SAVE YOUR BRAIN
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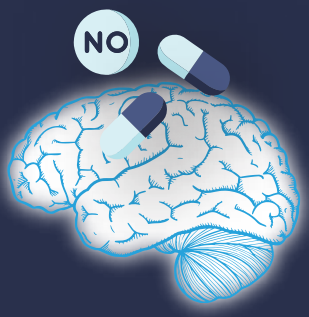


MODULE 3

ECSTASY & THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

YEARS 7-8 BAND, HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION
FOCUS AREA: ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Learning task: The impact of Illicit Drugs on the Developing Brain
Focus on Ecstasy - 45 Minutes

TOPICS	SUGGESTED SESSION TIME ALLOCATIONS
1. Facts about Ecstasy & the brain	15 minutes
2. How Ecstasy use affects the developing brain	25 minutes
Close - Portfolio/homework allocated	5 minutes

Note on flexibility - teachers may prefer to allocate 2 x 45 minute sessions to this module, to allow students more time to respond online, or to play the videos more than once and/or to use stop-start options during videos.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES:

It is important for teachers/facilitators to understand that social and emotional learning fosters the ability to make positive choices about how we behave. As teens, students need to build up the 'tool kit' of life skills to strengthen their decision-making skills.

These include:

- **self-awareness**
- **self-concept**
- **social awareness**
- **social management**
- **critical thinking**
- **problem solving**
- **reflecting & analysing**

These can be incorporated through this segment via online group discussion. Additionally, when face to face group opportunities present themselves use may be made in pedagogy such as role-play, debating, presentations at assemblies, and local community groups. Teachers will also know that our experiences and actions affect the way our brains develop and positive role models and interactions from family members and other a such as club leaders, coachers, teachers, friends and social group.

Quality feedback, reactions and experiential learning add to the teen's 'tool kit' by helping them to learn:

- **Strategies for relating and interacting with others**
- **Assertive behaviour skill**
- **How to establish and manage changing relationships – offline and online**
- **General health and wellbeing activities**
- **What impact Social / emotional health has on general well being**
- **Observe real resilience skills in action that support resilient behaviour**
- **See how others demonstrate coping skills and help seeking strategies**

Image source: aph.gov.au

1. FACTS ABOUT ECSTASY AND THE BRAIN: 15 minutes

Online Classroom Task - Read through notes and answer questions.

MDMA, short for 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, is most commonly known as Ecstasy or Molly. It is a laboratory-made drug that produces a "high" similar to the stimulants called amphetamines. It also produces psychedelic effects, similar to the hallucinogens mescaline and LSD. MDMA first became popular in the nightclub scene, at "raves" (all-night dance parties), and music festivals or concerts. It is now used by a broader range of people. The drug's effects generally last from 3 to 6 hours. It has no medical benefit and a high potential for abuse.

MDMA increases the activity of three brain chemicals:

▪ Dopamine—produces increased energy/activity and acts in the reward system to reinforce behaviours.

▪ Norepinephrine—increases heart rate and blood pressure, which are particularly risky for people with heart and blood vessel problems.

▪ Serotonin—affects mood, appetite, sleep, and other functions. It also triggers hormones that affect sexual arousal and trust. The release of large amounts of serotonin likely causes the emotional closeness, elevated mood, and empathy felt by those who use MDMA.

Other health effects include: nausea, muscle cramping, involuntary teeth clenching, blurred vision, chills, sweating.

Meet Molly - Truth about MDMA CLICK!

Answer the following:

- What technical name is given to Ecstasy?

- Ecstasy is a stimulant. What does that mean?

- Name 1 brain chemical that is affected by ecstasy and how does it affect it?

- What are two other health effects of ecstasy use?

2. HOW ECSTASY USE AFFECTS THE DEVELOPING BRAIN: 25 minutes

Online Classroom Task - Watch at least one of the videos below and look for 5 facts about how Ecstasy impacts on the developing teen brain. Students can add these to their e-portfolio for this module.

MDMA - Respect Your Brain: CLICK!

What Ecstasy does to your brain & body: CLICK!

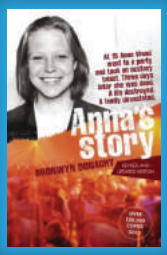
Ecstasy & Serotonin: CLICK!

Teachers/Parents CLICK! for more.

Portfolio/home study: Students review the video in this module and record their findings in their E Portfolio – 'We are programmers of our own brains'. Their findings should include at least two main learnings about the short term impact of ecstasy on the brain and at least two main facts about the serious risks of using even one ecstasy pill.

Students can research stories about young people who have experienced the effects of ecstasy use, using these cases:

Anna's story: CLICK!



OR

Ecstasy Addiction Stories
The Recovery Vilage
CLICK!

Students may also continue to suggest ways to use health practices, behaviours and resources to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities. For example, add to a poster display in a nominated public place such as a shopping centre or at school assemblies. The poster could be hard copy or electronic in presentation. This could be done in groups and connect to other classes ie. Art, IT etc.

EVERY PILL COULD CAUSE SERIOUS HARM & BRAIN SCARRING!

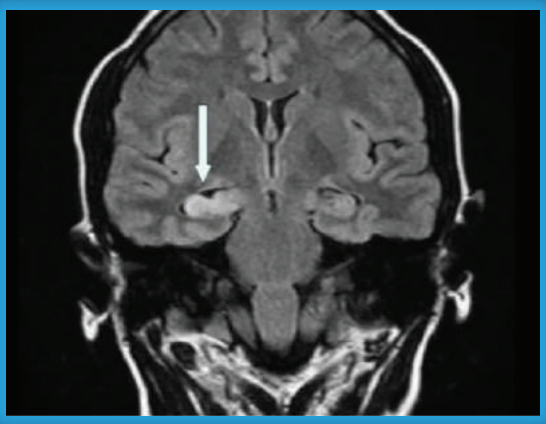


Image source: drugaware.com.au

Australian Curriculum links: Health & Physical Education
ACPPS073 Investigate & select strategies to promote health, safety & wellbeing.
ACPPS076 Evaluate health information & communicate their own & others' health concerns.
ACPPS077 Plan & use health practices, behaviours & resources to enhance health, safety & well being of their communities.