

Teacher Discussion Guide

Exploration: Time Machine Scenarios

Scenario 1: The Teen Drinking Crisis

It is 10 years in the future. You're standing in the middle of your town, once a vibrant place full of youth sports, weekend festivals, and packed high school graduation ceremonies. But something changed over the past decade that has changed the way your town feels.

Ten years ago, underage drinking became really common. It was easy to get alcohol, and no one talked about it. Teachers looked the other way, parents didn't want to upset their kids, and stores sold alcohol without checking the age of people. Social media showed parties as fun and exciting. In reality, it caused a lot of strain on teens and the town.

More teens began to show up at the hospital. School attendance dropped. Some students stopped going to school. Family relationships became strained. Emergency services were stretched thin, and youth support programs ran out of funding. Now, in the aftermath, the community is trying to pick up the pieces.

Your group, made up of parents, youth, health workers, and local leaders, has come together to figure out what went wrong and how to build a safer, healthier future.

Consider the following questions:

- How did this drinking culture affect young people, families, schools, and the wider community?
 - Youth physical health declined; more hospital visits. Increased risk of alcohol poisoning, injuries, and accidents. Long-term impact on brain development in teens.
 - Families became more disconnected or stressed, which could impact mental, social, and emotional health.
 - Schools struggled with attendance and learning.
 - Community trust broke down, impacting social and spiritual health (youth may be less likely to connect with spiritual or cultural organizations)
 - Emergency systems became overwhelmed.
- What signs were ignored, and what earlier actions could have helped?
 - Signs: Kids drinking at parties, poor attendance, increased hospital visits.
 - Earlier actions: Stronger ID laws, youth education, parent engagement, school policies, funding youth programs.
- What ideas do you have now to prevent this from happening again?
 - Youth-led education campaigns.
 - After-school programs and safe hangouts.
 - Support for parents and educators.
 - Community events promoting healthy lifestyles, including social and spiritual health and connection.

Teacher Discussion Guide

Scenario 2: The Youth-Led Wellness Campaign

You step into a school 20 years into the future, and it's not like anything you've ever seen. The halls are calm, bright, and filled with laughter. Students feel supported and connected. Mental health is openly talked about, and everyone knows where to go for help. Substance use is rare because most youth are aware of the risks and feel confident in making healthy choices.

This world wasn't built overnight. Twenty years ago, young people just like you started a movement. They were tired of feeling alone, stressed out, and unheard. So they launched a wellness campaign focused on real talk—about mental health, peer pressure, safe partying, substance use, and supporting each other. They used social media, art, music, and school events to spread their message. Slowly, things changed.

Adults began to listen. Policies improved. More mental health resources appeared in schools. Safer spaces were created for teens to hang out. Students felt empowered. It worked.

Now, your group, a group of young leaders, is meeting to plan the next big campaign to keep this momentum going.

Consider the following questions as you prepare your scenario:

- What made the original campaign so powerful and effective?
 - It was youth-led and focused on real issues.
 - Used social media, art, and music to connect.
 - Included everyone—students, parents, staff.
 - Even though the focus was on mental health, it positively impacted other dimensions of health and wellness, such as spiritual and emotional health (highlighting how all dimensions of health are interconnected).
- How did it change the school, community, and how people feel?
 - Schools became safer, more open spaces.
 - Reduced stigma around mental health.
 - Youth felt heard, adults learned to listen - improved social health and relationships.
- What message do you want to send now to keep building a healthier world?
 - Answers may vary.
 - Keep normalizing mental health conversations. Remind youth they are not alone.
 - Focus on prevention and early support in all aspects of youth's lives (e.g., home, school, community). Consider how to support all dimensions of health and wellness, including mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and social.

Teacher Discussion Guide

Scenario 3: The City that Never Changed Its Smoking Laws

Your time machine lands 10 years in the future. You notice there has been a big change: the government in this city got rid of laws limiting smoking and tobacco marketing 10 years ago. They also got rid of any laws prohibiting where people could smoke or vape. Cigarette ads play during cartoons, tobacco companies sponsor sports teams and music festivals, and there are no age restrictions for buying cigarettes.

Smoking is everywhere. People smoke in schools, restaurants, cars, and even hospitals. But as you explore this world, you start to see the hidden costs. Many people are sick with lung disease, heart problems, and cancer. Kids are starting to smoke earlier because they see it as normal. Few people know the risks, because no one ever researched the health impacts and public health campaigns were never funded.

You are a group of student leaders on a mission to investigate what life is like in a society where smoking is not restricted.

Consider the following questions as you prepare your scenario:

- How does smoking affect youth, families, schools, and workplaces?
 - Youth: Addiction, poor physical health, peer pressure. More pollution (air pollution, cigarette butts) so can affect all aspects of well-being (e.g., social, physical), It may negatively impact all aspects of health, including mental and physical health. It can lead to a higher risk of lung disease, cancer, and heart disease later in life.
 - Families: Health costs, stress, or poor role modelling may impact emotional or social health.
 - Schools: Less focus on learning, unsafe air. Affect on emotional health,
 - Workplaces: Increased sick days, lower productivity. Impact of physical, mental, and social health.
- What new laws and public health campaigns could help this world become a healthier version of itself?
 - Ban tobacco advertising to children
 - Reintroduce age restrictions
 - Create smoke-free public areas
 - Fund education campaigns about tobacco harms
 - Invest in healthier activities and prevention programs
- What challenges might you face when trying to change people's attitudes and behaviours about smoking in a world where it's been normalized for 10 years?
 - People might not want to change because they've seen smoking as normal for so long.
 - People might not believe that health impacts are due to smoking
 - Tobacco companies may try to stop restrictions.
 - Tobacco is very addictive, so people will need support in quitting smoking.

Teacher Discussion Guide

Scenario 4: Jay's Two Futures – Finding Support and Confidence

Your time machine takes you to two parallel futures of one person: Jay, a construction worker, who has ADHD.

Back in grade 6, Jay had trouble focusing and felt overwhelmed. Instead of trying to handle it alone, Jay talked to a parent and a counsellor. They were diagnosed with ADHD and got support, including therapy and medication, which helped a lot with their focus.

But things could've been different.

Jay remembers someone in school offering them nicotine and cannabis to help “calm down”. While it might've helped for a bit, Jay knows that over time, it could have made school harder, led to anxiety, affected their friendships, and affected his ability to keep a steady job. Jay is glad that they reached out for help when they did.

Your group, made up of Jay's friends, teachers, parents/guardians, and healthcare providers, are here to explore these two versions of Jay's life.

Consider the following questions as you prepare your scenario:

- What were the consequences of self-medicating with cannabis or nicotine vs. getting help?
 - Self-medicating might feel like short-term relief but can lead to worse physical and mental health. It can also increase anxiety and lead to unstable work/life, which can also impact mental, emotional, and social health.
 - Substances can interfere with brain development, especially in youth. This can impact mental, social, and emotional health.
 - Getting support (therapy, trusted adults, medication when needed) can lead to long-term growth and success. It can improve focus and increase healthy coping strategies. Getting help and support can improve many dimensions of health, including mental, social, emotional, and spiritual health.
- What could Jay's friends or teachers have done to support the healthier path?
 - Listen without judgment
 - Encourage Jay to talk to a trusted adult
 - Offer to go with them to talk to a counsellor
 - Recognize signs of stress and speak up
- Create a list of supports and choices that help people like Jay thrive.
 - Access to school counsellors
 - Youth mental health services
 - Supportive friends, a good community, and trusted adults
 - Healthy coping strategies like exercise, art, or mindfulness
 - Access to spiritual groups or support