



# APPENDIX

# Tier 1: Mindfully Exploring Substance Use

Tier 1 is based on the book *Mindfulness-Based Substance Abuse Treatment for Adolescents: A 12-Session Curriculum* (Routledge, 2015) on the program which is listed on the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP). It is typically delivered in 12-weekly 90-minute sessions.

## 1 Introduction

### Session Summary

As the introduction to the entire program, the first session orients participants to the structure of the curriculum, setting agreements and expectations for behavior and effort, and answering any logistical or structural questions that youth may have. Most of this session is spent building the groundwork for a therapeutic culture that has the potential to result in trust, receptivity, and disclosure. Introductory mindfulness concepts and meditations are presented, and youth are asked what they want to learn from the program.

### Learning Objectives

- Review the structure and logistics of the program
- Set group agreements
- Define mindfulness
- Introduce mindfulness practice
- Discuss what youth may want to learn from the program

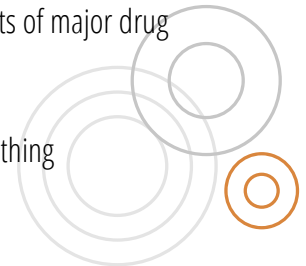
## 2 Mindfulness of Drugs and Their Health Effects

### Session Summary

The second session focuses on awareness of major drug categories, specific drugs, and their health effects. Youth will learn about the major substance categories (i.e., stimulants, depressants, opioids, cannabinoids, hallucinogens, etc.), their physiological effects on the brain and the body, and fatal drug combinations. This information will be presented via innovative activities and group discussion. A new, informal mindfulness activity will be presented, and formal meditation will be practiced.

### Learning Objectives

- Define major drug categories
- Review general physiological effects of major drug categories
- Discuss fatal drug combinations
- Practice mindfulness of deep breathing



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## 3 Reacting vs. Responding

### Session Summary

The third session begins with a role-play scene demonstrating mental versus physical power and reactions versus responses. The overarching objective of this session is that youth learn and practice concrete techniques that can improve mindful decision-making. This session incorporates formal mindfulness of the breath practice and a cognitive acronym that facilitates informal mindfulness.

### Learning Objectives

- Define the difference between reactions and responses
- Discuss the relationship between cause and effect regarding emotions and behaviors
- To practice and demonstrate proficiency in the S.T.I.C. technique (an acronym for the informal mindfulness practice of: Stop. Take a Breath. Imagine the Future. Choose.)
- To demonstrate proficiency in mindfulness-of-the-breath meditation

## 4 Mindfulness of Delusion

### Session Summary

The fourth session blends drug education and self-awareness. Group members are encouraged to contemplate why they actually use the drugs that they do. Youth are encouraged to think beyond the simple reasons of "it feels good," which are often delusions (simple false beliefs) and to seriously contemplate the underlying reasons for drug use. A number of activities, including a poem, debates about the pros and cons of drug use, individually focused activities, and group discussion highlight this session. A new formal meditation, the Body Scan, is introduced and practiced during this session.

### Learning Objectives

- Discuss the role of delusion in drug use
- Discuss pros and cons of substance abuse generally
- Discuss pros and cons of substance use personally
- Practice the Body Scan meditation



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## 5 Emotional Awareness

### Session Summary

As we near the middle of the curriculum, the goal has been achieved if some form of group cohesion has been developed. The fifth session has the potential to deepen group cohesion, as its activities involve emotionally charged scenarios that often result in an increased empathy among the youth. The session overviews emotions generally, presents the role gender norms play in emotional expression, offers opportunities for sharing emotional experiences, and offers tools to help manage emotions.

### Learning Objectives

- Review three basic categories of emotions
- Discuss the role of gender roles in emotional expression
- Discuss the role of empathy and compassion in drug treatment
- Practice “stand if” and “deep disclosure” activities

## 6 The Brain and Drugs

### Session Summary

The sixth session reviews the effects of drugs on the brain. This session covers the basics of brain physiology and the interaction between the neurotransmitter dopamine, the brain, and drugs. It also covers the role of mindfulness and meditation practice in executive function. This is the first session with a scheduled “youth-led” centering meditation. This passing of the torch serves the function of empowering young people. The Body Scan meditation is also practiced.

### Learning Objectives

- Review major areas of the brain
- Discuss the role of the frontal lobe in decision-making
- Discuss the interaction between dopamine and substance abuse
- Review neural pathways
- Discuss the relevance of mindfulness
- Practice the Body Scan meditation



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## 7

### Mindfulness of Triggers

#### Session Summary

Session 7 covers one of the most important themes for how mindfulness can help prevent substance abuse -- dealing with urges and cravings. This session reviews the role of urges and cravings in drug use, discusses the different types of cravings that lead to drug use, and teaches practices for effectively coping with such cravings. An advanced form of the Body Scan meditation is taught with an emphasis on not giving in to one's desire to move while meditating.

#### Learning Objectives

- Review the role of urges and cravings in drug use
- Practice awareness of urges and cravings
- Present urges and cravings flowchart
- Practice nonmoving Body Scan meditation

## 8

### Mindfulness of Craving

#### Session Summary

This session looks at stimuli that trigger drug use. Building on the emphasis on “craving” and its focus on the result of a trigger that they learned in Session 7, Session 8 focuses on the specific internal and external “triggers” that result in the craving or urge to use drugs. Triggers are defined and then contextualized within three major influences on the individuals’ life. Youth are invited to explore what major triggers have influenced their drug use and decision-making. Mindfulness practice is explicitly connected to the idea that more awareness of triggers, without judgment, can result in more responsive rather than reactive decision-making and, in turn, less drug use. Multiple educative mediums are used in this session, including discussion, didactic education, and experiential activities. The Mental Noting Meditation is introduced and practiced in this session.

#### Learning Objectives

- Define triggers
- Review influences on drug use
- Review personal triggers and influences
- Practice Mental Noting Meditation



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## 9 The Family System and Drugs

### Session Summary

Session 9 engages youth on the relationship between drug use and their family system. Family-based interventions have a large amount of empirical support for effectively reducing drug use among adolescents. Short of an actual family-based intervention, this session engages youth on topics related to their roles in their family systems, familial relationships, how drug use affects such relationships, and how mindfulness may help in building or rebuilding family cohesion. This session includes a number of group, individual, and meditative exercises to engage youth on these topics. A compassion meditation is practiced in order to promote empathy toward family members.

### Learning Objectives

- Discuss how drug use impacts family relationships
- Define intergenerational trauma and its influence on drug use and addiction
- Practice compassion-based meditation

## 10 Mindfulness of the Peer System

### Session Summary

Session 10 engages youth on another important system that impacts adolescent drug use -- the peer group. The peer group is often an extremely influential system on whether youth use drugs. Additionally, most youth do not possess the relationship skills necessary to negotiate healthy boundaries with their peers. This session offers an array of activities that include role-plays, discussions, and practical tools to build healthy relationships with peers. They will also learn and practice another form of compassion meditation, this time directed towards their peers.

### Learning Objectives

- Discuss the differences between friends and accomplices
- Discuss the role of leadership in relapse prevention
- Discuss the role of peer influence on relapse and relapse prevention
- Review leadership qualities necessary for autonomy



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## 11 Mindfulness of the External Environment

### Session Summary

Session 11 makes youth aware of the impact of the environment on drug use. The “environment” where youth live may mean daily survival in the impoverished conditions of a drug-ridden neighborhood or living in a wealthy home with easy access to a liquor cabinet and prescription drugs. This session seeks to present, discuss, educate, and learn about how the youth in the group perceive the role that their environment plays in drug use, both from a larger community and smaller family-home level. Didactic, experiential, and discussion-based activities comprise this session, as well as a third compassion meditation directed toward their community.

### Learning Objectives

- Discuss the multi-faceted environmental level of influence on behavior
- Discuss the impact of context for drug attitudes, cravings, and use
- Practice compassion-based meditation toward community

## 12 Closing Ceremony

### Session Summary

The final session is designed for reflection on the program and to celebrate the participation of the youth. This session honors the youth for their committed engagement. A focus group encourages the youth to reflect on their experience in the program and to appreciate themselves and each other. A final compassion meditation skill -- self-compassion -- is taught and practiced. Certificates are awarded and a celebratory meal (e.g., pizza, etc.) can close out the program.

### Learning Objectives

- Review the material taught over the whole course
- Solicit feedback on positive experiences and potential improvements for the program
- Express appreciation for the group as a whole
- Celebrate completion of the curriculum

