LESSON - “THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERVENING EARLY AND EARLY RECOGNITION OF SUBSTANCE USE”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age/Grade Level</th>
<th>Middle and High School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Time</td>
<td>1 class period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Needed</td>
<td>Writing supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>To know the warning signs of substance use, early recognition, early intervention, goals of intervention and what to do next.</td>
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SUBSTANCE USE, BRAIN DEVELOPMENT, EARLY RECOGNITION

Topic I: Use of additive substances interferes with normal brain development

Goal: To present facts to students to help them in their decisions about use of additive substances.

Teacher presents known information about early drinking, smoking or use of other drugs leading to developing addiction. Shares research data shows that if a youth starts the use of additive substances before 15 years, they are 7 times more likely to develop a substance use problem earlier than youth that delay first use until the adolescent brain has developed. Early recognition is often difficult due to typical teen behavior looking similar to the warning signs that something is changing in their behaviors.

Activity Title: Students are assigned to work in small groups to record their ideas.

Objectives: To continue setting the stage for conversation about topics that are often awkward for young students to openly discuss.

Activity Instructions: Groups of 2 or 3 will list their ideas of early warning signs that they see or know about, then all ideas will be presented in the large group.

Examples: include changed behaviors, mood shifts, hygiene and appearance problems, health issues, school performance, changes and challenges at home.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does it start for youth using substances? Why do youth think they won’t be addicted?
2. What might parents do when they realize their youth has been using substances?
LESSON CONTINUED:

I: Topic II - EARLY INTERVENTION

Following this first discussion, teacher reports further data stating that 21% of 6th graders reported they had alcohol at least once in the last year and that 68% of 12th graders reported they too had alcohol at least once in the last year while the parents reported that much less knowledge of youth drinking. With this information, we look at early intervention of youth substance use very seriously.

Begin Discussion about Early intervention by asking students:
Why are parents and adults advised to intervene a youth’s substance use as early as possible?

Examples: when casual use becomes regular use, addiction is more likely, damage to the brain development can stop and recovery can begin, stop use young and improve your chances for a more healthy, normal life.

CONTINUE WITH MORE DISCUSSION

1. How do youth stop their regular substance use?
2. What is an intervention? Can an intervention be successful?
3. Is it ever too early to intervene?
4. Why do teachers have to report a student’s substance use?