TEACHER DISCUSSION GUIDE

Pre-Activity: Emergency Response Stations

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STATION 1: RECOGNIZING OVERDOSE SYMPTOMS

At this station, students will learn to recognize and differentiate overdose symptoms associated with different substances. They will also practice identifying when a situation becomes a medical emergency and consider how to make safe, informed decisions.

Station Prep: At the station, provide students with copies of the DECYDE Overconsumption infographic.

For each scenario, students should:

1. **List** the key symptoms they observe.
2. **Identify** the most likely substance involved.
3. **Rate** the severity of the situation, using:
    a. **Red = life-threatening**
    b. **Yellow = needs medical help**
    c. **Green = non-emergency**
4. **Decide** what actions to take next (e.g., call 911, check for breathing, administer naloxone, place in the recovery position).

Situation 1: Liam is Not Responding

Liam is slumped over on a couch at a party. His lips are blue, his breathing is very slow, and he doesn't respond when his name is called or when shaken.

- **Symptoms:** Slow breathing, blue lips, unconsciousness
- **Likely drug or drug category:** Opioids
- **Severity:** Red (life-threatening)
    - Rationale: Blue lips and slow breathing = not enough oxygen - immediate overdose danger
- **Action:** Call 911, administer naloxone, place in recovery position

Situation 2: Maya at a Field Party

Maya has been at a field party for a few hours. She started vomiting, is slurring her speech, and she keeps drifting in and out of consciousness. Her skin feels cold.

- **Symptoms:** Vomiting, hypothermia, confusion

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- **Likely drug or drug category:** Alcohol
- **Severity:** Red (life-threatening)
    - Rationale: Vomiting, drifting in and out of consciousness, and cold skin = signs of alcohol poisoning
- **Action:** Call 911, stay with her, place in recovery position

Situation 3: Aiden After the Game

Aiden is celebrating a playoff win with his hockey team. One of his buddies offers him some drugs he had never taken before. After trying it, Aiden starts talking rapidly, sweating, pacing, and seems extremely agitated. Suddenly, he clutches his chest and collapses.

- **Symptoms:** Agitation, chest pain, possible seizure.
- **Likely drug or drug category:** Stimulants
- **Severity:** Red (life-threatening)
    - Rationale: Chest pain and collapse = possible heart attack or seizure from stimulant overdose.
- **Action:** Call 911, monitor breathing, cool environment.

Situation 4: Taylor's Test Nerves

Taylor is nervous for an upcoming text, and so their friend offers them to take an anxiety pill, which Taylor accepts. After taking the pill, Taylor seems dizzy and disoriented, with slow reflexes. They fall asleep and can't be woken easily.

- **Symptoms:** Drowsiness, confusion, slow reaction.
- **Likely drug:** Depressant (benzo)
- **Severity:** Red (life-threatening)
    - Rationale: Trouble waking, dizziness, and slow reflexes could mean respiratory depression → medical emergency.
- Action: Call 911, monitor breathing.

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Situation 5: Jordan at the Park

Jordan took something at a party and is now pacing around the park. She seems terrified, saying she sees things that aren't there. She is panicking, shouting, and trying to run into the street. Jordan is also very sweaty, hasn't had water in hours, and looks lightheaded.

- **Symptoms:** Hallucinations, paranoia, panic, risky behavior, dehydration
- **Likely drug:** Hallucinogen (LSD, psilocybin, ketamine, etc.)
- **Severity**: Yellow (needs help)
    - Rationale: Not usually life-threatening, but high risk of injury due to panic, hallucinations, and running into traffic. Needs immediate supervision and possibly emergency help.
- **Action:** Call 911 if unsafe, move them to a calm environment, give sips of water if possible, speak reassuringly, prevent injury

Situation 6: Emma Has a Brownie

Emma ate some homemade brownies at a friend's house. An hour later, she feels dizzy and nauseous. Her heart is racing, she looks pale and sweaty, and she says she thinks she's "going to die."

- **Symptoms:** Nausea, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, anxiety/panic
- **Likely drug or drug category:** Cannabis (edible)
- **Severity:** Yellow (needs help)
    - Rationale: Scary but rarely life-threatening. Usually anxiety, nausea, and panic. Needs a calm environment, reassurance, and hydration. Only call 911 if severe complications (chest pain, passing out).
- **Action:** Call 911 if symptoms are severe (chest pain, unconsciousness). Keep her calm and safe, stay with her, offer water

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STATION 2: RECOVERY POSITION VIDEO CHALLENGE

At this station, students will learn how to safely place an unconscious person into the recovery position, understand why it is important, and practice teaching this lifesaving skill to others.

Key Points to Emphasize:

- The recovery position helps keep the airway clear, allows the person to breathe, and prevents choking.
- An unconscious person should never be left alone—always stay with them until help arrives.

Station Prep: Provide a tablet or computer at this station for students to watch the Recovery Position video (1:25), if students do not have their own chromebook to do so.

Ensure Students include the following key steps of the Recovery Position in their video:

1. **Check safety & responsiveness:** Make sure the area is safe, call for help, and confirm the person is breathing normally.

2. **Position the arm & leg:** Place the arm nearest you at a right angle to the body; bring the far arm across the chest and hold the back of their hand against their cheek. Bend the far knee up.

3. **Roll them onto their side:** Gently pull on the bent knee to roll the person toward you, keeping their hand pressed against their cheek.

4. **Open airway & monitor:** Tilt the head back slightly to keep the airway open, adjust the top leg so the hip and knee are bent at right angles, and stay with them until help arrives.

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STATION 3: LIVED EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT. EVA'S STORY: LOOKING OUT FOR A FRIEND

Throughout the lessons, students will engage with authentic stories shared by individuals with lived and living experience. These spotlights present real perspectives, told in the individual's own words and language, offering students meaningful insight into the realities of substance use.

Station Prep: Provide students with a copy of the FACE Decision-Making Model (Intermediate) and Factors Influencing Decision Making Infographics at this station.

Scenario:

When I was in grade 11 a few of my friends and I attended a New Year's Eve party with kids from a different high school. My friend Yasmeen's boyfriend was from another high school and he was the one who invited us to go.

There were probably about 60 people at the party and no parents were home. There was mostly drinking going on and some vaping, too. Some people had coolers or beer but there was a lot of straight liquor. I remember seeing people drinking vodka straight out of the bottle. I only drank coolers.

We all didn't stay together the whole night and it was several hours later when I saw Yasmeen. She looked really drunk. She was on the couch half asleep and was slurring her words. Her boyfriend was with her trying to feed her bread to sober her up. Someone helped her upstairs and when I went to check on her again she was in the bathtub, and her boyfriend was trying to get her to drink water. I went to get my friends as I knew we needed to get her home. The ride we initially had planned was with my friend Sue's mom, but Sue didn't want to call her mom because she knew her mom would not be OK with the situation.. Yasmeen didn't want to call her mom because she knew she would be mad. Her mom didn't know she went to a party. I ended up calling my mom because she told me that if anything were to happen to call me and she would pick up me and my friends.

We helped Yasmeen get back down the stairs and stayed with her until my mom came. When my mom arrived, she asked my friend to call Yasmeen's mom to make sure she would be home before she drove Yasmeen home. When my mom tried to help Yasmeen out of the house she fell down in the snow. Another parent who was picking up their child helped get Yasmeen up and into the vehicle.

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After that night, Yasmeen wasn't allowed to do anything. She could go to school and hang out with her friends, but she wasn't allowed to go to parties or sleepovers. Her mom blamed us for getting her drunk and giving her straight alcohol, but I was only drinking coolers! She was the one who didn't tell her mom where she was going, and it was her boyfriend that was giving her vodka. I just hate how much blame we got from her mom when I'm the one that called my mom to get her home safely.

Yasmeen got made fun of a lot for getting so drunk, especially when she went back to school after the holidays. I felt bad that she drank too much and people were making fun of her. I didn't see her very often outside of school because she wasn't allowed to do much and her mom wouldn't let her hang out with us.

I didn't get in trouble with my mother. She was relieved that I called when a friend was in trouble. We talked a lot about safe drinking so I could understand the difference between straight liquor and mixed drinks. When I went to other parties in the future I always drank mixed drinks, as I didn't want to end up like Yasmeen did. My mom always reminded me before going to a party that I could call home and she would come get me, which made me feel safer.

FEEL

How do you think Eva felt when she noticed Yasmeen was in trouble at the party?

- Unsure about what to do
- Worried about getting in trouble
- Concerned over her friend's safety
- Confused about what to do and who to call for help
- Scared about getting in trouble
- Frustrated that no adults were around to help
- Determined to make sure her friend got home safely

ASSESS

What were the signs that told Eva something wasn't right?

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- Yasmeen was extremely intoxicated, slurring her words and finding it difficult to stay awake.
- There were no adults at the party, and her boyfriend seemed unsure of how to help.
- The planned ride home wasn't an option anymore, and Yasmeen didn't want her mom called.

What options did Eva have at the time?
• Let Yasmeen's boyfriend keep trying to sober her up • Tell her friends and hope someone else would help her • Ask the kids of the house to contact their parents • Call another friend who wasn't at the party for help • Call Yasmeen's mom for help, even if it meant her getting in trouble • Call her own mom for help • Call 911

CHOOSE

What choice did Eva make, and what were the results?
• Eva found her friends and stayed with Yasmeen to make sure she was ok. Eva chose to call her mom, who picked them up, helped Yasmeen, and ensured she got home safely. • Yasmeen faced consequences by her mom afterward, but the situation could have been much worse without Eva's actions. • Even though Yasmeen's mom blamed Eva and her friends afterward, Eva made a responsible and safe choice that could have prevented something worse from happening. • Eva didn't get in trouble from her mom. Her mom appreciated that she called for help. • Eva and her friends were unfairly blamed by Yasmeen's mom for what happened.

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- Yasmeen was made fun of at school after the party, which affected her socially and emotionally.

What factors might have influenced Eva to make her decision?

- Family- she felt safe to call her mom in this scenario, and knew she wouldn't get in trouble because she was trying to help her friend.
- Knowledge & Experiences - Eva knew to stay with Yasmeen and make sure she was ok and stayed awake.
- Self-concept - Eva felt confident in her ability to step up and help her friend in this scenario.

EVALUATE

How did Eva's decision to help Yasmeen affect both her friend's safety and their friendship?

- Eva helped keep Yasmeen safe by getting her home.
- Yasmeen's mom blamed Eva and her friends, which felt unfair.
- Yasmeen wasn't allowed out much after, so their friendship changed.
- Eva felt proud for calling her mom and taking responsibility.
- She also felt frustrated because Yasmeen got teased and they got blamed.
- Eva learned safer drinking habits and felt supported by her mom.

What could Eva and her friends have done differently?

- Create a safety plan in advance of the party, with how to look out for one another, who to call if you get in trouble, etc.
- Stayed together throughout the party to better look out for one another
- Checked in on each other more often, especially if someone seemed intoxicated

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- Had a clear backup plan for getting home safely, even if the original ride fell through
- Talked in advance about how to handle risky situations, like someone drinking too much
- If Yasmeen was passed out, place her in the recovery position to keep her airway clear and reduce the risk of choking while waiting for help
- Tell parents/guardians the truth about where they was going so they could ask for help if needed
- Set a limit for how much they planned to drink and stuck to it
- Avoided drinking straight liquor and chosen lower-alcohol options, consider how to calculate standard drink sizes
- Stayed close to trusted friends

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STATION 4: RED FLAG CHALLENGE

Instructions: Present the following situations and ask the students to point out the red flags that could contribute to an emergency situation (e.g mixing substances, untested drugs, using alone, etc). These situations are available in the Student Worksheets.

Situation 1: Jasmine is at a party with her friends. She's been drinking alcohol and then takes a couple of mystery pills that someone says are "just Molly." She says she feels weird and goes to lie down in a back room — alone.
Red Flags: • Mixing substances (alcohol + unknown pills). • Taking untested/unverified drugs. • Using alone / being left alone while intoxicated. • Taking alcohol with molly (MDMA or Ecstasy), increases the risk of dehydration.

Situation 2: After a concert, Taylor finds someone passed out on the sidewalk near the venue. They check if the person is breathing and then walk away because they "don't want to get involved or get in trouble."
Red Flags: • Leaving someone who is unconscious. • Not calling for help. • Not knowing or using the Good Samaritan Law (they won't get in trouble for helping during a medical emergency).

Situation 3:

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Riley and Sam take benzodiazepine- Xanax and alcohol together at a party. Riley seems super out of it, so Sam brings them to the car and lets them “sleep it off” in the back seat while heading back inside to party.
Red Flags: • Mixing CNS depressants (Xanax + alcohol) — high overdose risk • Leaving someone alone while they’re unresponsive • Not placing them in the recovery position or monitoring breathing

Situation 4: A group of friends is hanging out for a sleepover. One of them brings THC gummies from a sketchy online seller. They all take one, but Liam decides to take more because he “doesn’t feel anything yet.” When he starts vomiting and acting really confused, the others just let him sleep it off.
Red Flags: • Using unregulated/unverified substances. • Taking more before the effects have kicked in. • Leaving someone alone when they’re showing signs of overdose.

Situation 5: Ethan is experimenting with a new vape pen that he bought online. It’s supposed to have a cannabis concentrate, but the label is in another language. He decides to try it at home while his parents are out and doesn’t tell anyone he’s using it.
Red Flags: • Using alone. • Using an unregulated product with unknown contents. • No one knows he's using — no plan in place if something goes wrong.

Situation 6:

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Noah is at a house party when someone he doesn't know well offers him a pill, saying it will "make the night more fun." He's been drinking already and, not wanting to seem boring, takes the pill without asking what it is. A short while later, he feels overheated and dizzy, his heart is racing, and he's struggling to stay on his feet.
Red Flags: ● Taking an unknown drug from someone they don't trust. ● Peer-pressure influencing risky choices. ● No idea what the substance is or what it could interact with.

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