



# Illicit Drugs

## Definitions & Discussion Questions

**Illicit Drugs:** Illegal substances sold by drug dealers or prescription drugs or household chemicals used for the purpose of getting high.

**Inhalants:** Vapors or fumes produced from toxic substances found in many common household products that cause fast-acting harmful effects, which slow down the body's functions, causing light-headedness, loss of oxygen, drowsiness, agitation, seizures, loss of coordination, irregular heartbeat, and death.

**Pain Medications:** Prescription drugs used to relieve pain, derived from opium. May be more harmful than heroin and quickly cause dependence or result in overdose. Never take someone else's prescription meds.

**Cocaine:** A highly addictive stimulant drug extracted from coca leaves that is mixed in a powder and smoked, snorted, or injected. May cause death from respiratory failure, stroke, brain hemorrhage, or heart attack.

**Steroids:** Substances derived or synthesized from testosterone; usually prescribed by doctors to help heal injuries but are sometimes abused by athletes to increase muscle mass. Can lead to high blood pressure, liver and heart damage, testicular atrophy, severe acne, increased aggression, stunted growth, mania, delusions, and the development of breasts in men.



### Critical Thinking Section

#### Students:

- Do you know someone who has experimented with drugs? How do you feel about it?
- If someone offered you their pain medication and told you it was safe, what would you say?
- If huffing household cleaners or spray paint is so dangerous, why do kids try it?
- What would you do if someone asked you to try acid or cocaine?
- What are your consequences at home and school if you use drugs at home or on campus?
- Do you know someone who sells drugs at school?
- How easy is to get hooked on pain meds and switch to heroin?

#### Beware of Drugs Sold at Smokeshops

Neighborhood smoke shops sell a variety of substances labeled as 'natural' or 'safe'. These substances are not monitored by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and thus can claim anything on their label, even if it is false or misleading. For example, Kratom is a tropical tree found in Southeast Asia whose leaves can have mind-altering effects and is commonly sold at smoke shops despite the fact that it is illegal and causes uncomfortable and dangerous side effects.

**Activity Challenge:** Pick three substances and go to the Foundation for a Drug Free World to learn more about them and the different ways they can affect young people.

[www.drugfreeworld.org](http://www.drugfreeworld.org)

#### Staff & Family:

- What is your family code about using drugs?
- How do you keep your prescription meds safe?
- How early should you speak to your children or students about drug use?
- Why do young people experiment with dangerous drugs that could cause death?
- What do you tell kids when high-profile athletes abuse drugs like steroids?
- What are your child's or student's refusal skills when it comes to drugs?
- What would you do if you found out your child used drugs?