



Smoking

In this lesson, students explore the reasons why some young people choose to smoke. Using peer-to-peer discussion and activities, students discuss scenarios where young people are encouraged or pressured to smoke and then identify techniques for resisting this pressure.



Curriculum links to the PSHE Association Programme of Study

KS3

Core theme 1: Health and wellbeing

Pupils should have the opportunity to learn:

- to recognise and manage different influences on their decisions about the use of substances, (including clarifying and challenging their own perceptions values and beliefs)
- the personal and social risks and consequences for themselves and others of making different decisions regarding substances, including the benefits of not drinking alcohol (or delaying the age at which to start) and the benefits of not smoking, including, not harming others with second-hand smoke.

KS4

Core theme 1: Health and wellbeing

Pupils should have the opportunity to learn:

- the short and long-term consequences of substance use and misuse for the health and mental and emotional wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, including the health risks related to second-hand smoke
- to understand the terms 'habit', 'dependence' and 'addiction' in a wide variety of contexts (including substance use) and where and how to access support if they have concerns
- the wider risks and consequences of legal and illegal substance use, including on their personal safety, future career, relationships and future lifestyle.

>> Learning objectives

We are learning about why people may choose to smoke and how to resist the pressure to do so.

>> Learning outcomes

Pupils can:

- describe the reasons why some people smoke
- understand the harm smoking does to your health
- know who to ask for advice and where to look for guidance on resisting pressure to smoke, including on the NHS Smokefree website
- use different strategies to resist pressure to smoke.

Preparation

Before delivering the lesson:

- visit the [Every Mind Matters website](#) (optional)
- read through the [Every Mind Matters top tips](#).

The NHS Smokefree website has information about quitting smoking: www.nhs.uk/smokefree. This is a good resource to read through before the lesson and, if appropriate, to signpost to students.

Climate for learning

Read through [Guidance for learning in a safe environment](#). This includes advice on:

- developing and revisiting effective ground rules drawn up with students
- familiarity with your school's safeguarding policy and procedures, including Child Protection and other relevant policies
- being prepared in case students make a disclosure
- including and protecting vulnerable students
- using distancing techniques so that students can discuss sensitive issues without being encouraged to make a disclosure
- handling sensitive questions
- involving students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Anonymous question box

A question box or envelope should be placed somewhere in the classroom.

Students are encouraged to write down any questions that occur to them during the lesson and submit them anonymously. Teachers can address these questions in the next lesson or form time.



>> Resources

- [Up to you](#) (pick-a-path film)
- [Every Mind Matters website](#)
- Blank A4 paper and pens

>> Time

60 minutes approximately

>> Key vocabulary

Smoking, habit, risk, dependence, addiction, peer pressure, stress, resist, refuse, confident, assertive, influence, advice

Baseline assessment

These starter activities introduce the topic of smoking in a safe, non-threatening way, enabling you to find out what students already know or perceive about smoking. You can choose to revisit them in the plenary to show evidence of students' progress.

Before you begin, establish or review your ground rules for learning in a safe environment.



Paired mini 'word blasts' (5 minutes)

This activity enables students to share prior knowledge and feelings about smoking, including misconceptions.

Students get into pairs and create a 'word blast', writing down all the words that come into their head when they hear the word 'smoking'. They then group together with another pair and discuss how their word blasts are similar or different.



How do you feel? (5 minutes)

This is a before and after self-assessment activity. Students reflect on how they feel about the topic of smoking at the beginning of the lesson, and again at the end of the lesson, to see whether their feelings have changed.

Students should answer the question '**How do you feel about smoking and peer pressure?**' by picking an emoji that expresses their feelings. To help them choose their emoji ask students to think honestly about the following yes or no prompt questions:

- How confident are you that you could refuse a cigarette if offered?
- Would you know where to get help if you had questions about smoking?
- Would you know how to advise a friend or relative if they needed help to quit smoking?

Alternatively, students can place themselves on a 'confidence line' with 'Not at all confident' at one end, and 'completely confident' at the other. The emojis (or confidence lines) can be shown to the teacher using mini white boards or handed in on cards at the end of the lesson.

This is a self-reflection activity - students should never be asked to share personal information with their peers.

Core activities



It's up to you (15-20 minutes)

In pairs or small groups, students play the online game [▶ 'Up to you film'](#) on their phones or on a school device, and see how they would respond in some challenging situations. They should discuss each decision they make as they play the game.

If time permits, use the following differentiated questions as prompts for further discussion:

Lower

- What's it like when someone older puts you on the spot?
- Why might someone older ask you if you want to smoke?
- What are the reasons you might want to say no to smoking? (Health, social, financial reasons).
- Why could it be hard to say 'no' if you're asked?
- Who could help you out if you've started smoking and want to stop?

Higher

- Why do some people start smoking?
- Why might they ask you to join in smoking?
- How might they respond if you say 'no'?
- How can you say 'no' confidently?



What would Hannah do? (10 minutes)

Back in pairs, students discuss the following scenarios using guided questions to help them:

1. Hannah (or Harry), aged 14, finds cigarettes in her/his older sister's bedroom.
2. Hannah is in the park with her friends, who are smoking. Someone she really likes offers her a cigarette.
 - What might Hannah do in these scenarios?
 - Why might Hannah choose to start smoking? What are the reasons she would not want to? (Health, social, financial reasons).
 - Why might Hannah continue to smoke?
 - How are the two scenarios different? In which one is Hannah more likely to start smoking? Why?
 - How does peer influence affect our choices?

Students draw out a 'Head, Heart and Hands' diagram for Hannah, labelling her thoughts, feelings and actions in each scenario.



Think, Pair, Share (15-20 minutes)

The Every Mind Matters website contains further content that could support this activity, including self-care videos. If time allows and you feel it is appropriate, allow students to browse the site independently. Be on hand to answer students' questions if needed.

In their pairs, students should imagine that Hannah has started smoking and asked them for their opinions and advice. They should browse the NHS Smokefree site (nhs.uk/smokefree) and the [Every Mind Matters website](#) if time allows independently at this point to find any information or advice that they think would be useful for Hannah or anyone else who has questions about smoking. Each pair should then join with another pair to share their initial thoughts. Pairs can give constructive feedback to one another and build positively on the ideas they found and shared.

If students don't bring it up themselves, it is important to emphasise to the class that the most successful method of quitting smoking is with a local stop smoking service. Details can be found here: www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/local-support-services-helplines

Students can advise friends or relatives to access those services.

Plenaries

Use these plenary ideas to summarise learning and identify next steps.



How do you feel? (5 minutes)

Students think back to the emoji or confidence line that they shared at the start of the session in answer to the question **'How do you feel about smoking and peer pressure?'** Now they should choose another emoji, or position themselves on the confidence line, to answer the same questions, using the following prompt questions to help them:

- Have your feelings about smoking changed since then?
- Do you feel more confident in dealing with situations such as your friends smoking?
- Do you know where to get help if you need it?

The emojis (or confidence lines) can be shown to the teacher using mini white boards or handed in on cards at the end of the lesson.



I can! (5 minutes)

Students should complete one or two 'I can' statements that identify how they can now respond to or help a friend and share them with the class:

- If I get a text from a friend who's being pestered to smoke, I can...
- If my friend is offered a cigarette in front of others, I would advise them to...
- If my friend or relative wants to stop smoking I would advise them to... (Students should be referring to local stop smoking services here).

Making a public commitment can make it more likely that a person will stick to their promise. If appropriate, your students can make pledges in their own words, not to smoke and not to encourage others to smoke.

Before the end of class, remind students about the importance of asking for help if they need it, and remind them they can always visit the NHS Smokefree or Every Mind Matters websites in their own time if they want further information.



Extension ideas

Remember that the learning doesn't stop now. Each Every Mind Matters lesson can be followed up using the extension ideas below:

Vox pops and other video or audio

Students can create video clips of their ideas, interview their friends and create a vox pop compilation, or develop video clips which capture role-played examples of what can happen and how to respond.

Leaflets and artwork

Students can share their ideas by creating leaflets or posters that provide help and advice in their own words, and which draw on what they discovered in the lesson. This can include advice or creative responses like poems, rap lyrics, photos and visual art to convey students' messages.

Displays

Students can draw on their ideas to create displays of written work, images or video clips for your foyer. This is a great way to share students' learning and creative responses with other students and with adult visitors to your school.

Student-led assemblies

Students can develop their ideas into presentations, video clips and role plays that they can build into an assembly for a year group or the whole school. This can stand alone or link to displays and peer-led learning sessions.

Peer-led learning sessions

Students can develop versions of their activities that they can deliver with younger students, and which include the media they create to articulate their ideas in their own words. These can take place in tutor time, timetabled lessons, out of lesson time or as a suspended timetable activity.

