

# 7th GRADE: SUBSTANCE USE

## LESSON 3 OVERVIEW

# Dependency & Getting Help



### Lesson Time:

30 Minutes

### Materials Provided:

- Video: "[How Addiction Changes Your Brain](#)" (3:13)
- Lesson Slides [Download](#)

### Materials Needed:

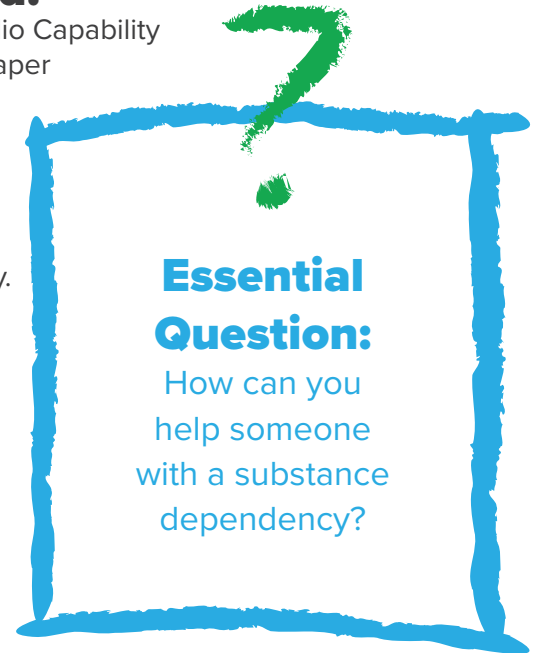
- Projector with Video/Audio Capability
- Dry Erase Board/Chart Paper
- Markers

### Objectives:

Students will be able to...

1. Define dependence & addiction.
2. Explain the physiological impact of substances on the brain and body.
3. List ways to get help for themselves or someone else struggling with addiction.
4. Identify levels of control in regard to others using substances.

**Terms to Learn:** Dependence, Addiction



# Dependency & Getting Help



## Lesson Introduction: (1 minute)

In our previous PATH lessons, we discussed motivating factors for substance use, warning signs of use vs. abuse, and the existence of gateway drugs. Today we are going to look into what we can and cannot control, why drugs can be difficult to quit, and most importantly what to do if you or someone you know needs help.

## Activity 1: Video & Discussion “Why are Drugs So Hard to Quit?” (7 minutes)

We are going to watch a short CNN interview of Dr. S. Gupta who reports how the brain physically changes with drug use. Before we watch the video, take out a piece of paper and your pencil. While you are watching the video, write down 2 facts or statements that were new information or things that got your attention. Pay attention as the video explains to you how the brain physically changes with drug abuse and how this can lead to a dependency on drugs. After the video, be prepared to share your notes.

“How Addiction Changes Your Brain” - CNN (3:13 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f1nmqjHIII>

**Pair-Share:** Turn to a neighbor and share with each other the two facts you wrote on your paper.

**What did you learn from this video?** (Allow students to share with the entire group the good answers they heard from their partner.) Does anyone remember from the video how many Americans are battling some sort of addiction? The report said 23 million! If we can work to educate people your age and prevent them from ever trying drugs, we are in a position to change those numbers.

**What happens when someone tries to quit with no help?** It usually doesn't last because they quickly start using again. The video told us that addiction is a disease of the brain that can happen to anyone. It causes a strong urge to keep taking it even if the drug is causing harm. That's basically the definition of addiction: to continue something that you know is harmful for you. That may not make sense to some of you. You may be thinking “Why would anybody do something to themselves that causes them harm?”

The video explained that when you take drugs, the chemical signals in your brain change. It affects your actions and choices and even the way you feel. Things that used to bring you joy or satisfaction like eating, talking to a new boyfriend or girlfriend, watching your favorite movie, or other experiences you would normally enjoy can be changed by drugs. This leads to depression and anxiety. For someone with a dependency, the drug becomes more important than the other things that used to bring them joy and excitement.

Students, you are guaranteed to be free from addiction if you choose to never use. Some people never try any substances because people in their family had such serious dependency problems. Some people have other motivating factors for never starting such as their health, sports, faith, future plans for success, and personal integrity. It is smart to make the choice to avoid it altogether, especially if dependency and addiction runs in the family.

## Core Lesson:

### Slide/Handout

**DEPENDENCE**  
A person's use is based on "survival"; characterized by the symptoms of tolerance and withdrawal.

**ADDICTION**  
Addiction is marked by a change in behavior caused by the biochemical changes in the brain after continued substance abuse.

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### Lesson Script/Talking Points

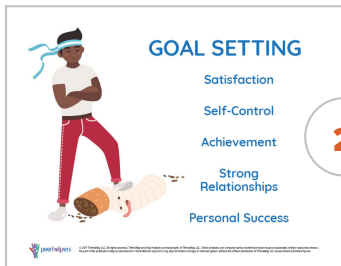
#### Slides 1-3 & Notes (13 minutes)

#### Slide 1: Terms of Dependence & Addiction

- **DEPENDENCE**- A person's use is based on “survival”; characterized by the symptoms of tolerance and withdrawal.
- **ADDICTION**- Addiction is marked by a change in behavior caused by the biochemical changes in the brain after continued substance abuse.

# Core Lesson (cont)

## Slide/Handout



## Lesson Script/Talking Points

### Slide 2: Goal Setting

When seeking satisfaction, consider the rush of self-control, achievement, strong relationships, and personal success.



### Slide 3: How to Help

If you recognize someone's dependence or addiction, knowing some initial steps for support or help can be critical. On this slide, let's take a look at the different options you have for getting help for yourself or others who have a substance abuse problem.

- **School** - Who can you go to in the school if you or someone you know is dependent on a substance? Answers may include Teacher, school counselor, coach, etc.
- **Family** - Who in your family outside of home do you trust or can you go to when you or someone else needs help? Answers may include aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.
- **Home** - Whom do you live with that you trust to go to when you or someone else needs help? Answers may include parent, older sibling, etc.
- **Community** - Who in your community do you trust that you can go to when you or someone else needs help? Answers may include pastor, coach, youth leader, etc.
- **Helplines** - Alateen (1-800-352-9996); National Youth Crisis Hotline (1-800-442-HOPE(4673) National Cancer Institute Smoking Quitline (1-877-44U-QUIT(87848)
- **Online** - Here are two websites that educate and provide help with this area.  
[www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)      <http://teens.drugabuse.gov>

## Activity 2: What I Can and Can Not Control-Board Activity (7 minutes)

*(Directions: Facilitators, draw two large circles on the board. Label the two circles "What I Can Control" and "What I Can NOT Control.")*

Our closing activity in today's lesson focuses on what you CAN and CANNOT control in your life in regards to alcohol, drug, and tobacco use. Class, we are now going to discuss what you can and cannot control in your life when it comes to substance use, substance abuse, and healthy choices. I need two volunteers to write the class answers for us. Everyone, once you share, the volunteers will write your responses under either what you can control or cannot control.

Raise your hand and share What You CAN Control in your life when it comes to substance use, abuse, and the choices you and others make. *(Have student write in responses on the board; see list below of possible answers if students need prompting.)*

Raise your hand and share What You CANNOT Control in your life when it comes to your or others' substance use and choices. *(Have students write in responses on the board; see the list below of possible answers if students need prompting.)*

# Core Lesson (cont)



*(Allow students to share their responses with the class. Once they have shared, provide them with these answers below if they have not been covered already. Write them in the circles on the board for the students to see.)*

## **CAN Control -**

1. Choosing to not put yourself in an environment where people may be using drugs or alcohol
2. Getting in the car with someone who has been drinking or under the influence of drugs (Ask to borrow someone's phone to call and ask for another ride.)
3. Asking for help or providing resources to the addicted person (talking to a teacher, parent, calling a hotline, etc.)  
What you say to others (ex. sharing with someone that you care about them or that you know how they can get help)
4. Refusing to use a substance (ex. "No thanks, I have practice.")
5. Participation in positive after school activities such as sports, clubs, church youth groups, volunteering

## **CANNOT Control -**

1. Other people's choices to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco
2. Whether someone develops an addiction
3. Another person's readiness to get help (You can provide them with helpful resources, but you can not force them to take action and get help.)
4. Other people's words and actions (Substance use affects people's moods and sometimes makes them irritable, angry, or depressed. They may even lie to you or steal from you.)
5. Pressure from peers (You will be faced with peer pressure at some point. Be sure to plan ahead for this and stand firm and strong with your choices.)

## **Closing: Essential Question (2 minutes)**

**How can you help someone with a substance dependency?** *(Allow for responses.)*

Today we discussed why drugs are so hard to quit once a person starts using and identified ways you can get help for yourself and others facing addiction. It is important that you understand the control that substances like drugs, alcohol, tobacco or vaping can have on your developing brains and bodies. While you can not control whether other people choose to use, you can control your own decisions and you can provide resources to friends and family who are abusing alcohol, drugs, or tobacco. Who can name some of the resources available to you when you are trying to help a struggling friend or family member? *(Allow students to answer, ensuring that answers include sources at your school such as teachers and counselors, as well as hotlines and web-sites mentioned within the lesson.)*

You never know... even at your age, you can be the reason someone quits using tobacco products, drugs or alcohol. Making healthy, safe, and smart choices will keep you on the right path in your life. You will have more achievements, stronger relationships, and more happiness when you choose to refuse alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

## **References/Resources/Hotlines:**

- [Addictioncenter.com](http://Addictioncenter.com)
- Alateen
- National Youth Crisis Hotline
- National Cancer Institute Smoking Quitline
- [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)
- <http://teens.drugabuse.gov/about.php>

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