

Alcohol Awareness Group

High School



Alcohol is the number one most abused substance by adolescents. In high school, students need to learn the effects of alcohol on the brain, co-morbidity with other risky situations, BAC definitions, and refusal skills. Use this guide when creating an alcohol awareness class for high school students. Utilize all group topics or tailor the group topic to fit your students' needs.

GROUP OPENING:

- ☐ Review the rules of the group. Be respectful, responsible, and fun to be with.
- ☐ Set expectations for group participation. Pass out the **Executive Function Skills** list and review the definitions of each (if needed).

GROUP OPENING SCRIPT: *'The purpose of this group is to raise your awareness about alcohol. Your participation is mandatory, and you are expected to be respectful, responsible, and fun to be with. Review the executive function skills list. You are expected to demonstrate these skills. When you do, I will give you positive feedback. The reason I will do this has to do with the 'Use-It or Lose-It' principle which says: The neurons you use for these skills grow. The neurons you do not use, you lose. Research tells us that young people with strong executive function skills are more likely to refuse engaging in high-risk behavior like underage drinking. Your opinion is respected, and it will be heard. Please follow that same rule for me.'*

GROUP TOPICS:

- ☐ **GROUP ONE:** Watch BrainAbouts **About the Brain** and discuss. Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.
- ☐ **GROUP TWO:** Watch BrainAbouts **About Risky Behavior** and discuss. Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.
- ☐ **GROUP THREE:** Watch BrainAbouts **About Alcohol** and use BrainAbouts **Alcohol Discussion and Facts & Stats Handouts** to generate discussion. Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.
- ☐ **GROUP FOUR:** Choose a video from **YouTube Channel Ask, Listen, Learn** to watch. Use the BrainAbouts Refusal Skills handout to teach and role-play refusal skills. Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.

REFUSAL SKILLS SCRIPT: *'Research shows that when young people have practiced and know what they are going to say when tempted to engage in a high-risk behavior, they are significantly less likely to stick to their values and refuse. On the other hand, youth who do not know what they will say are more likely to say yes to the high-risk behavior, even if it goes against their values!'*

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- ☐ **GROUP FIVE:** Choose a video from **YouTube Channel Ask, Listen, Learn** to watch. Look up and discuss your school's policy and your state's laws regarding underage drinking, drunk driving, and underage alcohol possession.

ACTIVITY: Teach students how to find information in the school policy handbook and in online resources (found in the Core) to find policies, stats, and state laws specific to your area. Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.

- ☐ **GROUP SIX:** Choose a video from **YouTube Channel Ask, Listen, Learn** to watch. Describe the relationship between alcohol and other risky behavior such as:

- Teens who drink alcohol are more likely to be the victims of dating violence and date rape.
- Teens who drink alcohol are more likely to engage in violence and suffer academic problems.
- Teens who drink alcohol are more likely to suffer from depression and other mental health illnesses.
- Teenage drinking and driving is the #1 cause of death in teens.
- A large percentage of teens who drink underage go on to try illicit drugs.

ACTIVITY: Read the list above and ask students why they think alcohol and other risky behavior, or mental health issues go together? Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.

- ☐ **GROUP SEVEN:** Choose a video from **YouTube Channel Ask, Listen, Learn** to watch. Define Binge Drinking, Blood Alcohol Concentration, and Blood Alcohol Poisoning. Use the BAC Chart to show what a serving size is and how each serving size affects the human body depending on servings/hour. Use the BAC chart in the Core. Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.

- ☐ **GROUP EIGHT:** Choose a video from **YouTube Channel Ask, Listen, Learn** to watch. Review and discuss the BrainAbouts Myths and Facts: Alcohol (found in the Core). Ask students the questions below: Reward EF skills with Brain-based Praise when students demonstrate them.

- How does your culture shape your attitudes about alcohol?
- Does your family have specific attitudes regarding alcohol?
- How does media affect your thoughts and feelings about alcohol?
- Why do social media, TV, and movies glamorize underage drug and alcohol use?
- Is alcohol considered a 'rite of passage' for underage youth? If so, how did this norm develop?
- How much do your friends influence your ideas about alcohol?