

Drug education

KS5/Post-16, Lesson 4: Keeping safe



Keeping safe

This is the fourth of five lessons for key stage 5 on understanding the risks and consequences of substance use, and making informed decisions about alcohol and other drugs. This lesson explores how to maintain personal safety in situations involving alcohol or other drugs, including how to help friends to stay safe and ask for help.

Learning objective

To learn how alcohol and other drugs can affect personal safety.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- identify signs that someone's personal safety may be at risk, in situations involving alcohol and other drugs
- identify barriers to asking for help when personal safety is at risk, and explain how to overcome these
- evaluate strategies to help stay safe when using alcohol or other drugs

Resources required

- Box or envelope for questions
- Resource 1: *Staying safe* [1 per student]
- Resource 2: *House party* [1 per pair]
- Resource 2a: *House party - hints* [support option, as required]
- Resource 2b: *House party - answers* [1 teacher copy]
- Resource 3: *Keeping friends safe* [1 per pair]
- Resource 4: *A night out* [1 per group]

Climate for learning

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson. These include relevant subject knowledge for this topic, guidance on creating a safe learning environment, and curriculum links.

It is important to be vigilant to any potential victim blaming during student feedback in this lesson. Students should be challenged in a supportive way, and encouraged to consider the impact victim-blaming language can have on others. See page 4 in the teacher guidance document for more on challenging victim-blaming.

Baseline assessment

Introduction (Slide 10–11, 2 mins)

Introduce the learning objective and outcomes. Explain that today's lesson will explore personal safety in situations involving alcohol or other drugs, including helping friends to stay safe, and how to ask for help.

Using slide 11, revisit ground rules for the lesson and remind students of the question box.

Baseline assessment activity (Slide 12, 5 mins)

Using **Resource 1: Staying safe**, ask students to read the speech bubble and consider the situation the character might be in, before responding to the questions below. As this is a baseline assessment, they should do this independently without discussing their answers with their peers.

While students complete the activity, circulate the classroom to assess their understanding of what someone might do to help themselves or others to stay safe in a situation involving alcohol or other drugs. If students show less confidence in answering the first two questions, you may want to spend more time on the first core activity, ensuring they understand signs that someone feels uncomfortable, unsafe, or unwell in a situation involving alcohol or other drugs, and how they can get help. If they show less confidence answering the last two questions, you may want to spend more time on the second and third core activities.

When students have completed the activity, ask them to put these to the side and explain that they will return to them at the end of the lesson.

Core activities

Identifying a problem (Slides 13–14, 15 mins)

Show the image on slide 13 of a group of young people at a party where there are alcohol or other drugs.

Using **Resource 2: House party**, ask students to work in pairs to complete the table. They should describe any signs that might show the characters are unwell, unsafe or uncomfortable, as well as identify any risks to the characters' wellbeing and safety, before explaining what the characters, or their friends, could do to help.

Ask volunteers to share their ideas, using **Resource 2b: House party – teacher notes** to guide feedback. Ensure any victim blaming is challenged (see 'Climate for learning' above and p.4 of the teacher guidance document). During feedback, explain that if a person has consumed alcohol or other drugs without their knowledge or consent (including if they have experienced pressure to do this), they are not at fault. It is important to use strategies that help to stay safe and vigilant, for example, those on **Resource 2b**, however, the act of 'spiking' is a criminal offence, where someone who causes another person to consume alcohol or other drugs without their knowledge or consent is fully responsible for this action.



Support: Ask students to use **Resource 2a: House party – hints** to match potential solutions to the different characters in the scenario, recommending strategies that each person might find most helpful.



Challenge: Ask students to write a short script for what one of the characters could say to ask someone for help or express they don't feel comfortable, or what another person could say to help one of the characters.

Staying safe together (Slide 15, 10 mins)

Explain that, building on the ways that people might help themselves or others to stay safe, they are now going to consider how someone might encourage or support others to make safe and responsible decisions.

Use slide 15 to introduce Kiran and Morgan, two more characters from the party. Towards the end of the night, Kiran sees his friend Morgan with car keys in her hand. Morgan said she wasn't planning to have any alcohol, but he has seen her with a bottle at different points in the evening. Kiran isn't sure how many drinks Morgan has had. She mentions that she will leave soon, as she needs to get the car back home.

Give pairs **Resource 3: Keeping friends safe** and ask them to decide what Kiran should do next, creating a 'diamond 9' with the strategies. The card at the top should be the strategy they think would be most effective, the cards in each middle row, strategies that would be equally effective, and the card at the bottom the least effective. If students can identify their own strategies, they might add these too.

Take feedback, drawing out key learning:

- *If a friend is making a decision that could put themselves, or others, at risk of harm, it is important to take action to intervene to lessen the risks, such as challenging a friend who has drunk alcohol and intends to drive.*
- *Asking others for support may help if challenging a friend is difficult. Using techniques such as humour, while remaining honest, can help to diffuse any tension in the situation.*
- *Suggesting safe and responsible options, such as finding another way home, rather than focusing only on the risks of someone's actions, can help to empower others to make a positive decision.*



Support: Ask students to consider what might make it hard for Kiran to suggest to Morgan that she doesn't drive home, and use **Resource 3: Keeping friends safe** to pick one strategy Kiran can use to help him overcome this barrier.



Challenge: Ask students to consider another situation, where Kiran notices that Morgan's behaviour has changed over the night, with her words and actions becoming slower or slurred. Morgan says that she wants to leave the party and walk home on her own. What might Kiran do to make sure that Morgan is safe?

Safety strategies (Slides 16-18, 10 mins)

Remind students of the scenario from the baseline assessment, showing a scene at a nighttime venue. Explain that now they will be thinking about what others can do if someone is out, possibly in a less familiar setting, and needs help because they are feeling unwell, they are uncomfortable, or they feel someone is behaving inappropriately toward them.

In small groups, give students **Resource 4: A night out**, and explain that this shows four potential sources of support someone could turn to if they needed help (also on slides 17-18).

Ask groups to examine each of the sources of help and support. They should consider what challenges or barriers might stop a young person asking for help from each of them, and what the benefits of asking for help might be.

Ask groups to share points from their discussion.

Students might suggest:

- *Asking a police officer: A challenge might be that different people have varying levels of comfort approaching a police officer, or they might be worried if they have consumed illegal substances. A benefit might be that a police officer can help to make sure the young person doesn't encounter any harm from others and can help to assess if they need medical help.*
- *Asking a security guard (bouncer): A challenge might be that if the security guard is positioned outside, it might be harder to ask them for help if the young person is inside the venue. Some young people might feel too intimidated to approach a security guard. A benefit is that security guards can help to communicate with other members of bar staff if there is a problem, for example, if someone's inappropriate behaviour means they need to be removed from the venue.*
- *Asking a parent or trusted adult: A challenge might be that a young person may feel embarrassed to call a parent or another trusted adult, or they might want to avoid getting in trouble. However, a benefit is that a trusted adult can help to make sure that the young person gets home safely and help to care for them if they are feeling unwell. Before going out, the young person might plan a safe location to meet a trusted adult if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable. They might also research local 'safe havens' that a person can visit if they feel worried while out at night, where volunteers and staff are available to help.*
- *Asking a member of staff: If the venue is busy, it might feel challenging to get the attention of a member of staff. Someone might feel unsure of what the member of staff can do. A benefit of talking to a member of staff at the bar is that many are trained to identify the signs or symptoms that someone has become unwell and can help to make sure that they don't consume any further alcohol or other drugs. In venues that run schemes like 'Ask for Angela', staff are trained to make sure that if anyone feels concerned or worried that they are not safe, they can approach them safely (for example, by using a code phrase/word, rather than having to say explicitly what the problem is while they may still be at risk of harm from another person). Staff can then get them any help they need. They might also be able to help in other ways, for example by providing a phone charger, if someone can't use their phone or doesn't have a portable charger.*

Ask students to 'think-pair-share' which of the sources of support they would recommend the character turn to and why, being ready to share their answers with the class. Take answers and draw out that whichever source of support the character turns to, asking for help or support or communicating that they feel safe or unwell is a safe and responsible decision to make.



Challenge: Encourage students to add any other sources of help and support the character could turn to and explain how they might help.

Reflection and endpoint assessment

Reflection and endpoint assessment (Slides 19-22, 15 mins)

Ask students to return to the questions from **Resource 1: Staying safe**. Remind them of the learning outcomes, and reflecting on these, ask them to now add any new learning that they can, or correct any answers where they need to, using a different colour pen.

Then, ask students to choose one character from those they have looked at across the activities from the lesson, and using the prompts on slide 20, write a short plan of action that the character can use to manage the situation safely, including which of the sources of support they could turn to, and what they might do to get home. Take feedback from volunteers, using slide 21 to remind students of key learning from this lesson.

Reflecting on this, ask students to then consider a plan of action they could use in future, to help to stay safe if they are in a situation involving alcohol or other drugs. Remind them that this might be for their own safety, or to help friends to stay safe. As this is a personal reflection activity, students do not need to share their answers.

Signposting support

Signposting support (Slide 23, 3 mins)

Answer any questions from the question box that are appropriate to answer in front of the class. If students have written their names, keep the answers anonymous.

Remind students how they can access further advice, guidance and support related to substance use, including:

- Speak to staff in school such as their form tutor, head of year, school nurse, or a member of the safeguarding team
- Speak to another trusted adult such as a parent/carer, or family member, or visit their GP
- Visit Childline, which can be contacted by young people under 19, at www.childline.org.uk; or by phone on 0800 1111
- Visit their GP or www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/nhs-stop-smoking-services-help-you-quit/ for help quitting smoking
- Visit FRANK at www.talktofrank.com/get-help/find-support-near-you to find local support services
- Visit www.talktofrank.com/get-help/what-to-do-in-an-emergency for information about managing situations where someone may need medical help

Extension activity

Personal safety plan (Slide 24)

Ask students to write down their personal safety plan that they considered during the reflection activity. This might be on a small card that can fit into a phone case, for example, with emergency contacts, phone numbers of local taxi companies, night bus routes, or a safe location where help is available.