

MANITOBA ADDICTIONS AWARENESS WEEK

TOPIC:	Healthy alternatives
AUDIENCE:	Grades 8 - 12
OUTCOME:	Describe appropriate use of avoidance/refusal strategies when dealing with potentially dangerous situations and/or stressful social situations.

HEALTHY ALTERNATIVES

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

Whether we want to admit it or not, everyone uses alcohol, other drugs or gambles for a good reason. If there was nothing good about any of these activities, people would not engage in them. This activity helps people discover personal needs and explore healthy options to meet those needs.

Activity: **Alternatives Scattegories**

Materials:

- Scrap paper for each student
- Pen/pencil for each student
- Stop watch

Instructions:

- In a large group, have participants brainstorm all the reasons that a person might choose to drink alcohol, use drugs, or gamble. List on board.
- Encourage enough responses to create a list of at least 10 reasons.
- Examples of reasons may include; fun, more creative, risk taking, fitting in with friends, to relax, for excitement, to forget problems, to feel better, to join with family, to be more outgoing, to feel free, for the challenge, to feel better about self, etc.
- Facilitator then talks about the fact that all these reasons are basic human needs. Alcohol, drugs or gambling are all options to meeting these needs, but can be harmful to a person. If a person can only meet these needs through alcohol, other drugs, or gambling, they may be considered dependent. It is important to have a wide range of healthy options to meet these needs.

- Paper and pen/pencils are then distributed to each participant.
- The facilitator reads out a reason (personal need) from the list generated and gives one minute for participants to write as many healthy activities as they can think of that would meet the need.
- After the minute is up, the participants take turns reading their lists slowly and if activities are listed by anyone else, the activities are crossed off.
- Participants get a point for each activity they write down that no one else has on their list.
- Continue for 4-5 rounds and a winner can be declared or not.

Debriefing Questions:

1. Did you get some activity ideas from other people that you wouldn't have thought of by yourself?
2. Which of the activities that you listed do you actually do?
3. Do you feel like you can meet your needs in a healthy way?