

## ALCOHOL: DIFFERENT PEOPLE, DIFFERENT TIMES, DIFFERENT EFFECTS

**Objective:** To discuss that the effects of alcohol on an individual depend on a variety of factors, including the individual, the alcohol involved and the environment

**Materials:** ■ Printed cards – ‘Types of alcohol’, ‘Individual factors’ and ‘Environment’

Teacher leads a discussion around some of the reasons people use alcohol, i.e., what are some of the perceived positive effects of alcohol? List some of these.

Then students are asked to identify some of the negative effects of alcohol.

Students are then asked to explain how alcohol could have such a wide range of effects, i.e., what factors affect whether a person has a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ time when they drink alcohol?

Use this discussion to categorise these factors under three headings:

- Individual factors – mood, whether you have eaten or not, gender, etc
- The alcohol itself – how much has been drunk, alcohol content, speed of drinking, etc
- Environment – who you are drinking with, why you are drinking with them and where you are consuming alcohol, etc

Discuss that the effects of alcohol are not always the same each time you drink. **Alcohol, like any other drug, affects different people at different times in different ways.** The effect of alcohol on an individual depends on the interaction of a range of factors.

Distribute the cards, one to each student. Ask students to spread themselves around the room and at the teacher’s signal they should form groups of three where each person has a different colour card. Each group should read each of their cards and then discuss the following questions:

- 1** What could be some possible effects of the alcohol under these circumstances, taking into account each of the three bits of information provided?
- 2** What are the potential harms? Give these circumstances a rating out of 5, with 5 being the most risky. As a group, come up with some strategies that could reduce the harms that have been identified.

One member of the group should now swap with a member of another group, ensuring that they have the same colour card. Each group will now have a slightly different scenario that can now be discussed.

Repeat the procedure, rotating the colour of the cards, at least five times.

Bring the class together to summarise what the activity had showed, i.e., no-one can know what effect alcohol can have on an individual at any one time – there are too many factors to take into account. However, there are certain situations where drinking alcohol is much riskier due to the interaction of factors and it is important to try to avoid these or at least attempt to reduce the risks wherever possible.

# TYPES OF ALCOHOL

Photocopy and glue the following statements on to separate pieces of blue card

<b>One bottle of vodka</b>	<b>Two bottles of high-strength vodka-based RTDs</b>
<b>One can of low-alcohol beer in 30 minutes</b>	<b>Two shots of vodka with orange juice</b>
<b>One bottle of regular-strength vodka-based RTD in 30 minutes</b>	<b>One bottle of regular-strength vodka-based RTD in 3 minutes</b>
<b>Four standard drinks in four hours</b>	<b>Eight standard drinks in four hours</b>
<b>Two cans of scotch and cola</b>	<b>Four shots of scotch and cola with ice</b>
<b>One bottle of vodka and one bottle of orange juice</b>	<b>Two cans of regular-strength beer</b>

# INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Photocopy and glue the following statements on to separate pieces of red card

<b>Is currently on medication prescribed by a doctor</b>	<b>Is going to drive home</b>
<b>Recently broken up with boyfriend/girlfriend</b>	<b>Short and slim female</b>
<b>Has been drinking caffeine-based energy drinks</b>	<b>Is going to catch a taxi home</b>
<b>Short and slim male</b>	<b>Just had a huge fight with parents about going out drinking</b>
<b>Sixteen year old inexperienced drinker</b>	<b>Sixteen year old experienced drinker</b>
<b>Recently eaten a meal</b>	<b>Is pregnant</b>

# ENVIRONMENT

Photocopy and glue the following statements on to separate pieces of green card

<b>On New Year's Eve with parents</b>	<b>At the beach at night with a group of school friends</b>
<b>Celebrating a grand final win with teammates</b>	<b>With new friends who are five years older</b>
<b>At a school friend's adult-supervised party at their home</b>	<b>At a school friend's non- supervised party at their home</b>
<b>In the local park with a group of friends</b>	<b>With a meal at home with parents</b>
<b>In a car with boyfriend/girlfriend</b>	<b>Commiserating losing the grand final</b>
<b>At the beach on a hot afternoon</b>	<b>At a party the night before playing sport</b>