Empowering Youth to DECYDE

Grade 7 Lesson Plan 2
Learning Activity 3

Teacher Discussion Guide: FACE-ing Stressful Situations

Scenario 1: Tom – Stress at Home: Will Nicotine Help?

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Tom's parents are going through a divorce. With his parents arguing, he finds it very stressful at home and school. Tom decided to use a nicotine vape to help him sleep and relax at home. He now uses his vape in the school bathroom between classes. Tom has found that the nicotine vape helps him stay focused and awake in class. What would you do if you were Tom?

Teacher Discussion Guide:

SUBSTANCE SNAPSHOT

Teachers may refer to the Nicotine Substance Snapshot to help inform the discussion.

What is Tom's stressor?

- Parent's divorce
- Parent's arguing

Feel:

- **How does Tom feel in this situation? How would I feel in this situation?**
  - Stressed
  - Tired of the arguing
  - Helpless
  - Sad
  - Lonely

Assess:

- **What are Tom's choices?**
  - Not vape
  - Only vape at home
  - To reach out to someone he trusts to talk about the situation.
  - Explore other coping strategies.

  If I were in this situation what factors may influence my decision? Refer to the Factors Influencing Decision-making infographic.
  - Peers
  - Family
  - School: Fear of consequences: They could get in trouble for vaping in the bathroom.

- Knowledge: Fear of becoming dependent on nicotine or the negative effects of nicotine on our bodies

Choose:

- **What is the safest choice? What are safe and healthy coping strategies to use in this situation?**
  - Not vape and choose healthier ways of coping.
  - Reach out for help on coping strategies
  - Talk to a friend
  - Tell his friends how he is feeling
  - Self-regulation strategies: breathing, focussing
  - Learn about self-regulating strategies from a trusted adult at school

Evaluate:

- **How could the choice to vape as a coping strategy impact themselves or others? How could using this substance affect them?**
  - May miss out on important learning if they frequently go to the bathroom to vape
  - May cause them to feel guilty
  - Vaping for prolonged periods of time can have a negative physical impact.
  - They could become addicted to nicotine.
  - Nicotine is harmful and addictive.
  - A negative effect on the relationship with teachers
  - Affect academics

What coping strategies could Tom use in the future?

- Talk to a trusted adult/professional about the situation at home.
- Healthier coping skills
- Explore options for healthier coping strategies (e.g., sports, activities)
- Work on developing a strategy for developing a positive mindset
- avoid self-blaming
- Talk to his family

Teacher Discussion Guide: FACE-ing Stressful Situations

Scenario 2: Nadia – Managing ADHD Symptoms: Will Cannabis Help?

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Nadia recently found out she has ADHD. She has been struggling to focus in class lately because she can't seem to stay still. She also finds it difficult to make friends as she's been told she talks too much and interrupts others when they're talking. Nadia heard online that cannabis may help with ADHD symptoms and she knows her older sister has cannabis gummies in her room. Nadia's sister is staying at a friend's house tonight and her stash is left on her desk. She wonders if she should take some to try at school in the morning. What would you do if you were Nadia?

What is Nadia's stressor?

- ADHD symptoms (e.g., lack of focus and concentration, talking too much, interrupting the class)
- Trouble making friend
- Her peers do not understand her

Feel:

- **How does Nadia feel in this stressful situation? How would I feel in this situation?**
  - Excluded
  - Misunderstood
  - Fear of her family finding out about the gummies
  - Fear of getting caught
  - Uncertain of the effects of cannabis

SUBSTANCE SNAPSHOT

Teachers may refer to the cannabis Substance Snapshot to help inform the discussion.

Assess:

- **What are Nadia's choices?**
  - Not take the gummy
  - Try a portion of the gummy
  - Find out more about gummies and their effects
  - Talk to someone about dealing with her symptoms
  - Talk to someone about helping her peers understand people with ADHD
  - Discuss the situation with her family who may seek medical attention with her

  If I were in this situation what factors may influence my decision? Refer to the *Factors Influencing Decision-making infographic*.

- Family: they could get caught by my sister or parents/caregivers
- Peers: Not fitting in
- School: trouble focussing
- School: teachers or guidance counsellor may provide guidance and be a source of support
- Knowledge: uncertain of the effects that cannabis will have: confusion, sleepiness (fatigue), impaired ability to remember, concentrate or react; anxiety, fear, or panic.
- Self-concept

Choose:

- **What is the safest choice? What are safe and healthy coping strategies to use in this situation?**
  - Not use cannabis.
  - Talk to a trusted adult about ADHD so they can find safer ways of managing symptoms.
  - Nadia could explore safe and healthy **personal** coping strategies

Evaluate:

- **How could the choice to use cannabis as a coping strategy impact themselves or others?**
  - Cannabis could cause anxiety, depression, or paranoia.
  - Cannabis can impair your thinking, concentration, memory and decision-making.
  - Cannabis can impact your ability to perform well at school if used often.
  - May affect relationships with friends or family
  - May have an effect on physical health

What coping strategies could Nadia use in the future?

- Talk to a healthcare professional about getting proper support to help with ADHD symptoms
- Explore options for healthier coping strategies
- Work on developing strategies for developing a positive mindset
- Avoid self-blaming
- Talk to family for support

Teacher Discussion Guide: FACE-ing Stressful Situations

Scenario 3: Taylor – Fear of Missing Out: Will Alcohol Help?

Scenario 3: Nadia – Fear of Missing Out: Will Alcohol Help?

It's Friday night and Taylor is bored and at home alone. As they were scrolling through their favorite social media, they noticed that their best friends posted a story showing them together at a sleepover. Taylor felt crushed. They were not invited and were not even aware of the sleepover. Taylor is feeling left out and very disappointed. They remember how their moms sometimes have a drink after a stressful day at work. Taylor knows that there is a bottle of vodka in the cupboard and wonders if taking a few sips will help them feel better. What would you do if you were Taylor?

What is Taylor's stressor?

- Exclusion by her best friends

SUBSTANCE SNAPSHOT

Teachers may refer to the alcohol Substance Snapshot to help inform the discussion.

Feel:

- **How does Taylor feel in this stressful situation? How would I feel in this situation?**
  - Angry and hurt
  - Sad and disappointed
  - Left out
  - Fear of using alcohol; unsure of effects
  - Fear their moms would notice the missing alcohol

Assess:

- **What are their choices?**
  - Not take the alcohol
  - Take only a few sips of alcohol and see how they feel
  - Reach out to their best friends and tell them how they feel
  - Reach out to another good friend to talk
  - Talk to their moms

  - **What factors may influence their decision? Refer to the Factors Influencing Decision-making infographic.**
    - Family: fear of getting caught drinking
    - Family: reach out to family to share experience and feelings
    - Family: not wanting to upset family
    - Peers: feeling angry at best friends

- Knowledge: Knowing the effects and consequences of drinking may deter the choice to drink
- Feelings: angry and sad

Choose:

- **What is the safest choice they could make? What are safe and healthy coping strategies to use in this situation?**
  - Not drink alcohol
  - Talk to a friend of family about feeling left out
  - Use a safer coping strategy to deal with anger
  - Reach out to their best friends and communicate their feelings
  - Think positively about the situation
  - Control their thoughts about the situation; maybe the best friends were not intending to exclude

Evaluate:

- **How could the choice to use alcohol as a coping strategy impact themselves or others?**
  - May affect relationship with family
  - May affect relationship with best friends
  - Cause feelings of guilt
  - Alcohol can change mood, behavior
  - Alcohol can make it more difficult to think clearly
  - Alcohol can affect coordination
  - Consuming alcohol frequently can increase blood pressure that can lead to heart disease or stroke, liver disease or digestive problems
  - Alcohol can distort your vision, hearing, and coordination, and can cause altered perceptions and emotions
  - Alcohol can cause a hangover with symptoms such as body aches, headache, nausea, vomiting

What coping strategies could Taylor use in the future?

- Talk to their best friends
- Engage in calming coping strategies like going for a walk
- Do something healthy and safe that they would normally enjoy
- Reach out to another friend or family
- Breathing techniques to relieve the anger
- Focus on positive thoughts such as good times with their best friends
- Focus on the positive aspects of their relationship with their best friends
- Try to understand that it is healthy for the best friend group to engage in activities with and without each other and stress the importance of good communication

Teacher Discussion Guide: FACE-ing Stressful Situations

Scenario 4: Ryan – Friday Night Fatigue: Will Caffeine Help?

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It is Friday night and Ryan is skidooing with their friends. They had a hectic week with school projects and early morning hockey practices. They are feeling extremely tired. Fatigue is setting in and Ryan can hardly stay awake. Ryan informs their friends that they are ready to go home and go to bed. However, their friends convince Ryan to stay longer and suggest stopping at the gas station to buy an energy drink which would help them stay awake. What would you do if you were Ryan?

What is Ryan's stressor?

- They are tired and fatigued.
- Peer pressure.

SUBSTANCE SNAPSHOT

Teachers may refer to the caffeine Substance Snapshot to help inform the discussion.

Feel:

- **How does Ryan feel in this stressful situation? How would I feel in this situation?**
  - Pressured by their friends
  - Eager to go home
  - Uncertain that the energy drink would work
  - Uncertain that the energy drink is a good idea

Assess:

- **What are their choices?**
  - Go home and get rest
  - Not drink the energy drink
  - Stay on not drive the skidoo
  - Ask friends if they understand energy drinks

  If I were in this situation what factors may influence my decision? Refer to the *Factors Influencing Decision-making infographic*.
    - Family: parents may not like the idea of consuming an energy drink
    - Family: may not approve of driving a skidoo in a tired state
    - Preferences: may really like energy drinks and want to consume them more often
    - Knowledge: Understanding the consequences of drinking energy drinks. They may affect a person's ability to fall asleep or affect alertness

- Knowledge: Rest is very important, if caffeine disrupts one's sleep, then they will not be able to handle stress or be productive
- Peers

Choose:

- **What is the safest choice they could make? What are safe and healthy coping strategies to use in this situation?**
  - Not drink the energy drink which has caffeine
  - Go home and get sleep
  - Stay and not drive the skidoo

Evaluate:

- **How could the choice to use caffeine as a coping strategy impact themselves or others?**
  - Caffeine use may cause irritability which may affect relationships with others
  - Caffeine can cause insomnia, nervousness, restlessness, nausea, and increased heart rate
  - Abruptly stopping caffeine may cause withdrawal symptoms (like headaches, low energy, and irritability), especially for people who consume it often
  - Caffeine can cause heart problems or worsen anxiety

What coping strategies could Taylor use in the future?

- Compromise with my friends to make plans for another day