

Smoking, drugs and alcohol 1

Smoking is a health hazard

Packets of cigarettes sold in most countries of the world have this warning:

Smoking may damage your health

Or

Smoking causes lung cancer

Cigarettes can damage your health in many ways. Smokers have a greater chance of getting heart disease, lung cancer and diseases that make it hard to breathe.

For someone who smokes, food is not as tasty, they have bad breath, smelly clothes, they get out of breath quickly and they probably have a smoker's cough.

Cigarettes are made from tobacco which contains tar. Yes, the same black stuff that is used to make roads. Tar builds up in the smoker's lungs. That's what causes lung cancer.

They will also spend a lot of money on the habit.

Make a poster about why smoking is bad for you.



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An interview with a smoker

If you know someone who smokes, and is willing to be interviewed, ask:

Why they started smoking

Why they still smoke

1. Make a report on your interview.
2. Imagine you are trying to explain to someone why they should not start smoking. What would you say to them?

Many people start smoking because:

- Someone tells them that it is great
- Someone tells them that everyone else is doing it

But the truth is:

- Smoking makes someone feel uptight, agitated and nervous when the effect wears off.
- More than 89% of young people in Fiji DO NOT smoke.
- Smoking will make a person poor.
- Smoking affects the people around the smoker. People are exposed to passive smoke which can cause the same health problems as the smoker.
- It's hard to quit. It can take as many as 5 or more tries to succeed.
- About 8 out of every 10 young people say that those who smoke are LESS ATTRACTIVE than non-smokers.

3. If someone thinks they need to smoke to "feel good", what could you say to them?

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Marijuana, Cannabis

Cannabis is a “depressant” drug that comes from the cannabis sativa plant. Depressant drugs slow down the nervous system. They slow down the messages going between the brain and the body.

Marijuana made from the dried leaves and flowers of the cannabis plant.

Cannabis has far more tar than tobacco, so has a lot more damaging effects on the lungs.

When a person first uses cannabis:

- They may feel happy and relaxed. They laugh at things that other people don't find funny.
- They take risks and put themselves and others in danger.
- They have an increased appetite so might snack on junk food.
- They are less coordinated, meaning that they may stumble or make wrong judgements. It is dangerous to drive or operate machinery.
- They cannot concentrate, cannot remember things and lose track of what they are saying.
- Like cigarette smoking, it is addictive. When the body gets used to the drug, it will keep on craving for it.

People who start smoking marijuana may do this because someone tells them to do it. This can happen through hanging around with the wrong crowd.

1. *Why is it important to choose your friends carefully?*
2. *How can drugs affect the whole society?*

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Alcohol

People who drink alcohol to excess are likely to experience a number of physical effects, including:

- Hangovers (a headache after waking up the next day)
- Nausea (feeling sick)
- Shakiness
- Vomiting and memory loss
- Losing balance
- Feeling dizzy
- Injury to yourself
- Alcohol poisoning

Alcohol affects the brain, and can do permanent damage to the brain of people under 18.

Alcohol affects people's judgement, especially their ability to drive a car. It can make people act in ways they would not normally act.

1. *Many people drink alcohol because they are sad, lonely, or stressed. What is a better way to deal with problems such as these?*
2. *Some people drink alcohol because they just want to join in with the crowd. What is better than being a 'crowd pleaser'?*
3. *What should a person never do after drinking alcohol?*