



# Educator Guide: Risk-Taking Lesson

## **Recommended for Grades:**

6<sup>th</sup>

## **Time:**

6 minutes

## **National Health Education Standards:**

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 7: Demonstrate practices and behaviors that support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: [shapeamerica.org](http://shapeamerica.org).

## **Learning Objectives:**

After completing this lesson students will be able to:

1. Differentiate between a positive risk and a negative risk when given multiple risks that teens may face.
2. Define binge drinking and explain how it can lead to alcohol poisoning.

## **Lesson Description:**

In this lesson students will learn how to determine whether a risk is positive or negative. They will also learn about alcohol and its effects on the body.



## Pre and Post-Test Questions:

Use the following questions with your students in any way that you see fit (on paper, using a survey tool, etc.) You may choose to combine questions from various lessons and activities that your students participate in. Correct answer choices are bolded.

1. Which of the following would be considered a negative risk?
  - a. Reporting bullying to a teacher
  - b. Trying out for the basketball team
  - c. Telling an adult about a friend who is using drugs
  - d. **Going to a party where there are drugs**
2. Which of these is a question you can ask yourself to help you figure out if a risk is positive or negative?
  - a. **Can I tell a trusted adult about this?**
  - b. If I do this, will I be more popular?
  - c. Will I make money if I do this?
3. What is binge drinking?
  - a. Drinking before you are 21
  - b. **Drinking large amounts of alcohol over a short period of time**
  - c. Drinking hard liquor
4. What is it called when the body can't break down alcohol fast enough and the body becomes poisoned by it?
  - a. Addiction
  - b. Tolerance
  - c. **Alcohol poisoning**
  - d. Nerve poisoning

## Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself or your students as you complete the Risk-Taking Lesson. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Advertisement – a paid announcement in newspapers, magazines, radio, television, online, etc.
- Alcohol – a liquid drug that is a depressant, meaning it slows down the body. Alcoholic drinks can include beer, wine or hard liquor.
- Alcohol poisoning – occurs when a person drinks a lot of alcohol in a short period of time, and the body can't break down the alcohol fast enough. The body becomes poisoned by the alcohol. A person with alcohol poisoning can pass out, vomit and even die.
- Brain – the main organ in the nervous system that controls the body's activities by sending and receiving messages to and from different parts of the body
- Consequence – the effect or result of something
- Depressant – a drug that slows down the body, especially slowing down the central nervous system and the sending of messages throughout the body. Alcohol is an example of a depressant.
- Drunk – when a person's physical and mental abilities are impaired from drinking alcohol
- Gag reflex – a contraction of the back of the throat triggered by an object touching the roof of your mouth, back of the tongue or the back of the throat. This reflex helps prevent choking.
- Illegal – something that is against the law
- Impair – to weaken or damage
- Intoxication – a temporary condition that affects the central nervous system after a person uses drugs or alcohol
- Judgement – the ability to make a decision based on careful thought or come to a sensible conclusion
- Legal – something that follows the law
- Risk – a situation that could involve exposure to danger, harm or loss
- Stress – an anxious, nervous or worried feeling a person gets when reacting to different situations, pressures or events

# Risk-Taking Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Complete this worksheet as you move through the Risk-Taking Lesson.

1. What are the four main questions you can ask yourself to help you figure out if a risk is positive or negative?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_

2. At what age does it become legal for someone to drink alcohol?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Write down four factors that can impact how alcohol affects a person.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is intoxication?

5. What is it called when someone drinks a large amount of alcohol over a short period of time?
- 

6. What could happen to a person if they have alcohol poisoning?

7. What should you do if someone has alcohol poisoning?
- 

8. Besides alcohol poisoning, what are two negative consequences of drinking?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

# Risk-Taking Worksheet Answer Key

1. What are the four main questions you can ask yourself to help you figure out if a risk is positive or negative?

- a. If I choose to do this, am I going to learn something new that's actually useful to me?
- b. If I fail at this, will I still be proud that I at least gave it a try?
- c. Are there any negative consequences if I take this risk?
- d. Can I tell a trusted adult about this?

2. At what age does it become legal for someone to drink alcohol?

21

3. Write down four factors that can impact how alcohol affects a person.

- a. Age
- b. Weight
- c. Amount of food eaten
- d. Whether they are male or female

4. What is intoxication?

Intoxication occurs when a person's body and mind are impaired by alcohol. It's also called being drunk. When a person is intoxicated, they may stagger, lose their coordination and slur their speech. They may also be confused and disoriented.

5. What is it called when someone drinks a large amount of alcohol over a short period of time?

Binge drinking

6. What could happen to a person if they have alcohol poisoning?

A person could pass out, vomit or even die.

7. What should you do if someone has alcohol poisoning?

Call 9-1-1

8. Besides alcohol poisoning, what are two other negative impacts of drinking?  
Addiction, negative health effects, problems with the law and issues in school



# Supplemental Activity: Positive or Negative?

## **Objectives:**

After completing this activity students will be able to:

- State the four questions they can ask themselves to determine if a risk is positive or negative.
- Differentiate between a positive risk and a negative risk when given multiple risks that teens may face.

## **Materials Needed:**

- Chalkboard or whiteboard for brainstorming

## **Time Required:**

25 minutes

## **Instructions:**

On the board, write down the four questions used to determine if a risk is positive or negative. The questions are:

1. If I choose to do this, am I going to learn something new that's actually useful to me?
2. If I fail at this, will I still be proud that I at least gave it a try?
3. Are there any negative consequences if I take this risk?
4. Can I tell a trusted adult about this?

Tell students that you will be calling out a risk that teens may take. Students should refer to the list on the board to determine if the risk is positive or negative. Take time to discuss each one as a group. Below is a list of possible risks. Feel free to include others that you think may apply to your students and omit any that you think are inappropriate.

Possible risks:

- Trying out for the basketball team
- Cheating on a test
- Stealing or shoplifting
- Befriending someone new
- Riding with someone who is drunk or high
- Drinking alcohol
- Hitchhiking
- Babysitting for a new family
- Rock climbing
- Taking drugs
- Skipping school
- Trying out for the school play

# Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



# Resources and Services: Alcohol and Other Drug-Use Prevention

- American Lung Association Lung Help Line, 1-800-LUNG-USA (800-586-4872)
- Children's Wisconsin, [www.childrenswi.org](http://www.childrenswi.org)
- KidsHealth, [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)
- LifeStance Health, [www.lifestance.com](http://www.lifestance.com)
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
- Partnership to End Addiction, [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)
- Rogers Behavioral Health, [www.rogersbh.org](http://www.rogersbh.org)
- The Tobacco Control Resource Center for Wisconsin, [www.tobwis.org](http://www.tobwis.org)
- United States Government-Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov)
- Wisconsin Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW



# Transcript

## Slide 1

Claire: Believe it or not, we take risks every day, probably without even realizing it. These risks could include what we wear, what we eat and drink, how much we study and who we hang out with.

Kwasi: Some people automatically think that risk-taking is always a negative behavior, but it's not. Risk-taking can be totally normal and healthy.

Claire: Absolutely! Some risks can have very positive outcomes, while others can have negative outcomes. And it's not always easy to tell if a risk is positive or negative. Being able to tell the difference is an important skill that we all need to learn.

## Slide 2

There are four main questions you can ask yourself to help you figure out if a risk is positive or negative.

First you should ask yourself, "If I choose to do this, am I going to learn something new that's actually useful to me?"

Next, ask yourself, "If I fail at this, will I still be proud that I at least gave it a try."

Third, ask yourself, "Are there any negative consequences if I take this risk?"

And last, ask yourself, "Can I tell a trusted adult about this?"

## Slide 3

Sometimes teens choose to take negative risks, despite all the possible negative consequences, or despite the fact that they would not want a parent, or other adult, to find out.

Let's take a closer look at alcohol, and why some teens decide to drink despite the risks. While it's illegal for teens to drink alcohol, it is legal to drink alcohol in Wisconsin once a person reaches the age of 21. Alcohol affects a younger person's body and brain differently because they are still growing and developing. That doesn't mean that drinking alcohol as an adult isn't risky though. Adults can still get into trouble or have health problems because of alcohol. Deciding whether or not to drink is a personal decision that we each eventually have to make.



## Slide 4

How alcohol affects a person depends on many different factors, such as their age, weight, the amount of food they've eaten and whether they are male or female. For some people, one or two drinks may affect them greatly, and for others, they may have more drinks and not appear or feel drunk at all. Even if a person does not look or feel drunk, their body is still being affected.

## Slide 5

Alcohol is a depressant, so it slows down the central nervous system, which is made up of the brain and spinal cord. The job of the central nervous system is to send and receive messages throughout the body. Alcohol actually blocks some of the messages trying to get to the brain, and this can change a person's emotions, movements, vision and hearing.

## Slide 6

In very small amounts, alcohol can make a person feel more relaxed or less nervous. Drinking more alcohol causes greater changes in the brain, which leads to what's called intoxication. Intoxication is when a person's body and mind are impaired by alcohol. It's also called being drunk. When a person is drunk, or intoxicated, they may stagger, lose their coordination and slur their speech. They may be confused and disoriented. They may also say or do things they normally wouldn't.

## Slide 7

Some people drink large amounts of alcohol over a short period of time, which is called binge drinking. Binge drinking is very dangerous and can lead to alcohol poisoning. This occurs when the body can't break down the alcohol fast enough and the body becomes poisoned by it. Alcohol poisoning affects the body's automatic reflexes, like breathing and the gag reflex. A person could pass out, vomit and even die from drinking too much alcohol. If the gag reflex isn't working properly, a person can choke to death on his or her own vomit.

## Slide 8

Remember, everyone is affected differently by alcohol, so there's no way to say how much is "a lot" of alcohol for a particular person. If you think someone has alcohol poisoning, call 9-1-1 immediately. While it may be scary to call 9-1-1, without medical help, a person with alcohol poisoning can die.

## Slide 9

Even if binge drinking doesn't lead to alcohol poisoning, drinking that much alcohol impairs judgment, so someone who has been drinking may be more likely to take risks that they might not otherwise take. For example, they might walk home from a party by themselves late at night, or they might use other drugs offered to them.

## Slide 10

There are lots of reasons why teens may use alcohol. They may be curious. They may want to reduce stress or feel good. Teens often think that if they drink, it will help them fit in.

## Slide 11

Teens may see their parents or other adults drinking. They may see ads showing beautiful people doing all kinds of fun things while drinking alcohol. Because they see it everywhere, alcohol may seem harmless to them.

## Slide 12

There are a lot of negative consequences to drinking though, that some teens don't consider. These can include:

- Addiction
- Problems with the law
- Issues in school
- Negative health effects
- And other problems that can affect your day-to-day life

## Slide 13

Kwasi: Now, think back to those questions that can help you determine whether a risk is positive or negative. If you choose to drink alcohol, are you going to learn anything worthwhile? Will you be proud of yourself?

Claire: What negative consequences might there be? And are you willing to share this with a trusted adult? Remember to ask yourself these questions anytime you're thinking of taking a risk and hopefully it'll help you make a good decision.



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