



# Students Together Moving to Prevent Substance Use

**COMPLETE KIT**



**STOMP**



# About Us

## About Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada)

PHE Canada champions healthy, active kids by promoting and advancing quality health and physical education opportunities and healthy learning environments. Supporting community champions with quality programs, professional development services, and community activation initiatives, PHE Canada inspires all to live healthy, physically active lives. Find out more at [www.phecanada.ca](http://www.phecanada.ca).

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**Students Together Moving to Prevent Substance Use (STOMP) Kit**

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# Part I:

## Introduction

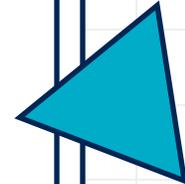




## STOMP Overview

Students Together Moving to Prevent Substance Use (STOMP) is a dynamic program that takes a comprehensive approach to curb substance use among youth including smoking, vaping, cannabis and alcohol use by targeting the student population and its unique characteristics, norms, and needs directly.

Students in grades 7-12 work with peers, school staff and community leaders to co-create a grassroots approach to reducing substance use in their school community.



## How to use this kit

This STOMP Kit is designed to empower youth to take action around their health, while also giving them the tools they need to examine their habits, reflect on the harms of vaping and smoking behaviors, and encourage them to generate healthy conversations with their peers around tobacco.

Additionally, this kit also provides activity ideas for schools to use within their classes and throughout the school to create a healthier school community while simultaneously educating students around the harms of vaping or smoking.

Designed with the 4 areas of substance use intervention (harm reduction, upstream prevention, equity-oriented approaches, stigma reducing practices), and comprehensive school health in mind, this kit provides a starting point for schools looking to educate and equip students to make more informed decisions around substance use, vaping, and tobacco.



# Acknowledgement of Sacred Tobacco

We humbly acknowledge that there is much education that needs to occur to better understand and respect the differences between sacred tobacco and commercialized tobacco. Throughout the project, we have relied on Knowledge Keepers from Indigenous communities to help us differentiate these two forms of tobacco.

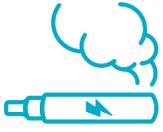
As we continue to learn, listen, and respect sacred tobacco in all its forms, we hope to also continue to work towards reconciliation through projects like STOMP. We know that not all tobacco is created equal and our aim is to prevent commercial tobacco use and vaping while also providing more education around sacred tobacco.



Scan the QR code to watch a video about sacred tobacco and its importance within Indigenous culture and communities, created in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority of BC and Knowledge Keeper, Rhona Bowe.



# Glossary of Terms Related to Tobacco and Vaping

○○○	
When we say....	We mean...
 Vape or Vaping	The action or practice of inhaling and exhaling aerosol which often contains nicotine and/or flavouring produced by a device designed for this purpose. A vape is often referred to as being a drug delivery system.
 Vape Juice	E-liquids and any other nicotine-infused product commonly found in e-cigarettes or vapes. May also contain dyes and other harmful chemicals.
 E-cigs or E-cigarettes	A drug delivery system or device that produces an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine—the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products—flavourings, and other chemicals that help to make the aerosol. E-cigs are sometimes referred to as ENDS (electronic delivery systems), mods, pens or tanks. Used as a verb, they are sometimes referred to as vaping.
 Commercial Tobacco	Tobacco that is regulated, processed, packaged, and sold in Canada such as cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, etc. Commercial tobacco products contain nicotine, a highly addictive drug that has physiological effects on the body.
 'Chew' or Chewing Tobacco	Tobacco that is consumed in a chewable form. It is often referred to as smokeless tobacco or snuff.

# Glossary of Terms Related to Tobacco and Vaping

When we say....	We mean...
 Smoking	The action of inhaling smoke through combustion or burning (i.e., lighting a cigarette)
 Tobacco Combustion	Tobacco which is burned, creating either primary and/or secondary smoke. It is during combustion of commercial tobacco that many of the harmful chemicals are released.
 Nicotine Dependence	Nicotine dependence is an addiction to tobacco products caused by the drug nicotine often found in commercial tobacco products. It involves physical and psychological factors that make it difficult to stop using tobacco.
 Ceremonial or Sacred Tobacco	Naturally grown and harvested tobacco that is used for ceremonial purposes, such as smudging, cleansing or gifting. When burned, this tobacco smoke is not meant to be inhaled. It is intended to go upwards to the Creator and in the four directions (East, South, West and North). Sacred tobacco does not contain the same chemicals as commercial tobacco.  Source: First Nations Health Authority For more on sacred tobacco, we encourage you to watch this video from the First Nations Health Authority by scanning the QR code:



To view sources, visit:  
<https://phecanada.ca/programs/stomp/kits-for-schools/stomp-glossary-terms>



## Featured Peer-to-Peer Initiative:

### Peer Support Volunteers

**Location:** Churchill Community High School (La Ronge, SK)

To support with developing an understanding of peer-to-peer initiatives, an example of a mental health initiative developed by secondary school students is described below.

#### BACKGROUND

The school has a population of 550 students in grades 7-12 and 90% of the school population are students of First Nations or Métis communities. Over the last four years, the school has experienced suicides of three students. The school has a social worker to support the students and after the suicides they were provided with another social worker.

#### PROMISING PRACTICE

The Peer Support Volunteers program began when two high school students wanted to start a peer support group for their fellow students. Ten students were trained as peer support volunteers in the first year and more will be trained in the years to come. The peer support volunteers are trained and certified by the Teen Talk program. They bridge the gap between the students and the community support that is available by reaching out to students to provide accurate information, resources, and links to services in their community. wellness, diversity, body image, and family problems. Other activities include gym blast, KaHOOT games, dances, welcome treats for new students, or providing food to students missing their lunch or breakfast. Peer support volunteers help to identify students at risk of being bullied and they provide a safe place for them to be at lunchtime while also offering a private consultation room for any student.



### IMPACT

Almost half of the school population has participated in an activity implemented by the peer support volunteers. The peer support volunteers supported three suicide interventions that were taken over by the social workers with referrals to mental health supports.

### SUSTAINABILITY

Every year, the school applies for grants so that they may continue the program. The school also makes important community connections in order to support the programming.

## Modifications

Here are suggestions to modify this approach for different learning environments.

- For students who need more support, assign them their own personal peer support volunteer whom they feel comfortable receiving individualized support.
- Organize excursions for peer support volunteers and the students that they are working with to participate in activities within the community.

Presented by:





## Part II:

# Resources for Students



## Purpose of These Resources

These resources are designed for students in grades 7-12 to equip them with the tools they need to make positive changes in their schools and to address substance use conversations with their peer groups. These resources can also serve as tools to empower students to make more informed decisions about their health habits; and to be more aware of risky behaviours around substance use, tobacco, and vaping.





# STOMP

## Icebreaker Ideas



### GIF of the Day

Share a GIF that accurately describes how your day/year is going.



### Shelf Care

Share your favorite book, blog or research article you last read.



### Essential Items

Share what you believe to be the most essential item in your home.



### Adventure Thinking

Would you rather ZOOM from a cabin in the mountains or from a cottage on the ocean?



### Life Stories

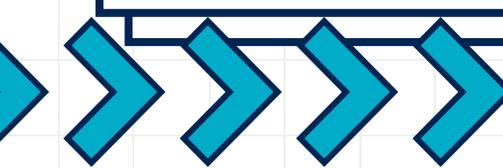
Share your life story in 5 minutes.



### Share 3 Photos

Share 3 photos of yourself or of your school.

For some additional ideas, check out these icebreaker activities from [teambuilding.com](http://teambuilding.com) following the QR code:





# Let's Talk About Commercial Tobacco Use

Think about your experiences, peers, and environments related to commercial tobacco use and respond to the questions below. There is no right or wrong way to respond but there is an empty box after every question for you to write your response.

YOUR EXPERIENCES	RESPONSES
Have you ever felt the need to smoke and/or vape?	
Would you say you have wanted to smoke and/or vape in the past but didn't act on it?	
If you smoke cigarettes, would you say it is under a pack a day?	
Have you ever tried chewing tobacco?	
Do you view smoking and/or vaping as a way to cope with stress and/or anxiety?	
When you look ahead 3 years, do you see yourself as a "smoker," "vaper" or a "non-smoker" and "non-vaper"?	
YOUR PEERS	RESPONSES
Do others around you smoke and/or vape?	
Do you feel that you need to smoke and/or vape to belong within a peer group at school?	
Do you feel others won't like you if you choose not to vape and/or smoke?	
YOUR ENVIRONMENTS	RESPONSES
Are cigarettes and/or vaping products accessible to you at home?	
If someone showed you how you could stop smoking and/or vaping, would you be open to stopping?	
If smoking and/or vaping became more expensive, would you stop?	
Would you say you generally feel more stress at school or at home?	
How could your school help you become healthier or help you to quit smoking or vaping?	

# Exploring Habits, Smoking, and Vaping

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## How do I know if a habit is healthy or unhealthy?

Habits can be *healthy* or *unhealthy*. If a habit contributes to your overall health in a positive way, it would be considered a healthy habit. If it doesn't contribute to your overall health in a positive way, then it is considered an unhealthy habit.

All habits—even unhealthy ones—serve us in some way. That is why we repeat them. As an example, smoking, vaping, or using e-cigs might temporarily ease your stress or anxiety, which is the reason why people often turn to these things. This decision may then lead to nicotine dependence, leading to psychological and physical factors that force your body to respond by giving it more nicotine.

However, using commercial tobacco products of any form is not good for your health. Therefore, even though smoking is effective in feeding a craving and reducing stress, it does not contribute positively to your overall health. Instead of using this risky response to stress, examples of less risky or healthier responses to stress and anxiety would be going for a walk, meditating for 5 minutes, calling a friend, working out, or making a healthy snack.

**Smoking** a cigarette, vaping, or consuming other forms of commercial tobacco may reduce stress right now (that's how the habit is serving you), but it **is not a healthy long-term behaviour**. What might seem effective in the short term can be really harmful to your health over time. The more we consume commercial tobacco products, the more clearly we can see its harmful effects through illnesses like cancer, heart disease, and stroke.

Before we explore habits further, it's important to understand that some habits can become an addiction. This is the case when the habit of smoking or vaping turns into nicotine dependence.



# Unpacking addiction and nicotine dependence

Nicotine dependence (also called tobacco addiction) involves physical and psychological factors that make it difficult to stop using tobacco, even if the person wants to quit.

Nicotine releases a chemical called dopamine in the same regions of the brain as other addictive drugs. It causes mood-altering changes that make the person temporarily feel good. For example, inhaled smoke delivers nicotine to the brain within 20 seconds. This “rush” is a major part of the addictive process. When you stop using commercial tobacco, nicotine levels in the brain drop. This change triggers processes that contribute to the cycle of cravings and urges that maintains addiction (Refer to our How Habits Work document for more detail).

## Signs and Symptoms

Nicotine dependence involves physical and psychological factors.

### Signs of physical dependence on nicotine include:

- the urge to smoke or vape within 30 minutes of waking
- ranking the first cigarette or vape of the day as the most important
- smoking or vaping at regular intervals throughout the day.

Tobacco use causes feelings of pleasure and alertness, but people with nicotine dependence become tolerant to the desired effects. They may no longer experience pleasure from using tobacco, but they continue to use it because they have cravings and want to avoid nicotine withdrawal.

### Signs and symptoms of nicotine withdrawal include:

- irritability
- restlessness
- anxiety
- insomnia
- difficulty concentrating
- fatigue

In addition to physical factors involved in nicotine dependence, there are psychological factors. People develop conditioned signals—triggers—for tobacco use. For example, some people always smoke after a meal or when they feel anxious. These triggers lead to behaviour patterns that can be difficult to change.

**If you—or people you know—are struggling with nicotine dependence, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted friend or a family member. You can also reach out to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).**



## How do I recognize and avoid triggers that can lead to unhealthy habits?

One of the most practical ways to eliminate an unhealthy habit like smoking or vaping is to reduce exposure to the cue(s) that causes it. For example, if you are easily distracted by your phone notifications (cue) and can't seem to concentrate at school or at home, then turning off notifications or even leaving your phone in another room (reducing exposure) can produce a boost in your concentration and productivity. **When you reduce or eliminate the cue or trigger that causes the distraction, you are more likely—over time—to eliminate the unhealthy habits.**

Before you can reduce exposure to the cues that prompt an unhealthy habit, you must first recognize the cues. This is part of practicing self-reflection which, in turn, leads to self-awareness (a healthy habit!). Whenever you find yourself repeating an unhealthy habit, reflect on the following questions and take note of your answers:

- Who am I with when I am triggered to choose an unhealthy habit?
- What does my environment look like? feel like? sound like?
- What time of the day is it? Is it later in the day or morning?
- What happened to me recently that may be causing me to want to choose an unhealthy habit?
- Am I experiencing HALT? (hungry, angry, lonely, or tired) when I feel a craving?





## How do I develop self-awareness?

The more often you ask yourself these questions about your habit cues, the more self-aware you will become. This self-awareness will then allow you to notice patterns that precede your habits. For example, are you usually in the same place or around the same people when you experience the craving for an unhealthy habit? Does the craving for an unhealthy habit happen at the same time of day? Do you have certain stressors in your life that seem to be pushing you to experience a craving for this unhealthy habit?

Once you have a good idea of what cues your unhealthy habits, you can search for ways to mitigate or eliminate the cues that trigger your craving and associated response. This may look like choosing to go to bed 30 minutes sooner. Or maybe walking to school rather than taking the bus. Or choosing to participate in your school's intramural program rather than hanging out outside during the lunch break.





## How does my environment shape my behaviour?

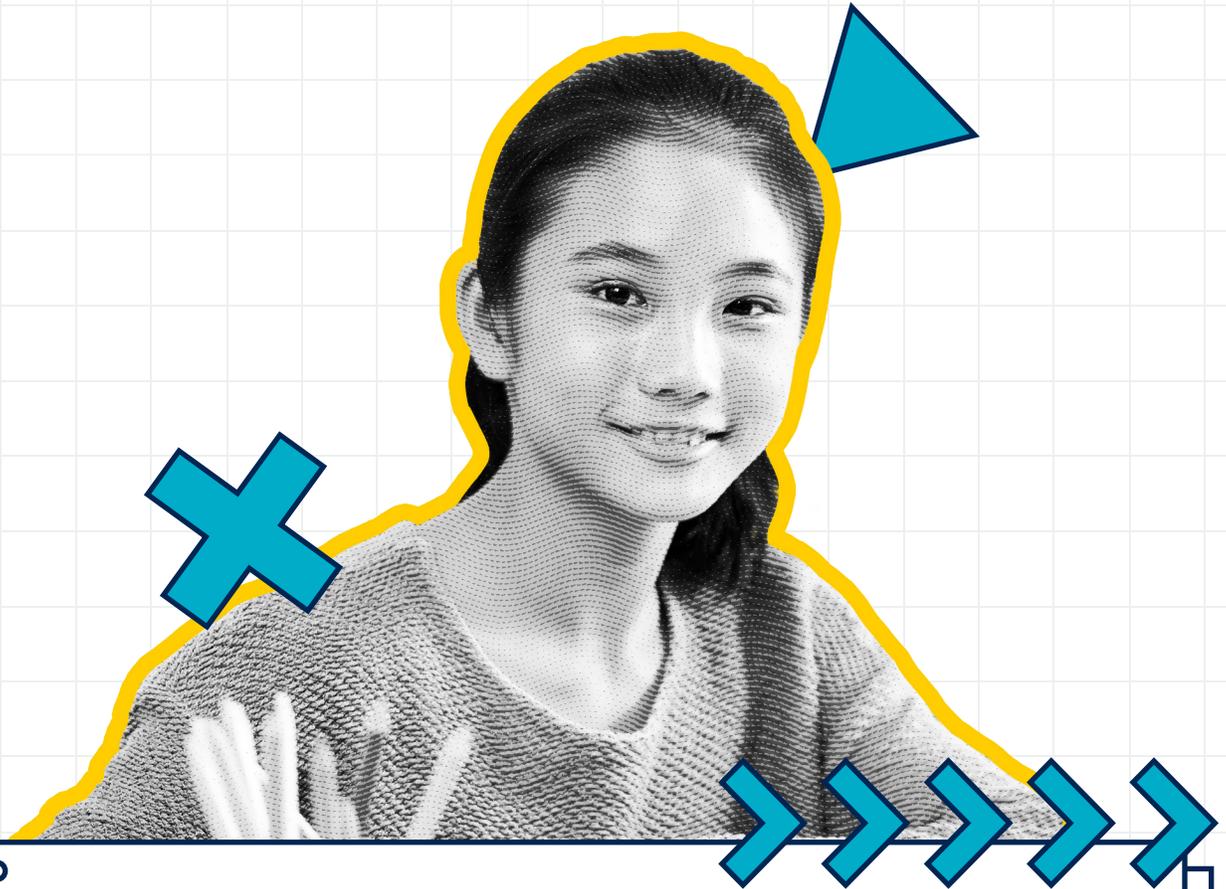
The physical environment is an important driver of healthy habits and behaviour change over time.

Your habit cravings are often triggered by cues in your daily surroundings. For example, at school, if the cafeteria served only tacos and french fries and you chose to eat cafeteria food most of the time, then you would probably eat more tacos and french fries rather than consuming anything else because tacos and fries are readily available and easy to access every day. In this way, our everyday environments play a critical role in our decision making. **Knowing this, it's equally as important to understand what is within your control to change and what is outside your control to change when it comes to your environments.**

To continue thinking about your school environment, as a student many things can be within your control. For example, you can choose who you spend your time with while at school, what you do with your free time, and where you spend your free time.

However, other things remain outside your control. For example, you can't control who your teachers will be, when something will happen that will stress you out, or when you can leave the school grounds.

Being mindful of what you can't control allows you to focus on what you can control. You can then focus on making changes to the elements of your environment that you can control to work towards decreasing unhealthy behaviours. Simply put, **it's important to own what you can control and let go of what you can't.**



## Extend Your Learning

Using a journal or your phone, list some of the things that stress you out. Then put an asterisk (\*) beside each one that you have no control over so that they are identified. For example, if bad weather stresses you, then add it to your list. You can't control the weather so put an \* beside it. If a certain TV show triggers you, add that to your list. You can control whether you watch that TV show, so do not put an \* beside it.

For everything on your list that you identify as being out of your control, commit yourself to letting go of it the next time it comes up in your life. Repeating a statement such as "I cannot control \_\_\_\_\_; therefore, I am not giving it power over me today" can be really helpful as well.



# Breaking an unhealthy habit

Just like we can change our environments, we can also change or “break” unhealthy habits. It is hard to permanently eliminate an unhealthy habit but—over time—we can change our brain’s response and reward systems that are directly connected to our cues and cravings.

As James Clear noted in the book *Atomic Habits*, to break unhealthy habits, it’s important to make them as invisible, unattractive, difficult, and unsatisfying as possible. To use the habit of smoking cigarettes as an example, here is how this can look:

## INVISIBLE

Removing cigarettes from sight so you are not triggered to smoke each time you see them is a way to make it invisible. When you think of something less, the less often you are likely to pursue it.

## DIFFICULT

You can’t smoke a cigarette anywhere. Policies tell you where and when you can smoke. If something becomes increasingly difficult, it’s hard to continue. Although this is not easy, it’s important to remember that adding layers of difficulty when it comes to curbing commercial tobacco use can be a good thing. For example, further increasing the difficulty around when, where, and how to smoke or vape can often help people consume less commercial tobacco over time.

When actioned together, these four elements can really help you in your efforts to break a bad habit.

## UNATTRACTIVE

Many cigarette packages already show images of the negative effects of smoking. If something is unattractive (like the photo of a smoker’s lung) you are less likely to continue the action that is associated with being unattractive.

## UNSATISFYING

An expression that comes from the fitness industry says this: Nothing tastes as good as feeling healthy feels. The same is true with commercial tobacco. Once you choose a different response—like walking, making a healthy meal, or journaling—over time you begin to feel more satisfied with those new behaviours and less satisfied with the old response of having a cigarette.





## How can I stick with a healthy habit?

You can stick with a healthy habit in many ways. The most important thing to remember is that for a healthy habit to stick, you first need to enjoy doing it. For example, yoga is a healthy activity to do but if you don't enjoy yoga, you are less likely to stick with it. However, if you enjoy biking, you will likely stick with biking because you enjoy doing it.

Here are 5 ways you can develop a healthy habit that sticks:

- Make it connect with other things you already enjoy
- Make sure it fits into your life
- Make it meaningful to you
- Make it part of your identity (e.g., "I am a runner")
- Make it as easy as possible (e.g., a 5-minute walk)





## What happens if my habits are different from my friends?

Your friends and your peers are likely very important to you. Social norms—rules or standards understood by members of a group—have a powerful influence on habits. For example, if you regularly experience social situations where your healthy habit feels like it is the opposite of what the group is doing, then it can lead to you feeling vulnerable and/or left out.

If this happens, the best option is to first talk with your friends, voice how you feel, and ask them to respect your choices. If your friends don't accept your choices, it may be worth considering other groups of peers to hang out with or other activities to get involved in. This decision can be really challenging, but your choices should be respected, and your healthy habits will benefit you in the long run.



## How do I stay committed to a healthy habit?

If you find yourself falling back to the unhealthy habit again and again, one of the most effective strategies is to create a commitment device. **A commitment device is a choice you make in the present that can control your responses in the future.**

For example, if you choose to stop smoking, commit that same amount of money you will save to a piggy bank or savings account each week. If you find yourself smoking again, use the money from this account to pay for it and ask yourself how it feels to have less money because of your smoking habit. Does it feel better or worse? The commitment device (contributing to your savings) means that there are negative consequences to choosing to smoke in that you will have less and less money each week.

## How do I develop self-control?

You may be able to resist temptation to smoke, vape, or use e-cigs a couple of times, but many people find it very hard to develop the willpower to override these cravings every time they arise. This willpower comes back to what you can control and your self-awareness. Trust yourself and your commitment to choosing healthier habits as a response to a craving. Take a breath and remind yourself that you can respond to the craving in a healthy way as well as an unhealthy way. You have the knowledge and awareness to control the craving.

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**If you—or people you know—are struggling with nicotine dependence and/or the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a health care provider. You can also reach out to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH: Youth Addiction and Concurrent Disorders Service)**

Source:  
<https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/programs-and-services/youth-addiction--concurrent-disorders-service>





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## What is “thinking big but acting small”?

Change takes time. When working toward replacing an unhealthy habit with a healthy one, you need to think big but act small.

For example, if you say you are going to drink water every time you feel a craving to vape, you need to start by carrying a full water bottle with you throughout your day. Because you know cravings will come, it’s important to be prepared so that you can easily respond to the craving with the healthy habit rather than resort to the unhealthy one. The idea is to make it as easy as possible to start the new habit.

As another example, if you decide you want to start walking to school every day in January, but you are always rushing to get out the door and end up asking your parents for a drive, change your approach. You can start small by making sure your lunch is made and your necessary outdoor clothing is ready the evening before so you can easily grab them in the morning before heading out the door to school.





## How long does it take to imprint a new habit?

On average, it takes about two or three months for any habit to really stick. More than anything, it's about consistency when forming new habits and breaking old ones. If you were smoking one cigarette per week and have decided to quit, it may not take as long to imprint a new habit that replaces your old one. However, if you are smoking a pack of cigarettes per day, it may take you longer to change that habit to something else because of how permanent the habit of smoking was in your life.

The key point is that building a new healthy habit is not a finish line to cross or a race to win, but a journey towards making healthier choices for yourself. There is no specific point where an old habit ends forever and a new habit is imprinted forever. This journey consists of a series of decisions and responses which occur each day.

## What are keystone habits?

Charles Duhigg, author of *The Power of Habit*, refers to some habits as being keystone habits. These are habits that have a powerful (and positive) influence over many factors or actions in your day. Investigating your own keystone habits can be a great way to build self-awareness and understanding of your own cycle of habits.

To use reducing vaping or tobacco use as an example, if you walk outside for 20 minutes every morning on the way to school, does that force you to get out of bed earlier? Does it force you to pack your school bag more efficiently? Does it make you feel more alert in the classroom? Does it reduce your number of cravings for consuming things like e-cigs or unhealthy foods? If the answer is "Yes," walking to school would be considered a keystone habit for you because it has a powerful influence on your day-to-day actions.

As you work toward replacing unhealthy habits in your life, keep an eye out for what habits seem to positively influence how you feel and act the rest of the day. Once you narrow them down to one or two, you have found your keystone habits!





## What is habit stacking?

Author James Clear refers to habit stacking as a series of actions that you can take to construct new habits over time. These are cues that you can embed in your day-to-day life that are often built on top of other responses throughout your day, producing a series of cues that support the healthy habit. Here are some examples:



When the bell rings at school for lunch or a break, I will always check to see if I can go to the gymnasium or outdoor field for some physical activity rather than heading to the smoking area



When I get ready to go out the door in the morning, I will take three deep breaths and think of a positive word for the day



When I get home after school, I will make a healthy snack before doing anything else



When I am getting ready for bed, I will journal for at least 10–15 minutes



When I notice that my water bottle is half empty, I will fill it up





## How do I remain accountable?

Looking to your peers as a support system can be really helpful when it comes to working toward and choosing healthy habits.

Consider asking someone you trust to be your accountability partner—the person you can call, lean on for support, or simply hang around with should you need help to stop repeating unhealthy habits such as smoking, vaping, or consuming other forms of commercial tobacco products.

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### Habits Summary:

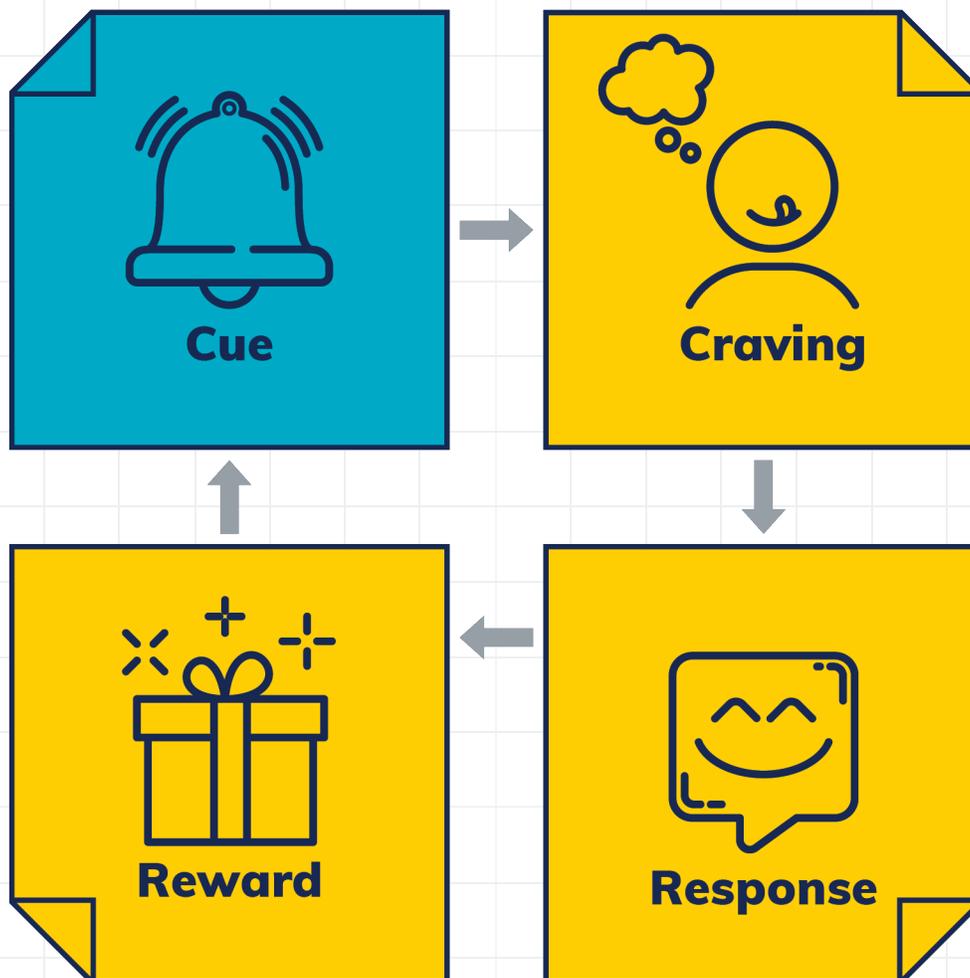
- Habits can be either healthy or unhealthy
- Environment shapes behaviour
- Own what you can control; let go of what you can't
- Four key elements to changing habits: invisibility, difficulty, unattractiveness, unsatisfactory
- It's ok to voice how you feel with your peers
- Start small but think about the tomorrow you want
- Create a commitment device that shows you the consequences of returning to an unhealthy habit
- Developing self-awareness can help you better understand your cravings and responses
- Keep an eye out for keystone habits that make your days better
- Habit stacking can produce great results over time

# How Habits Work



The four stages of habits are best described as a negative feedback loop: an endless cycle that is constantly running throughout your day. This “habit loop” is continually scanning your environment, predicting what will happen next and trying out different responses, often to alleviate stress or anxiety. The **cue** triggers a **craving** and, which motivates a **response**, which then leads to a **reward**, which satisfies the craving and, ultimately, becomes associated with the cue.

Looking to discuss the four stages of habits? Clear (2018)<sup>1</sup> explained it well in his best-selling book *Atomic Habits*, and we’ve generated a model based on the book to help you better understanding how habits work. See below:



Habits like smoking are so challenging to quit and can even lead to addiction. Replacing the reward (a cigarette) with a different reward like running, going for a walk, meditating or having a light snack, can allow you to change allow you to change your body’s response.

1. Clear, J. (2018). *Atomic habits: tiny changes, remarkable results : an easy & proven way to build good habits & break bad ones*. New York, New York, Avery, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

# How does my environment shape my behaviour?



The physical environment is an important driver of healthy habits and behaviour change over time.

Your habit cravings are often triggered by cues in your daily surroundings. For example, at school, if the cafeteria served only tacos and french fries and you chose to eat cafeteria food most of the time, then you would probably eat more tacos and french fries rather than consuming anything else because tacos and fries are readily available and easy to access every day. In this way, our everyday environments play a critical role in our decision making. **Knowing this, it's equally as important to understand what is within your control to change and what is outside your control to change when it comes to your environments.**

To continue thinking about your school environment, as a student many things can be within your control. For example, you can choose who you spend your time with while at school, what you do with your free time, and where you spend your free time.

However, other things remain outside your control. For example, you can't control who your teachers will be, when something will happen that will stress you out, or when you can leave the school grounds.

Being mindful of what you can't control allows you to focus on what you can control. You can then focus on making changes to the elements of your environment that you can control to work towards decreasing unhealthy behaviours. **Simply put, it's important to own what you can control and let go of what you can't.**



# Breaking an unhealthy habit

Just like we can change our environments, we can also change or “break” unhealthy habits. It is hard to permanently eliminate an unhealthy habit but—over time—we can change our brain’s response and reward systems that are directly connected to our cues and cravings.

**Here are four ways you can help break an unhealthy habit:**



**Make It Unattractive:** Many cigarette packages already show images of the negative effects of smoking. If something is unattractive (like the photo of a smoker’s lung) you are less likely to continue the action that is associated with being unattractive.



**Make It Invisible:** Removing cigarettes from sight so you are not triggered to smoke each time you see them is a way to make it invisible. When you think of something less, the less often you are likely to pursue it.



**Make It Difficult:** You can’t smoke a cigarette anywhere. Policies tell you where and when you can smoke. If something becomes increasingly difficult, it’s hard to continue. Although this is not easy, it’s important to remember that adding layers of difficulty when it comes to curbing commercial tobacco use can be a good thing. For example, further increasing the difficulty around when, where, and how to smoke or vape can often help people consume less commercial tobacco over time.



**Make It Unsatisfying:** An expression that comes from the fitness industry says this: Nothing tastes as good as feeling healthy feels. The same is true with commercial tobacco. Once you choose a different response—like walking, making a healthy meal, or journaling—over time you begin to feel more satisfied with those new behaviours and less satisfied with the old behaviour of having a cigarette or vape.

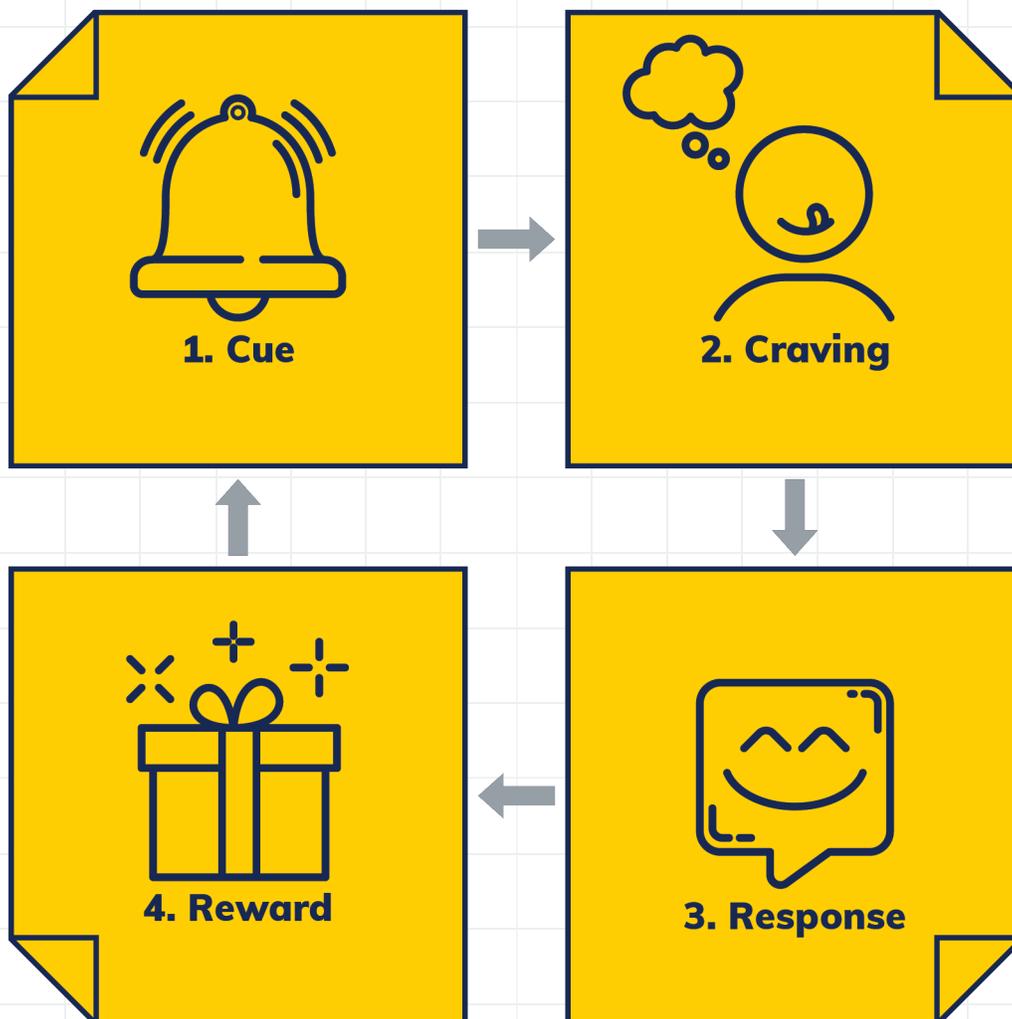
**Even when all of these 4 elements are combined, smoking is still a very difficult habit to quit due to addiction and nicotine dependence. However, the earlier in life that you can start to break the addiction to smoking, the better your health will be over time.**



# Choosing Alternative Rewards



When you experience a cue and then a craving, how can you respond and choose a different reward? Here are some examples of different rewards that support your health and wellness. Ultimately, you need to find what works for you so you may have to try a number of alternative rewards before finding one (or a few) that you prefer.





# Try...



finding a hobby that you enjoy like woodworking, drawing, making a YouTube channel, playing games



a physical activity that you enjoy such as yoga, walking, weightlifting, shooting hoops



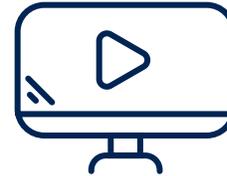
calling a friend or connecting with someone you haven't talked to in the past 3–5 days



going for a walk with a friend or while listening to a new playlist



taking 3–5 deep breaths and then chewing gum



watching your favourite show



making a healthy snack



journaling

---

**What other alternative rewards can you think of that would support your health and wellness? Make a list using your journal or the notes function on your phone.**



# Tracking Habits



You can track your habits using a habit tracker—a simple way to measure whether you engaged in a habit. You can track your habits in a variety of ways. You can buy a wall calendar, you can make one on a sheet of paper, use a journal, or use the notes function on your phone.

## How to Use a Habit Tracker

Here are some examples of how you can use the Habit Tracker template provided on the next page.

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### Quitting Vaping

If you currently vape every day of the week, think about how many times per day you typically vape. Each day you vape about that number of times, put an X in those days on the tracker. If you “break the chain” and don’t vape as much one day (or set of days), shade in that day on the tracker. Finally, if you don’t vape at all for a day, put a checkmark in those days on the tracker.

---

### Increasing Physical Activity

Consider how much physical activity you want to engage in each day of the week. Each day that you engage in that amount of physical activity, place a checkmark in those days on the tracker. If you partially achieve this amount of physical activity, shade in those days on the tracker. If you are not physically active throughout the day, put an X in those days on the tracker.

---

At the end of each week, check your progress and consider what is working well and/or what is not working to help you break the habit. Even if you broke an unhealthy habit (such as smoking) once in the week, you should celebrate it and consider it progress. If you broke the habit at least once within a specific day (but not the entire day) shade in the box for that day. On the last page of this resource, you can find a QR code to access a video about the concept of getting 1% better each day that supports the concept of making small progress that will lead to big rewards.





## Extend Your Learning



### Reflecting On Your Habits

Journaling can be a great way to track your habits, document your daily actions, and help you develop increased self-awareness. Journaling can also increase your level of happiness and your overall well-being. Click the button to learn more about how to journal.



### How to Get 1% Better Every Day

Scan this QR Code to watch more about creating and sustaining healthy habits for increased well-being.



## Part III:

# Resources for Schools



## Purpose of These Resources

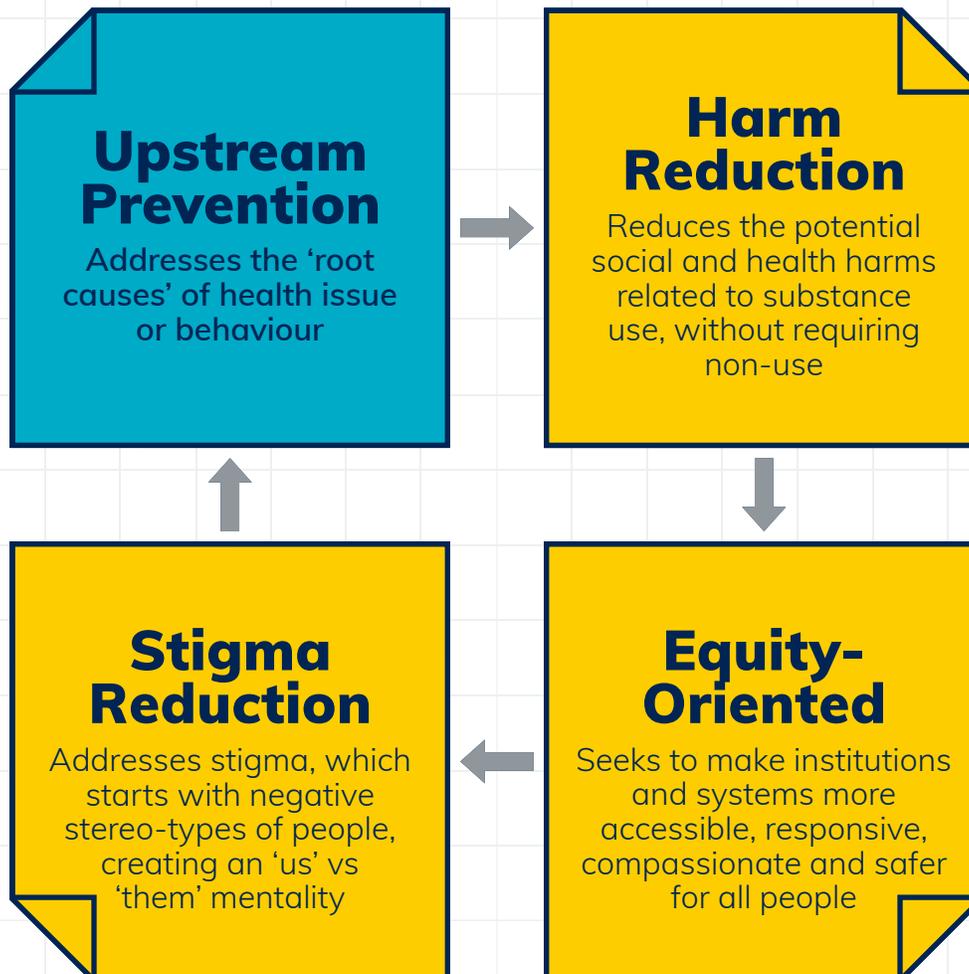
These resources are designed for educators and schools, and include activities and ideas to teach about substance use, tobacco and vaping. All activities are curriculum linked and can be tailored to small and large class sizes.



# The Four Intervention Approaches for Addressing Substance Use



When addressing substance use such as vaping or smoking, it is important to remember that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work. Substance use is complex and therefore we need to seek various interventions that address these four areas:

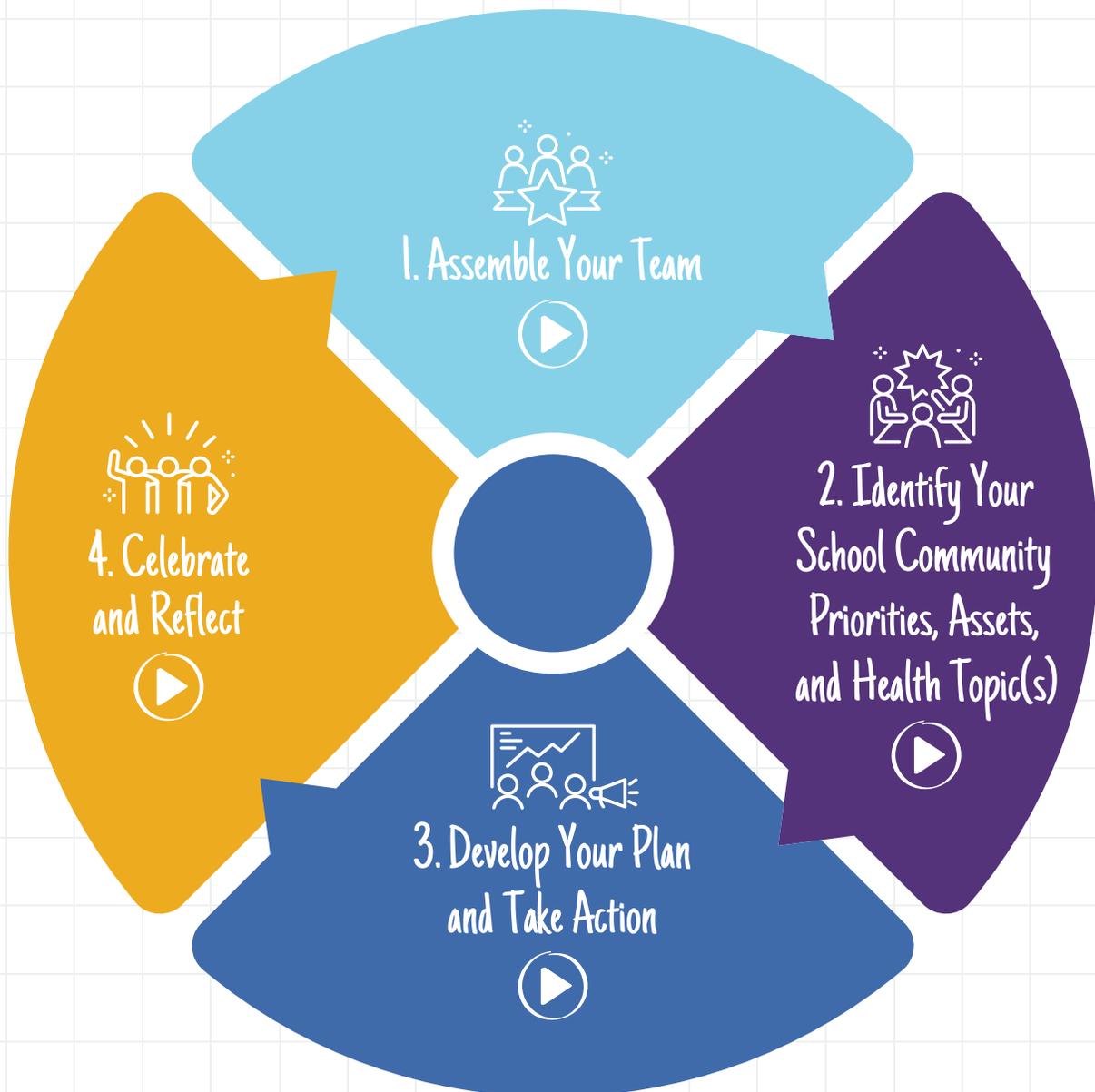


Source: <https://www.studentscommission.ca/en/blueprint-in-action>

Footnote: These approaches were developed based on the key findings of the School Matters Forum held by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

# Healthy Schools Certification

## 4 Step Process



Scan the QR code to view a video introducing the Healthy Schools Certification:



# Harm Reduction Blogs

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

Materials	Laptop, tablet or other recording device
Learning Outcome	Describe the concept of harm reduction and analyze harm reduction strategies for commercial tobacco use.
COVID-19 Safety Precautions	Remind students to keep a safe physical distance from each other and use their own device.

## Flipped Classroom Strategy (Optional)

A flipped classroom is an instructional model where direct instruction is delivered to students *outside of and before* instructional time. Students are introduced to content that supports the introduction, comprehension, and recall of content and then instructional time is utilized to apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate content.

Before implementing this activity during instructional time, ask students to find out what harm reduction is, either through research or talking with someone about it. Then ask students to review [this infographic](#) and consider the harm reduction actions of public health versus the tobacco industry.

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Scan the QR code to view the Harm Reduction Infographic



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Scan the QR code to view the curriculum links



# Harm Reduction Blogs

Healthy Living



At School Activities



Substance Use

7-12

Grade Level

## Activity Description

If utilizing a flipped classroom approach, discuss with students what they learned about harm reduction and what the infographic implied. If not utilizing a flipped classroom approach, share with students what harm reduction is and provide examples. Then share [this infographic](#) and ask students to consider the harm reduction actions of public health versus the tobacco industry as depicted in the infographic. Ask students to write a 500–800-word blog article that answers one of the following questions:

1. How are the tobacco industry's harm reduction strategies problematic and what could be done about it?
2. What does harm reduction mean to you when considering the topic of commercial tobacco use?

For older students, increase the word count range to adjust for their level of writing and consider asking them to find research to support their position. If students require support in understanding how to write a blog, these articles can support their understanding:

- How to Write a Blog Post: A Step-by-Step Guide:  
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-start-a-blog>
- My blogging voyage, and how I do it (step by step)  
<https://ditchthattextbook.com/my-blogging-voyage-and-how-i-do-it-step-by-step/>

## Healthy Living Competencies



### THINK

Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate knowledge about healthy habits, health risk situations, and the short-term and long-term effects of their health choices.



### FEEL

Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy living for themselves, others, and their community.



### ACT

Practice behavioural skills and strategies that facilitate choices, actions, and habits for healthy living.



## Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning. Consider asking students the following questions and discuss the answers together.

- Why do you think the topic of harm reduction is considered complex (i.e. there are no perfect harm reduction intervention strategies)?
- Based on your own experiences, where have you seen examples of harm reduction strategies that work?

# Harm Reduction Blogs

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

## Observing Learning Outcomes

Sample questions to observe learning outcomes include:

- Is the student able to describe the connection between harm reduction and commercial tobacco use?
- Is the student able to successfully analyze appropriate and inappropriate harm reduction strategies related to commercial tobacco use?

## Learning Extension (Optional)

Ask students how they can be more mindful of the messages that the tobacco industry markets including questioning the information that tobacco companies share.

Then encourage students to consider how they can take action - like using their voice to express their opinion to tobacco companies or informing others about being mindful of this messaging.

# Responding to Risk

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

**Materials** Paper, pencils, pens

**Learning Outcome** Apply their learning about peer pressure to write a risk situation for their peers and develop responses to the risk situations written by others.

**COVID-19 Safety Precautions** Remind students to keep a safe physical distance from each other and use their own pens and pencils.

## Flipped Classroom Strategy (Optional)

A flipped classroom is an instructional model where direct instruction is delivered to students *outside of and before* instructional time. Students are introduced to content that supports the introduction, comprehension, and recall of content and then instructional time is utilized to apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate content.

Before implementing this activity during instructional time, create a video or share the *Types of Peer Pressure* content at the end of this activity about the topic of peer pressure. Ask students to reflect and consider if they have experienced peer pressure, and if so, what type of peer pressure they experienced.

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Scan the QR code to view the curriculum links



# Responding to Risk

Healthy Living



At School Activities



Substance Use

7-12

Grade Level

## Activity Description

If utilizing a flipped classroom approach, review what students read or watched about peer pressure. If not utilizing a flipped classroom approach, provide students with the content provided at the end of this activity and have them read it on their own or review it together. Ask students to reflect and consider if they have experienced peer pressure, and if so, what type of peer pressure they experienced.

Discuss with students why they think peer pressure is such a common topic with their age group. Ask students the following questions and discuss as a group:

- What is meant by the term risky behaviour?
- Are all risky behaviours equal? Why or why not?
- Why do you think some people engage in risky behaviour? (*Encourage students to think about changes teens are experiencing, autonomy and control over their choices, family history, etc.*)

Risky behaviour and peer pressure are often talked about together with teenagers. Why do you think this is?

Share with students some of the different behaviours that are defined as risky included in the chart below. Ask students if they can think of others that should be added to the list. Share the chart below with students and explain that they will work with a partner to develop a risk situation that their classmates will need to respond to. The situation should include a description of the influence, environment and risk behaviour.

### Influence

- A new group of friends
- An older friend you look up to
- A childhood friend
- Someone you've just met

### Environment

- At a party
- On the bus
- Outside during a break
- Walking home from school
- On the weekend
- At work

### Risky Behaviour

- Commercial Tobacco Use
- Alcohol Use
- Other Substance Use
- Gambling
- Video Games
- Sexual Activity
- Unsafe Driving

### Type of Peer Pressure

- Spoken
- Unspoken
- Direct
- Indirect

After pairs have completed their risk situation, they find another pair and exchange their risk situations with each other. Each pair works together to discuss the situation and identify the type of peer pressure and a response that demonstrates they will choose not to engage in the risky behaviour. Pairs continue to find another pair to exchange their risk situations with until they have reviewed each risk situation.

Bring the group back together and ask them the following questions:

- Was it easy to find ways to say no to the risky behaviour?
- Was one type of peer pressure used more than another?
- If you had to create a list of ways to say no to risky behaviour, what could be included?

# Responding to Risk

Healthy Living



At School Activities



Substance Use

7-12

Grade Level

## Healthy Living Competencies



### THINK

Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate knowledge about healthy habits, health risk situations, and the short-term and long-term effects of their health choices.



### FEEL

Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy living for themselves, others, and their community.



### ACT

Practice behavioural skills and strategies that facilitate choices, actions, and habits for healthy living.



## Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning. Consider asking students the following questions and discuss the answers together.

- How do you think being able to say no will help you when you experience peer pressure and risky situations in your life?
- What are some of the potential long-term health effects of engaging in risky behaviour?

## Observing Learning Outcomes

Sample questions to observe learning outcomes include:

- Does the student consider the influence, environment, and behaviour in the risk situation they write?
- Is the student able to successfully respond to the risk situations developed by peers identifying an appropriate way to say no to the behaviour?

## Learning Extension (Optional)

Share this [Refusal skills for vaping and e-cigarettes](#) activity with students. Compare and contrast their risk situations with some of the situations include in this activity.

Look at the Refusal Skill Cards included and discuss if there are any ways to say no to risky behaviour that are included on these cards that students did not include in their list.

Scan the QR code to view the “Refusal skills for vaping and e-cigarettes” activity



# Responding to Risk

Healthy  
Living

  
At School  
Activities

  
Substance  
Use

7-12  
Grade  
Level

## Handout - Types of Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is a common topic with adolescents because of the fact that the peer group can be an important influence as teens experience increased autonomy and control over their decisions. It's likely that peer pressure is not a new topic for you but you may not be aware of the different types of peer pressure. Included below is a brief description of the different types of peer pressure:

### Spoken

Spoken peer pressure is when someone asks, suggests, persuades, or directs someone else to engage in a behaviour. This also includes pressures received in texts, emails, or on social media. Examples of spoken peer pressure include when someone asks a peer to skip a class or convinces a peer to attend a party they did not want to attend.

### Unspoken

Unspoken peer pressure is when someone is exposed to the actions of their peers and chooses whether they want to follow along. Examples include participating in certain fashion choices or joining a certain group at school.

### Direct

Direct peer pressure can be spoken or unspoken and requires the person to make a decision about a behaviour right away. Examples include being handed an alcoholic drink (unspoken) or being dared to do something (spoken).

### Indirect

Indirect peer pressure is subtle and implied by the attitudes and behaviours one observes in others. Examples include a youth trying vaping because they know the peer group they would like to connect with vape, or stopping wearing their favourite shoes because they read a negative tweet from a peer about those types of shoes.

While all of the examples provided are negative, it's important to remember that peer pressure can also be positive. If someone is considering joining a club at school and their friend encourages them to join, and also says they'll also join with them, this is an example of positive peer pressure.

Content developed from [Talk it Out](#)

Scan the QR code to visit the Talk it Out website



## Design A Habit-ABLE Environment

Heathy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

**Materials** Markers, pens, pencils, paper, other creative designing tools if available

**Learning Outcome** Describe factors that can and cannot be controlled about a chosen habit and create a space that incorporates these factors to support starting or stopping the habit.

**COVID-19 Safety Precautions** Remind students to keep a safe physical distance from each other and encourage them to use their own materials (markers, pens, etc.).

### Flipped Classroom Strategy (Optional)

A flipped classroom is an instructional model where direct instruction is delivered to students *outside of and before* instructional time. Students are introduced to content that supports the introduction, comprehension, and recall of content and then instructional time is utilized to apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate content.

Before implementing this activity during instructional time, provide students with the *How Does My Environment Shape My Behaviour?* content at the end of this activity and ask them to read it and choose a personal habit and consider what they can and cannot control in relation to this habit.

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Scan the QR code to view the curriculum links



## Design A Habit-ABLE Environment

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

### Activity Description

If utilizing a flipped classroom approach, review what students read about in the *How Does My Environment Shape My Behaviour?* content. If not utilizing a flipped classroom approach, provide students with the content provided at the end of this activity and have them read it on their own or review it together. Ask students to list different habits and have them consider what they can and cannot control in relation to this habit. This can be done as a whole class or in small groups with each group considering a different habit.

Alone or with a peer, ask students to choose a habit to either start or stop (e.g., starting being physically active, stop vaping, etc.). Once students have chosen a habit, ask them to use what they have learned about how environments shape their habits and design their ideal space to support them with starting or stopping the habit. Encourage students to think critically and creatively about where the space is, what is in the space, and who is in the space. Provide them with 20-30 min to brainstorm and design their space on a piece of paper.

Following the design process, ask students to share their designs with the class or in small groups and describe the following:

- What they designed
- Where the space is
- Who is in the space
- Why they chose to design this
- How this will support their habit

Consider challenging students to actually create some elements of the space to support starting or stopping their habit. Check in with them a week or two later and discuss if they feel the updated environment is helping them.

### Healthy Living Competencies



#### THINK

Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate knowledge about healthy habits, health risk situations, and the short-term and long-term effects of their health choices.



#### FEEL

Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy living for themselves, others, and their community.



#### ACT

Practice behavioural skills and strategies that facilitate choices, actions, and habits for healthy living.



### Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning. Consider asking students the following questions and discuss the answers together.

- Do you think it would be easier to control what is in the space or who is in the space in relation to the habit you chose?
- Which do you think is easier – designing a space to start a good habit or designing a space to stop a bad habit?

## Design A Habit-ABLE Environment

Healthy  
Living



7-12  
Grade  
Level

### Observing Learning Outcomes

Sample questions to observe learning outcomes include:

- Is the student able to successfully describe and differentiate factors about habits that can be controlled and not controlled?
- Does the space the student design include at least two elements that will support starting a good habit or stopping a bad habit?
- Is the student able to describe their space and detail *why* and *how* this will support their habit?

### Learning Extension (Optional)

Ask students to use the information they have learned about how to design a space to support a habit, and have them design a space (or spaces) inside or outside of the school to support those with stopping the habit of commercial tobacco use.

Students can approach their student council or school administrators to inquire about the potential of designing some of these spaces.

## How Does My Environment Shape My Behaviour?

The physical environment is an important driver of healthy habits and behaviour change. Your habit cravings are often triggered by cues in your daily surroundings. For example, at school, if the cafeteria only served tacos and french fries, and you chose to eat cafeteria food most of the time, you would probably eat more tacos and french fries rather than consuming anything else because tacos and fries are readily available and easy to access every day. In this way, our everyday environments play a critical role in our decision-making. Knowing this, it's equally as important to understand what is within your control to change and what is outside of your control to change when it comes to your environment.

To continue thinking about your school environment, there are many things that can be within your control as a student. For example, you can choose who you spend your time with while at school, what you do with your free time, and where you spend your free time.

However, there are also things that remain outside of your control. For example, you can't control who your teachers will be, when something will happen that will stress you out, or when you can leave the school grounds. Understanding what you can't control allows you to focus on what you can control. You can then focus on making changes to the elements of your environment that you can control, to work towards decreasing unhealthy behaviours. Simply put, it's important to own what you can control and let go of what you can't.

From *Exploring Habits and Tobacco Use*.

# Understanding My Stress

Healthy Living

  
At School Activities

  
Substance Use

7-12  
Grade Level

Materials	Journals, pencils, pens, or a digital writing device
Learning Outcome	Identify personal stressors and associated responses and determine strategies to relieve or cope with the stressors.
COVID-19 Safety Precautions	Remind students to keep a safe physical distance from each other and encourage them to use their own materials (journals, pencils, etc.).

## Flipped Classroom Strategy (Optional)

A flipped classroom is an instructional model where direct instruction is delivered to students *outside of and before* instructional time. Students are introduced to content that supports the introduction, comprehension, and recall of content and then instructional time is utilized to apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate content.

Before implementing this activity during instructional time, ask students to read the [webpage about stress](#) from the *Canadian Mental Health Association* or provide them with the same content in a [printable brochure format](#). Ask students to consider some things that cause them negative stress and write them down.

Scan the QR code to view the webpage about stress



Scan the QR code to access the printable brochure format



Scan the QR code to view the curriculum links



# Understanding My Stress

Healthy Living



At School Activities



Substance Use

7-12

Grade Level

## Activity Description

If utilizing a flipped classroom approach, review with students what they read about stress before the activity. If not utilizing a flipped classroom approach, present the information on this [webpage about stress](#) from the *Canadian Mental Health Association* or provide students with the same content to read on their own in a [printable brochure format](#). Then engage students in a discussion about things in their lives that may cause them negative stress and how this may affect their health and well-being.

Share the following questions with students as journal prompts:

- What stresses me out the most each day and why?
- How do I respond to stressors in my life?
- Would I like to change my response to these stressors? If so, what strategies could I use to change my response?

Ask students to practice personal self-reflection about the journal prompts and write a response that demonstrates critical thinking and an understanding of personal stressors.

Consider challenging students to pick one of the stressors they would like to change their response to and apply their proposed strategy. Give students time to plan their strategy and then act on it and check in with them after an agreed upon amount of time.

## Healthy Living Competencies



### THINK

Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate knowledge about healthy habits, health risk situations, and the short-term and long-term effects of their health choices.



### FEEL

Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy living for themselves, others, and their community.



### ACT

Practice behavioural skills and strategies that facilitate choices, actions, and habits for healthy living.



## Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning. Consider asking students the following questions and discuss the answers together.

- *What is the difference between relieving a stressor and coping with a stressor?*
- *What surprised you or what did you learn about your stressors as you took the time to reflect and journal?*

# Understanding My Stress

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

## Observing Learning Outcomes

Sample questions to observe learning outcomes include:

- Is the student able to identify at least two stressors in their life and their associated responses?
- Is the student able to demonstrate critical thinking about strategies to relieve or cope with the stressor?

## Learning Extension (Optional)

Ask students to journal each day, or a few times a week, and write about their stress, strategies, and overall health.

After an agreed upon amount of time, check in and discuss if they feel that taking the time to reflect and write out their thoughts and feelings has been supportive to their overall health.

# The Quest for Quitting

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

**Materials** Pens, pencils, paper, note taking device such as a tablet, workbook, etc.

**Learning Outcome** Identify points of personal relevance from a media source and collaborate to build a plan to quit vaping or using commercial tobacco, or support a friend/peer to do so.

**COVID-19 Safety Precautions** Remind students to keep a safe physical distance from each other and encourage them to use their own materials

## Flipped Classroom Strategy (Optional)

A flipped classroom is an instructional model where direct instruction is delivered to students *outside of and before* instructional time. Students are introduced to content that supports the introduction, comprehension, and recall of content and then instructional time is utilized to apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate content.

Before implementing this activity during instructional time, ask students to watch [What is the Single Best Thing You Can Do to Quit Smoking?](#) by Dr. Mike Evans. Encourage students to consider what stands out to them in the video and why.

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Scan the QR code to watch the video “What is the Single Best Thing You Can Do to Quit Smoking?”



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Scan the QR code to view the curriculum links



# The Quest for Quitting

Healthy Living



At School Activities



Substance Use

7-12

Grade Level

## Activity Description

**Part I:** If utilizing a flipped classroom approach, review the [What is the Single Best Thing You Can Do to Quit Smoking?](#) by Dr. Mike Evans with students. If not utilizing a flipped classroom approach, show the video to students and encourage them to consider what stands out to them in the video and why.

Break students into groups of 3-4 and ask them to talk about the video and have them share what stood out to them and why. Have students peer select who will be the recorder for the group and who will be the one to report back to the whole group following the discussion. As group, students summarize their points in preparation for sharing with the whole class.

**Part II:** After 10-15 minutes of discussion, bring the group back together for a whole group discussion. Ask the reporter from each group to share their group's summary. Discuss with the class the similarities and differences between what the groups presented.

**Part III:** Ask students to go back into their small groups and assign each group either as a smoker (or vaper) who would like to quit or a friend/peer of a smoker (or vaper) who would like to quit. Based on the content in the video, groups come up with a plan for quitting or a plan for how to support a friend/peer when quitting. Encourage groups to choose a new recorder and a new reporter.

**Part IV:** Bring the group back together again for another whole group discussion and ask the reporter from each group to present their plan. Discuss with the class the similarities and differences between the plans the groups presented.

## Healthy Living Competencies

### THINK



Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate knowledge about healthy habits, health risk situations, and the short-term and long-term effects of their health choices.

### FEEL



Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy living for themselves, others, and their community.

### ACT



Practice behavioural skills and strategies that facilitate choices, actions, and habits for healthy living.



## Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning. Consider asking students the following questions and discuss the answers together.

- *Even though this video has been viewed over 2 million times, do you think everyone who watches it stops smoking? Why or why not?*
- *Why do you think it's important to know how you can support a friend or peer who is trying to stop vaping or using commercial tobacco?*

# The Quest for Quitting

Healthy  
Living



At School  
Activities



Substance  
Use

7-12

Grade  
Level

## Observing Learning Outcomes

Sample questions to observe learning outcomes include:

- Is the student able to describe components of the video that are important or interesting to them supporting these points with details about why it is important or interesting?
- Does the student collaborate successfully with their peers by presenting ideas and listening to the ideas of others?

## Learning Extension (Optional)

Ask students to think about how the information shared in today's class (by both their peers and in the video) can help them in their decisions to smoke less often or not at all.



PHE CANADA ACKNOWLEDGES THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA.

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