

HIV/AIDS: Influence of Alcohol & Other Drugs

Grade 7, Lesson #22

Time Needed

One class period

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to ...

1. Describe the physical and emotional effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body.
2. Recognize that drugs (including alcohol) impair a person's ability to make decisions.
3. Explain that poor decisions about drugs and sexual behavior can put a person at increased risk for HIV.
4. List at least three reasons why some teens use drugs and healthier, less dangerous alternatives for meeting these needs.

Agenda

1. Set the stage by brainstorming the physical and emotional effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body. (7 minutes)
2. Discuss the impact of alcohol and other drugs on decision-making and on HIV risk. (5 minutes)
3. Analyze an advertisement, focusing on the use of alcohol to meet social and emotional needs. (5 minutes)
4. Generate a list of healthy, less dangerous alternatives to meeting these needs. (5 minutes)
5. Use the student worksheets to personalize the issue and reinforce concepts. (25 minutes)
6. Close the lesson. (1 minute)
7. Assign homework. (2 minutes)

Note: The teacher's script is indicated by italics. This script is meant to be a guide for teachers who might find it helpful.

Materials Needed

Student materials:

- Worksheet: *Lily & Gino's Story* (front); *Lily, You've Got Mail* (back) (1 per student)
- Worksheet: *Eric's Story* (front); *Eric, You've Got Mail* (back) (1 per student)
- Individual homework: *Healthy Fun* (1 per student)
- Family homework: *Alcohol, Other Drugs, and HIV* (1 per student)
- Family homework: *Family Homework Letter & Confirmation Slip* (1 per student)

Classroom materials, equipment:

- Transparency: *Alcohol and Other Drugs**
- Transparency: *Beer Ad**
- Overhead projector

* Alternately, *FLASH* transparencies are available as PowerPoint files on the *FLASH* web site: www.kingcounty.gov/health/flash

Resources

Background Reading:

- HIV/AIDS: Background Information for Educators www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/basic/
- How to answer difficult questions: Answering Difficult Questions www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/personal/famplan/educators/diffques.aspx
- How to answer questions about controversial issues: Values Question Protocol <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/personal/famplan/educators/values.aspx>

Websites - Public Health – Seattle & King County:

- Resources for Health Educators <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/hiv/educators.aspx>
- HIV/AIDS Program www.kingcounty.gov/health/hiv
- Family Planning Program www.kingcounty.gov/health/famplan
- Drug and Alcohol Use and Harm Reduction <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/hiv/HarmReduction.aspx>

Phone Numbers:

- HIV/STD Program: 206-296-4649 (PHSKC) M-F 8-5pm
- HIV/STD Hotline: 800-272-2437 (Washington State Department of Health)
- HIV/STD Hotline: 800-CDC-INFO (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)
- Facts of Life Line: 206-328-7711 or 888-307-9275 (Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest)
- Your local Public Health Department

Activities

1. Set the stage by brainstorming the physical and emotional effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body. (7 minutes)

Show the *Alcohol & Other Drug* transparency.

I'm not looking for one specific answer, but turn to your neighbor and tell that person at least one way these things can affect a person. Remember to think about emotions (how they make people feel) and behaviors (how people act.)

Can I have a few volunteers to share what they talked about with their neighbor?

As students give responses, write them on the board. While most of these points are negative, it is important to acknowledge that adolescents perceive positive aspects of using alcohol and drugs as well. This helps build credibility. Later in the lesson, we will discuss healthier, less dangerous ways to meet these needs.

Possible answers include:

- High, light-headed
- Nauseous, dizzy, drowsy
- Depressed
- Silly
- Feel good
- Less shy or anxious
- Less concerned about privacy, values, responsibility, etc.
- More aggressive: fighting, shouting, using weapons, etc.
- Less cautious: driving when drunk, being in sexual situations, swimming at night, etc.
- More confident: talking to people that normally make them nervous, asking someone out on a date, etc.

2. Discuss the impact of alcohol and other drugs on decision-making and HIV risk. (5 minutes)

What does this have to do with getting HIV?

Possible answers include:

- People think less clearly.
- People don't make the same decisions they would if they were not using alcohol or other drugs.¹
- People often make decisions they later regret.
- **Alcohol and other drugs all increase the user's chances of getting HIV.²**

If a person can't think clearly and make good decisions, they are more likely to take risks, such as using injection drugs and having sex. Using drugs and alcohol should not be used as an excuse to have unsafe sex. People who are drinking or using drugs can still choose abstinence or use condoms to protect themselves.

While all drugs and alcohol affect a person's ability to make decisions, using needles to inject drugs can actually transmit HIV infection. If a person uses needles, i.e., for diabetes, steroids, or illegal drugs like heroin, he or she should use a brand new needle every time. Many areas have needle exchanges where people can turn in used needles to get new ones.

3. Analyze an advertisement, focusing on the use of alcohol to meet social and emotional needs. (5 minutes)

Show *Beer Ad* transparency.

What is it about this ad that makes people want to buy the beer?

Possible answers include:

- The people are having fun.
- The people feel like they're fitting in.
- The people are hanging out with close friends.

Is it okay to want to have fun, to fit in, and have friends? Sure. Everyone needs that. It's part of being human. The ad implies that the way to achieve that is with beer.

4. Generate a list of healthy, less dangerous alternatives to meeting these needs. (5 minutes)

Can you think of other less dangerous ways that people...(insert from brainstorm list above e.g. build friendships, fit in, have fun)?

Give students a chance to share their responses.

5. Use the *Stories* and *You've Got Mail* worksheets to personalize the issue and reinforce concepts. (25 minutes)

Hand out *Lily & Gino's Story* (front) and *Lily, You've Got Mail* (back). Have a student volunteer read *Lily & Gino's Story* aloud. Then, discuss each of the questions as a large group. Possible answers follow each question.

Why did Lily use alcohol and other drugs in this situation?

- As an excuse to have sex (although Lily can say, and even believe, that having sex with Gino was an accident)
- So she wouldn't really have to think about whether this was a good or "right" time for her to have sex
- To excuse her from having to talk with Gino about it first
- To make her feel less nervous about having sex

Exactly what risks did Lily take?

- Getting HIV or another Sexually Transmitted Disease
- Getting pregnant
- Getting talked about by Gino
- Feeling bad, guilty, scared
- Damaging her relationship with Gino
- Disappointing her family. [Note: If your class brings this up and seems to dwell on it, you might point out that communicating about problems can make a family closer. A young person who has lied or made a mistake can often recover their family's trust in time.]

Did her decision to have sex have any possible benefits?

- She might feel less left out with her friends.
- She might have satisfied her curiosity.
- She might have had a good time.
- Gino might want to see her more.

Were the possible benefits worth the risks, in your opinion?

- Most students will conclude that the risks were not worth the benefits.

Did Lily consider Gino's feelings about having sex?

- As far as we can tell, Lily didn't consider Gino's feelings.
- She encouraged him to drink and had sex with him. Based on what he said in the past, it doesn't look like he wanted to have sex.

What are some steps that Lily could take now?

- As soon as she can (but at least within the next three days), go to a clinic to get emergency contraception — a kind of birth control pill that prevents pregnancy if taken right away, also called the morning after pill. To find a clinic or drug store that carries emergency contraception, Lily can go to the website www.not-2-late.com and type in her zip code. [Note: If you've already done a birth control lesson, make sure this point is included. If not, this can be used as an opportunity to teach about emergency contraception.]
- If Lily doesn't use emergency contraception, she can get a pregnancy test in 2 weeks.
- Go to a clinic to get an STD checkup including an HIV antibody test. [Note: Lily can get a chlamydia test result in 7 days, but other STD's may take longer to show up. For example, it might take 6 months to get an accurate Hepatitis B test, and it will take 3 months to learn if she got HIV. Ongoing check-ups are a good idea.]
- Get condoms and learn how to use them.
(If appropriate for your school district, discuss correct condom use with your class. You can use, for your own reference King County's "Correct Condom Use" <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/aids101/protection.aspx> as a basis for the discussion. NOTE: Please don't direct 7th graders to this page; it is intended for older teens and adults.)

- Talk to Gino about what happened, how they are feeling, and whether or not they are going to have sex again.
- Talk over the situation with her family or other trusted adults.

Give people five minutes to complete *Lily, You've Got Mail* individually. Discuss student responses.

Hand out *Eric's Story* (front) and *Eric, You've Got Mail* (back). Have a student volunteer read *Eric's Story* aloud. Then, discuss each of the questions as a large group.

Why did Eric use alcohol and other drugs in this situation?

- We don't really know why Eric used alcohol and other drugs.
- Here are some possible reasons:
 - To feel good or get high. (Note that not all people feel good on drugs. Some drugs cause some people to feel pretty bad.)
 - To impress the older guys (peer pressure).
 - To do what he usually does for fun with his friends. It felt familiar.
 - To relieve boredom.
 - To fit in.
 - To relieve anxiety.
 - To escape from problems.
 - To treat depression (he may or may not know he is depressed).

Exactly what risks did Eric take?

- Getting injured in a car accident, if he or a friend drove.
- Getting in trouble with the police.
- Disappointing his family.
- Feeling bad, guilty, or scared.
- Getting HIV or hepatitis B or C infection.
- Becoming addicted to alcohol or other drugs.
- Making sexual decisions that he might regret later.

Did his decision have any possible benefits?

- He might have had a good time.
- He might feel less left out with his friends.
- He might have satisfied his curiosity.

Were the possible benefits worth the risks, in your opinion?

- Most students will conclude that they were not.

Eric is worried about HIV, what should he do about it?

- In 3 months, go to a clinic to get an HIV antibody test. Getting tested right away won't tell him whether he got infected at the party. It takes time to make enough antibodies to show up on the test. [Note: in 6 months get tested for Hepatitis B & C.]
- Talk over the situation with his family or other trusted adults.

Give students five minutes to complete *Eric, You've Got Mail* individually. Discuss student responses.

6. Close the lesson. (1 minute)

You just gave some great advice to Lily and Eric. You told them how to take care of themselves and stay healthy, but still have fun. I hope you'll all follow your own good advice.

7. Assign homework. (2 minutes)

Students' options might be...

- Individual Homework: *Healthy Fun*
- Family Homework: *Alcohol, Other Drugs & HIV*

Students who do the family homework will also need to take home *Lily & Gino's Story*, *Eric's Story*, and *Family Homework Letter & Confirmation Slip*.

A Reminder about Family Homework

It is the philosophy of the FLASH curriculum to encourage family communication. This is why every topic (although not every single lesson) includes a Family Homework Exercise. These exercises usually focus more on feelings and values than on content, although some involve reviewing that day's learning. The child does NOT report back on the content of those conversations. Instead, he or she returns a Family Homework Confirmation Slip, signed by the child and whatever adult has completed the exercise with the child. This may be a parent or guardian, a grandparent or aunt or uncle, a partner or friend of the parent or guardian, a family counselor, someone from the child's community of worship, or whomever else the child identifies as "family."

It is not our intention, however, to penalize young people who cannot do Family Homework. There may be many reasons. Perhaps a particular issue is too sensitive and either the child or the family prefers not to discuss it. Perhaps the parent(s) or guardian(s) work evenings, care for elderly relatives or for some other reason just can't make time to do homework together. Because some children cannot do Family Homework, we recommend that, whenever you assign FLASH homework, you always offer Individual Homework as an alternative through which a child could earn the same credit.

Alcohol and Other Drugs



Beer Ad



Lily & Gino's Story

Lily and Gino are in 9th grade. Lily likes Gino a lot. They've gone out a couple of times, and she thinks she might want to try sex. She's not really sure. She has a couple of older girlfriends who've tried it, and she's starting to feel a little weird about waiting. Lily's feeling a little left out, too. Gino has said he didn't think he wanted to have sex.

Lily doesn't want to talk to Gino about it, because she worries what Gino would think. She knows condoms are important, but she's too embarrassed to buy them.

So, Saturday night, at a party, she smokes marijuana, which she doesn't usually do, and drinks some beer. She encourages Gino to do the same. They both get pretty drunk and high and end up having sex before they leave. No condom was used.

The next morning, everything is still a little hazy. Lily can't remember everything exactly, but she doesn't think Gino used a condom. She starts counting the days until her next period.

Discussion Questions:

- A. Why did Lily use alcohol and other drugs in this situation?

- B. Exactly what risks did Lily take?

- C. Did Lily consider Gino's feelings about having sex?

- D. Did her decision to have sex have any possible benefits?

- E. Were the possible benefits worth the risks, in your opinion?

- F. What are some steps that Lily could take now?

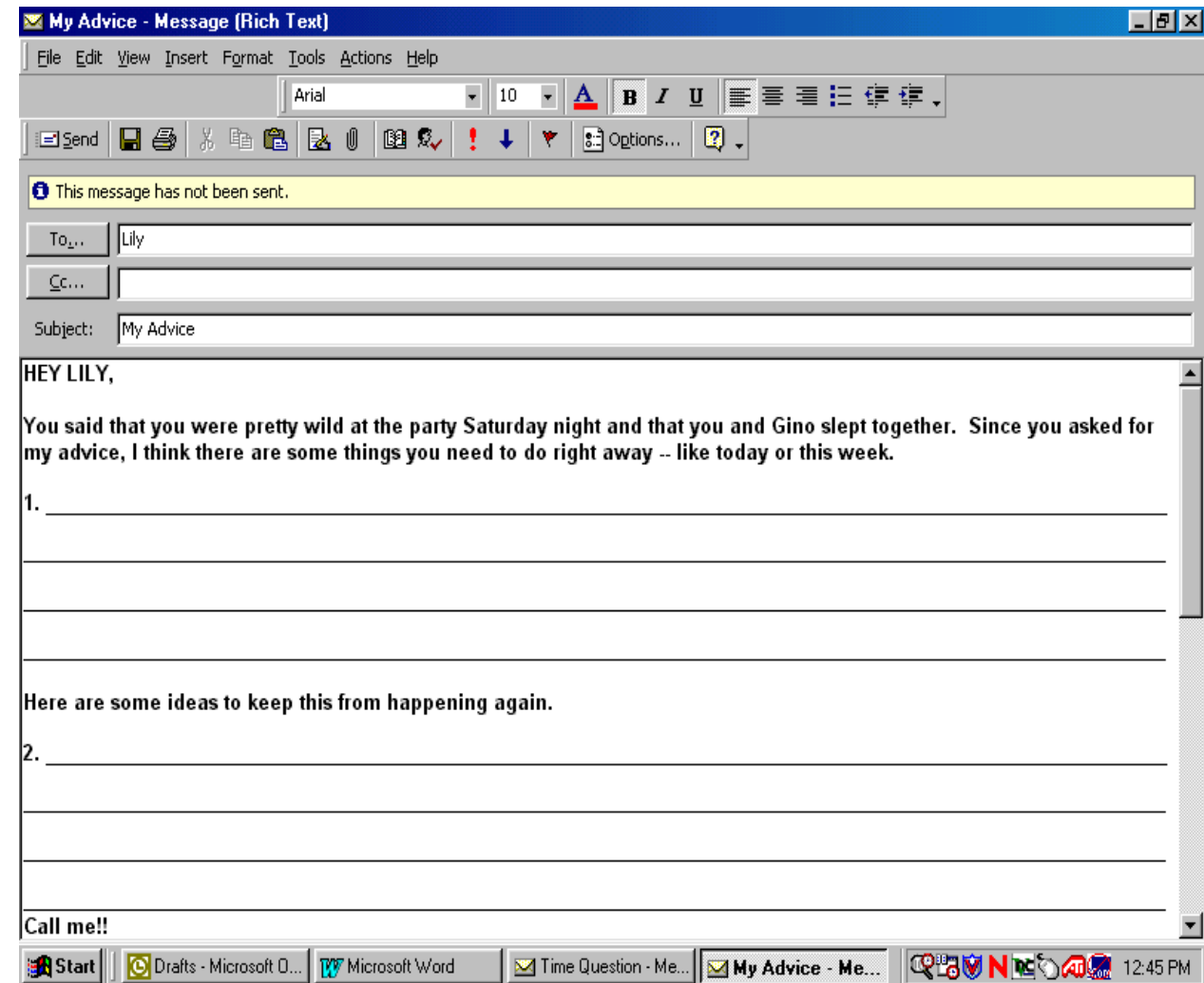
Lily, You've Got Mail

Name: _____ Date: _____

Class Period: _____

Instructions:

1. Tell Lily at least 2 things you think she should do in the next days or weeks.
2. Give Lily at least 2 pieces of advice about how to avoid getting in this situation in the future. Be sure to suggest a healthier, less dangerous thing to do next time she's feeling left out.



Eric's Story

Eric is 15. He went to a party on Saturday night with some of his friends, too. There was an assortment of alcohol and other drugs. Just like always, Eric was pretty high and drunk after a couple of hours.

About then, some older guys showed up. They were using needles to inject drugs. They kept pressuring Eric to try it. Eric was too drunk and high to be sure what he wanted, but he ended up using a needle.

When he woke up the next morning, he couldn't believe he had injected drugs. He was scared. What about HIV?

Discussion Questions:

- A. Why did Eric use alcohol and drugs in this situation?

- B. Exactly what risks did Eric take?

- C. Were the possible benefits worth the risks, in your opinion?

- D. Eric's worried about HIV. What could he do about it?

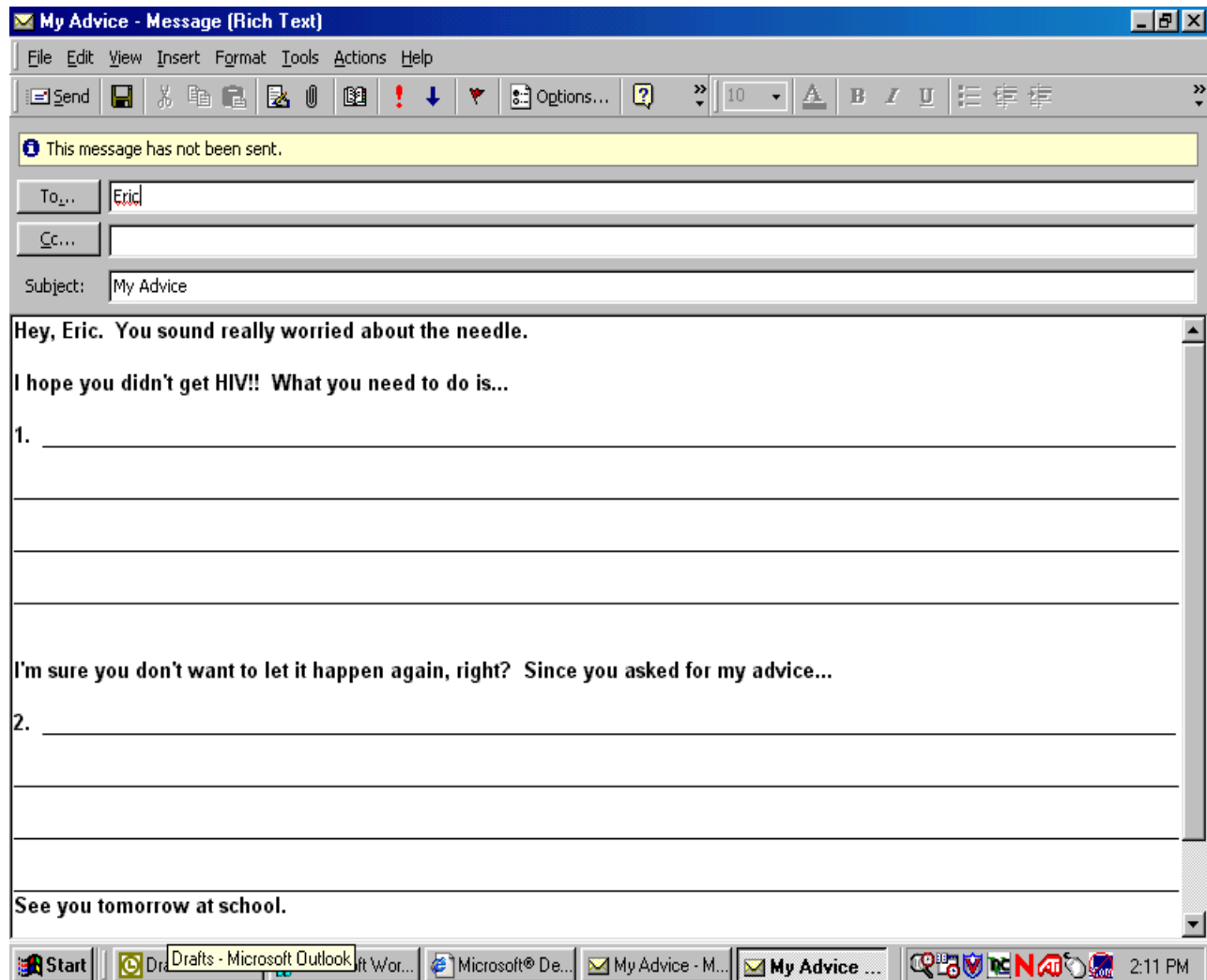
Eric, You've Got Mail

Name: _____ Date: _____

Class Period: _____

Instructions:

1. Tell Eric at least 2 things you think he needs to know about HIV testing.
2. Give Eric at least 2 pieces of advice about how to avoid getting in this situation in the future.



Individual Homework: Healthy Fun

Name: _____ Date: _____
 Class Period: _____

Directions:

Some people use alcohol or other drugs to fit in or to have fun with their friends. Using the phone book, Internet, or a local newspaper, create a list of at least five other activities that youth in your community can do for fun (e.g., sporting events, dances, community center activities, museums, etc.) Be sure to include locations, times, costs, where to get more information, and any other necessary information.

Activity	Location	Hours	Cost	How to find out more	Other
Example: Snow-boarding	Snoqualmie Pass	Every day 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.	\$38 for a lift pass	Call (425) 434-7669	Requires snowboard or skis
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

Family Homework: Alcohol, Other Drugs, & HIV

About Family Homework:

All family homework exercises are optional. Family homework is for two of you... the student and an adult in your family (parent, step-parent, aunt, uncle, etc.)

Directions:

1. Review *Lily & Gino’s Story* and *Eric’s Story* from today’s class.
2. Discuss together:
 - The student’s plans and hopes for the future - after high school.
 - How sex, drugs, and alcohol can impact those plans.

NOTE: Turn in a Family Homework Confirmation Slip by _____, if you want credit.



FAMILY HOMEWORK CONFIRMATION SLIP

We have completed “Family Homework Exercise: Alcohol, Other Drugs, & HIV”.

Date: _____

Student’s signature: _____

Adult’s signature: _____

References

- ¹ Brick J, Ed. Handbook of the Medical Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Binghamton, NY: Hawthorn Press; 2004.
- ² National Institute of Drug Abuse (under NIH). Available at: http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts_hiv1.php#ref. Accessed: August 20, 2009.