



Influence in Action: Cannabis Edition

Peer Influencer Program Manual

Acknowledgements

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The program experience of The Students Commission and research knowledge from the team at Brock University identified the need to address the misinformation and inaccurate perceptions related to cannabis use among youth and to reduce the harms associated with cannabis use in young people. In reviewing the literature, a peer influencer model was determined to be the most effective means to address this issue.

Together, as members of the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement, they identified a series of programs that tapped into the natural strengths and communication methods of youth, which had been incorporated into programs implemented in Wales (the ASSIST program) and Australia. The Influence in Action program utilizes this approach within a comprehensive theoretical framework. (See the following section for an explanation of the theories guiding the program).

Building on some of the core theories and practices of the ASSIST program, the team set in motion an intensive joint collaboration of youth (drug users and non-users), youth workers, youth program developers and academics to build a program that integrated the best theoretical concepts, with effective health and youth engagement practices. The initial program, and manuals, focused exclusively on cannabis and the program was called Drug Buzz. However, after pilot testing early versions of the program in youth organizations, schools, and youth conferences, the name was changed to Influence in Action and the focus broadened, with an emphasis on critical thinking.

During the pilot testing, resistance to drug-focussed only programs was identified and so the Influence in Action program has been expanded to include critical thinking about a wide range of health choices facing young people, with an emphasis on a “case study” approach for young people. The rationale for youth is that cannabis has been chosen as the case study because it is so controversial and there is so much public misinformation circulating.

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Principles and Guiding Frameworks

Guiding Principles of Influence in Action

The Influence in Action program was developed with nine guiding principles:

- some young people are natural and powerful influencers in their peer groups;
- positive, strength-based approaches are effective;
- engaging in risk-taking is part of normal development;
- engaging youth in meaningful ways enhances positive youth development;
- being involved in the planning and development of a program empowers youth to take a leadership role in improving the lives of their peers;
- being involved in planning and decision-making improves youth experiences of programs;
- respectful adult-youth experiences foster positive development for both the youth and the adult;
- evidence-based, evaluated programs should be available and shared with others;
- and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child obligates Canadian adults to ensure that young people have the right to the latest information to make their own informed decisions.

Overall Influence in Action Frameworks

Influence in Action is designed to equip youth with the skills and information to share with their peers on a broad range of topics. The core concept was developed in the southern United States to promote safe sex practices among gay men, and subsequently adapted in Wales and in Australia to address smoking, cannabis and drug use among adolescence. We have enhanced the core concept of Diffusion Theory with other theoretical frameworks. In this edition of Influence in Action, we provide examples and activities from a wide range of health choices that young people face, but the focus of the program is on cannabis use. We have chosen cannabis as a controversial drug, with widespread public confusion (both adult and youth) around facts, beliefs, and attitudes, that provides an excellent opportunity to develop youth leaders skills in critical thinking, decision-making and leadership.

Context of Adolescent Development/Experimentation

Adolescence is a time of experimentation and exploration as a means to develop one's own unique sense of self (Ravert, 2009). While engagement in risk-taking behaviours is often part of this exploration, the dangers for potential harm are heightened

as the brain is still developing. Equally, participation in positive activities helps influence brain development in positive ways. (Clinton, 2008).

Recent research has focused on how substance use impacts on the still developing adolescent brain. Research has shown that abnormalities in brain functioning exist in alcohol and cannabis users (Squeglia, Jacobus, & Tapert, 2009). Specifically, cannabis users show decreases in learning and ordering functioning. Recent use cannot explain these abnormalities. Further, these abnormalities have been linked to physical and structural changes in the brain (Squeglia, Jacobus & Tapert).

Cannabis use has been linked to impairments in social and psychological functioning. Specifically, research has shown that cannabis users are less likely to attend post-secondary education (Chassin, Hussong, & Beltran, 2009), experience impairment of motor abilities, distortion of thinking, and depression of mood, (Hall, Room, & Bondy, 1999), and are at increased risk for developing chronic psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia (Feilding & Morrison, 2010).

Youth Engagement and Positive Youth Development

Youth engagement is the meaningful, sustained participation of a youth in an activity outside of the self (Pancer, Rose-Krasnor, & Loiselle, 2002). Engagement includes cognitive (e.g., thinking about the activity, concentrating on the activity while doing it), affective (e.g., excitement, frustration, enjoyment), behavioral (e.g., participation frequency, duration), and spiritual (e.g., meaningfulness, gives sense of belonging to community, connects individuals to others) aspects of involvement. Engaging youth in meaningful partnerships can benefit adults and youth (Zeldin, 2004).

Positive youth development programs have goals involving the six Cs of youth development (Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000; Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2001; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003a, b):

- *Competence* in a range of areas in youth's lives, including social and in cognitive areas such as problem-solving and decision-making,
- *Confidence*, including youth's self-esteem, understanding of who they are, and belief in themselves and in their future
- *Connections*, strengthening youth's relationships with people and places such as schools
- *Character*, including promoting healthy behavior and a sense of right and wrong
- *Compassion*, including youth's empathy and understanding of others
- *Contribution*, with youth taking on responsibilities and making meaningful decisions for themselves and others, influencing others positively, such as peers, family, and community.

Positive youth development programs also provide an atmosphere that supports youth empowerment, recognizes youth's abilities, and encourages supportive relationships between youth and adults and youth and their peers. Finally, program activities in positive youth development programs are challenging and relevant to youth's lives and provide opportunities for skill-building.

Unlike many of the other models underpinning the Influence in Action program, youth engagement and positive youth development principles are not explicitly discussed in any of the program modules. Instead, they serve as underlying principles and are implicit to every aspect of the Influence in Action program.

Both youth engagement theory and positive youth development theory take a strength-based or asset-based approach to youth, focusing on what youth are doing well, can do well, and what their existing strengths and capacities are. Positive approaches have been shown to be more effective in changing behaviour than negative ones. Therefore, throughout, Influence in Action strives to present statistics and youth behaviour in a way not usually done: Example 70% of students in Ontario Grades 7 to 12 have never tried cannabis, NOT 30% of students smoke marijuana. In the development of the program, this simple reframing of the statistics that most students are bombarded with has been very effective.

The Four Pillars and Beliefs, Values, Opinions, and Attitudes toward Young People

In Influence in Action, youth are asked to reflect upon their beliefs, values, attitudes, and opinions, and to recognize the difference between these concepts:

- a. *Belief*: An assumed truth —Thinking something is true
- b. *Value*: Underlying assumptions about standards that govern decisions —Thinking it is important or unimportant
- c. *Attitude*: Directed by a belief towards something —The way I approach someone or something is affected by what I believe and value
- d. *Opinion*: Expressing an attitude toward something —Expressing what I think, based on my beliefs, values and attitudes

Youth are also asked to participate based on a philosophy developed by The Students Commission of Canada, and which is known as the Four Pillars. The four pillars are **Respect, Listen, Understand, and Communicate™**.

Adults involved in Influence in Action can use the four pillars to help recognize and question their own beliefs, values, opinions, and attitudes around young people. **The Four Pillars begins with respect, for young people**, their idealism, their hope and their capacity to improve the world, and for the gift that each person carries within. This means striving for diversity of people and experiences and expertise and it means that youth and adults work collaboratively as equals. Example: Respect requires adults to *value* youth competencies. Influence in Action starts with respect for the skills and competencies that youth already have related to influencing each other. Respect is granted, not earned, as a starting point for adult/youth partnerships. Respect is granted, not earned, between youth participants. The onus is upon the grantor to discover the reason to respect the other; respect is given, not demanded. This pillar challenges many people's unexamined beliefs about respect. (You should respect me because of my age, my experience, my degree, my uniform, rather than asking what will I respect about you?)

With respect as the foundation, adults involved in Influence in Action can learn to *listen* to young people, not just with their ears, but also with their heads, hearts and all their senses. This means listening to words, to silences, to deeds, to experiences, and to

youth as experts. The Influence in Action program, and all adult and organizational partners can constantly grow and change through the input of youth and adults and the reciprocal listening of adults and youth. Example: Actively listening involves *believing* that youth have expertise.

From listening comes *understanding*. Understanding involves processing what has been heard, to create new knowledge, new skills, and the conditions for adults and young people to work effectively together. Example: *Understanding* requires that adults' *attitude* toward youth's input allow adults to reflect on and process what youth have said. Understanding requires adults to learn something new from and with youth and acknowledge that they have.

If people really understand each other, then they can *communicate*. Communication allows for the creation of action plans, which are implemented with practical projects that make a positive difference. With communication, adults and youth can create the relationships with each other to help them achieve their goals. Example: Communicating requires recognizing that adult *opinions* on how youth should behave are just that, and Influence in Action is based upon a *belief* that youth know how to influence each other in positive ways, supported by research evidence.

This process and these four pillars—Respect, Listen, Understand, Communicate™—create the foundation for taking action to improve lives and society. This process and these values create the space for youth to celebrate and develop their hope, skills and knowledge, and the space to impart that knowledge to adults.

Young Decision Makers Model

The Young Decision Makers Model (The Students Commission, Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement, 2009) was established to guide the process for youth to work in partnership with adults to address an issue. This framework has been adapted and was imbedded in the development of the Influence in Action program. The YDM model has 5 spheres of activity, which have been applied to Influence in Action:

Action. Influencers within grades 7 and 10 are identified and invited to become a peer influencer for the Influence in Action program.

Studying Issues. The 2-day training provides opportunities to enhance their knowledge of issues related to critical thinking, with a focus on cannabis, as well as develop and enhance their skills to influence others regarding critical thinking, with a focus on their cannabis knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and use.

Discussing Issues. Young people have many opportunities to discuss issues by exploring and communicating with each other and adults, in whatever way works for them. They are given opportunities to practice new skills to increase their comfort in engaging in influential conversations.

Decision Making. Peer influencers decide on the best way to communicate this new information to their peers and put their skills and knowledge into action.

Inform Decision Makers. Peer influencers bring the results of their experiences back to the program developers and contribute to the revision of the program.

Knowledge in Action Model (Knowledge Exchange & Transfer)

It is important for programs and policies to use research and to have a process that moves from creating knowledge to putting that knowledge into action. Influence in Action uses the Knowledge in Action Model (The Students Commission of Canada, 2010). The cycle of the Knowledge in Action Model includes: creation and discovery of knowledge (ideally co-created), recognizing the message that is to be transferred; deciding upon the audience for the message; deciding how to transfer the message; transferring the knowledge by selecting, creating, and implementing interventions and products, with facilitation a key part of the process; monitoring how the knowledge is being used; evaluating the impact of that use, including changes in attitudes and behaviors; and deciding upon next steps.

Key elements of the research literature behind the development of the model identified several important components of effective practice (Dobbins 2009):

- the closer the consumer of the knowledge (youth or adult) to the generation of the knowledge the better the uptake and practice of the knowledge
- facilitation of the process of knowledge exchange is critical,
- knowledge exchange is reciprocal and includes many ways of knowing and types of knowledge.

Influence in Action engages young people in interactive discovery of the latest credible information related to marijuana use, and other information related to science and health. Next, it lets them choose the facts of most interest to them and generate messages that they would want to transfer to the peers. The program then provides training on how young people recognize the audience they have (Stages of Change) for the conversation and skills training on techniques for facilitating effective conversation (Motivational Interviewing), matching their message to their audience.

Overall, the program also asks the peer influencers to report to adult allies about the conversations they have and surveys measure the impact on the peer influencers and their peer group.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (youth under 18) is an important tool to communicate to young people their right to accurate information, their right to express themselves, their right to protection and their right to make appropriate decisions for themselves. Using a rights-based approach helps position, the provision of important information as a right, rather than as an lecture.

Source: Fact Sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF) http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child): When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account. This does not mean that children can now tell their

parents what to do. This Convention encourages adults to listen to the opinions of children and involve them in decision-making -- not give children authority over adults. Article 12 does not interfere with parents' right and responsibility to express their views on matters affecting their children. Moreover, the Convention recognizes that the level of a child's participation in decisions must be appropriate to the child's level of maturity. Children's ability to form and express their opinions develops with age and most adults will naturally give the views of teenagers greater weight than those of a preschooler, whether in family, legal or administrative decisions.

Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child): When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account.

Article 13 (Freedom of expression): Children have the right to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others. In exercising the right to freedom of expression, children have the responsibility to also respect the rights, freedoms and reputations of others. The freedom of expression includes the right to share information in any way they choose, including by talking, drawing or writing.

Article 17 (Access to information; mass media): Children have the right to get information that is important to their health and well-being. Governments should encourage mass media – radio, television, newspapers and Internet content sources – to provide information that children can understand and to not promote materials that could harm children. Mass media should particularly be encouraged to supply information in languages that minority and indigenous children can understand. Children should also have access to children's books.

Theoretical Frameworks

Summary of Influence in Action Theories

The Students Commission, as lead of Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement, in partnership with researchers at Brock University identified the need to reduce the harms associated with cannabis use in young people and developed this program known, as “Influence In Action.” In reviewing the literature, a peer influencer model was determined to be the most effective means to address this issue. The Influence In Action program utilizes this approach within a comprehensive theoretical framework. The following section explains the theories guiding the program

Influence in Action: Cannabis Edition is a peer-mediated program designed to encourage informed decision-making by young people about marijuana use. The focus of the program is ensuring that everyone has accurate information to allow for informed decision-making regarding their own marijuana use. The program is based on the idea that certain people have a natural influence over their peer group (Bleeker & Silins, 2008). These peer influencers have a degree of authority over their peer group because their peers listen to what they say, respect their opinions, and follow their actions. The main objective of this program is to provide peer influencers with accurate information and enhanced skills so they

- 1) make informed choices themselves
- 2) are able to reinforce peers who make the decision not to use marijuana,
- 3) are able to support those who chose to reduce their use, and
- 4) encourage those peers who chose to use marijuana to do so as safely as possible.

Conceptually, because adolescent drug use is a function of the larger peer group context, credible and influential leaders who are properly educated about the effects of drug use, would be able to pass the information on to their peers and thus reduce drug-related harm among the group (Bleeker & Silins, 2008).

Peer-mediated programs addressing drug use have been well-supported in previous research (Bleeker & Silins, 2008). The success of peer-mediated programs depends to a large degree on the extent in which the program is based on a strong theoretical background (Bleeker & Silins, 2008). Accordingly, Influence in Action is based on five major theoretical models: Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005; Fishbein et al., 2002), Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers, 2003), Harm Reduction (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2002), Stages of Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 2005), and Motivational Interviewing (MI; Miller & Rollnick, 2009). It is also based on principles and research on youth engagement, positive youth development, the 4 Pillars, and informed decision-making described earlier.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior identifies mechanisms and processes underlying behavior to help explain why people do what they do (see Figure 1; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005; Fishbein et al., 2002). According to Ajzen and Fishbein, behaviors are primarily determined by intentions. Intention to perform a specific behavior is a function of one's favorableness or unfavorableness towards performing the behavior (i.e., attitude), the perceptions about what other people, such as family and friends, will think about one's performance of the behavior (i.e., norms), and one's beliefs about their ability to perform the behavior in light of barriers or supports (i.e., control). Each of these factors, in turn, are determined by corresponding underlying beliefs and background factors such as personality, values, experience, and knowledge. The Theory of Planned Behavior is important for providing a conceptual understanding of why people behave as they do, and thus, is an integral peer-influencer training component for the Influence in Action program.

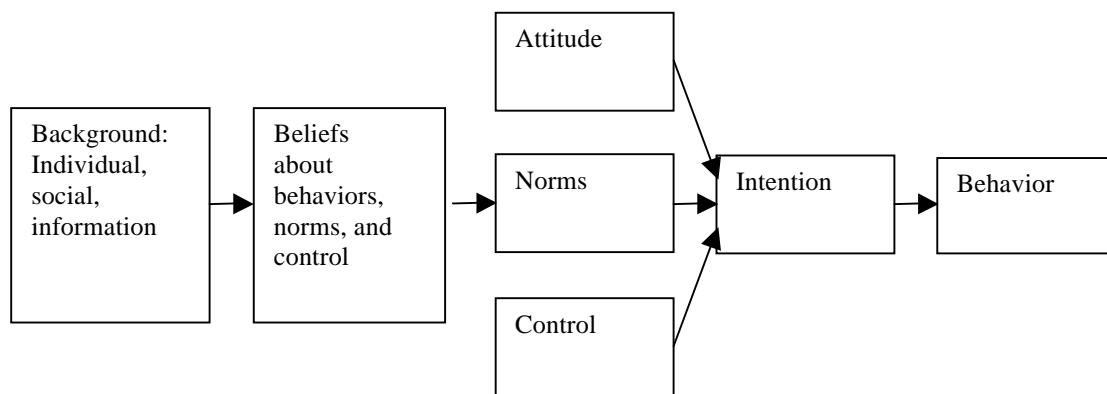


Figure 1. The Theory of Planned Behavior

Diffusion of Innovations

Diffusion of Innovations, developed by Rogers in 1983, explains how and why ideas, or innovations, are spread throughout society, or groups, and how people come to accept or adopt innovations of change (Rogers, 2003). Diffusion is a process that spreads an idea through certain channels and certain people within society. This adoption process in which ideas are spread and accepted has five stages. The first stage, termed 'Knowledge', is the stage in which the individual is first exposed to an idea and becomes aware that it exists. People in this stage still lack the information and drive to learn about the innovation. 'Persuasion' is the second stage, and it is the stage in which the individual becomes interested in the idea and actively seeks out information regarding it. Third, in the 'Decision' stage, the individual weighs the pros and cons of the idea/innovation and

decides whether they want to adopt or reject it. This stage is very subjective and difficult to measure. The fourth stage is termed the 'Implementation' stage, in which the individual uses the innovation in a manner that suits his or her life situation. The usefulness of the idea/innovation is judged during this stage. Finally, the fifth stage is called 'Confirmation', and it is the stage in which the individual finalizes the decision to continue using or employing the innovation. During this stage, the idea/innovation may be employed to its fullest potential.

In addition to the stages of the adoption process, Rogers (2003) also identifies five classifications of acceptance by individuals in the society. 'Innovators' are the first individuals to accept or adopt an innovation. Individuals in this group are typically characterized as being risk-takers, young in age, and having access to money and contact with the sources of innovation (i.e., socially or otherwise). 'Early Adopters' are the second fastest category of adopters. Individuals in this group are typically characterized as having the highest amount of opinion leadership. Also, they are often (but not always) young in age, have high social status, access to finances, higher education, and are socially forward. Individuals in this group tend to be opinion leaders, or people with particular influence over other people's attitudes and behavior. They use their influence by introducing change when the group is ready, and knowing what timing is not too early or too late for their social group. The 'Early majority' category emerges after a varying degree of time, usually significantly longer than the amount of time it takes the Innovators and Early Adopters to accept or adopt an innovation. Individuals in this group are slower and more cautious in the adoption process, and are usually characterized as having average social status and having contact with the early adopters. Individuals in the 'Late majority' group take longer than the average member of society to accept or adopt an innovation. They tend to approach new ideas with a high degree of skepticism, and only accept or adopt an innovation after the majority has already done so. Also, individuals in this group are typically characterized as having a low degree of opinion leadership. Finally, the 'Laggards' are the last category to accept an idea/innovation. Individuals in this group have little to no opinion leadership and are very averse to change.

Overall, the Diffusion of Innovations identifies the process in which ideas are accepted or adopted by individuals within a society and the levels of acceptance by those individuals. This model is important for the Influence in Action program because it provides us with a conceptual understanding of how and why peer influencers can make a positive impact on the decisions individuals in their peer group make. It is also an integral component of our program manuals, in which the goal is to inform influencers with knowledge about marijuana use and decision-making processes, and then have them diffuse the information to their peers.

The central tenet of the theory for the Influence in Action program is the concept of opinion leaders, who have influence and a good sense of timing of when to introduce concepts to their peers. Unlike many peer-mediated programs, the influencers are identified not through self-selection, interest in the topic, or voting or nomination for a specific office or function, but by a survey process that identifies who other youth regard as influential in their peer group generally. The process identifies the opinion leadership from the diverse groups in a school, class or community organization.

Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is a program or policy approach that reduces the harm from drug use without requiring total abstinence of drug use (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2002). A harm reduction approach recognizes that abstinence is the desired outcome; however, it accepts alternative levels of use that reduces harm (Marlatt, 1998). Harm Reduction is based on the idea that rather than being a dichotomous, yes/no construct, drug use falls on a continuum which has five gradual points between non-use and dependent use. 'Non-users' have never used the drug. 'Experimental users' have used once or several times in the past, but have discontinued their use. Individuals in this group are more likely to have been motivated by curiosity about the drug and its effects. 'Irregular use' refers to infrequent drug use which usually occurs on special occasions or when direct opportunities come up. 'Regular use' refers to predictable drug use that could be frequent or infrequent. Individuals in this category are often trying to attain the drug. Finally, 'dependent use' refers to frequent, often daily use. Individuals in this category may have binge drug-use episodes, or may keep using even though they know the drug is having a negative impact on their lives. As part of Harm Reduction, Influence in Action: Cannabis Edition is intended to make marijuana use safer for those youth who choose to keep using at their current level, or to move youth to lower levels of substance use.

Stages of Change/Transtheoretical Model of Change

According to the Transtheoretical Model of Change (referred to here as Stages of Change; Prochaska & DiClemente, 2005), behavior change proceeds through a set of five stages. For every behavior and every person, there will be a different readiness to change and different requirements for the change to occur. The behavior must be present in order for these stages to come into play, and an individual can move forwards and backwards through the stages in a nonlinear way. During 'precontemplation' the individual is not considering change at all (e.g., "I don't have a problem"; "I don't need to change"). During 'Contemplation' the individual is considering the problem in a more in-depth way than the previous stage, but is ambivalent about change (e.g., "Sometimes I think I have a problem, sometimes I don't"). During 'Preparation' individuals understand that they want to change and they try to start the process of change or begin actions toward implementing a change (e.g., "I know I need to make changes"; "I have done a few things that show I am ready to begin"). During 'Action' the individual is practicing the new change (e.g., "I have begun to make changes"; "I have made the changes I want to make"). The Action stage can last anywhere from one day to six months. During 'Maintenance' the individual continues his/her commitment to sustaining the change (e.g., "I have maintained changes"). This stage lasts longer than six months.

The Stages of Change model is important for the Influence in Action program because it provides the theoretical background for understanding the processes involved in changing behavior. The program intends to inform influencers about the Stages of Change model, so that they can recognize behaviours and statements of their peers and convey appropriate information to them at appropriate times. This knowledge and recognition skill helps them support Harm Reduction objectives for their peers who choose to reduce their level of marijuana use or any other change behaviour.

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Motivational Interviewing, developed by Miller and Rollnick (2009), is a person-centered, goal-directed, approach to strengthening motivation for behavior change. According to Miller and Rollnick, motivation is not an intrinsic quality, but rather a product of interaction. MI is intended to help people resolve ambivalence and move toward changing. There are five major components involved in MI.

Part 1 involves understanding the collaborative and evocative spirit of MI (Rollnick, Miller, & Butler, 2008). MI is about cooperating and collaborating with the other person, because only they can take the actions needed to change their behavior. Furthermore, MI is not intended to give the person skills or knowledge, rather, it's intended to evoke their own motivation and resources, based on their goals, values, dreams, and perspectives. MI also involves honoring people's autonomy. Ultimately, people will make the changes that they want about their lives, and thus it is more helpful to understand this than to try to tell them what to do. This aspect of the theory aligns with the First Pillar: Respect and the strength-based approach.

Part 2 of MI involves careful, empathetic listening, and OARS. The OARS acronym stands for Open questions, Affirming, Reflecting, and Summarizing. The goal of this part of MI is simply to understand a problem or issue instead of trying to solve it. This aspect of the theory aligns with the second pillar: Listen. It provides techniques for effective listening and ensuring that the listening has generated understanding, the third pillar. It also aligns with traditional practices of effective facilitation techniques.

Part 3 of MI involves recognizing change talk when conversing with others. Change talk involves any Desire, Ability, Reason or Need (DARN) to change; in this case, reduce substance use or to avoid situations involving drugs with the potential for harm. In the Influence in Action program, change talk also involves stay-the-same talk, that is, desire (e.g., want, wish, would like to), ability (e.g., can, could, am able to), reason, or need (e.g., need to, have to, it's important). Stay-the-same talk would be about not to use or experiment with cannabis, or to continue to make decisions around substance use that are free from harm. In addition to DARN, MI involves listening for words that indicate commitment around decisions (Amrhein et al., 2003). In terms of the Four Pillars, Part 3 of MI is a subset of Listening, which aids understanding, which in turn promotes effective communication.

Part 4 of MI involves eliciting and reinforcing change talk or positive stay-the-same talk. Once you recognize change, commitment, or stay-the-same talk, you can use active listening and OARS in response. You can also ask for elaboration or examples. All of these strategies enable influencers and opinion leaders to emphasize, reinforce, and influence the conversation in the direction of harm reduction. This is effective communication, the fourth pillar.

Part 5 of MI focuses on strategies for interacting when talk is not in the direction of harm reduction, when meeting resistance to new ideas. It is important to accept that not all talk will not be in the direction of harm reduction and that people might be losing something in making decisions around substance use. When this occurs, there are various strategies that may be used. For example, simple reflection refers to parroting back to the person what they just said. Second, amplified reflection refers to paraphrasing, or some repetition and some content, in order to amplify things the person has said that they might disagree with when they hear it. For example, if someone states, "I can't stop smoking,

my friends all smoke”, a peer influencer might then state, “You’ll lose all your friends if you don’t”, which may lead the person to respond with, “Well no, it’s not like they’ll stop talking to me or anything”. A third strategy is double-sided reflection, which refers to reflecting back statements the individual just made in support of their behavior, and then other feedback they have given about drawbacks of their behavior. Fourth, emphasizing personal choice and control refers to the idea that it is every person’s choice to use, not use, or make any other decision regarding drug use. Finally, joining with resistance refers to siding against change because it will cause people to naturally side with the opposite. Thus, by siding with the negative, and perhaps amplifying this, you may be encouraging them to side with the positive. Exploring the pros and cons can help people weigh out the costs and benefits of their decisions and actions.

Motivational interviewing is an essential theoretical model to Influence in Action initiatives because it provides basic strategies for peers talking with peers about behavior and choices. Influence in Action gives peer influencers the opportunity to practice adapting motivational interviewing techniques for use in natural conversations to motivate and support their peers.

MI was developed for a client/clinician setting as an approach in counseling. Influence in Action is **NOT** about peer-to-peer counseling or interviewing. Influence in Action has adapted MI to reinforce diffusion of knowledge, which assists youth in critical thinking around behaviour choices. Influence in Action is asking peer influencers to be aware of their influence and improve their skills in participating in motivational conversations when opportunity presents itself in natural, day-to-day settings.

Summary

Influence in Action is a combination of frameworks and theories of which the primary premises are:

- youth identify natural influencers who use their opinion leadership in natural conversations
- these influencers, given access to accurate, helpful and interesting information, will incorporate that information naturally in conversations with their peers
- this natural process is an effective method of knowledge dissemination and will result in the peer influencers and their peer group using the information to make positive behaviour choices and reduce risky behaviours

Overall, the five theoretical frameworks summarized above provide the fundamental conceptualization to the goals and objectives of the Influence in Action program. The Theory of Planned Behavior is integral component because it explains why people behave as they do. The Diffusion of Innovations model explains why and how peer influencers can make a positive impact on the decisions individuals in their peer group make. Harm Reduction provides a practical approach to support those youth who choose to not use to make marijuana, to make use safer for those youth who choose to continue using at their current level, and to move youth to lower levels of drug use. The

Stages of Change model provides an understanding of the processes that are involved in changing drug-use behaviour. Finally, MI provides influencers with applicable techniques and strategies that can be used when talking to their peers about marijuana use. Taken together, these models provide a conceptual framework for Influence In Action's central goal of encouraging informed decision-making by young people, with an emphasis in this version on marijuana use.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Youth Engagement Framework, the Four Pillars, and the Knowledge in Action and Young Decision Makers models anchor the theoretical concepts in guiding principles that respect and support the rights and the capacity of young people to make informed decisions.

Target Group for this Program

This program had been designed for and evaluated within a “normative” grade 10 environment. It should be noted that modifications would be recommended if this program were to be used for a high-risk/at-risk population or specific cultural groups. Further, it should be noted that this program has not been evaluated for its effectiveness within high-risk/at-risk or culturally-specific groups, although it has been developed and piloted with high-risk and culturally specific groups.

Day 1

Room Setup:

Displays

Four Pillars

UNCRC: Article 12,13 and 17

YDM Model

Information Fair Displays: salt, sugar, brain, assorted guidelines

Large Screen: laptop, website, videos loaded

Small group areas, large group area, room for physical movement

Module 1: Setting the Stage

Objectives:

- Understand the philosophy, structure and purpose of Influence in Action
- Introduce the Four Pillars (Respect, Listen, Understand, Communicate™) as fundamental values to the Influence in Action project
- Explore what it means to be an influencer, as well as the power and responsibility

Facilitators Tip: Community Builders will occur first, but if questions are arising you're your interactions with the influencers you can reinforce the written material: that the primary purpose is to harness their power as influential young people to provide accurate information to the peers that help them think critically through informal conversations.

Facilitators Tip: In situations where Brock University is not able to conduct the full evaluation because schools have not approved the research aspect of the project, we will introduce a quiz in this section to test their knowledge at the start. As part of Module 6, we will review the quiz and let them evaluate the training as a set up to them thinking about evaluating the ongoing program, and "quizzes" with their peers.

1) Interactive Connections:

The following are possibilities to choose from. They may also be used in other parts of the program to provide interactive, physical activity.

A) Constituency BINGO

Materials:

- Pens/Pencils for participants
- Printed BINGO sheets available for participants as they enter the room

Purpose: To introduce participants to each other in an interactive fashion while also focusing on sharing neutral objective facts that will come up throughout the training.

Instructions:

- 1) As participants arrive, hand out bingo sheets.
- 2) Let them know that they are to fill out each section.
- 3) Half of the BINGO sheet will be focused on learning more about each individual person (e.g. find a person who lives in a house). The other half of the BINGO sheet will focus on filling in facts (e.g. find a person whose bingo sheet has a fact about sodium)
- 4) Allow participants (20 minutes) to complete the activity.

B) Pass the hand clap game: Need Description

C) Co-operative Juggling : Toss the ball(s) in a circle game. Have group form a large circle. Using a ball or a soft object (e.g., teddy bear), have influencers toss the object to any person after yelling out their name. Continue until all participants have had their name yelled out once and the object gets back to the initial person. You can continue this process and add in more objects simultaneously to make it more interesting. You can also reverse the order so that the person you have been receiving the object from is now the person you are tossing the object to

D) 2) Partner Interviews**Materials:**

- Pens for each person
- Paper
- Flip-Chart

Setup:

- 1) Write out the following questions on the flip-chart for everyone to see:
 - Your Name and the story behind your name
 - Where you were born/where you're from?
 - Name a person in your life who influenced you.
 - Why did this person influence you?

Purpose: To give participants an opportunity to connect one-on-one with other individuals at the training.

Instructions:

- 1) Partner up participants randomly with one other person.
- 2) Have partners interview each other with the questions on the flipchart.
- 3) Depending on size of group, introduce each other to the larger group

2) What is the Influence in Action project all about?

(Done in large group) (This information is also incorporated into Constituency Bingo, together with Guiding Principles, UN Convention etc.).

Purpose: To review the philosophy and purpose of the Influence In Action project.

Activity: Review the information on the Influence In Action project, as a Motivational Charge to the Large Group.

Key Points for Facilitators:

What: Influence in Action is a program designed to encourage informed decision-making through critical thinking skills. Influence in Action is based on the idea that some people are “*influencers*” and they have power to share knowledge. Similar programs have been developed in Wales and in Australia around tobacco and drugs. With your help we are bringing the idea into Canada.

Who: You have been selected because your peers see you as an influential person. As an “*influencer*,” people listen to what you have to say, you are respected and through what you say and what you do you can encourage other people to follow your lead. For example if you say, “Cigarettes are full of tar, make my clothes smell and smoking is likely to cause cancer,” it is probably going to have an impression. On the other hand, if you smoke, others may follow your lead and decide to smoke.

How: The Influence in Action project is about supporting you. Over the next two days, together we will explore what it means to be an influencer. We will work together to develop skills and knowledge to become a more effective influencer. We expect that naturally you will use some of this training in your normal day-to-day conversations afterwards. If you are comfortable, you will be asked after the training to complete some surveys on the impact of this training in your day-to-day interactions and let us know whether the training was useful or not.

What the Program is NOT: The focus of the program is ensuring everyone has accurate information to allow for informed decision-making. Influence in action is **NOT** about telling peers what to do. It is designed to foster critical thinking among peers so they can make informed decision for themselves. Influencing does not always mean in-depth discussions with your friends. Influence can occur with small repeated comments **OR** with more in-depth conversations.

There will be lots of time to practice skills and to talk about our shared expertise. We will be learning together so that at the end of our time, you will feel comfortable talking to your friends about what you have learned.

Facilitators Tip: This section is very important for setting the stage for the next two days. Be sure that the participants understand the purpose of the Influence in Action program so that they don’t believe that the expectation is that they speak with people they don’t know and that all conversations must be long and involved. Be sure to reinforce these

messages throughout the two days. *Specifically, regarding marijuana — Remember, Influence In Action is intended to reinforce youth who make the decision not to use marijuana, support those who chose to reduce their use, and to ensure that those youth who chose to use marijuana do as safely as possible.*

3) The Four Pillars (Done in large group)

Interactive Activity: Four Pillars Exercise

Materials:

- Four Pillars visual display (either the stands or paper copies that can be posted on the wall)
- Two Facilitators familiar with the Four Pillars
- Attached Four Pillars Scenarios

Setup for this Activity:

Place the visual Four Pillars at the front of your training room. These four pillars should stay posted for all to see throughout the training.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to interactively and visually introduce the four pillars, which provide guidelines to create a safe environment, for the training and for the conversations afterwards.

Description:

- 1.) Facilitators briefly describe each pillar: Respect, Listen, Understand and Communicate. Emphasize the importance of these as both our values for working together and our process of interaction with others.
Summary
 - **Respect:** actively seeking and valuing the gifts and experiences of everyone. Respect is granted, unconditional, not earned.
 - **Listen:** when you truly respect a person, you learn to listen to that person; not only with your ears, but also with your head, heart, and all your senses.
 - **Understand:** by listening, we can process what we hear and understand others; understanding creates new knowledge and new skills, and opens our horizons when thinking or having a conversation.
 - **Communicate:** by really understanding others you can effectively communicate with them; communication builds relationships.

Notes on the Four Pillars for Reference only:

Respect: Respect for people, their idealism, their hope and their capacity to improve the world. Second, respect for the gift that each person carries within. We believe that by creating conditions of respect, we enhance the capacity of people to work together and improve their lives and the lives of others. Respect means respect for diversity and an effort to strive for diversity of people and experiences and expertise in all of what we do. Respect means actively seeking and valuing the gifts and experiences of all those with whom we work and live. Respect means reciprocity— that each person is an equal partner in our work. Respect means youth and adults working collaboratively as equals.

Listen: With respect as our foundation: We listen not just with our ears, but also with our heads, hearts and all our senses. We listen actively, intensely, not just to words, but to silences, to deeds, to experiences. We listen to the spoken word, the written word, the image. We listen to learn, to gather information, to enhance our capacity to give and to receive. We listen to youth as experts, and we gather other information, other voices to ensure diversity. We listen because we are curious, because as people we are constantly growing and changing through the input of others. We listen to truly understand who others are.

Understanding: To *understand* is to go beyond listening, to process what we have heard, to reflect upon the new knowledge and gifts given to us. Understanding creates new knowledge, new skills. If we truly understand who others are, and who we are, we can work together as equals, valuing differences and building upon similarities and common goals. We understand the problems each of us faces, and the aspirations each of us has. Understanding creates the conditions for working effectively together .

Communication: If people really understand each other, then they can *communicate* – our fourth pillar. When people truly communicate, the obstacles fall away. Communication is the first action and creates the process for developing and taking all the actions we need to take, as individuals and as an organization to achieve our goals and dreams.

Our belief is that this process and these four pillars — Respect, Listen, Understand, Communicate™ — create the foundation for taking action to improve lives and society. We give opportunity for young people to choose a positive path, to take action on the disadvantages, inequalities, the barriers so many face. We believe that this process and these values provide the structure for youth and adults to work collaboratively towards the elimination of poverty and all of the factors which create advantage for some and disadvantage for others. This process and these values create the space for youth to celebrate and develop their hope, skills and knowledge — and the space to impart that knowledge to adults. This process and these values help change lives, our country, and the world for the better and create what so many participants have called the *magic* of The Students Commission.

- 2.) Two Facilitators work to complete a demonstration of how a conversation (using the four pillars) works based on the attached two scenarios. As they are working through the process, they physically move from one pillar to the next. As the

- conversation is progressing, the facilitator walks in front of the pillar sign representing which pillar is being used in that moment of the conversation.
- 3.) After ‘achieving’ each pillar in the scenario, de-brief with participants what each individual pillar means. Questions that can assist your de-brief:
 - When did we achieve this pillar and what did we do to achieve it?
 - Are there other strategies that could have been used to achieve the pillar? Describe an example.
 - What did you learn about this pillar that you didn’t know before?
 - 4.) After each scenario, debrief. Below are some questions that can assist your debrief:
 - How did we achieve each pillar? Describe the words and actions that took place.
 - Why do you think this process is important when speaking with others?
 - What did you learn from each scenario?
 - How do you feel about each scenario?
 - What will you do with you’ve learned from each scenario
 - 5.) Facilitators will complete one-two scenarios on their own.
 - 6.) They will then go through one scenario where they will encourage the group participants to identify when (through their conversation) they have achieved each pillar. Facilitators will also work to encourage participants to identify key moments in the conversation that lead to the next pillar.
 - 7.) Wrap-up by summarizing the Four Pillars and their importance.

Facilitators Tip: These guidelines will be highlighted throughout the training, especially when we discuss “how to have a conversation” on Day 2. It is important for the group to understand that the training is a ‘safe space’, where they will be respected and we expect that they will be respectful of one another. They are able to share personal stories and examples without fear of judgment. (However, it is important that facilitators remember that these are students from the same school, going back into a setting that might not be as safe. Facilitators need to exercise care and caution about personal stories and disclosures)

Facilitators Tip: The concept of respect here is deeper than manners and politeness; it goes beyond waiting your turn to talk or holding the door open for someone. It is about looking for and naming what you respect in other. It is also a connected cycle, more than four separate concepts. One action leads to the next. The activity illustrates the cycle.

4) What it means to be an ‘Influencer’ (Done in small groups)

Purpose:

- To foster an understanding that the youth at the training are all part of this project because they have been identified as influential people by their peers.

- To explore what being an influencer means.

Activity Background: As an influencer, you can reinforce the decisions that your peers are making while supporting others in their choices. People are watching you – your actions and words — and this is power.

With power comes responsibility. You can be influencing others subconsciously without recognizing it. It is important for influencers to make informed decisions and think about safe choices and safer choices because the impacts are not only limited to themselves, but extend to others around them as well.

Power from within is different from power over others. Power from within is not trying to impose your own value system on others; it is encouraging others to find their own power, make their own decision. Power from within is not about being right; it is about being confident and comfortable with your own values, beliefs and decisions, expressing them, but not forcing them on others.

Facilitators Tip: The words “safer choice” are linked to the harm reduction approach. We are not making judgments; we are providing information and skills (UNCRC Articles 12 and 17) that assist young people in minimizing the harm of choices, like using marijuana.

Step 1: What is an influencer? Have a discussion about what it means to be an influencer. Refer back to the partner interview exercise at the beginning of the training.

- In what ways do we influence others?
- Why do we influence others?
- What does being an influencer mean to the choices you make?
 - e.g., if you spend your breaks at school smoking then as an influential person this will demonstrate to your peers that this is a normal and ‘cool’ thing to do. So will playing soccer.
 - e.g., if you put yourself in risky situations, then this will tell those around you that the situation isn’t very risky

Facilitators Tip: Below is a definition in which the components should be explored through the activity and discussion.

An influencer is someone of respect or reputation who is trusted by their peers.. Influencers have power in the sense that they have the ability to encourage behaviour choices, both positive and negative. For example, an influencer may be a trendsetter, someone others follow to imitate a certain look. In Influence in Action, an influencer is someone others follow with respect to a behaviour. It should be noted that some people that influence others may not necessarily be aware that they in fact influence others. Influence can be both explicit (things we say) and implicit (how we act).

Step 2: Positive/Negative Activity—Map out an Influencer

Facilitators Tip: Preparation: On a flipchart, have participants create a visual version of an influencer based on the discussion in Step 1. Create three columns: person, positive trait, negative trait. Have them fill in this person as they work through the activity with the group.

1. Invite participants to share their partner's experiences from the partner interview activity earlier. Or share their experiences — both positive and negative — with the larger group.

Facilitators Tip: Be sensitive to the risk of disclosure; ask the group to be sure that the negative experiences they share are ones that they are comfortable sharing publicly. In discussion, seek for positive and negative influencers of various ages (i.e., young people and adults).

2. Record on flipchart the qualities the influencer possessed that made those experiences for each individual. Invite participants to label when they felt that those experiences led to something positive in their lives. After discussion, invite the participants to share those experiences that led to something negative in their lives. For example, a caring trait of an influencer may have a positive influence on behaviour, whereas an unsupportive trait may have a negative impact on behaviour.
3. Have participants map these traits to a visual 'influencer' on the flip chart paper. These visuals 'influencers' will be posted on the wall for the duration of the training.
4. Have the group revisit the activity by asking them to share with the group, or in pairs, a time in their life when *they themselves* were positive influencers and/or negative influencers. Who did they influence? What did they have an influence over? Ask them to identify the qualities in their actions and behaviours that are similar or dissimilar to the ones identified earlier in this activity.

Step 3: Have participants walk around the room so that they can check out each team's visual influencer. Invite teams to record the similarities and differences between their visual influencer and the other teams visual influencers.

Facilitators Tip: Explore the following questions with the larger group to wrap up the module (if they weren't discussed in the above activity):

- What is the difference between teaching and influencing? Or bullying (i.e., controlling or commanding) and influencing?
- How would you like to influence others?
- What kind of influencer do you want to be?
- How did this activity relate to the four pillars: respect, listen, understand and communicate?

Step 4: At the front of the room; record answers to questions above and record similarities and differences. Post these throughout the room. The room should now include both the information fair and the visuals (visual influencers) of the training so far. Invite individual participants to walk around before the module ends to continue to record information. Ask participants to record the piece of information that struck them as the most surprising.

Module Debrief:

Summarize the key features of the Influence in Action program, the 4 pillars, and the knowledge about influence that they gained. Participants will fill out customized head, heart, feet and spirit sheets.

Module 2: How Do We Know What We Know?

Objectives:

- To critically identify various sources of information that influence what we know
- To examine the credibility of the sources of information
- To differentiate between statements of fact and opinion
- To understand that you can respect others' perspectives without accepting them to be true

1) Sources of Information

(Done in large group by one facilitator)

Purpose:

- To explore where we get our knowledge.
- To critically examine sources of information in terms of credibility, accuracy, and reliability.

Facilitators Tip:

- Materials required: flip chart, markers, Sources of Influence chart (for guideline purposes)
- Hacky sack or small ball or “talking stick” of some kind
- Large version of the sources of influence visual for people to see
- Printed Large Font-labels of: Community, Society and Family and Friends with smaller examples below the larger label (see source of Influence chart)
- Flip chart paper to record on placed under each label.
- For this activity, you will only be working on outermost ring, identify sources of knowledge for this exercise, grouping them into family/friends, community, and society sections. Keep this circle chart because you will be filling in the inner rings throughout the day.

Activity 1:

Prepare: Throughout the room, hang up flip chart paper in three different places. Using the pre-made labels in the facilitator kit (Friends/Family, Community, Society), label each of the papers.

Explain: Ask participants to stand up and form a circle. Let them know that they will be sharing the fact that surprised them the most from their previous rotations of the information fair. Explain that they'll pass the hacky sack to a random person in the circle and that when it comes to them, it's their turn to share. When a person holds the hacky sack, they are the only one who can speak and share their thoughts (emphasizes first pillar of respect).

Facilitate: Each time a new person gets the hacky sack, ask them to share, which fact surprised them and why they believe the way they do about the fact. Once that person has answered, the facilitator asks the group to decide which category (Family/Friends,

Community, Society) their reason fits into. Once the group decides, the facilitator records the reasons for surprise on flipchart paper under the heading that the group decided on. Be sure that the writing is big enough for everyone to read it from where they're sitting. You'll need to keep these papers visible for one of the first activities the following day (Module 5, Part 1, Activity 2)

Facilitators Tip: Questions that can be asked to facilitate discussion include:

- Why was this surprising for you?
- What do you think will happen now that you know this new information?
- Are there any facts that you questioned? If so why?
- Are there any that you think you'd like to know more about and if so why?
- How much do you think these three categories of people influence the values, beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of young people?

Activity 2:

Prepare: Leave the flip chart paper from the previous activity on the wall. Divide the group up into three teams. Give each team some post-it notes and something to write with.

Explain: Each team will rotate for 5 minutes to each station on the wall (Friends/Family, Community, Society). At each station, the influencers will write on the post-it notes to show which sources of influence they accept information from. Ask them to consider each source individually, Parents, Relatives, Close friends, Neighborhood, Teachers, School, Peers, Books, media, news, government. Each influencer adds a sticky note to each source of influence. Their sticky note should say something like, "Trust," "Question," or "Reject" to show how accepting they are of information that comes from each source. They can add phrases like "most of the time," "never" or use percentages.

Facilitate: While groups are rotating, facilitate by asking questions like:

- Are there certain sources you trust for certain types of information?
- Are there some sources that you always question?
- Are there some that you never question?

After the rotations, bring the group back to the circle. Referring back to the post-it notes, facilitate a discussion using questions such as:

- What makes you question certain sources or certain information?
- What makes you trust certain ones?
- How do you know if the information you get from a source is credible?
- How do you know if it's accurate?
- How do you know if it's reliable?
- What do you think is the difference between credible, accurate, and reliable information?

Facilitators Tip: Definitions are included below as a guideline. Youth do not need to generate exact definitions, but after discussion summarize by providing the definitions for each term.

Credibility: offering reasonable grounds for being believed

Accuracy: freedom from mistake or error

Reliability: giving the same result on successive trials

Remember that having one doesn't mean you have them all. They are all different ways of determining whether or not you should trust that information. Having all three makes something more trustworthy.

Facilitators Tip: Explain to the group that when they stop to consider whether information is credible, accurate, and/or reliable, they are thinking critically! Critical thinking is essential to making informed decisions for oneself.

Facilitators Tip: Keep in mind throughout this discussion that the focus is on the information NOT on the person providing the information. Remember the 4 pillars here to ensure that no participants feel that they are being attacked.

2) Exploring values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes

(Done in smaller group)

A. Purpose:

- To explore how the various sources of information influence our values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes.
- To explore the connection between our values, beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviour.

Activity 1: Group Discussion: Either use the given examples or get the group to generate an example of information we get from a source and how that information influences our behaviour:

- a. E.g. Your parents tell you if you're 'good' Santa will bring you presents; society and communities will also continually reinforce this notion even for those that don't believe in Santa (e.g. Christmas songs, media influences)
- b. What do we do with the information we receive from these sources? → Believe it
- c. How does believing it influence us? → We are 'good.'
- d. Therefore: *sources of information can influence our beliefs which in turn, influence our behaviour*

Activity 2: Divide into four (new) small groups. Each group is assigned one term of either: values, beliefs, opinions and attitude. Using the Young Decision Makers model, provide opportunity for participants to study the terms. Each group will then provide their definition of the term based on their own experiences and the research (through internet and the research provided). They will present these definitions and how they came to them with the larger group. There will then be a facilitated discussion with an opportunity for the larger group to provide input into the definition.

Facilitators Tip: Allow the participants some time to generate their own definitions from their own experiences, then circulate a fact sheet on values, beliefs, attitudes and opinion

with examples to help inform their definition and to be in line with the Young Decision Makers cycle.

It may be helpful to use each term in a sentence to illustrate each term.

Belief: An assumed truth —Thinking something is true. Example: I believe that people are usually friendly and approachable.

Value: Underlying assumptions about standards that govern decisions —Thinking it is important or unimportant. Example: I value honesty, integrity, ambition, competence, and independence.

Attitude: Directed by a belief towards something —The way I approach someone or something is affected by what I believe and value. Example: I am not going to talk to him; he's dishonest. I like partying; alcohol is good for you.

Opinion: Expressing an attitude toward something — Expressing what I think, based on my beliefs, values and attitudes. Example: Country music is better than rap.

B. Purpose:

- To understand that beliefs are not always necessarily true.
- To identify differences between beliefs and opinions/attitudes.
- To critically examine values/beliefs/ opinions/attitudes.

Activity 1: When is a fact a fact?

Let participants know that the room around them has been setup to share information on a variety of different topics of interest. Invite participants to rotate around individually (for a second time) to different stations, to try them out or to see what information is available. Once participants have rotated around the room; facilitate a large group discussion on Facts. Were there any facts out there that they didn't necessarily believe, were there facts out there that they easily believed? Ask why people felt the way they did about the different examples.

Discuss how your values and beliefs can contribute to what you believe to be a fact. For example, if you believe that it is a fact that chocolate is healthy then you may take the statement "chocolate ice cream is better for you than vanilla ice cream" to be another fact. You may cite research studies that support your position that chocolate is healthy therefore, chocolate ice cream is better for you. Alternatively, if an individual prefers vanilla ice cream, they may cite studies, which say that fewer ingredients are healthier for you. If credible evidence supports both perspectives therefore, the statement is based on personal preference and therefore an opinion.

KEY POINT: Critical thinking is occurs when you evaluate what you take to be a fact, even when your beliefs provide support.

Facilitators Tip: Keep in mind that we all have varying opinions, which we turn to when creating our various beliefs. When considering other's opinions, we need to refer back to

the 4 pillars. For example, someone may hold the opinion that vanilla is purer than chocolate and therefore vanilla ice cream is better than chocolate. This needs to be respected and understood.

Activity 2: “Name that Statement”: Give statements (or have statements generated by group) and explore if the statement is true/false/opinion. Have the influencers go through each statement and explain why they believe the statement is true, false, or an opinion (i.e., do credibility checks: *accuracy, reliability, credibility*).

- Birds have feathers
- Fishing is best at night
- Teachers never make mistakes
- Airplanes are safer than cars
- Soccer is played with a ball
- Football is the roughest sport
- Pierre Trudeau was the best Prime Minister of Canada
- A ring around the moon means it will rain tomorrow
- Adults always tell the truth
- Chocolate ice cream is better than vanilla ice cream

Facilitator’s Tip: To make this activity more interactive, there are 2 options:

- a. Use “Fist to 5” to show agreement for the following statements.
- b. Post 3 pages around the room with TRUE, FALSE, OPINION on them.
Have the group go to the page that represents their perspective.

In both options, be sure to discuss why the choice was made. Reinforce when the youth use critical thinking to support their position.

Activity debrief: After exercise re-introduce idea of critical thinking by informing youth that what they just did was an example of the critical thinking process. *Critical thinking* is a process in which a person improves their thinking and knowledge through taking charge of the information that they believe. This is done through the mental evaluation of arguments or propositions that are presented to them (Huitt, 1998; Paul & Elder, 2005).

The main point is that what we think is true and important (our beliefs and values) shape our attitude and approach to what we encounter in life and what our opinions become. It is important to note that our beliefs, values, attitudes and opinions are influenced and reinforced by our sources of information – which aren’t always accurate, reliable, or credible sources of information. Applying critical thinking to our own beliefs, values attitudes, and opinions helps us to better understand how our own values, beliefs, etc., are formed.

3) Beliefs/values/attitudes/opinions influence decision-making, which influences behaviour

(Done in large group)

Purpose:

- To understand that beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions influence our decisions, which in turn, influence our behaviour.

Activity 1: Generate discussion about what influences our decision to do something, highlighting factors such as:

- What we think other people are doing (belief about norms)
- What we think is acceptable/normal behaviour within our peer group (belief about norms)
- What we think we can get away with (beliefs)
- What we think is right/wrong (opinion, attitude)
- Ability to perform the behaviour (i.e., if you think you can do it) (attitude, opinion)
- What we think the result/outcome of the behaviour will be (i.e., what you expect to happen) (expectation – belief, opinion)
- What we think the influential people in our lives are doing → This point demonstrates why it is important for the influencers to understand their significance as an influential person in their peers' lives (beliefs, norms)

Activity Debrief: Link critical thinking with decision-making – if inaccurate information informed our beliefs/values/attitudes/opinions, and that is what directs our decision-making, then we may be making decisions based on inaccurate information and not making the best choice. For example, just because an astronomer published an academic paper saying that the sun revolves around the Earth (as people had firmly believed so in the past) doesn't make it a fact. People were afraid to walk to the ends of the earth. Now let's watch this rap about 'Hand-Washing'. Debrief: This video demonstrates how beliefs and attitudes can shift rapidly when new information is shared and how inaccurate beliefs, if believed to be true by the majority (norms), can keep people doing something very unhealthy, even when they are supposed to be "experts." De-brief to ensure everyone understands the message of the video. Highlight that a little critical thinking and observation can go a long way in decision-making. This is what this program is all about. It's about stopping and thinking what we think we know to be true so that we can be sure that we making informed decisions. It is totally okay for us to know that something we are about to do may not be that good for us (e.g. eating a hamburger). It is important though that we know what is in that hamburger, so that we can weigh the risk be sure that we have critically evaluated the information we receive from all our sources before we adopt it into our own perception of reality.

4) Applying critical thinking to marijuana and other topics of interest: Myths or facts?

Purpose:

- To identify what we know about marijuana and other topics and where we get our knowledge from.

- To critically think about whether what we know is credible, accurate, and reliable information.
- To learn more about marijuana-related myths and facts.

Activity 1 Option 1: Myths or Facts game: read out the statements from the Myths or Facts chart below to the group and have them label them as being either a myth or fact about marijuana. Include some elements of Option 2, if you like for them to add myths or questions. Assign influencers in pairs to statements and have them research each to determine if they are true or false.

Activity 1, Option 2: As a group, generate a list of statements that include the following:

- Statements they believe to be true about marijuana use, and where they learned each from
- Potential myths that they may have heard, and from whom/where
- Questions that they might have about marijuana use

Facilitators Tip: For simplicity for Option 1, have the statements prepared on separate cards ahead of time to hand out to the influencers. In either Option, be sure to have some blank cards so that youth can add their own “facts” or statements they are unsure about that are not on the list. If option 2 is chosen, ensure that all areas/issues (e.g., Social, physical, legal) in option 1 (chart) are addressed

Facilitate Activity

For both Options, write statements and questions on flipcharts on the wall. Influencers may then pair up and research the assigned beliefs, potential myths, and questions to determine their accuracy. When influencers have arrived at an answer that they are satisfied with, they should post their information on the flipchart, **with the reference** that provided the information. Facilitators should verify their research with participants. Have each pair present what they found out. *Optional*: Use “dotmocracy”. When the list of statements has been generated, give each influencer red, green, and yellow circle stickers, and ask them to put a dot next to each statements based on whether they think it’s a fact (green), myth (red), or they’re not sure (yellow). Alternatively, use dotmocracy to vote on whether they think the facts people have researched and the references they used were very reliable, credible, and accurate (green), not reliable, credible, and accurate (red), or somewhere in between (yellow).

Activity Debrief: When presenting to the group, influencers should be prompted to cover:

- 1) Was the statement on your card true or false?
- 2) What did you find in the research to determine whether it was true or false?
- 3) How did you know your research was credible, accurate and reliable?
What was your source?
- 4) Was it surprising what you found? If so why? If not why not?

Facilitators Tip: For this activity you will need computers with internet access or paper resources such as brochures from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health or the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. See the appendix for list of websites for researching marijuana. Feel free to make the website information available to adult allies. See Activity 2, option 2 below for examples of myths, followed by facts and references. These examples may be used if the group is having trouble generating their own (either do Activity 2 option 1 or 2; preferable option 1, but don't do both). Responses and references may be disseminated at the end of the activity/day.

Facilitators Tip: Remind the group of the 4 pillars. We may come across to others as being judgmental if we don't follow the 4 pillars. Critical thinking is not about being judgmental. It is about critically examining how we know what we know, why we do what we do, and trying to understand others' points of views and experiences. This exercise is about differentiating fact from fiction, not judging the various statements presented.

Facilitators Tip: Discuss how because values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes about marijuana use and other topics are not always true, we need to think critically about the information we are getting from information sources to determine what is true/false so that we avoid forming values/beliefs/ opinions/attitudes that are based on inaccurate, unreliable or non-credible information.

Myths or Facts?	Answer
Most young people have used marijuana at least once.	Myth: 69% of Ontario students (grade 7-12) have NEVER tried it (CAMH, 2006) 57.1% of Canadians ages 15 to 24 report not having NEVER used marijuana in their lifetime (Health Canada, 2009).
Marijuana is natural so it cannot be bad for you.	Myth: A lot of natural things are bad for you (poisonous plants). When you smoke marijuana it releases harmful substances into your lungs (CAMH, 2006)
Marijuana smoke contains tar and other cancer-causing agents.	Fact (CAMH, 2006)

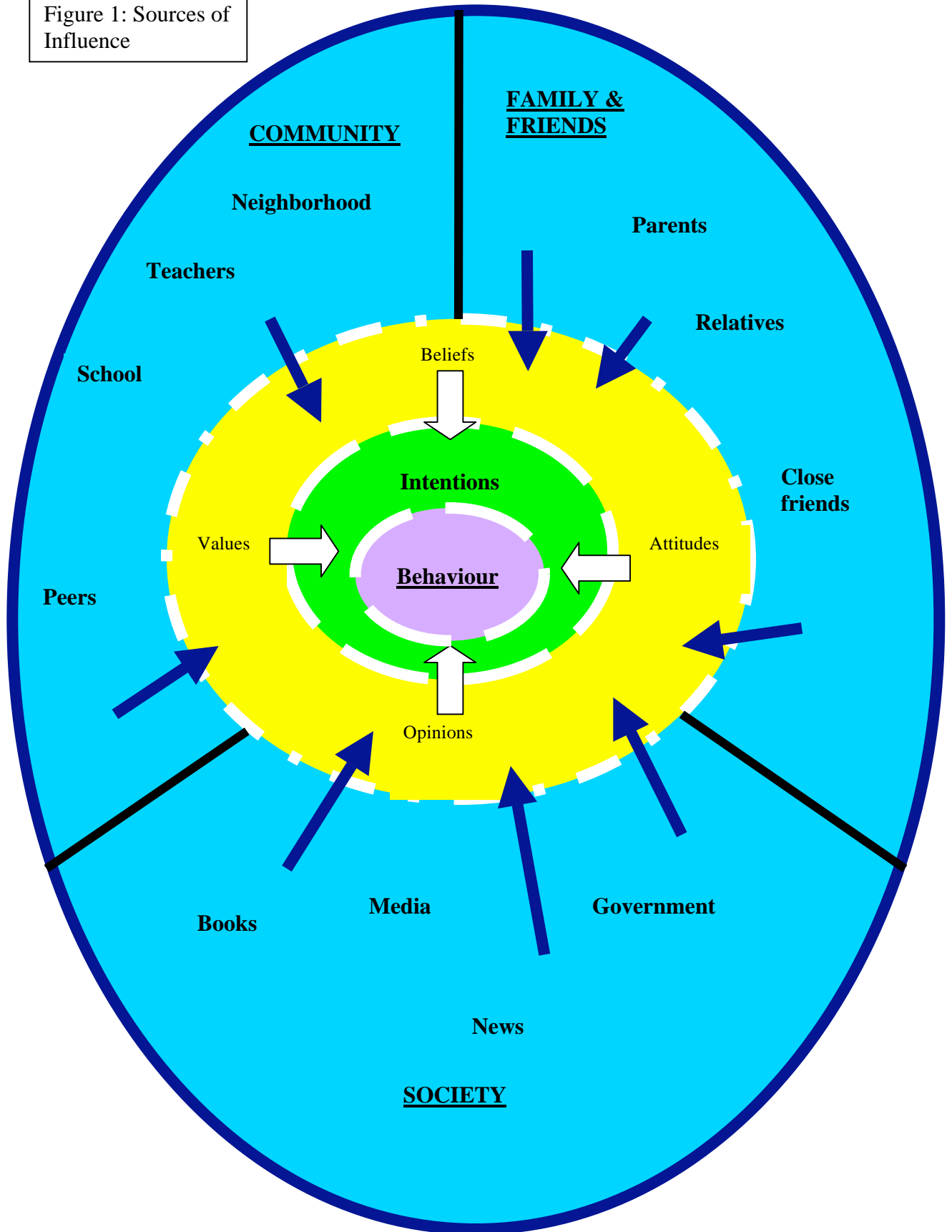
Marijuana doesn't affect any brain processes.	Myth: The most psychoactive chemical in marijuana is THC. THC attaches itself to specific receptors, known as cannabinoid receptors. These receptors are found throughout the brain and once activated by the presence of THC, can interrupt the regular process that the receptors control (such as memory or concentration) (Kalat,
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	2009) making the brain work less effectively.
All marijuana is the same strength.	Myth: There is great variation in the strength of marijuana (CAMH, 2006)
People who inhale marijuana can develop a physical dependence.	Fact: People do not become physically dependent on marijuana. This is because marijuana does not affect the brain's reward system, which is responsible for addiction. However, some people may develop a psychological dependence on marijuana (Kalaf, 2009).
Now that after smoking marijuana doesn't make you impaired.	Myth: The acute effects of THC are the most noticeable, but it can impair cognitive functions such as memory, attention, and decision-making. These effects can last for several hours (Kalaf, 2009).
Marijuana doesn't affect memory.	Myth: The hippocampus is the part of the brain that is responsible for memory. THC can impair the hippocampus, leading to memory impairment (Kalaf, 2009).
3 to 4 joints per day causes the same damage as smoking 20 or more cigarettes.	Fact: The damage caused by smoking marijuana is not directly comparable to smoking cigarettes. Marijuana contains many chemicals, including THC, which can be harmful to the lungs and other organs (Kalaf, 2009).
There are at least 400 chemicals in marijuana.	Fact: Marijuana contains over 400 different chemicals, including THC, CBD, and terpenes. These chemicals can have various effects on the body (Kalaf, 2009).
There are not a lot of arrests in Canada for marijuana.	Myth: About 1% of all drug arrests in Canada are for possession of marijuana (CAMH, 2003)
There are no serious penalties for possessing even small amounts of marijuana.	Myth: Most people convicted of possessing marijuana for the first time receive a fine or a discharge, but could still end up with a criminal record. A first-time conviction for possessing 30g or less could result in a 6 month jail sentence, a \$1,000 fine or both (CAMH, 2006)
THC leaves your system once the 'effects' of marijuana have worn off.	Myth: THC remains in your brain for days or weeks. It may even affect your memory, speech or learning. THC can be stored in your fat cells and is slowly expelled from the body (CAMH, 2006)
A lot of teens regularly use marijuana. Values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes	Myth: Only 3% of Ontario students are problem users (CAMH, 2006)
Smoking marijuana doesn't affect your school performance.	Myth: Non-users find it easier to think and are more motivated than users (CAMH, 2006).
There are no long term effects associated with marijuana use.	Myth: Marijuana use may impair people's attention, memory and ability to process complex information. This can last for

	weeks, months and even years after usage has stopped. Cannabis smoke also contains cancer-causing agents, irritates the respiratory system (CAMH, 2003)
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Marijuana use is not associated with mental health issues.	Myth: Marijuana has been linked to the onset of schizophrenia (CAMH, 2006)
Cannabis use is illegal in Canada.	Fact (CAMH, 2006)
Marijuana is never useful.	Myth: Synthetic THC is used as a prescription medicine for people with AIDS or those undergoing cancer treatments. It is used because it can relieve nausea and vomiting and can help the person regain their appetite (CAMH, 2006)

Figure 1: Sources of Influence



Module Debrief:

Review the sources of influence chart and highlight the importance of critical thinking about information we receive given the relationship of information influencing our values, beliefs, attitudes and opinions, which influence our intentions (decision to do something) and ultimately our behaviour (what we chose to do). Complete head, heart, feet and spirit sheets on the module.

Module 3: Why People Do What They Do

Objectives:

- To explore factors which influence decision-making regarding marijuana use.
- To understand the role of risk and protective factors in influencing intentions/behaviours toward marijuana use.
- To understand the continuum of marijuana use.
- To explain the project's focus on cannabis and marijuana

Pre-Amble: Up until this point, the focus has been on a variety of different topics and statements with a more detailed look at cannabis. For the rest of the event, the discussion will focus on marijuana and cannabis. We will use this topic as a 'case study' to demonstrate the impact of critical thinking on a controversial topic.

Why Cannabis?

The topic of cannabis and marijuana happens to be one that generates a lot of controversy and confusion among people in Canada. People's beliefs, attitudes, opinions and values vary remarkably from person to person. Cannabis provides a good case study of how thinking critically and finding out the facts for yourself on an issue can potentially shift your beliefs. There is also new research about cannabis and cannabis itself is changing, which many adults and young people don't know.

1) The Role of Pros/Cons in Decision-Making

(Done in small groups)

Purpose:

- To explore the decision-making process
- To understand what influences a decision (weighing the pros/cons and risk/protective factors)
- To recognize how decisions, based on intentions, can result in behaviour.

Activity Introduction: Decision-making involves considering your options, your environment, and organizing the information you have in order to decide what you will do.

Key Points

There are things in our environment that may increase or decrease the likelihood of making the decision to engage in a particular behaviour. These are called risk and protective factors. For example, if you have close parent/guardian relationships, this may influence your decision-making so that you avoid certain behaviours that may be risky for you. That's a protective factor. On the other hand, if you live in a neighbourhood that has drug dealing taking place, this would be a risk factor as it may increase the chances that someone will try to sell you drugs or get you involved in helping them sell drugs. Both protective and risk factors can influence what choices an individual makes. Each

individual makes their own choices, but it helps to know and think about what protects you and what exposes you to risk. Friends who all listen to classical music put you at risk of listening to classical music.

protective factor- a factor in one’s behaviour/environment/personality that will decrease the likelihood of engaging in a risk behaviour

risk factor- a factor in one’s behaviour/environment/personality that will increase the likelihood of engaging in a risk behaviour

Activity 1: Individual group members circulate around the room with large post-it notes to share an activity/behaviour (e.g. smoking marijuana, eating a hamburger) of their choosing. They will rotate to each heading to share the pro of doing the activity, con of doing the activity, pro of not doing the activity and con of not doing the activity.

Activity 2: After the group discussion. Have each individual look at the lists that they have created. Have participants vote by dotmocracy (1 of the 4 headings) for each activity listed. This will help determine what the participants value. Ask them what they value on the list (for example if they have listed their boyfriend/girlfriend as a con of using and they value this relationship more than any of the pros; then this will have a greater impact). Have a general discussion around the influence that one’s values have on the weight the pros and cons have on their list.

Facilitators Tip: Try to discuss that in some cases, values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes can overshadow each other. For example, if someone holds the attitude that going camping is not enjoyable, but their belief is that it is important for children to have camping experiences, their behaviour may be to take their children camping because their belief was stronger than their attitude.

Facilitators Tip: Below is a list of reasons for using/not using marijuana generated by youth. The chart below is for guideline purposes; students should be generating their own responses. If students question the accuracy of any pros/cons identified, allow them to research it on provided computers to ensure accuracy of information.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Pros of Using Cannabis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • satisfy curiosity • meet social expectations • relax • have better time at parties • helps to deal with stress • easier time getting to sleep • have fun • better sex 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cons of Using Cannabis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost • arguments with parents, girlfriend/boyfriend • legal charges • interferes with medication
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Pros of Not Using Cannabis</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cons of Not Using Cannabis</u></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no hangovers • do better in school • be able to concentrate better • better memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bored • nothing in common with friends • will need to make changes • too stressful
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Information Fair ENERGIZER!!!

Activity 3: What are some things in one's life or surroundings that would affect one's behavioural choices (e.g. risk and protective factors)? As a quiet individual activity have participants write down three different 'factors' in behaviour choice at the self, social and system level. Collect participants answers and then draw from a hat anonymously and discuss as a group. (see Appendix C for a listing of factors).

Discuss the connection between the pros and cons, the weighting of the value that people place on a pro or a con, and protective and risk factors.

2) Continuum of use

Purpose:

- To understand that behaviour can fall anywhere on the continuum between non-users and problem users.
- To apply this specifically to marijuana use as a case study

Materials:

- Markers
- Flip-Chart

Facilitators Tip: Draw a horizontal line across the chart to represent the continuum of behaviour.

Activity 1: Levels of behaviour fall on a continuum. (Optional, to connect first to other types of behaviour, using examples from the Information Fair. Otherwise, just do Activity 2. These can be combined.)

Facilitator Questions:

- 1) Ask participants to think back to some of the behaviours we've discussed throughout this workshop.
- 2) Ask participants to choose a few behaviours and to describe the different levels of intensity surrounding those behaviours.
- 3) What would be the two extreme opposites on a behavioural continuum of use?
- 4) What would you call the middle ground of these behaviours?

For both Activity 1 and 2, try to get youth to identify two extreme opposites as 'non-user' and 'dependent/problem user' and write at each end of the line. Have youth

generate responses like ‘experimenter’, ‘irregular/occasional user’ and ‘regular user’ that go between the extremes (and add into continuum line between ‘non-user’ and ‘problem user’). Discuss what level of use would fall into each category (e.g., what does an occasional user look like in terms of their use?). Note that people can either stay where they are or move either way along this continuum of use.

Activity 2: Applying the continuum to Marijuana Use.

- 1) Create a continuum of use for Marijuana use.
- 2) Ask participants to define all of the levels of use.
- 3) Ask participants to provide descriptions of what being at each of these stages would mean (e.g. not using marijuana—what would the impact on life be, using marijuana daily—what would the impact on life be. What might the life of a problem user look like?)

Facilitators Tip: The definitions included below are for guideline purposes. Youth do not need to generate exact definitions, but after discussion, you should provide them with accurate definitions for each term.

No-Use – no use/never used.

Experimental Use - Used once (or several) times – motivated by curiosity about the drug (including alcohol) and the effect of the drug. Use stops.

Irregular Use - Use is infrequent and irregular, usually on special occasions or when direct opportunities come up.

Regular Use - Use is predictable, and could be frequent or infrequent. Person looks for the drug often.

Daily Use - Use is frequent, often daily or the person binges. The person keeps using even though they know it is having a negative effect on their lives.

Facilitators Tip: The important point in this discussion is that with increased use, there is increased harm for the user. Some important areas to highlight are:

- Neglecting your responsibilities (school, work, or home)
- Taking risks while high (increased risk-taking behaviour)
- Getting into legal trouble
- Problems in interpersonal relationships
- Risks to developing brain and earlier use increases risk of problem use later in life (Information Fair: schizophrenia, brain development poster)

3) Decision Points

In our lives, we all start as non-users. As we age, we have to make decisions about our marijuana use – will we continue to be a non-user or will we decide to use? This chart (see Decision Tree with stats for province you are in) shows that we are making decisions all the time and there are many points/opportunities to influence choices.

Facilitators Tip: Go through the decision-tree that is for the province you are in. Relate it back to the continuum of use pointing out that most youth chose not to use marijuana.

Activity 1: Discuss the various points at which decisions are made. For example, first, you decide to use or not use, if use, experiment and stop or experiment and continue to use. Each time an opportunity to use arises, you can make the decision to use or not.

Discuss how your decisions impact your life. (e.g., goals, career aspirations, values, beliefs).

NOTE: On the Decision Trees, we start with the positive norm, but then switch to the negative, talking about who is using. As part of this activity, have students calculate the positive story for each statistic and post it on a flip chart.

Activity 2: Discussion questions:

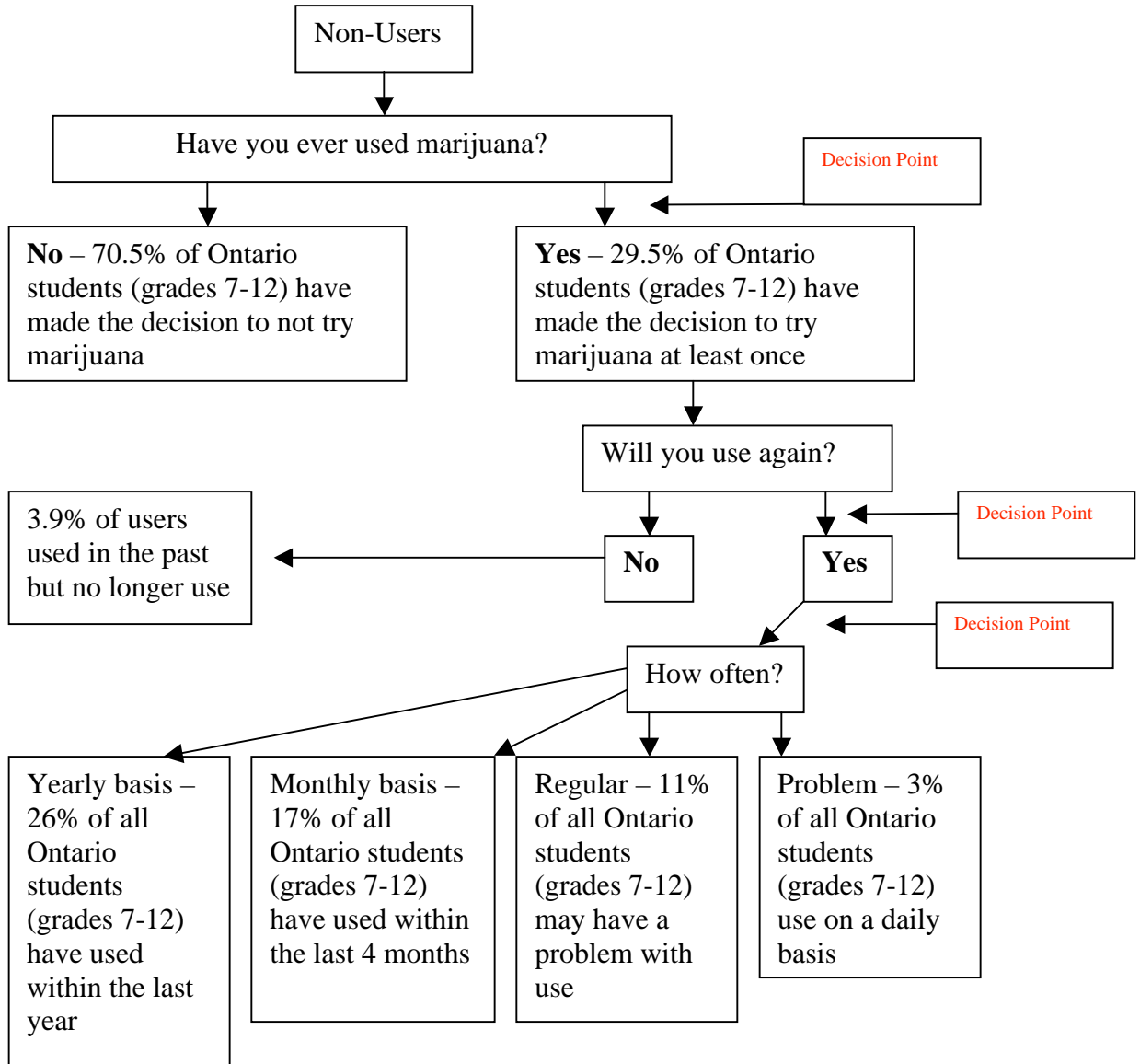
- Where do you think you can influence/talk to someone?
- Where/when are points of influence?
- What is the difference in influencing someone when they are faced with making a decision when at a party (in the moment) versus making a decision when no marijuana is present at school or just hanging out?
- How might an influencing conversation differ between someone deciding to use for the first time versus someone who has used before?

Facilitators tip: Highlight that decisions we make regarding marijuana happen regularly. Every time someone thinks about using or there is an opportunity to use marijuana, there is a decision point. Each decision point is an opportunity for influence.

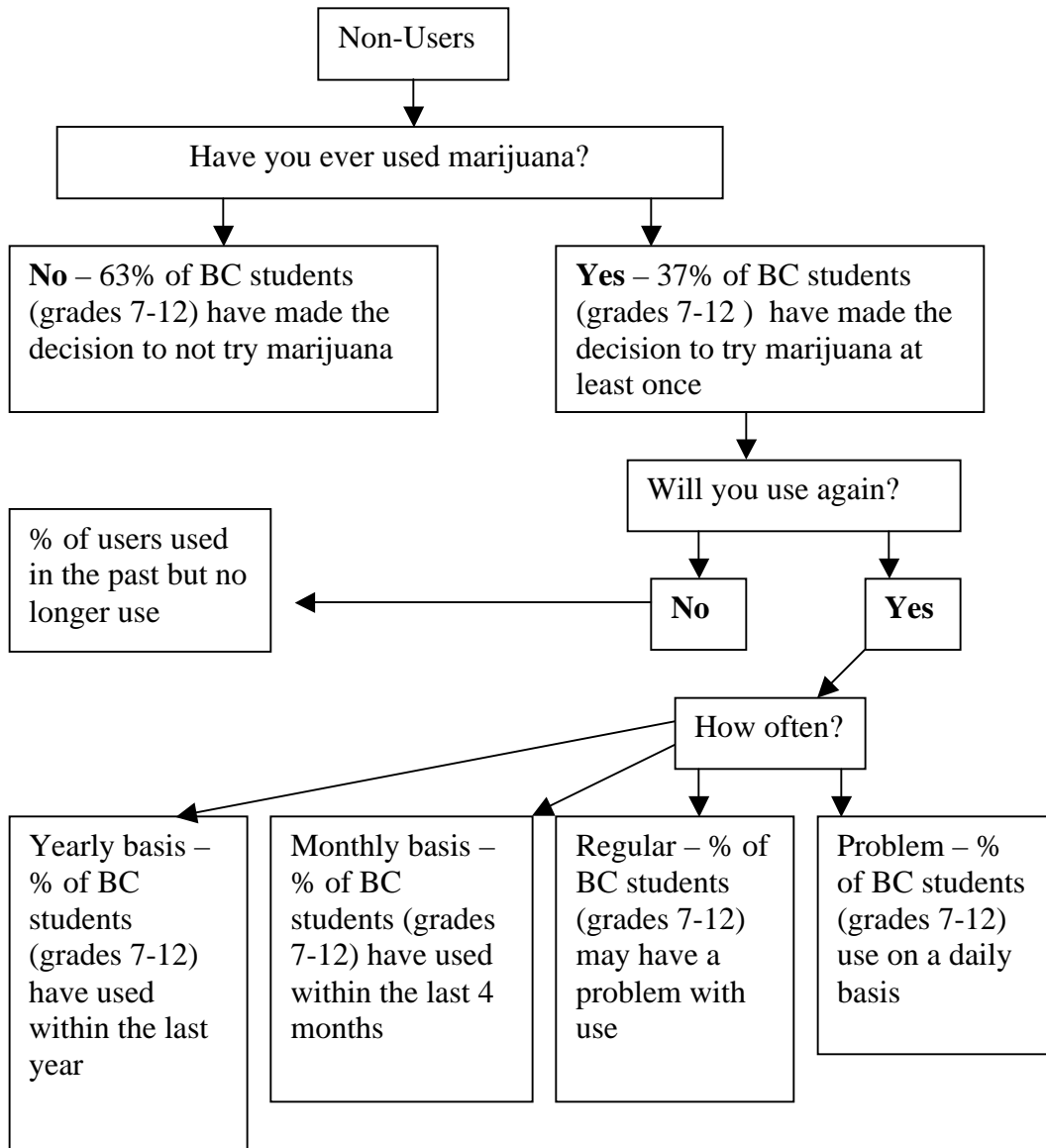
Module Debrief:

Summarize the discussion which explored that people use for different reasons and that an individual's environment may increase or decrease the likelihood that a person will choose to use marijuana. When individuals are thinking about or are faced with an opportunity to use marijuana, these are times when an influencer may have an impact. These decision points arise at many times throughout our lives.

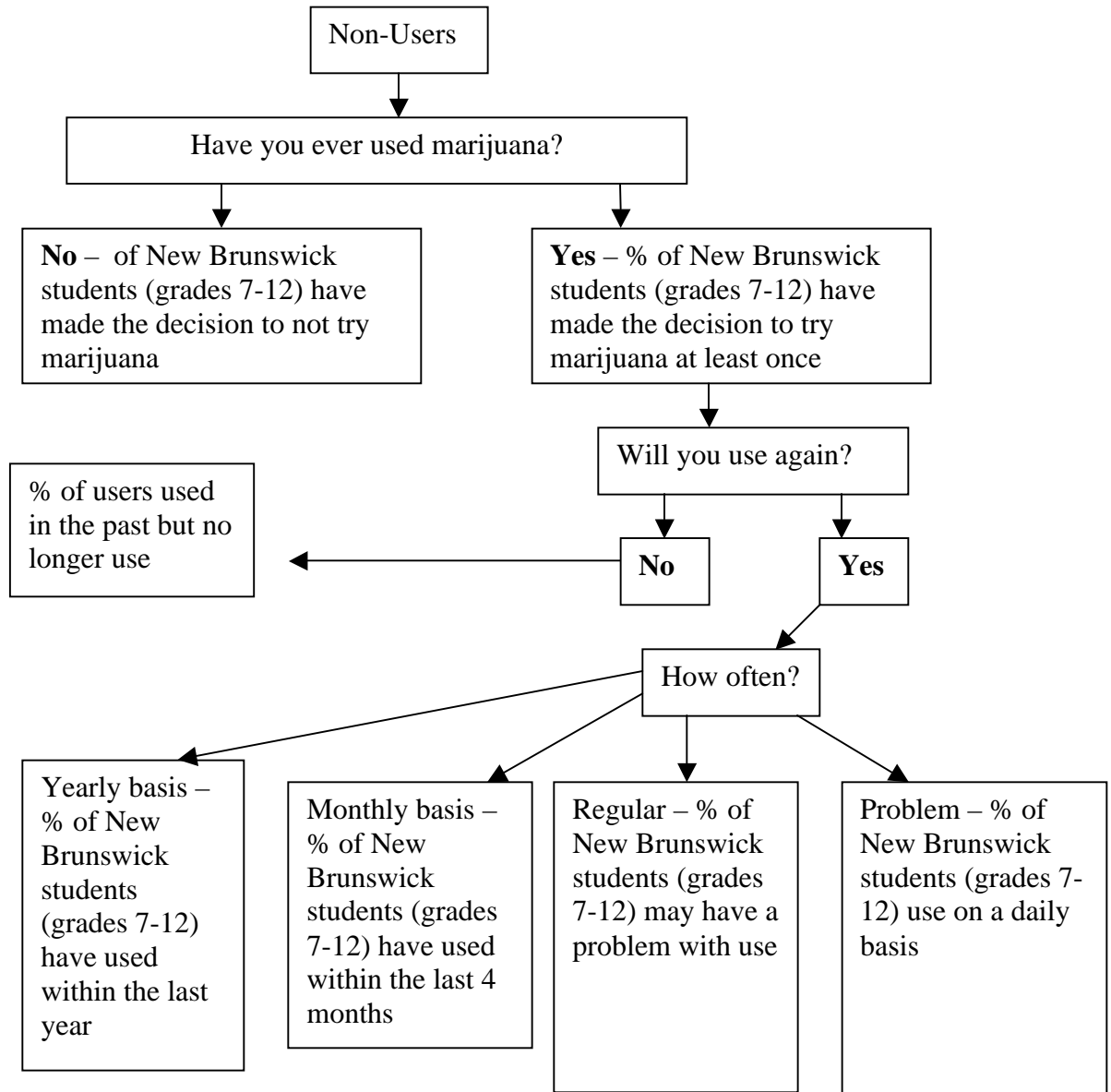
Decision Points: Ontario
(Center for Addiction and Mental Health, 2006)



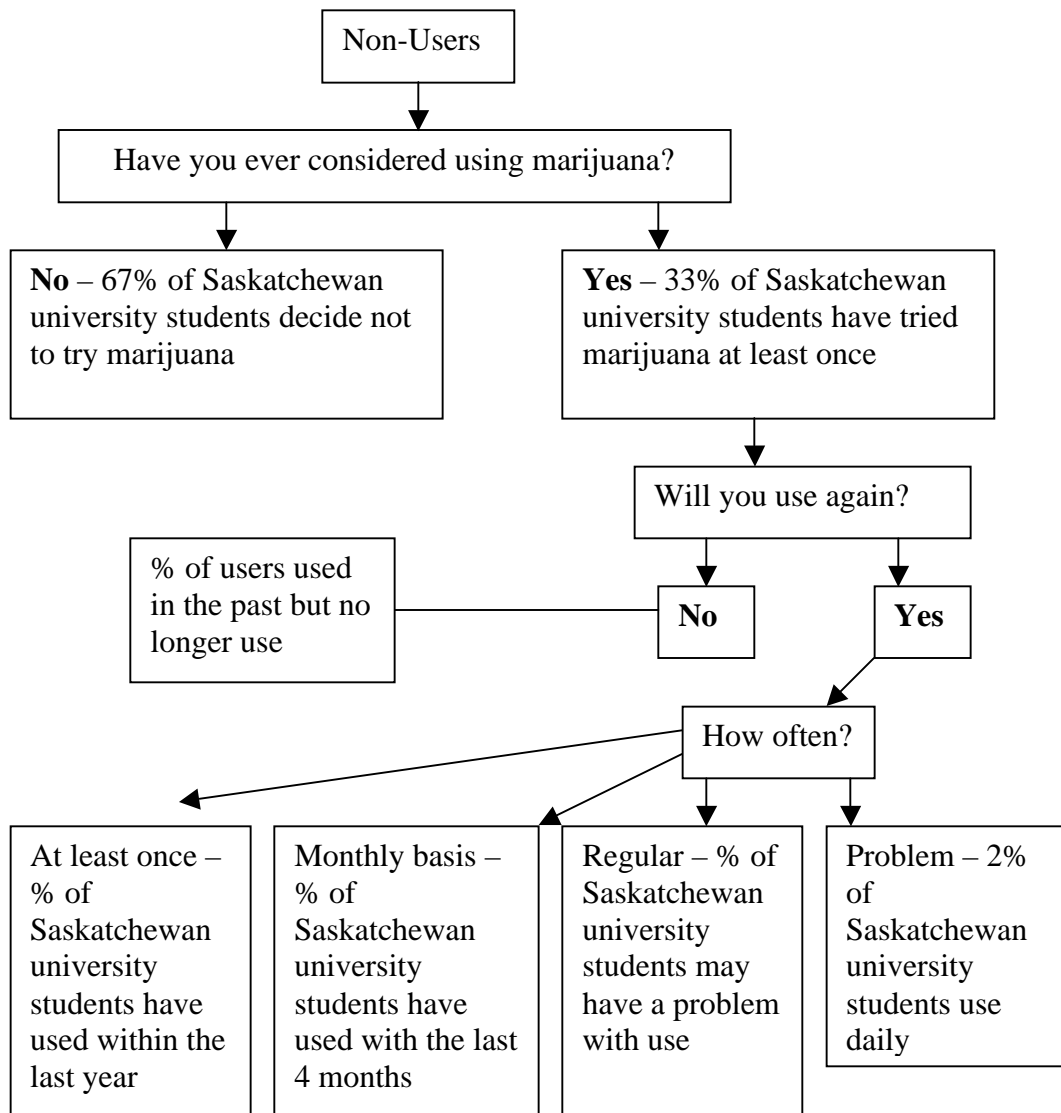
Decision Points: British Columbia
 (The McCreary Centre Society, 2003)



Decision Points: New Brunswick
(New Brunswick Student Drug Survey, 2007)



Decision Points: Saskatchewan
 (Student Health Centre, University of Saskatchewan, 1999)



Module 4: How and why people change

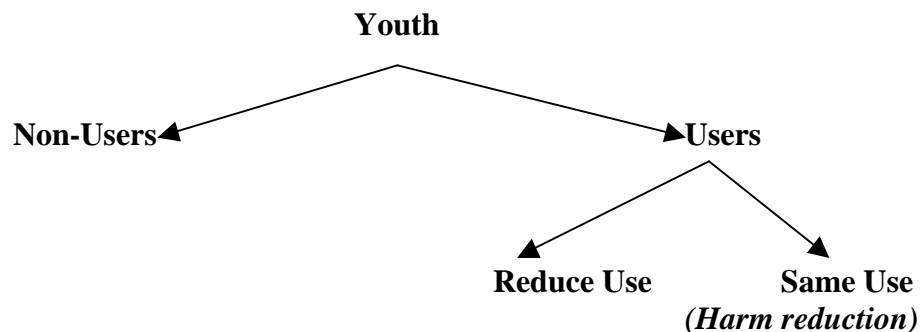
Objectives:

- To explore how and why people make decisions to change behaviours (process of change)
- To understand the role of peer influencers in the change or stay-the-same process

1) Groups of Youth and Use

A. Purpose:

- To introduce the need for different strategies an influencer may use depending on the decision a peer has made regarding their marijuana use. These strategies can also be used for other activities: getting more exercise, reducing alcohol consumption, playing a musical instrument. We will continue to focus on marijuana as the case study.



There are three groups of youth: non-users, users who want to reduce their marijuana use, and users who want to continue to use at the same level. The strategies that you would use to support and influence their choices would differ among the groups as the goals will be different.

Group 1. Non-users

Influencer role: reinforce choice to not use

Group 2. Users who want to reduce their use

Influencer role: support decision to change

Group 3: Same use – harm reduction approach

Influencer role: reinforce safer use

Activity 1: Generate a discussion. Knowing what you know now from our discussion on critical thinking, write down on a sheet of paper, a fact about marijuana or any other facts that you found from the information fair that would shift your thinking on a subject or motivate you to change. Then describe why? These will be collected and we will discuss each individually.

During discussion, the facilitator asks questions: What facts would work in conversations with some of your peers at shifting behaviour? Would this work with all types of users groups (including non-users)? Which type of user would it work best with? If so, why? If not, why not? Are there different strategies emerging from the discussion for different types of users? (Note these on a flip chart as they emerge.) If there was a friend of yours that was engaging in behaviour that you wanted to influence them away from, what kind of information would you share with them, what kind of strategies would you use? Discuss why it is important to customize your strategy depending on the decision made by your friend or peer.

B. Purpose:

We will now work to focus some of these strategies on cannabis use.

- To become familiar with the process of change
- To reflect on one's own experiences of change and mixed feelings (ambivalence) towards change
- To apply the process of change to understand how people may or may not move along the continuum of marijuana use. The change process could mean reducing marijuana use or stopping use or never experimenting.

For any behaviour that people might want to change, people will have a different readiness to change, and different things will help enable the change. Think of the protective and risk factors that we discussed earlier on and how they can impact behaviour. It's the same principle when applied to behaviour change. For example, this would apply to people who may want to change where they are with their marijuana use.

Activity 2: Case Study-- Identifying different stages in the change process, which can be applied to any behavior people are changing, are thinking about changing, or have changed (e.g., for those who want to reduce their marijuana use).

Option 1: The simplified version —three stages

1) **Weighing the Pros and Cons (contemplation stage):**

- Thinking about the behaviour and that they may want to change it; this is where beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions (e.g., pros and cons, credibility of sources, accuracy of information and reliability) are being critically evaluated. (Sometimes I think I have a problem, sometimes I don't)

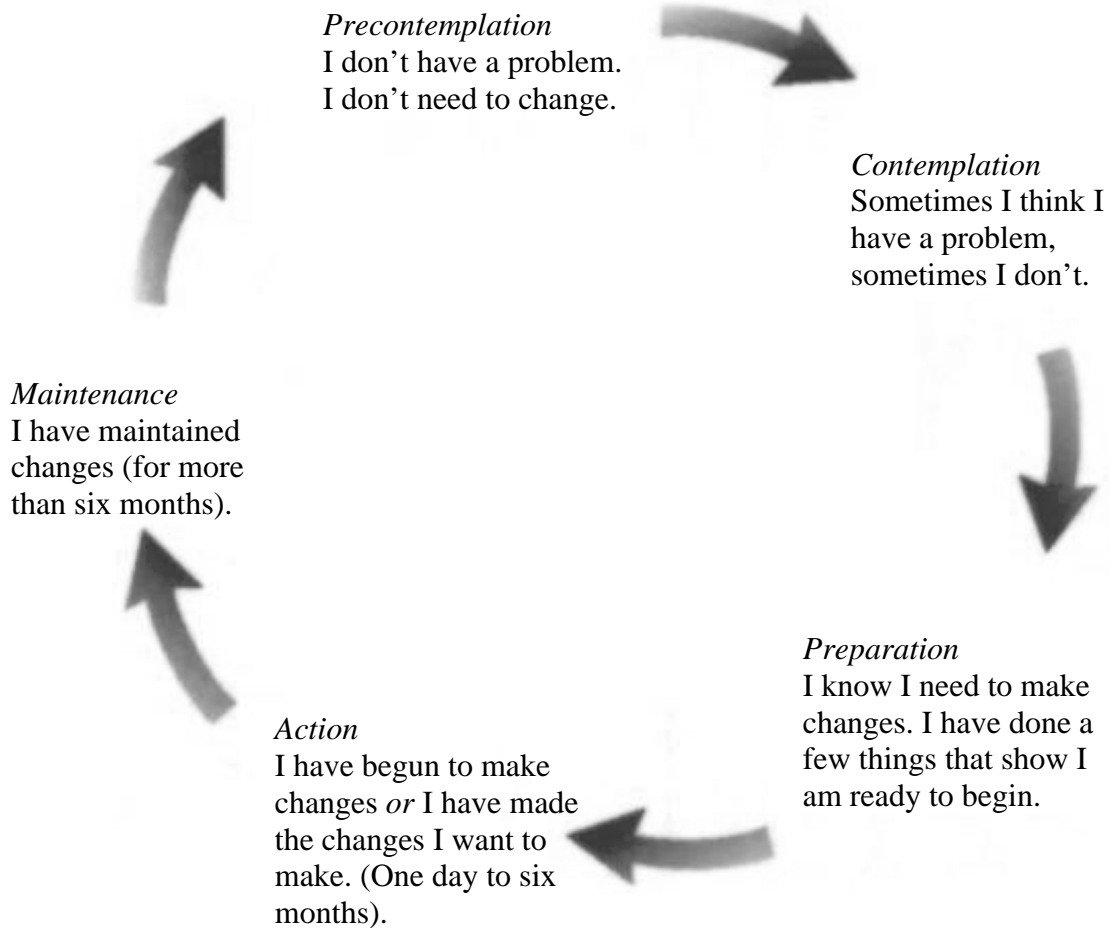
2) **Making Change (preparation and action stages):**

- Based on critical thinking, decisions are made to change the behaviour; involves intentions towards changing the behaviour (I know I need to make changes. I have done a few things that show I am ready to begin)
 - Acting on intentions which lasts anywhere from one day to six months (I have begun to make changes *or* I have made the changes I want to make)
- 3) **Maintaining the change (maintenance stage)**
- Maintaining changes for more than six months (I have maintained changes)

Facilitators Tip: Pass out diagrams of the stages of change process. Go through each stage with the group. As you go through each of these write them down on flip chart, and for each one read the definition (or have a participant read the definition) and then ask participants to think of themselves in each stage. Invite participants to share a behaviour of theirs that corresponds with each stage and then discuss why they are there, what types of sentences would they say.. (e.g., I don't have a problem). If the group seems uncomfortable personalizing this, have them imagine what someone else would say for that stage.

Option 2: The 5 Stages of Change (Transtheoretical Model of Change)

(Prochaska & DiClemente 2005)



Precontemplation: People aren't critically evaluating their decision to use marijuana, they don't even think they want to change (I don't have a problem. I don't need to change.)

Contemplation: Thinking about the behaviour and that they may want to change it; this is where values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes (e.g., pros and cons, credibility of sources, accuracy of information and reliability) are being critically evaluated (Sometimes I think I have a problem, sometimes I don't)

Preparation: Based on critical thinking and weighing the pros and cons of doing the behaviour, decisions are made to change the behaviour; involves intentions towards changing the behaviour (I know I need to make changes. I have done a few things that show I am ready to begin)

Action: Acting on intentions which lasts anywhere from one day to six months (I have begun to make changes *or* I have made the changes I want to make)

Maintenance: Maintaining changes for more than six months (I have maintained changes)

Facilitators Tip: Pass out diagrams of the stages of change process. Go through each stage with the group. As you go through each of these write them down on flip chart, and for each one read the definition and then ask participants to think of themselves in each stage. Invite participants to share a behaviour of theirs that corresponds with each stage and then discuss why they are there. (e.g., I don't have a problem).

Activity 3: Before the activity, have signs with the letters a, b, and c posted in different parts of the room. **Facilitator chooses** and gives influencers with a behaviour which most youth might feel they should do more of, such as doing more homework, eating more vegetables, or exercising more.

Explain to influencers that you will read out a series of statements about the behaviour and potential changes. For each statement, influencers should go to the different letters posted around the room to show their responses.

Stages of Change Self-Identification Questionnaire

(Based on ideas from the URICA)

1. I don't really think that there is a problem.
 - a. agree
 - b. not sure
 - c. disagree

2. I am actively working to change. *(these responses are different from the last question!)*
 - a. disagree
 - b. not sure
 - c. agree

3. I've been thinking that I might want to change.
 - a. disagree
 - b. not sure
 - c. agree

4. Sometimes it's difficult to change, but I'm working on it.
 - a. disagree
 - b. not sure
 - c. agree

5. I don't really see the point in thinking about it. *(this one's backwards!)*
 - a. agree
 - b. not sure
 - c. disagree

6. I have made changes, but sometimes it’s still a struggle.
- a. disagree
 - b. not sure
 - c. agree

7. I wish I had more ideas on how to change.
- a. disagree
 - b. not sure
 - c. agree

8. I have made changes, and I want to make sure things stay that way.
- a. disagree
 - b. not sure
 - c. agree

Debrief: Tell the youth that if they had
 Mostly a’s: early in the stages of change.
 Mostly b’s: closer to the middle.
 Mostly c’s: at the end of the stages of change.

Debrief questions: If you had mostly a’s, what could other people do that would help you to change the behaviour? If you had mostly b’s? Mostly c’s?

Now go through this activity again but this time, **ask influencers to pick any behaviour** that they have ever thought they might want to change, that someone else has suggested they change, or they have tried to change.

Debrief questions: Did the influencers end up in the stages of change different this time? Why? (For example, was this a behaviour they cared more or less about?) Ask if any influencers are willing to volunteer to identify roughly where they were in the stages of change and what others could do that would help them change.

Activity 4: Read the following statements to the group and have them identify which stage the person would be in and which group of youth they would be part of (i.e., group 1, 2, or 3). If the simplified option 1 was used, *a description in italics* of the stage is provided. If option 2 was used, the formal name of the stage of change is identified **in bold**, and finally the group of type of use is identified. It may be helpful in doing this exercise if you have the labels or visuals up on flip charts or the wall.

Statement	Answer re Stage	Answer re Group
“I don’t have a problem at all with marijuana and all of my friends are doing it too”	<i>not ready to change</i> or precontemplation	group 3 same use)
“I’ve successfully cut down on my marijuana use and have been able to keep it up for the last year”	<i>reinforcing current behaviour or</i> maintenance	group 1 non-use or group 2 reduce use

“I think that I’m beginning to rely a lot on marijuana, I might want to think about reducing my use, but I really don’t think I have a ‘problem’ with it”	<i>weighing pros and cons</i> or contemplation	<i>group 2 reduce use</i>
“I’ve started to only smoke at parties, rather than smoking every day”	<i>making change</i> or preparation/ action	<i>group 2 reduce use)</i>
“I’ve been turning my friends offers to smoke down lately, it was getting in the way with activities I wanted to participate in.”	<i>making change</i> or action	<i>group 2 reduce use</i>
“Sometimes I think that my marijuana use affects my motivation to do things like school work/sports/etc.”	<i>weighing pros and cons</i> or contemplation	<i>group 2 reduce use)</i>
“I know that my marijuana use is getting out of hand. I’ve started to make friends with other social groups that don’t use it as much as my friends”	<i>weighing pros and cons</i> or preparation/action	<i>group 2 reduce use)</i>
“I have never had the urge to try marijuana, my health and grades are more important than any curiosity.”	<i>reinforcing current behaviour</i> or maintenance	<i>group 1 non-use</i>

Module Debrief:

- Highlight the importance of listening to the peer and their choices, and matching your strategies of influence to where the person is at.
- Highlight the role of values/beliefs/attitudes/opinions in decision-making
- Highlight the connection between risk and protective factors in supporting decision-making.

Day 2

Module 5: Inserting what you know effectively into conversation

Part 1 – Introduction: direct and indirect conversation

Objectives:

- To explore how influencers can use informal conversation to influence their peers
- To review and apply what we've learned so far about sources of information, values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes,
- To establish the goal of influencing conversations
- To identify natural opportunities where influencing conversations can happen

Activity 1 – Jeopardy

Purpose:

- To review yesterday's modules and their main points

Materials:

- Printed Jeopardy questions and answers for facilitators to read from
- Prize for the winning team

Set-up:

- Draw a Jeopardy board sideways on a piece of flip chart paper or black board
- Create a score chart on another piece of flip chart paper or black board so that one of the facilitators can keep track of the score

Instructions:

- Divide the group into 3 or 4 teams
- Make sure everyone understands the rules of Jeopardy
 - The first team to put their hands up gets to answer first.
 - You only get one chance to answer.
 - If your team answers correctly, you get the points that the question is worth.
 - If you answer wrong, you lose the amount of points that that question is worth.
 - Each team only gets one chance to answer each question. If they answer wrong, they can't have a second guess, and the other teams have a chance to put their hands up and answer.

Facilitator Tip: You may want to ask if anyone from the group would like to lead the game by asking questions and recording points. This is a good way of sharing leadership opportunities with the group, which helps foster a sense of ownership for the group members.

Activity 2 – Facilitated Discussion (10 minutes)

Purpose:

- To explore how conversation, both direct and indirect, can influence others.

- To review and begin to apply what we've learned so far about:
 - Sources of influence
 - Beliefs/values/attitudes /opinions

Materials: Flip chart papers from Module 1, Part1, Activity 1

Set-up: – Check to make sure that the flip chart papers that were used the previous day for Module 1, Part 1, Activity 1 are still visible on the wall.

Instructions:

1 – Explain to group: Yesterday we learned a lot about critical thinking, where people get their information, and how people form their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and values. Today we're going to start thinking about how our knowledge of that can help us use conversation to influence people to make informed decisions.

2 – Referring back to the flip chart papers from yesterday's activity, facilitate the following conversation:

- Does anyone remember from yesterday the different sources that influence young people's values, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs?
- Does anyone remember how we defined what a belief is? What about our definition for values? Opinions? Attitudes?
- What are some of the beliefs/values/attitudes/opions we have that we know have been influenced by our close friends and peers?
- Looking back at our flip chart papers from yesterday, how many of us said that we accept information from our friends and/or peers as being accurate, reliable, or credible?
- Based on our conversation yesterday, how much would you say young people are influenced by their close friends and peers?
- Do you think young people are influenced by what they hear their friends and peers say in conversation?
- What does all of this tell us about how influential young people like yourselves can use conversation to influence your peers?

Facilitator Note: The purpose of this discussion is to review what was learned the previous day and to highlight the role that conversation plays in influencing our peers. The influencers may point out that the way young people behave influences their peers, which is true. However, remind them that the purpose of Influence in Action is to see how sharing information through conversation influences people.

Activity 3 – Setting Goals with Fists and Snowballs (15 minutes)

Purpose:

- To begin identifying our goals in having influential conversations about marijuana and or other topics with our peers (This is just the beginning. The group will revisit their goals throughout the day as they learn more about influencing conversations.
- To review the philosophy and intent of this program, which was covered in Module One

Materials:

- Several small pieces of paper and a pen for each group member
- Flip chart and markers

Prepare: Give each participant a few pieces of paper and a pen. Have your flip chart and markers ready to record.

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group: In this activity, we're going to combine two processes to help us decide what our individual and collective goals are for having these conversations with our peers. The first part of the process is called "Snowballing." In this part, I'm going to ask you each to think of some goals that you think we should have. Try to keep in mind everything we've learned so far about why people do what they do and critical thinking. When everyone's done, you'll crumple up your papers like snowballs and throw them in the middle. Then, everyone will grab a few snowballs from the middle, and we'll take turns reading out what the papers say. This way, no one has to read their own out loud. Each time a new one is read, we'll take a few minutes to discuss it. We'll use our fists to show how much we each like the idea of having that as a goal. This part of the process is called "Fist to Five," and it's a way of coming to agreement and ensuring everyone has a say. So to have your say, listen to the goal that's being read. If you love it, you hold up five fingers. If you don't like the idea at all and just can't agree to it, you hold up a fist. If you're kind of on the fence, you can hold up 2, 3, or 4 fingers to show how much you agree or disagree. If anyone holds up less than 3 fingers for an idea, I'll ask you to share your thoughts with the group about why you don't think that should be part of the goal, and we'll discuss as a group to decide if we should reword that goal or just leave it out all together. Whatever goals we decide to keep, I'll record it on the flip chart paper.

2. Give the group few minutes to think about what they think the goal of these conversations should be and write each idea down on a separate piece of paper. To get them thinking, you can ask questions like:

- What impact would you like to have on the young people in your school?
- If this program were successful, would anything be different in your school or in the lives of the students in it?
- Do you want people to have accurate information about marijuana or other drugs or topics?
- Do you want them to use critical thinking when they make decisions?
- Do you want them to change their opinions, beliefs, values, attitudes or behaviour?
- Do you think they should agree with you?

3. When everyone is done writing their ideas, ask them all to crumple up their papers into 'snowballs' and throw them into the middle of the circle, onto the floor or table. Then, get everyone to grab 2 or 3 snowballs each.

4. Go around the circle, giving each person a chance to read the goals that are written on the papers they have. After each goal is read out loud, take a few minutes to do "Fist-to-

Five.” You do “Fist-to-Five” by having each person hold up their fingers (or fist) on the count of three. If anyone in the circle holds up 3 or less fingers for a certain goal, ask them to explain why and encourage the rest of the group to discuss. You can ask questions like:

- Why did you rate this idea as 3 or less?
- Do you have any questions or concerns about this idea?
- What does the rest of the group think?
- Is there another way we can word it to address these concerns or should we just leave it out altogether?

Each time the group agrees on a goal, record it in their words on the flip chart.

6. Explain to the group: We’ll keep these goals visible for the rest of the day, and we can come back to them any time we want to add or change something as we learn more techniques for having influencing conversations.

Facilitator Tip: It’s important for everyone in the group to have a say in this process and for everyone to understand and feel comfortable with the goals that are decided upon.

It is also important that the goals align with the philosophy and intent of Influence In Action. If the group comes up with goals that are not in line with the philosophy and intent of this project, the facilitator must ask questions and refer back to previous parts of the training to help the group reconsider their ideas and understand that the goal of the conversation is not to change people or make them quit using marijuana. As outlined in the introduction of this manual, the purpose of this program is as follows:

“Influence in Action... is a peer-mediated program designed to encourage informed decision-making by young people about marijuana use. The focus of the program is ensuring that everyone has accurate information to allow for informed decision-making regarding their own marijuana use...The main objective of this program is to provide peer influencers with accurate information and enhanced skills so they:

- 1) make informed choices themselves
- 2) are able to reinforce peers who make the decision not to use marijuana,
- 3) are able to support those who chose to reduce their use, and
- 4) encourage those peers who chose to use marijuana to do so as safely as possible.”

It may help to point out to the group that although we are capable of influencing others, we are not capable of changing them. Only they can make decisions to change their behaviour. Remember, their behaviour is a result of decisions they make that are based on their current attitudes and beliefs, which have formed throughout their lives as a result of the people and information they have encountered. All we can do is provide new information that may affirm or challenge the beliefs and attitudes they already have. If the information we provide challenges their current beliefs and attitudes, our hope is that

the new information we provide will stimulate them to think critically about their decisions and behaviour.

Activity 4 – “A Day in the Life of…” (20 – 30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To identify natural opportunities where direct and indirect conversation can influence others

Materials:

- A piece of flip chart paper and some markers for each participant

Set-up: Give each participant a piece of flip chart paper and some markers.

Instructions:

1. Explain that this activity is going to help us visualize the places and times where we might have opportunities to share influential information with people.
2. Ask them to visualize a typical day at their school. Help them to visualize it by asking questions like the following:
 - How do you get to school?
 - Where do you go first?
 - What do you do?
 - Who do you see?
 - Who do you talk to?
 - Where/when do you have the most conversations with other students?
 - What do they talk usually about?

As they consider these questions, ask them to draw or write on their paper to show what comes to mind. (this should take less than 5 minutes)

3. Ask them to choose the part of their day that is most likely for having natural opportunities to share information about cannabis with their peers. You can help them visualize this by asking questions like:
 - Where might conversations about marijuana come up naturally?
 - Who are the people you might talk to about it?
4. Ask a few volunteers to take turns depicting to the rest of the group the realistic situations that they conversations about marijuana will come up naturally. They can use drawing, writing, speaking, acting, etc and ask others in the group to help them depict it if need be.

FACILITATOR NOTE: In these demonstrations, participants are just showing the setting where conversations could come up. Later in this module, they'll do role play to practice how they'll have these conversation. For now, this activity is just about helping the participants visualize where, when, and with whom these conversations may take place.

Part 2 – Applying the Four Pillars to Influencing Conversations

Objectives:

- To understand the importance of the 4 Pillars to influencing conversations
- To review and apply what we've learned so far about critical thinking, decision making, the continuum of use, and the way people change
- To sharpen our skills as influencers by identifying techniques and messages for communicating with people who are at various stages of change and decision making
 - **Conversations are meant to be natural**
 - Some people are not always ready for change
 - Multiple messaging
- To identify barriers that might come up while having a conversation and discuss ways of responding to these barriers

Activity 1 – Group Discussion

Purpose: To set the stage for applying the 4 Pillars to influential conversations and for strengthening our skills as influencers

Materials: The flip chart paper where the group's goals for influencing conversations were recorded.

Set-up: Make sure the group's goals are visible

Instructions:

Step 1 – Explain: So far today, we've reviewed what we learned yesterday about sources of influence and critical thinking. We've also identified our goals for having influencing conversations and the places where these conversations might happen. This next part of the orientation is going to help you sharpen the influencing skills you *already* have and learn how to apply the 4 Pillars to our influencing conversations.

Step 2 – Ask the group: Why do you think the 4 Pillars would be important to having an influencing conversation with someone about a topic like marijuana?

Step 3 – Explain: The best types of influencing conversations are those that involve the motivations of the person you're talking to.

Step 4 – Ask the group: Why do you think it's important to focus on the motivations of the person you're talking to?

Step 5 - Explain: As part of the Influence in Action program, we have our own motivations for having these conversations. Remember the goals we came up with earlier for what we hope to achieve by having influencing conversations with people? Well even though we already have those goals in mind, we have to be careful not to have our minds made up about how these conversations should go or what the result will be. We have to be respectful of the people we're talking to and their motivations. Influencing conversations are about "cooperating and collaborating with the other person because only they can take the actions needed to change their behavior..." Influencing conversations are "intended to evoke their own motivation and resources, based on their

goals, values, dreams, and perspectives.” It also “involves honouring peoples autonomy...” to make their own choices but they’re also about understanding that the choices a person makes are influenced by the sources of influence they’ve experienced in their lifetime. Influencing conversations should allow people to explore why they are making the choices they are and the possible risks that surround those choices. We do not try to convince or persuade the person to take up our viewpoint, but rather explore their viewpoint, give them information, if it’s helpful, and ultimately let them decide for themselves what is their best decision (Hetteema, Steele, & Miller, 2005). So as peer influencers, our goal will be *to help people be aware of why they are making the decision they are around marijuana use, share accurate information that they can use to make their decisions, and help them move them towards continuing non-use, reducing their use, or toward safer use.*

Step 6: Ask the group if it’s okay with if you add the italicized part to their list of goals. Encourage any questions, discussions, or concerns about it.

Step 7: Ask the group if there are any other changes or additions they want to make to the goals at this time.

Facilitator Note:

It’s very important to make sure that all group members understand and are comfortable with any changes being made.

PART 2. A) RESPECT

Activity 1 – Pompous Poetry Reading #1

Purpose:

- To review the first pillar, Respect
- To have fun and be silly

Materials:

- A printed out copy of the Four Pillars (as written in the SC handbook)
- A bag, basket, or box with cheesy poet costume items (i.e. a scarf, a beret, silly glasses, a bow tie, a fake moustache, a garden hat, etc.)

Set-up: Have the costume items and copy of the 4 Pillars at the front of the room.

Instructions:

1. Ask the group for a volunteer to be the first poet of the day (if no one wants to, one of the facilitators can do it.)
2. Have the volunteer choose their costume to get into character
3. Ask them to read the description of respect in their best cheesy poet character

“Respect means respect for people, their idealism, their hope and their capacity to improve the world. Second, respect for the gift that each person carries within. We believe that by creating conditions of respect, we enhance the capacity of people to work together and improve their lives and the lives of others. Respect means respect for diversity and an effort to strive for diversity of people and experiences and expertise in all of what we do. Respect means actively seeking and valuing the gifts and experiences of all those with whom we work and live. Respect means reciprocity— that each person is an equal partner in our work. Respect means youth and adults working collaboratively as equals.”

4. Explain to the group: It sounds cheesy when we read it like this, doesn't it? And some people might think that talking about respect is a little cheesy. But respect is crucial to interacting with people and having conversations with them. In the next activity, we're going to find out what everyone in this group already knows about why respect is so important.

Activity 2 – R.E.S.P.E.C.T. What it means to you

Purpose: To give the group a chance to learn from each other's experiences about the importance of respect to interactions and conversations.

Materials:

- a copy of R.E.S.P.E.C.T by Aretha Franklin (optional)
- a sound system to play the song on (optional)
- a piece of paper and pens for each participant

Instructions:

1. Ask the group to think of a time they felt disrespected in a conversation. Encourage them to think of times where the disrespect wasn't necessarily blatant, as in someone calling them a name.
2. While they're thinking about it, play R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
3. Ask them to write one or two words on their paper to sum up what it was that made them feel disrespected and one or two words to describe how they felt during or after that conversation.
4. When everyone's done, stop the music and take a few minutes to let everyone share their words. You can facilitate a discussion on this by asking questions such as:
 - What did the person do that seemed disrespectful?
 - How did it make you feel?
 - Do you think this person was aware that they were being disrespectful?
 - Are disrespectful conversations common in your school?
5. Now ask the group to think of a conversation where they felt very respected, and on the flip side of their paper, write down one or two words to describe how the person they were talking to showed them respect and how it made them feel during or after the conversation.
6. While they're thinking and writing, play R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
7. When everyone's done, stop the music and take a few minutes to let everyone share their words. You can facilitate a discussion on this by asking questions such as:
 - What did the person do to show respect to you?
 - How did it make you feel?
 - Are respectful conversations common in your school?

Activity 3 – Breakout Discussions

Purpose:

- To stimulate thought and discussion on respecting people with different personality types, people at different stages of the continuum of use, and people at different stages of change
- To identify the biases that could affect our ability to show respect to different people
- To review the stages of change and the continuum of use

Materials:

- paper and pens for each team
- 3 different sets of cards. Personality Traits, Levels of Use, and Stages of Change.

Set-Up:**Instructions:**

1. Divide the group into three teams.
2. Give each team a set of cards some paper and pens for recording.
3. Ask them to work as a team to place the cards in order from least respectable to most respectable. In order to do this, they'll need to discuss why they do or do not have respect for the person described on the card. They'll also need to practice showing respect to their teammates in this process.
4. Tell the teams they have five minutes to complete this.
5. When the five minutes is up or the teams are done (whichever comes first), ask each team how it went. You can facilitate a discussion using question like:
 - Was it easy or hard to put the cards in order?
 - Did everyone agree easily on what order the cards should go in?
 - Were there any disagreements? Why or why not?
 - What, if anything have you learned from this activity so far?
6. Explain to the group: Because everyone has different values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes, we all have biases that might make it easier for us to show respect to some people than to others. As influencers, it's really important for us to be aware of our biases and show respect to everyone we have conversations with, regardless of their personality type, their values, beliefs, attitudes, and opinions, and where they are on the continuum of use or in the stages of change. The next two pillars, Listen and Understand, will help us respect all people that we have conversations with.
7. To wrap up this activity, facilitate a discussion using questions like:
 - Why is Respect important in having conversation with people who are in the different stages of the change process?
 - What do you think could happen if we don't show genuine respect to the people we're talking to?
 - Can we, as influencers, think critically and respect people at the same time?
 - Will applying critical thinking assist us in understanding someone's values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes towards marijuana?
 - Are we being judgemental when we're trying to understand others' values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes in regards to marijuana use?
 - Is there a difference between thinking critically and being judgemental?

PART 2. B) LISTEN**Activity 1 – Pompous Poetry Reading #2****Purpose:**

- to review the second pillar, Listen
- to have fun and be silly

Materials:

- A printed out copy of the Four Pillars (as written in the SC handbook)

- A bag, basket, or box with cheesy poet costume items (i.e. a scarf, a beret, silly glasses, a bow tie, a fake moustache, a garden hat, etc.)

Set-up: Have the costume items and copy of the 4 Pillars at the front of the room.

Instructions:

1. Ask the group who'd like to be the second poet of the day (if no one wants to, one of the facilitators can do it)
2. Have the volunteer choose their costume to get into character
3. Ask them to read the description of Listen in their best cheesy poet character

Listen: With respect as our foundation, we listen not just with our ears, but also with our heads, hearts and all our senses. We listen actively, intensely, not just to words, but to silences, to deeds, to experiences. We listen to the spoken word, the written word, the image. We listen to learn, to gather information, to enhance our capacity to give and to receive. We listen to youth as experts, and we gather other information, other voices to ensure diversity. We listen because we are curious, because as people we are constantly growing and changing through the input of others. We listen to truly understand who others are.

4. Facilitate a group discussion using questions like:
 - How can really listening to what people have to say help us be better peer influencers?
 - Can you think of some things we might learn by listening to people that can help us have a better influencing conversation with them?
 - What do you think the conversations might be like if we don't really listen to what people are saying to us?

Activity 2 – Active Listening

Purpose:

- to learn techniques that help us listen to others

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers

Preparation:

Instructions:

1. Facilitate a lesson/discussion on the following topics. One facilitator should record the group's ideas. Discussion questions are in italics.

1. **Body language:** Some body language shows people that we're listening and some body language makes it seem like we're not listening.
What are some examples of body language that shows we're listening?
What are some examples of body language that makes it seem like we're not listening?
2. **Careful listening.** In other words, pay attention and try to really get where the other person is coming from.
What are some things that can help us listen carefully to what people are saying?
 What might make it hard for us to listen carefully?

3. **OARS:** This is an acronym to help us remember techniques for active listening. It stands for Open questions, Affirming, Reflecting, and Summarizing.
- Open Questions:** Questions that cannot be answered with a yes/no can help us get more information from a person.
What are some examples of open questions that we can ask to get more information from a person? (e.g., What do you mean? Can you tell me more about that?)
 - Affirming:** A supportive response
Can you think of any comments or gestures that you already that shows people you're listening? (e.g., Yes, Mhmm, nodding).
 - Reflecting:** Repeating back what the other person has said.
 - Summarizing:** Putting together a few things the other person has said.
What do you think the difference between reflecting and summarizing is? Can you think of any examples to show the difference?

Facilitators Tip: It might be helpful to put OARS up on flip charts.

Activity 2 – Active Listening Demonstration

Purpose:

- For facilitators to demonstrate active listening while talking about cannabis

Prepare:

- decide which facilitator will share a story and which will be the active listener

Instructions:

1. One facilitator says a few sentences with their co-facilitator about a situation they have been in involving marijuana. Two facilitators briefly discuss the situation, during which time one facilitator 1) listens 2) asks the first facilitator to tell them more 3) asks an open ended question 4) uses an affirmation 5) provides a reflection and 6) summarizes what the first facilitator has said.

Activity 3 – Speed Conversations

Purpose:

- for influencers to practice active listening

Materials:

- chairs
- flip chart papers from previous activity

Prepare:

- have the group arrange their chairs into an inner circle and outer circle. The chairs in the outer circle face inward, the chairs in the inner circle face outward, so that the chairs are facing each other.

Instructions:

1. Ask everyone to sit in one of the chairs in the circle
2. Explain that the group will be having a series of 2 minute conversations about marijuana. Everyone chooses a situation that might have come up for themselves or someone they know, or that they could imagine coming up, around marijuana use. Just

like the skit, one person describes the issue, and the other tries to respond using only listening and one of the active listening.

3. They'll start with the person sitting in front of them. One person in the pair starts by sharing a scenario involving marijuana, while the other partner practices the active listening techniques we just learned. After the 2 minutes is up, the partner who was doing the listening at first now has 2 minutes to share a scenario they can think of, while the other partner practices active listening techniques. After each partner has had a turn, the inner circle rotates to the right, so that everyone has a new partner. Repeat this process until the inner circle has made a full rotation and each person in the inner circle has had a conversation with each person in the outer circle.

4. Debrief the activity with questions like:

- What did you notice during these conversations?
- What worked?
- What didn't work?
- How did it feel?

PART 2. C) UNDERSTAND

Activity 1 – Pompous Poetry Reading #3

Purpose:

- to review the second pillar, Listen
- to have fun and be silly

Materials:

- A printed out copy of the Four Pillars (as written in the SC handbook)
- A bag, basket, or box with cheesy poet costume items (i.e. a scarf, a beret, silly glasses, a bow tie, a fake moustache, a garden hat, etc.)

Set-up: Have the costume items and copy of the 4 Pillars at the front of the room.

Instructions:

1. Ask the group who'd like to be the third poet of the day (if no one wants to, one of the facilitators can do it)
2. Have the volunteer choose their costume to get into character
3. Ask them to read the description of Understand in their best cheesy poet character

Understand: To *understand* is to go beyond listening, to process what we have heard, to reflect upon the new knowledge and gifts given to us. Understanding creates new knowledge, new skills. If we truly understand who others are, and who we are, we can work together as equals, valuing differences and building upon similarities and common goals. We understand the problems each of us faces, and the aspirations each of us has. Understanding creates the conditions for working effectively together.

4. Facilitate a group discussion using questions like:
 - Can you think of a time when you felt truly understood by someone you were talking to?
 - Can you think of a time when you felt like you truly understood the person you were talking to?
 - What was it like? How did it feel?

- Will applying critical thinking assist us in understanding someone's values/beliefs/ opinions/attitudes towards marijuana?
- Is it possible to apply critical thinking (assessing *credibility, accuracy, reliability of information*) without being judgmental?
- What is does it mean to be judgmental?
- Are we being judgmental when we're trying to understand others' values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes with regards to marijuana use?
- What can we do to avoid being judgmental of people if they tell us about their values, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, or behaviors?

Facilitators Tip: Remind the group that as long as we use critical thinking within the context of the 4 pillars, we can work with the individual to make the best decision for their life situation without passing judgment on their beliefs or behaviours. Highlight the difference between commenting on a behaviour versus commenting on a person. Remind the group that they will be receiving further training on practical aspects of applying this knowledge.

Facilitator Tip: Remind the group that in influencing conversation, we're just try to understand where the other person is coming from. You shouldn't be trying to solve any problem or issue, but rather, try to understand it.

Activity 2 – Understanding Talk & Actions

Purpose:

- To understand the values/beliefs/attitudes/opinions of people based on what they say
- To explore the kinds of behaviour that might result from people holding certain values/beliefs/attitudes/opinions

Materials:

- A printed sheet containing some of the myths and facts that were used in Module 2, part 4:
 - o Most young people have used marijuana at least once. (Myth)
 - o Marijuana is natural so it cannot be bad for you. (Myth)
 - o Marijuana smoke contains tar and other cancer-causing agents. (Fact)
 - o Marijuana doesn't affect any brain processes. (Myth)
 - o All marijuana is the same strength. (Myth)
 - o Marijuana doesn't affect memory. (Myth)
 - o A lot of teens regularly use marijuana. (Myth)
 - o Smoking marijuana doesn't affect your school performance. (Myth)
 - o There are no long-term effects associated with marijuana use. (Myth)
 - o Cannabis use is illegal in Canada. (Fact)

Set-up:

- Divide the group into smaller groups (ideally 4-5 per group)
- Cut up the paper with statements so that you can give each group a number of statements to work with (There are 10 statements on the sheet. So if you have 5 groups of 5, each group gets 2 statements, and so on.)

- give each group an extra piece of paper to record their discussion

Instructions:

1. Ask each group to think about what kind of behaviour would most likely result from someone holding each of the beliefs on their paper
2. Ask them to record the behaviours that they think would result
3. Ask one or two people from each group to report back to the rest of the group by reading out each statement they got and the behaviours they came up with.

Facilitators Tip: The goal here is to reinforce critical thinking because beliefs can directly have an influence on intentions and behaviour. For example: individuals' values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes about marijuana use may not necessarily be based on facts. We need to think critically about the information we are getting from various sources to determine what is true/false.

Activity 3 a) – Listening for Influencing Opportunities

Purpose:

- for the group to learn to identify influencing opportunities

Materials: n/a

Set-up: n/a

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group: Influencing opportunities are when someone brings up the topic of marijuana.
2. Ask the group: Can you think of any times where you've heard it come up in the past?
3. Explain: Knowing when to use your influencing skills involves listening carefully to what other people are saying. Let's use marijuana as an example. Try to catch words that indicate that the person might want to continue to make safe decisions around marijuana, or to make safer decisions.
4. Ask: What is the influencing opportunity in these statements?
 I can't smoke pot. My girlfriend would kill me.
 I would try it, but I don't want to get a record.
 I'm just not interested in smoking pot.
 My brother smokes pot and he's an idiot.

Some Influencing Opportunities might be a bit less clear:

- I like smoking, but I probably shouldn't do it at school.
- I don't want to use, but I probably will try it anyway.

5. Ask the group to provide their own examples of influencing opportunities.

Activity 3 b) Change Talk

Purpose:

- to learn how to recognize change talk
- to learn about DARN

Materials:

- list of statements to read
- 2 pieces of flip chart paper
- the flip chart paper that was used yesterday to show the continuum of use

Set-up:

- Make sure the continuum of use flip chart paper is visible to the group
- Label one flip chart paper “Change Talk to Reduce Use” and the other paper “Change Talk to Increase Use”
- draw a big plus sign (+) over each flip chart page to divide each the page into four sections
- On each paper, label the four sections: 1) Desire; 2) Ability; 3) Reason; 4) Need

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group: Some influencing opportunities will be when you hear someone using “Change Talk.” Change talk is when people say things that show they might be getting ready to make a change. People can mean moving either direction on the continuum of use; they can change by reducing use but they can also change by increasing use. Change Talk involves any Desire, Ability, Reason or Need (DARN) to change. When someone has a desire to change, they might use words like want, wish, would like to. When someone believes they have ability to change, they might use words like ‘I can,’ ‘I could,’ or ‘I am able to.’ If someone has a reason or a need to change, they might say things like ‘I need to,’ ‘I have to,’ or ‘it’s important for me to...’
2. Read the following statements and allow the group time to decide which section (Desire, Ability, Reason, or Need) of which flipchart paper (Reduce Use or Increase Use) each statement should go under:
 - a) “I have to quit smoking weed or my parents are going to send me to boarding school.” (Need to reduce use)
 - b) “I want to see what being high feels like.” (Desire to use)
 - c) “I could quit smoking weed if I wanted to.” (Ability to reduce use)
 - d) “My girlfriend doesn’t like being around me when I’m high.” (Reason to reduce use)
 - e) “My girlfriend asked me to buy some weed for this weekend.” (Reason to use)
 - f) “Smoking weed makes me lazy.” (Reason to reduce use.)
 - g) “I know where to get weed.” (Ability to use)

Activity 3 c) – “Stay-the-same Talk”

Purpose:

- to learn to identify when someone wants to stay where they are on the continuum of use

Materials:

- continuum of use flip chart paper
- blank flip chart paper

Set-up:

- Make sure the continuum of use is still visible
- Have the blank flipchart paper ready to write on

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group: Just like you tell by what someone says that they might want to change, you can also tell by what people say that they might want to stay the same.

2. Facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- What's something that a non-user might say that would tell you they want to stay the same?
- What's something that someone who's experimenting with marijuana might say to show that they want to stay the same?
- What about someone who uses occasionally? What's something they might say to show they want to stay the same?
- What might a regular user say that shows they want to stay the same?
- What's something a daily user might say that shows they want to stay the same?

PART 2. D) COMMUNICATE

Activity 1 – Pompous Poetry Reading #4

Purpose:

- to review the third pillar, Communicate
- to have fun and be silly

Materials:

- A printed out copy of the Four Pillars (as written in the SC handbook)
- A bag, basket, or box with cheesy poet costume items (i.e. a scarf, a beret, silly glasses, a bow tie, a fake moustache, a garden hat, etc.)

Set-up: Have the costume items and copy of the 4 Pillars at the front of the room.

Instructions:

1. Ask the group who'd like to be the second poet of the day (if no one wants to, one of the facilitators can do it)
2. Have the volunteer choose their costume to get into character
3. Ask them to read the description of Communicate in their best cheesy poet character

“If people really understand each other, then they can *communicate*. Communication allows for the creation of action plans, which are implemented with practical projects that make a positive difference. With communication, adults and youth can create the relationships with each other to help them achieve their goals.

4. Facilitate a group discussion using questions like:

- What kind of things should we communicate to people in our role as influencers?
- Do you think that what you, as influential peers, communicate to people can help them achieve their goals?
- Based on your own experiences and what we've learned in this training so far, what do you think are some effective or good ways of communicating with people when you're trying to influence them in a positive way?

Activity 2 a) – Group Discussion on Messages

Purpose:

- to explore the importance of delivering effective messages in effective ways depending on who you're talking to

Materials:

- flip chart and markers

Set-Up: n/a**Instructions:**

1. Explain to the group: A message is a way of sharing information with someone. It's kind of like a statement. We hear and see messages all the time – on TV, on the internet, on posters. We also hear messages from the people around us. As influencers in this program, part of your role is to share messages with your peers. In our next activity, we're going to come up with some messages that we think would be effective ways of sharing information. But before we do that, let's talk a bit about the kinds of messages we can use.

- Can you think of any messages that you've heard lately on any topic?
- What do you think makes a message effective?
- What can make a message ineffective?
- Do you think that messages based on someone's own values, beliefs, opinions, or attitudes are effective? Why or why not?
- Do you think that messages based on someone's personal experience are effective? Why or why not?
- What about facts? Can facts be effective messages? Why or why not?
- Do you think it makes a difference if your message is long or short? Why or why not?
- As influencers there may have to be several interactions with the same person before they've successfully influenced them. Why do you think this is?
- Are there certain messages that you think would be more effective with some people than with others? Explain.
- Do you think the messages you use with your close friends will be different than what you don't know very well or at all? Why or why not?

Facilitator Note: The goal of this conversation is to facilitate the group to understand the following points:

- Short messages can be a good way of sparking a longer, more in-depth conversation, but once you've shared your message and the conversation is rolling, you should focus on finding out more about that person and what motivates them. (Refer back to OARS)
- When delivering messages based on their own values, beliefs, opinions, or attitudes, they should be extra careful to remain respectful of the person they are talking to so that they don't come across as preachy.
- If you decide to share a message that's based on a personal view or experience, be sure that it is backed up by some factual information.
- Multiple messaging is a really important strategy in this program because people often have to hear several of the same messages before anything will 'stick' with someone. Repeating a message on several different occasions, in different ways, helps people absorb the new information. Tie this back to the process of change. As people move through the process of change, they will encounter different opportunities and challenges. The process of change is not a one-way street, people can very easily slip back into old patterns if they are not reminded of the reasons they wanted to change in the first place. Change is hard and requires support.

- The messages we choose to use will depend on whom we're talking to and where that person fits on the continuum of use and in the stages of change

Activity 2 b) – Choosing Your Messages

Purpose:

- For the group to identify what messages they want to communicate with their peers to help them critically think about and make informed decisions that are best for them.

Materials:

- recipe cards
- a pen for each person
- the list of goals that the group came up with earlier in the day
- Ten pieces of flipchart paper. Each paper has one of the following profiles written on it:
 - A non-user who says they never want to try marijuana
 - A non-user who says they want to see what it feels like to get high
 - An experimental user who's talking about how fun it was when they got high last weekend
 - An experimental user who's talking about how paranoid they felt when they were high last weekend.
 - An irregular user who's talking about how much they love getting high.
 - An irregular user who's talking about how their friend smokes weed every time they hang out
 - A regular user who says smoking weed helps them write lyrics for their music
 - A daily user who says they're broke because they spent all their money on a bag of weed
 - A daily user who says that they can concentrate better in class when they're high

Set-up:

- Hang up the ten pieces of flipchart paper on the walls throughout the room

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group: Now, we're going to come up with a bunch of messages that you think would be effective ways of sharing accurate information about marijuana with your peers and messages to help them think critically about the decisions and actions they make.
2. Ask the group to circulate the room, stopping at each piece of flipchart paper to think about what message they would like to give to the person that's described on the paper. Ask them to choose at least five of the ten papers to actually write their message idea on. Remind them that messages should be fairly short, but you can come up with messages that are designed to stimulate a longer, more in depth conversation with someone. Remind them to think about the goals they set earlier in the day as they're coming up with message ideas.

3. After 5 minutes or so, bring the group back together to review all the ideas on the papers.
4. Ask the group which flipchart paper they want to start. Tell them that you'll read through all the ideas on the paper and ask them to let you know if they hear an idea that they like or that concerns them or that they just want to talk about more.
5. Facilitators can also point out certain ideas for discussion, but it's good to let the group have some time/freedom to point out the ones they're interested in talking about. You can also facilitate discussion on the different ideas by asking questions like:
 - Is this message an opinion, belief, or
 - What do you think your reaction would be if someone said this to you?
6. As the group discusses the messages, work to refine each one so that they are all messages that the group and the facilitators are comfortable with.
7. Have the group members use the recipe cards to write down the messages that they could actually see themselves using.

Facilitator Tip: Depending on the group, it may take a fair amount of time to come up with messages that everyone is comfortable with. You can remind the group that not everyone has to use every message that is created. They can choose which ones they'll use and which ones they won't.

Activity 2 c) – Longer Conversations

Purpose:

- to learn how to recognize when someone wants to keep talking
- to learn what to do and say if sharing a message with someone leads to a longer, more in depth conversation
- to identify the resources available in your school and community that you can tell people about if they need more information or help
- to review OARS

Materials:

- Copies of a list of local resources and services available to students

Set-up: n/a

Instructions:

1. Facilitate a discussion with questions like:
 - How can you tell if someone's willing or wanting to talk more about the topic?
 - How can you tell if they don't want to keep talking about?
 - What should we do when someone seems like they don't want to talk anymore?
 - What should we do when someone does want to keep talking?
 - Do you remember the OARS acronym from earlier?
 - Open questions – What are some open questions you could use?
(ie. “Why do you want to make this change? If you did decide to make this change, what would you need to do to make it happen? What are the top three reasons for you to do it? How important would you say it was to make the change?)
 - Affirming – Can anyone think of an example of an affirming statement?
 - Reflecting – What about an example of a reflecting statement?
 - Summarizing – And a summarizing statement?

- How can you present your own opinion and information that may support change while respecting the opinion of others?
- What do you think could happen if we share information with someone that conflicts with a value, opinion, attitude or belief that has been shaped from another source of influence, such as family, media, school, etc.?
- Do you think the conversations you have with close friends will be different from conversations with people you don't know very well or at all? Why or why not?
- Are there any topics or things that you wouldn't be comfortable discussing with people?
- Are there any situations where you think you might need support from a professional?

Facilitator Tip: The following are points that the facilitator should make if none of the group members have already:

- The purpose of having longer conversations with people is to help them reflect on their own values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes so that they can critically think about the decisions they are making or are going to make
- It's important to recognize when someone isn't open to talking further and not to force it
- Be sure that group remembers and understands OARS
- Asking questions to understand a person's reasons for wanting to change their behaviour or wanting to keep their behavior the same is a way to implement the 4 pillars. Respecting their values and motivations, and listening to their reasons in an effort to really understand where they are coming from can be as simple as asking "Why do you want to make this change/keep this the same? What is important to you in this decision?".
- Not all conversations will effect movement in the stage of change. Some people will simply not be ready to change. But that's not to say that you shouldn't support them in their change process (wherever they may be with it) . Everyone has a reason behind their choices. If you encounter a conversation like this you can:
 - a) *Emphasize personal choice and control*—Again, it is every person's choice (e.g. with marijuana to use, not use, or make any other decision regarding marijuana.)
 - b) *Try to understand the pros and cons of their decision*—(e.g. Try to understand their own pros and cons for using or not using marijuana.)
 - c) *Use the credible, accurate, reliable information you have about marijuana*—(e.g. If it seems like it might be helpful, give them information you have about marijuana.)
- Anytime it begins to feel like an argument or debate, or like you are trying to convince someone of something, it's a sign that you're being too pushy so re-group and change your approach or end the conversation.
- If you take up one side of an argument, people have a tendency to take up the other. To make things worse, people tend to believe and remember what they say more than what other people say. Research has shown that behaviours like persuading, confronting, directing, and warning have been associated with negative outcomes (Apodaca, 2009). (In other words, direct persuasion is not an effective way to resolve ambivalence)

- Influencing Conversations are *collaborative*. They are about cooperating and collaborating with the other person, because only THEY can take the actions needed to change their behaviour. You cannot make them change.
- Influencing Conversations are *about the other person*. They are not intended to teach, it's intended to facilitate discussion about *their* values, goals, beliefs, and perspectives. The facts that you have learned may help you start conversations and be knowledgeable when you talk, but that's only one little piece of the conversation. Share what you know if it's relevant, but that shouldn't be all you do.
- Influencing Conversations are *respectful of others' decisions*. Ultimately, people will make the changes that they want in their lives, and acknowledging that is probably more helpful than trying to tell them what to do.

Part 3 – Identifying influencing opportunities

Activity 1 – Storyboards

Purpose:

- To give group members a chance to individually visualize influencing opportunities

Materials:

- Peer Influencer Storyboard
- Pens

Set-Up:

- give each group member a story board and make sure they have a pen

Instructions:

1. Ask the group members to work individually to come up with a realistic influencing scenario that they could see happening in their school. Tell the group that this can be done in pairs, if preferred.
2. Explain to the group that we need to make sure that all three groups are covered in the storyboards: non-users, users who want to reduce their use, and users who want to continue their use. Ask for a number of volunteers to cover each category so that there are at least a few storyboards being create for each one.
2. As they work, remind them to consider things like:
 - Where is the conversation taking place?
 - Who is the conversation with? One person? Several people? Close friends? Acquaintances?
 - How does the influencer in the storyboard know that this is an influencing opportunity? What is said or done that lets them know?
 - What does the influencer say?
 - What does the other person/people say in response?
 - Does the influencer share any facts about marijuana?
 - What questions does the influencer ask?
3. When everyone's done, facilitate a discussion with questions like:
 - Do you think the scenarios you came up with were realistic, i.e., could you imagine having them with friends or peers?
 - Did anyone come up with a scenario that they wouldn't know how to respond to?

4. Collect the storyboards from the group for the next activity.

Activity 2 – Forum Theatre

Purpose:

- for participants to sharpen their skills through role play

Materials:

- several of the story boards created by the group members who are willing to share them

Set-Up:

- arrange the chairs in a circle or semi-circle for the group to sit while they watch the role plays

Instructions:

1. Explain to the group: This is our final activity of the day. It's a role-playing activity where we'll have a chance to take on various personas so that we can practice what not to do and what to do in conversations. We're going to take turns acting out some of the story boards that you came up with, but we'll mix them all up so no one will know whose is whose. For each storyboard, we'll need enough volunteers to play the characters that are in that scenario, and the actors will act out the storyboard in the middle of the circle. First, the actors will play out their scenario as it is written. Then, they replay their scenario a second time, but this time the people in the circle can shout 'freeze!' at any time to stop the actors in the centre. At this point you can either: 1) Replace: take the place of one of the actors to demonstrate something that they would or wouldn't do as an influencer in that situation, 2) Direct: suggest what the actor should do or say next, (these suggestions can be to demonstrate effective influencing or ineffective influencing) 3) Inquire: ask one or both actors to share their inner monologue (i.e. what their character is thinking in that moment such as their motivations, the influences on their decisions, their internal reactions, etc.), and/or 4) Optional: provide feedback (i.e. identifying strategies that are useful, noticing skills, etc.).
2. Explain: The facilitators will play an important role called the Joker. The Joker intervenes in moments when the scenario/suggestions start to become too unrealistic (i.e. change is too easy or simple) or to add challenges that complicate the scenario (e.g. 'What you didn't know about this character is that they smoke pot with their parents', or 'this conversation is taking place at a party instead of at school').

Facilitator Note: The Joker's role should remain pretty minimal and only intervene if necessary. The facilitator may model the Joker role for one or two rounds, then pass it on so that other peer influencers can take the role of Joker if they want to (generally this ends up happening anyway as the audience starts to think critically about complex life situations and decisions). Remember that the scenario does not have to be resolved at the end.

3. For the first round of the role-play, the facilitators should go first, using one of the story boards that has the right number of characters for them to play so set the tone for the activity and to help increase the comfort level for the group to take a risk by volunteering. Encourage the group to call 'freeze' at any time.

4. Once the facilitators have demonstrated the first round, encourage the group members to volunteer. Remind the group that this is a safe environment for this to occur – no one is going to be perfect! Reinforce that you are asking them to act in this activity and their own viewpoints are not necessarily incorporated with any of the conversations that may be had. These are pretend skits that you are asking them to do, not real life situations (attempt to reinforce that you are asking them to act, take the onus off of them and put it onto you). Hopefully all of the group members will want to try, but it's okay if some are really uncomfortable with the idea. There will be several rounds with different volunteers to ensure everyone has a chance to role-play.

5. At the end of each round, debrief and ask the 'audience' to provide feedback using questions like:

- What strategies worked and what strategies didn't work as well?
- What was each participant's experience like?
- Was the peer in the scenario a non-user, a user who wanted to reduce, or a user who wanted to continue using?
- Were the strategies used by the influencer appropriate considering which category their peer was in?
- Do you think this category of people would be easier or harder to influence? Why?
- What strategies/words/actions were helpful/detrimental to the conversation?
- What skills were important in this scenario?
- How did actors use their influence?
- What would you take from this example into your own conversations?
- If they were friends and had additional information about the other person's life, what types of approaches might they be able to use that wouldn't be available to strangers (e.g., knowledge of their friend's values, career goals, ambitions, etc.)?

Facilitator Note: Use the debriefs after each round to reinforce themes from the other modules, such as:

- The Four Pillars
- O.A.R.S.
- D.A.R.N.
- The stages of change
- The continuum of use
- The goals of influencing conversations
- The importance of using the knowledge you have of your friends to within your discussions (i.e., knowing the values and beliefs, goals and ambitions of your friends)
- That most conversations will likely be short.
- The importance of recognizing opportunities for influence.
- The importance of matching your strategies to where they are on the continuum of use (Group 1 not using- reinforce decision; Group 2 wanting to change- supporting the change, Group 3 continued use- influence for safer use).

You can ask the participants to keep an eye out for when they see people using techniques they learned in the training.

Module 6: Putting it all Together - The Influence in Action Program

1) Role as a Peer Influencer (20 minutes)

Purpose:

- To develop expectations with the participants on next steps for the program
- To reinforce the Four Pillars in everyday conversations
- To outline opportunities that will come with being a part of the Influence in Action program
- To answer any questions that participants may have regarding the program

Activity 1: In small groups. Have a discussion around what the group feels they are expected to do. Within this conversation ensure that the 4 pillars are outlined, the harm reduction approach is fully understood, they have a clear understanding of the 3 groups of users and the type of influencing that is required for each, and that they understand the basics of the conversations they will be having as peer influencers. They may have the opportunity to have several conversations with the same people and that each individual is to be treated as a unique influencing opportunity.

Potential Discussion Questions:

- What do you think you will do with what you've learned over these past two days?
- How do you think you will use the four pillars after this training?
- How do you think you will use critical thinking after this training?
- Will you discuss what you've learned these past few days with your peers? If yes, what opportunities do you think will come up in your conversations? What challenges do you think there will be in having these conversations?
- Thinking back to our Forum Theatre activities and our storyboards: how might you go about starting a conversation?
- What do you think will be the most important thing to remember when having a conversation with a peer?
- How do you feel about having conversations with your peers about these topics?
- How do you think your friends will feel when you discuss these issues with them?

Facilitators Tip: Centre your discussion on the fact that not everyone will need to, or be ready or willing to change. Peer influencers will be respectful of the four pillars when speaking with each individual. This is a harm reduction approach. (Explain Harm Reduction if you haven't already). They will be using power from within themselves to influence; by role modeling, by respectful, caring questions that challenge when appropriate, and timely, appropriate sharing of accurate information to. They will be able to help other see their own power, rather than use their power over others to tell them what to do.

Activity 2: Reflect back to the storyboards and forum theatre scenarios. Tell the group that this can be done in pairs, if preferred.

Potential Discussion Questions:

- Do you think the scenarios you came up with were realistic, i.e., could you imagine having them with friends or peers?
- Does anyone have one that they want to share?
- Did anyone come up with a scenario that they wouldn't know how to respond to?

2) Tracking (20 minutes)

Purpose:

- To develop a system with participants to track their conversations
- To outline program expectations
- To develop further leadership opportunities from the program. (e.g. participation in a final conference)

Work with the group to develop a tracking system of their conversations. Share copies of the various options; show them the website for recording feedback. Options include journals (written and on-line), video recording, rap music and text messaging. Once you have agreed on a system that works best for your team, set check-in times and dates each week when you will check in with the influencers to collect their stories and feedback.

3) Support (10 minutes)

Purpose:

- To explain the support that the influencers will have from the adult allies.

Explain to the group the various avenues of support they will have during the program. These include: phone contact with their adult ally, meeting times to go over progress/concerns/problems and e-mail contact with their adult ally. Collect contact information from participants so that your team can stay in touch with the peer influencers.

Activity: Have a discussion around what type of support the youth would like to have from their adult ally. If they seem to have a lot of discussion, make a list on a flip chart of all of requested supports.

Facilitators Tip: Make sure after the training to assign adult allies to each peer influencer (preferably a person who has facilitated their two-day training). The adult ally will be in weekly contact with the peer influencer to check in and will be available at other times via email or phone. Be sure to let the youth know that if they do not feel comfortable

working with their assigned adult ally they have the opportunity to switch. We understand that not all working relationships work and will do our best to accommodate everyone.

4) Questions? (10 minutes)

Purpose:

- To allow the influencers to voice any questions, comments or concerns they may have about the training they received or any aspects of the program (expectations, etc.).

Facilitators Tip: Allow this discussion to flow as the influencers see fit. If they attempt to answer each other's questions, let this happen as long as the information being presented to one another is accurate.

5) Next Steps

Purpose:

- To explain how and when the program will begin to roll out now that training is complete.
- To complete the quiz questionnaire
- To explain other opportunities connected with the program
- To complete Head, Heart, Feet, Spirit sheets for Day 2
- To explain that participants may have an opportunity to attend a national conference

Ask participants to fill out the quiz questionnaire that they filled out at the beginning of the training. (Name or NO Name Quiz) Collect up all the answer sheets, shuffle the responses and hand back. For each question, add up all the answers on the flip chart by having young people stand if they have the answer being called out on their sheet. Then put up the results from Day One. Compare and discuss with the influencers about whether they think that two-day training was effective at sharing new information.

Explain to participants that they will be asked near the end of the program to deliver the questionnaires in their classrooms to their classmates and that they will be responsible for sending the results back to their adult allies. Please note: Participants will be supported in the delivery of the questionnaire by their adult allies.

Facilitators Note: This step may not be possible depending on your arrangement with your school. Timelines for delivery of the program will vary depending on your arrangements with the schools.

Explain to participants that a few of them may be selected to attend the Unite and Ignite conference in Ottawa on March 24-27. This conference will give them an opportunity to meet with other influencers and youth from across the country. Check out www.studentscommission.ca for more information on the conference!

Wrap up the training in a fun and interactive way (use an energizer or wrap-up community builder)

Note for Facilitators: It is important that facilitators send all data, questionnaire results, and HHFS sheets and the outline of your unique tracking system back to the Toronto office as soon as you receive them.

Step-by-Step Guide

- 1) Place each piece of information (e.g. HHFS sheet, Questionnaire, Outline of tracking system) in an envelope.
- 2) On the envelope, indicate the name of the school, the grade, what is inside the envelope (e.g. HHFS sheets etc)
- 3) Seal the envelope

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Appendix A Drug Buzz Fact Sheets

How Drugs Work

(Fadem, 2004)

- The central nervous system in the brain is comprised of nerve cells, or neurons.
- There are gaps, or synaptic clefts, between neurons. Chemical messengers in the brain travel between synaptic clefts, and these chemical messengers are called neurotransmitters.
- Our breathing, heartbeat, senses, and emotions are all related to the concentration of neurotransmitters in the synaptic cleft.
- Neurotransmitters that have been related to substance use include dopamine, glutamate, and serotonin.
- Long-term drug use is believed to cause changes to neurotransmitter receptors, which might help to explain substance dependence (substance abuse with withdrawal symptoms and repeated use) and tolerance (the need for more of a substance to get the same effects) (DSM-IV-TR).
- Psychoactive drugs are classified by their effects on the nervous system.

Some Other Info About Drugs

- There are many different ways to administer drugs. The methods of administration that are the fastest route to the bloodstream and brain are smoking, injection, and snorting (Fadem, 2004).

DRUG BUZZ FACT SHEET

Classifications of Drugs

Substances can be classified according to their effects. Below is some information about the different classifications of drugs.

Stimulants

- activate the central nervous system by making dopamine more available
- elevate mood, cause insomnia, decreased appetite, and increase heart and brain activity (e.g., heart rate)
- withdrawal effects include depressed mood, increased appetite, feeling tired, and decreased heart and brain activity
- examples: amphetamines, cocaine, tobacco, cocaine, Ritalin, cigarettes, Dexedrine, caffeine, crack, ecstasy, caffeine

Sedatives/Depressants

- depress, block, or replace neurotransmitters
- elevate mood, decrease anxiety, sedate, reduce inhibitions
- withdrawal effects include depressed mood, increased anxiety, difficulty sleeping
- examples: alcohol, barbiturates, benzodiazepines (Librium, Xanax, Halcion, Quaaludes, Valium), ketamine, GHB, rohypnol.

Opioids

- elevate mood, decrease anxiety, sedate, slow down breathing
- withdrawal effects include depressed mood, increased anxiety, and flu-like symptoms
- examples: demerol, morphine, codeine, dilaudid, heroin, methadone

Hallucinogens

- confuse neurotransmitters
- elevate mood, alter perceptions
- few withdrawal effects
- examples: cannabis (marijuana, hashish), LSD, psilocybin (magic mushrooms), ketamine, mescaline, peyote, PCP

DRUG BUZZ FACT SHEET

Short-Term and Long-Term Effects

(CAMH Do You Know... Cannabis (2003) and About Marijuana (2006) brochures)

Short-Term Effects

- negatively affects depth perception, attention span, concentration, muscle strength, and hand steadiness, and slows down reaction time
- interferes with thinking and short-term memory
- is not regulated, so might be contaminated with fungi, pesticide, or other drugs
- raises heart rate and lowers blood pressure
- a large amount can cause toxic psychosis (a.k.a. greening out), which can involve hallucinations, paranoid delusions, confusion, and amnesia (but it probably won't kill you)

Longer-Term Effects

- psychological dependence, causing people to crave marijuana and to feel that they need it and become anxious if they don't have it
- mild physical dependence, causing people to have withdrawal symptoms like irritability, anxiety, loss of appetite, sweating, problem sleeping, and upset stomach for about a week after they stop using
- problems with the respiratory system, like bronchitis
- reduced motivation to work
- impaired attention, memory, and ability to process complex thoughts
- cannabis use has been linked to schizophrenia
- for pregnant women, smoking marijuana can be harmful to the baby (for example, the baby might be born too small)

Appendix B

TRAINERS TIPS

Definitions, student cheat sheet, and credible sources

Definitions:

- Critical thinking
- Values: Underlying assumptions about standards that govern moral decisions
- Attitudes: Belief towards something
- Opinions: Expressing an attitude toward something
- Beliefs: An assumed truth
- Credibility: Offering reasonable grounds for being believed
- Reliability: giving the same result on successive trials
- Accuracy: freedom from mistake or error

Cheat sheet:

- Credibility check: accuracy, reliability, credibility
- Four Pillars: Respect, Listen, Understand, Communicate
- Sources of Knowledge → values/beliefs/opinions/attitudes → Behaviour
- OARS: Open questions, Affirming, Reflecting, and Summarizing
- DARN: Desire, Ability, Reason or Need
- Strategies for Rolling with Resistance
- Continuum of use
- Decision chart for province
- List of credible marijuana sources

Credible vs. Non-credible sources:

- Wikipedia
- Ask Jeeves
- Google searches
- Peer reviewed websites/journals/articles
- Dictionary.com
- Urban dictionary
- Facebook

TRAINERS TIPS

Credible on-line marijuana sources

Not4me- Health Canada's webpage with information on cannabis and other drugs.

www.notforme.ca

Canadian Centre on Substance Use- Canada's national addictions agency, legislated and funded by Health Canada to provide leadership, analysis, and advice to reduce drug-related harm.

www.ccsa.ca

www.xperiment.ca

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health -A mental health and addiction teaching hospital funded by the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, The University of Toronto, and various other foundations and funders.

www.camh.net

Council on Drug Abuse- A non-profit organization based on Ontario that sponsors drug education programs in schools. It receives funding from the provincial Ministry of Health Promotion, along with a number of foundations, corporations, and individual donors.

www.drugabuse.ca

Parent Action on Drugs- A registered charity aimed at prevention, education, and support for parents, youth, and professionals.

www.parentactionondrugs.org

HeretoHelp- A project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information, funded primarily by the BC Mental Health and Addiction Services of the BC Provincial Health Services Authority. Additional funding is provided by the provincial Ministry of Children and Family Development and corporate sponsors.

www.heretohelpbc.ca

www.deal.org

www.whatswithweed.ca

Appendix C

Risk and Protective Factors for Adolescent Drug Use

Risk Factors:

- Socio-environmental variables
 - initiation and course of substance use related to male gender (Poikolainen et al., 2001; McCuller et al., 2001, cited by Husler et al., 2005)
 - living in a single-parent home, and lower socio-economic status have both been associated with adolescent drug use (McCuller *et al.*, 2001, cited by Husler et al., 2005)
 - poor grades in school (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - a lack of religious commitment (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - disruptive life events (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - low school commitment (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
- Cognitions towards substance-use and substance-related variables
 - positive expectations of cannabis use (Chabrol et al., 2006)
 - awareness of parental drug use (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - perceived adult drug use (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - early use of alcohol (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - perceived availability of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs (ATOD; Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - family attitudes favorable to ATOD (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - family attitudes favorable to anti-social behaviour (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - individual attitudes favorable to antisocial behaviour (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - individual attitudes favorable to ATOD (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - parental marijuana use (Brook et al., 2001)
 - smoking and alcohol use (Brook et al., 2001)
 - poor cost benefit analysis abilities (Rolison & Scherman, 2002)
 - perceived external locus of control (Rolison & Scherman, 2002)
 - high sensation seeking behaviour (Rolison & Scherman, 2002)
- Intrapersonal variables
 - negative affectivity and depression associated with greater cannabis use (causal relationship is unclear; Brook et al., 1998, 2001; McGee et al., 2000; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001; Repetto et al., 2008; Wills et al., 2002)
 - Negative mood (Husler et al., 2005)
 - trait anxiety and anxiety sensitivity were found to be important personality risk factors for substance use (Comeau et al., 2001, cited by Husler et al., 2005)
 - low self-esteem (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)

- unconventionality and tolerance for deviance (Brook et al., 2001; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
- sensation seeking and the desire for novel and unusual experiences (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
- low sense of social responsibility (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
- a lack of purpose in life (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
- rebelliousness (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
- impulsivity (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
- early initiation to antisocial behaviour (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - Early initiation of drinking and exposure to use were specifically linked to more frequent use (Best et al., 2005)
- males engage in cannabis use the most (von Sydow et al., 2002)
- smoking before the age of 15 (von Sydow et al., 2002)
- positive attitude towards future drug use (von Sydow et al., 2002)
- regular alcohol use (von Sydow et al., 2002)
- behavioural inhibition (von Sydow et al., 2002)
- Interpersonal variables
 - time spent with smoking friends (Best et al., 2005)
 - time spent with drug using friends (Best et al., 2005)
 - number of peers using cannabis (Brook et al., 2001; Chabrol et al., 2006; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001; Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - peer antisocial behaviour (Brook et al., 2001; Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - adolescents who find good social support among their peers but low family social support are at increased risk of substance use (Wills & Vaughan, 1989, cited by Husler et al., 2005)
 - poor relationship with parents (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2001)
 - less time spent with mother (Best et al., 2005; von Sydow et al., 2002)
 - growing up without both parents (von Sydow et al., 2002)
 - paternal discipline (Brook et al., 2001)
 - peer smoking (Brook et al., 2001)
 - history of parental felony (Graves et al., 2005)
 - general peer network delinquency (Husler et al., 2005)
 - early availability of drugs (von Sydow et al., 2002)

Protective Factors:

- Socio-environmental variables
 - school rewards for prosocial involvement (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - school opportunity for involvement (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - family rewards for social involvement (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
 - family opportunity for social involvement (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)
- Substance-related variables
 - negative expectations of cannabis use (Chabrol et al., 2006)
- Intrapersonal variables
 - social skills (Saint-Jean & Crandall, 2004)

- personality factors such as conventionality, ego integration, and interpersonal harmony (Brook et al, 1984, Brook et al., 1986, Donovan, 1996, Jessor & Jessor, 1977, cited by Brook et al., 2001)
- high conventionality (i.e., intolerance of deviance and church attendance; Brook et al., 2001)
- low pathology (i.e., ego integration; Brook et al., 2001)
- secure sense of self (Husler et al., 2005)
- achievement motivation (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004)
- positive orientations to health and school (Jessor et al., 1995)
- intolerance of deviance (Jessor et al., 1995)
- perceived regulatory control (Jessor et al., 1995)
- Interpersonal variables
 - parental knowledge inversely predicted pro-marijuana attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Lac et al., 2009)
 - parental warmth inversely predicted pro-marijuana attitudes and subjective norms (Lac et al., 2009)
 - parental monitoring functioned as a protective factor against peer influence on marijuana initiation during early adolescence, but the effect vanishes during late adolescence (Tang & Orwin, 2009)
 - number of peers opposed to cannabis use (Chabrol et al., 2006)
 - parental identification (both maternal and paternal; Brook et al., 2001)
 - having high-achieving peers (Brook et al., 2001)
 - positive and open family relations (Husler et al., 2005)
 - positive family communication (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004)
 - positive adult support (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004)
 - positive rapport and communication with adults (Jessor et al., 1995)
 - community places value on youth (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004)
 - young people are given roles in the community (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004)
 - clear and positive family & school boundaries (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman, 2004)