to have a good time, celebrate and socialise with others. Students will be offered opportunities to challenge peer expectations about the role of alcohol and other drugs in social settings.

These activities have been adapted from Celebrate Safely – Look after your mates[[1]](#footnote-1)

Course outcomes

1.1 Assess personal strengths and skills to achieve positive outcomes in a range of challenging and changing situations.

1.2 Critically evaluate services and resources to identify sources of reliable information and support.

1.3 Build positive thinking, self-belief and a sense of empowerment to take action to promote meaningful futures for self and others.

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Recognise that young people like to socialise, and this may involve situations where alcohol and/or other drugs are present.
* Understand that people can have a good time without using drugs and alcohol.
* Describe responsible behaviour in situations that may involve drugs and alcohol.
* Identify and assess skills and strategies to avoid potentially harmful situations when celebrating or going out.
* Formulate strategies that will reduce harm to themselves and others in a range of situations where alcohol and/or other drugs may be present.

Suggested content

| Learning context | Content |
| --- | --- |
| Drugs and alcohol  Focus: Making safe and responsible choices | Identifying solutions and responding to situations which involve the use of drugs and alcohol   * avoidance and assertive behaviours * recognising risk * intoxication and its effects * planning strategies to reduce harm in various situations * assessing and applying personal strengths to respond to situations * recognising influences on decision making and problem solving, e.g. personal, social and cultural values   Responsible behaviour   * protective strategies in drug and alcohol related situations * responsible behaviour in venues * responsible behaviour in other environments, e.g. end of school celebrations, festivals and concerts, public places, parties, moving between venues   Accessing information, support and services   * accessing and assessing reliable information, support and services * supporting yourself and others * recognising an emergency situation * calling for help * applying first aid in drug related situations |

Teaching notes

Through these activities, students will recognise the factors that can increase the likelihood of a good night out or celebration, including assessing the role that drugs and alcohol can play in exposing people to risk. Students will develop and discuss a range of strategies to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes in situations that may involve alcohol and other drugs, including parties, licensed premises, end of school celebrations, and concerts and music festivals.

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of Life Ready sessions that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of Life Ready can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

Be sensitive to cultural protocols that may be relevant to certain members of intended audiences when previewing materials. The department’s [Audiovisual materials in schools - procedures for use](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/controversial-issues-in-schools?refid=285776) provides advice for schools with regard to the use of audio-visual material including films, videos, DVDs and computer games classified by the Classification Board and Classification Review Board.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [Life Ready website.](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready)

Evaluating resources before use

Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context. Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care. Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audiovisual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.

Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Materials should be reviewed in full and endorsed by the school principal before use in NSW government schools.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of Life Ready may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the Life Ready program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the Life Ready program they are concerned about. A sample information letter is available on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Learning experiences

Activity one – What is a good night out? (10 minutes)

1. Students work in small groups with butchers paper, an A3 sheet of paper or an online space. Groups divide the paper or online space into two equal columns. In the columns students respond to the following:

* what is a good night out or celebration? What does it look like, sound like and feel like?
* how would parents or family members describe a good night out or celebration for young people? What would it look like, sound like and feel like?

1. Invite groups to present their responses. Facilitate discussion by asking questions such as:

* what are the similarities and differences between the two lists?
* what can young people do to have a good time and stay safe?
* what role does alcohol or other drugs play in changing the outcomes and risks associated with a night out or celebration?
* propose strategies to increase the positive outcomes for self and others when celebrating, socialising or going out, whether alcohol was used or not.

Activity two – Strategies (20 minutes)

1. In small groups, students select an environment where young people might socialise, celebrate or go out, but where alcohol and/or other drugs may be present. Possible examples include:

* parties
* pubs, clubs, nightclubs and other licenced premises
* end of school celebrations, e.g. Schoolies week, overseas trips
* concerts and music festivals.

1. Students use an online space, butchers paper or a whiteboard to record ideas. Draw a large box in the centre of the space.

* Inside the box, groups record the factors that improve a night out or celebration in that environment, e.g. good music, friends only, food, chance to meet others, dancing, no violence or aggression.
* Outside the box, groups record strategies they could use to maximise safety and enjoyment and increase positive outcomes for self and others, e.g. organise a caterer, alert police when you are having a party, provide food, buy your own drinks if drinking alcohol, organise a lift home, stay with trusted friends.

1. Encourage students to access a range of websites to expand their list if necessary. Examples of websites that could be used include:

* [NSW Police MyNite](http://www.mynite.com.au/index.php)
* [Turning 18: Drugs, alcohol and celebrating safely](http://www.turning18.com.au/)
* [What Are You Doing To Yourself?](http://www.whatareyoudoingtoyourself.com/)
* [Queensland Government schoolies week information](http://www.schoolies.qld.gov.au/schoolies/staying-safe)

1. Invite students to present their ideas to the whole group. Facilitate discussion after each group’s presentation using questions such as:

* which strategies were common to most groups and environments?
* which strategies are most useful or most important?
* which strategies are you likely to need to use most often?

1. Conclude the activity by discussing the importance of knowing and practising these strategies to ensure a good time when going out.

1. *Celebrate Safely – Look after your mates*, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)