

Potential Integration:

ELA

Health
5.ATOD.3.1 Use refusal skills to resist the pressure to experiment with alcohol and other drug use.
5.ATOD.3.2 Design strategies for maintaining an alcohol-free lifestyle that include barriers and ways of overcoming these barriers.

Materials Needed:

Appendix 1 – Refusal Skills to Avoid Alcohol

Appendix 2 – Practicing Assertive Refusal

Appendix 3 – Who ME? Alcohol-Free!

Statement of Objectives:

In previous lessons, we have studied the effects of alcohol abuse on the person who drinks and on others such as family members or friends. We also looked at why people drink and the influence of advertising. Today we will learn strategies to avoid alcohol. By the end of the lesson, you will be able to demonstrate assertive refusal to experiment with alcohol and other drugs.

Focus:

Have students write their names in cursive, as neatly and legibly as possible. Then have them move their chairs so that they can extend one of their legs in front of them with their knee “locked.” Ask them to begin moving their extended leg in a wide circle and continue doing so as they try to write their name again. Usually they begin to move the leg up and down and are unable to move it in a circle. Students will usually be frustrated by not being able to concentrate on or complete the task effectively.

Say to students, This activity is intended to show how the effect of alcohol interferes with a person’s life. Alcohol is a depressant drug and we perform activities less well if we are under the influence. There are many reasons to avoid alcohol completely until you are an adult and to avoid misusing or abusing it after adulthood. Knowing HOW as well as WHY to avoid alcohol will help you live a healthier life.

Teacher Input:

Distribute copies of the handout from Appendix 1, Refusal Skills to Avoid Alcohol. Ask students to read the information and respond to these questions:

- Why might a young person think drinking alcohol is okay?
- What does it mean if someone is assertive?
- Of the six Ways to Say No, which is likely to be most effective?
- What are reasons for saying No?
- What activities (other than drinking) could a young person suggest?

Now we are going to practice saying No assertively. Ask students to come to the front of the room and stand facing a classmate. Distribute the numbered slips created by cutting apart

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Appendix 2, Practicing Assertive Refusal. One row will read the pressure line (odd-numbered statements) and their partners in the row facing them will state the assertive refusal (even-numbered statements). Encourage “refusers” to use a firm voice and look the person in the eye.

Assessment:

We practiced our refusal skills, but it is also a good idea to think about strategies. Having a plan to make certain you stay alcohol-free means you will know what to do in different situations. To do this, each of you will write a plan titled Who ME? Alcohol-Free!

Provide copies of Who Me? Alcohol-Free! (Appendix 3). Share the example of avoiding situations in which young people may be tempted to try alcohol (such as a party with older students that is not supervised by adults). Give students fifteen minutes to write a paragraph for each part of the assignment. Call on several students to share their ideas.

Closure:

In your writing assignment, you showed that you understand the need to have a plan and the skills to avoid alcohol. You have practiced saying No to a drug that is risky for young people.

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Refusal Skills to Avoid Alcohol



You will face a number of difficult decisions in life. Since making friends and fitting might be important to you and others your age, peer pressure has a big impact on decisions, especially on those about drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. Children may be afraid that if they say no to something harmful, they will not be accepted. It is important to learn about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Other important skills that you will need are refusal skills. If you learn how to say no to dangerous situations, you will feel more confident in your decisions. There are a number of ways you can refuse drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Ways To Say No:

- **Say, "No, thanks."** It could be just as easy as that! However, if the person offering the cigarette, beer, or joint persists, back up "No thanks" with other tactics.
- **Be a broken record.** Keep saying no as many times as needed, either to cause the person pressuring them to stop, or to stall and think of something else to say.
- **Give a reason.** This reason could be simply, "I'm not allowed to do that," or, "That's bad for you." It could state the consequences, such as, "I don't want to do that; it will make me sick," or, "You can die from doing that." The important thing is to state reasons for saying no with confidence. It's important not to get into an argument. The goal is to refuse what is being offered.
- **Walk away or ignore the offer.** This doesn't work in all situations. Sometimes you will be alone or in some other situation where you can't walk away.
- **Change the subject or suggest doing something else.** By saying, "Let's do ____ instead," you have the potential to not only refuse an offer of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, but to prevent a friend from using them too.
- **Assert yourself.** This is an important part of all the above tactics. If you can stick up for yourself, you are learning an important life skill. Being able to state your position assertively is a trait also valued in adults, so if you learn it now, you will be better off in the future.

Practicing Assertive Refusal

1. "You'll look cool if you drink."	2. "I don't need alcohol to be cool."
3. "All the older kids drink at parties."	4. "That might be okay for older kids, but not for me."
5. "Drinking helps you relax."	6. "I practice yoga and breathing exercises. I can relax without alcohol."
7. "Just one drink won't hurt you."	8. "It wouldn't help me either."
9. "They advertise beer on TV so it can't be that bad."	10. "Those ads are just trying to sell you a product."
11. "The movies show how much funnier people are when they drink."	12. "Movies also show people getting in trouble when they drink: fighting, drunk driving, being rude. That's not for me."
13. "You're just afraid your parents will find out."	14. "There won't be anything to find out. I don't drink."
15. "If you were my friend, you would drink with me."	16. "If you were my friend, you would not pressure me to do something dangerous and illegal."
17. "You can't get drunk on beer."	18. "I learned in Health class that a beer is just as strong as a glass of wine or liquor."
19. "Drinking is a way to show you're more mature."	20. "I think I'm being mature by standing up for my right to make my own decisions."
21. "Adults exaggerate the dangers of drinking to scare us. Don't be a sissy."	22. "Drinking can be dangerous. That's why it is illegal for kids our age."
23. "Drinking gives you a super buzz."	24. "I don't need to be buzzed. It's better to stay sober."
25. "Have you seen that movie, The Hangover? Those guys had a blast."	26. "They also got into a lot of trouble and could have hurt themselves or other people."
27. "My parents drink and they aren't alcoholics."	28. "Many adults drink responsibly, and I will try to make healthy decisions after I am 21."
29. "You'll be able to stop anytime you want."	30. "I won't have to stop drinking, because I do not plan to start."
31. "I bet you've never tried beer before."	32. "You're right! And I'm not going to now."
33. "Are you sure you don't want to try it?"	34. "No, thanks. I don't drink."
35. "I know folks who have drunk alcohol for years and it hasn't hurt them."	36. "Maybe they are just lucky. I don't want to take a chance."
37. "You know, everyone I know drinks."	38. "Not true. I'm somebody and I don't drink."
39. "I bet you've heard that your first drink will make you sick and you're afraid to try it."	40. "I have heard that and getting sick is not my idea of a good time."

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Who ME? Alcohol-Free!



This is a writing assignment to help you consider how to avoid pressures to try alcohol. Write a paragraph to answer each question. Make certain your narration of experiences or events reflect the decision to avoid alcohol entirely until of legal age, then use in moderation (if at all).

<p>Describe a situation in which an older student offers you alcohol: perhaps an older brother of a friend who thinks getting little kids drunk is funny.</p>	<p>Write a description of the strategies you could use to avoid this pressure.</p>
<p>Write the dialogue (three statements each) for you and the older student.</p>	<p>Write a conclusion to the scenario reflecting your firm decision to avoid alcohol and the words you would use to assertively refuse.</p>

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