

Lesson 2 VSA and Getting Help

Learning Intention

To understand the risk of volatile substance abuse (VSA)

Learning Outcomes

To know the effects and risks of volatile substance abuse

To know how to get and to give help

Resources

[VSA Factsheet](#)

[Dialling 999 script](#)

[Peer Pressure Strategy cards](#)

[Anonymous Questions template](#)

Activities

1. Ground Rules

In a circle, remind the group of the ground rules from the previous lesson.

2. Question and Answer Session

Answer any questions that were remaining from the last lesson. Tell the class there will be another opportunity to ask questions at the end of this session.

3. Introduction

Remind the children that they previously looked at a whole range of legal and illegal drugs. Tell them that today's lesson will focus on volatile substance abuse (VSA). Ask them what they think volatile substances means. Volatile substances is the name given to things like aerosols, gases and glues - they are sometimes called solvents.

4. VSA the effects and risks

In small groups, ask the children to discuss what they think are the effects and risks of volatile substance abuse; they should note these on a piece of paper. Give each child a [VSA Factsheet](#), you may need to read this through and explain any difficult words or concepts. Ask the groups to look at their original ideas, were there any things they had wrong, or any surprises? Ask the group to think of three reasons not to try VSA. Note a reason from each group in turn until all the answers are exhausted.

5. Skills for resisting pressure

Ask the class to recall the strategies used in the role play in the last lesson. Display the [Peer Pressure Strategy cards](#) on the whiteboard to remind them. In pairs, take turns to persuade each other to try a solvent, the other person should use the reasons not to try VSA to say no. Ask the pairs to decide which strategies work best. Join up with another pair and share ideas. In this group of four choose one effective approach to saying no to VSA and share with the whole class. Take ideas from the class and discuss.

6. Contacting the Emergency Services

Ask the children if they know how to contact the Emergency Services. N.B. There may be a child in your class who has had to do this, be sensitive to how this may make them feel. Talk the pupils through each stage of the [Dialling 999 script](#). In pairs, use the script to role play calling for an ambulance for someone who is unconscious in a local park; they appear to have been sniffing aerosols. Ask for volunteers to share their role play.

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7. Reflect and Review

Ask the class what they have learnt during the lesson. Do a go-round: One thing I have learnt today is ...

Using the [Anonymous Questions template](#) ask the class to complete the sentence: After the lesson I wanted to know ... This can be any question that they may have about VSA that they feel has not been covered in the session. Reassure the class that if they haven't got a question, they can leave it blank. The questions should be placed in a box at the front of the classroom and they will be answered in the next lesson.

Additional Activities

Encourage the children to explore the Re-Solve Interactive website:

http://re-solv.org/toxic_agents/index.htm. This is a child friendly interactive site which may answer any remaining questions they have.

Basic First Aid

You may wish to contact your local St John Ambulance group. They have additional resources in the Young Life Saver pack. This activity should be supported by a first aider.

Explain to the children that we know that the common causes of death from VSA begin with choking or unconsciousness. Explain that the children are going to learn some basic first aid for these two situations. Talk the pupils through the First Aid for choking instructions, (see [First Aid Teacher Guide](#)).

Ask the first aider to demonstrate each stage by talking the rest of the class through what they are doing. N.B. It is important that they only pretend to slap and pretend to squeeze. Repeat this for the First Aid is someone is unconscious instructions (see [First Aid Teacher Guide](#)). N.B. It is important that they do not practise CPR. Explain that it is dangerous to breathe air into a person's lung if they are breathing normally. Ask the first aider to demonstrate placing a person in the recovery position; alternatively, watch this short Red Cross clip: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veD29nbvg8E&NR=1>

Ask the children to work in pairs to practice placing their partner in the recovery position.