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When it comes down to it, a good choice might seem "hard" because of pressures from other kids. But growing up means taking care of yourself despite those pressures. In fact, getting it wrong and making unhealthy choices can end up being the "hardest" – worst – choice of all!

or faith leaders? Grandparents and other relatives? Trusted adults? Others? Take this opportunity to review the types of refusal skills exemplified in the "Ways to Say No" options in the "Say What?" exercise: say no thanks, give a reason, walk away, suggest an alternative, discuss the positives you can better achieve in your own life without these bad choices. discussion toward the aspect of developing real "super" powers. Think of great sports heroes and intellectual or artistic geniuses and discuss how training and discipline make people stronger – more "super." Now lead the students back to the topic that is the focus of this package – refusal skills for alcohol and drug abuse. Ask students what things are in place in their own lives that they can think about or rely on when some of these situations come up. Parents? Courselors? Teachers? Other community on when some of these situations come up. Parents? Teachers? Teachers? Teles one of the relatives? Use the students' interest in super heroes to discuss super-powers. Students may see this as a science discussion or as an exercise in literary creativity, and both types of responses are fine. But lead the

Develop Your "Spider-Sense!"

between these outcomes. Inform students that even though many kids suspect that most kids are drinking, a solid majority of kids do not drink alcohol. It's good to know when you do something you know is healthier and safer for you, that you're also not being a "freak" or "different" at all. Have time to let the kids comment on the majority of kids not drinking. Then add that children who begin drinking before the age of 15 are 5 times more likely to develop alcohol problems than people who start after the age of 21. Ask them what that means? (Physically, emotionally, behaviorally includes driving.) This is a quick "bell-ringer" discussion starter. Have small pieces of paper available; ask kids to write their answer and fold once—so all answers look the same. Do a secret ballot answering, "Do you think most kids "Have you ever tried an alcoholic drink?" Do another secret ballot answering, "Do you think most kids have, or have not tried an alcoholic drink?" Ask students to predict whether there will be a difference have, or have not tried an alcoholic trinks? Ask students to predict whether there will be a difference have, or have not tried an alcoholic drink?"

Not What You Think!

This is a classroom game-like activity. Begin by asking, hey, are you guys ever bored? Get kids to talk about being bored. Then split the class up into three or four or more groups, depending on your judgment of how large each group needs to be to productively brainstorm. The competition is: List as many things as you can for kids to do with the rules that the list cannot include things that are impossible (supernatural), illegal, or crazy-impractical (climbing Mount Everest). You will get questions like, "Is reading just one thing, or can reading one book be different from reading another book?" If his breaks a logjam, let them list five books. Then they have to move on to other activities. The group with the biggest non-repeated list (à la Boggle) "wins" OR you can total up the classroom list and say, "We'll try again next month and see if we can come up with a little bit bigger list."

remembering one or two of them when the time actually comes. Similarly, there aren't especially "right or wrong" answers on this sheet. Yes, a "total stranger" is probably the best situation to match with the "walk away" way-to-say-no, but the important element here is to foster a range of refusal tools so that students can in fact have a fighting chance of

Some thoughts on Activity Sheet "Say What? \ Say What Else?"

jomework! The key here is parental involvement, with the important medical information coming along swers on the sheets. This will give them the chance of actually helping their parents/guardians do the You may wish to go over this activity sheet in class but invite the kids NOT to write the an-

Some thoughts on Activity Sheet "Alcohol-Super Villain!"

many of the same dangers are involved - with regard to illegal drugs as well. Below are further resources and ideas to help you make a difference in your students' abilities to with-stand the temptations of alcohol and illegal drugs. This poster-teaching guide is focused on alcohol, as that is the focus of the "Mard Choices" comic book, however, the refusal skills can be used by kids - as

Hey, Teacher!

在第八支工事的代表。他们是被推出的人。他们也没有一种的



~ to the Marvel Universe of free teaching materials!

You know that engaging students' imaginations and enthusiasm is the way to get things across to them, whether those are curriculum skills or ways kids can grow in their character education. This comic book and poster-teacher guide package, "Hard Choices," is intended to help you convey to kids the vital message that trying alcohol or illegal drugs is a bad choice.

Research has indicated that the #1 reason kids avoid alcohol and drugs is that they don't want to disappoint their parents. This may surprise you, kids might deny it, and parents may be nothing short of shocked, but this realization gives us an important key to understanding how to combat the scourge of underage drinking and illegal drug use. We've got to engage parents and include them in activities designed to help give kids the skills they need to make what are sometimes hard choices — refusing the temptation to drink alcohol or try illegal drugs.

The activities in this package are all designed with the inclusion of parents in mind. So, make sure you work this comic book and these teaching activities into your busy schedule. Get the households involved. Just as characters in comic books are always thanking Spider-Man for swooping to their rescue, your students — and our whole society — will, in the long run, thank you for what you are: a super hero!

THE COMIC BOOK: KEY PISCUSSION QUESTIONS

used while you read the comic book to check for What do you think is understanding and to set up your later discussions going to happen? and activities



Why might Franklin need a special communicator? Why might the Fantastic Four not be able to use regular cell phones? What would the same type of precaution be in the "real world"? [Kids should always have a phone number available to call for their parents' help. If they are in a situation where they can't have one, or if the parents don't answer and it's an emergency, call 911.]



Tim and Franklin are Franklin mean by this? making? [They're going out without parental permission. In fact, the parents don't know where the kids are. so can't help them if there's trouble.]

What would make this situation even worse?

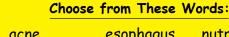
Here are discussion questions that can be [If Franklin didn't take the communicator.]



What makes the choice "hard" for Franklin to call his parents? What would you think of Franklin if he made the other choice and did not call?

Franklin says that "alcohol can lead to risky choices." Drinking alcohol, of What's the mistake course, is a risky choice in the first place. What does





acne balance breathing calcium choke

nutrients esophagus heart (used ulcer twice) cirrhosis judgment liver learn

Hey, you there! My name is Alcohol. I'm a liquid. I am found in some drinks that grown-ups sometimes have, like beer. But kids are not the same as grown-ups... They're not grown up! That's why I'm attacking you guys: Your bodies are still growing, so it's easier for me to destroy you! Here's how I do it!

_, that muscle that pumps blood through your body. I can make it harder for that muscle to work and raise your blood pressure. This increases your chance of a _____ attack later

I also attack your stomach. I raise acid levels there, which can lead to an _____, which is a sore inside your stomach: Very painful!

Drinking me can also harm your skin, making _____ get worse. That's zits to you!

One of the disgusting things I do is make people who drink too much of me throw up. Throwing up can damage your ____, the tube in your body that carries food to your stomach. Throwing up can also be dangerous because a person can ____ and not be able to breathe. That's a way I can definitely destroy

I even attack your bones by making it harder for your body to use _____, a mineral you need to build strong bones as you grow

Your ____is a main target of mine. This organ has a lot of important jobs in your body, like keeping poisons out of your body and making protein. Over time, I can cause a disease called _ attacks this organ.

I also block your body's ability to absorb _____, and so, in a way, I starve you!

I really score points destroying your brain! I attack your cerebral cortex, which helps you make decisions. I quickly impair your _____. The hippocampus is a part of the brain that helps you remember things. Drinking helps me attack your ability to _____. The cerebellum is important for coordination. I can easily make you lose your _____. The medulla is the part of the brain sometimes called your "automatic pilot." If I get a really good shot at your medulla, even "automatic" things you do, like _ fall prey to my attacks!

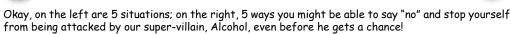
So, when it comes to kids, I am really poison! Not only that, I can make you seem stupid in the process. I'm a super-villain. Destroying you is part of my job!

Message to Parents/Guardians

This Alcohol guy seems pretty dangerous, especially for kids. Did you know that the human brain weighs about three pounds, and that it grows one pound during the teen years? Can you imagine how much damage Alcohol can do to a kid before he or she has stopped growing? I know it's hard to listen to villains, but make sure you and your child read Alcohol's speech and fill in the blanks. Sign your name below to let your child's teacher know you've read this villain's message and are ready to help your child develop strong defenses against his vicious attacks!

Parent's or Guardian's Signature: Student's Name: _





Match up the best matches. These are tricky. Make sure you get a parent or quardian to talk about these situations with you and to read the note to them below, under "Say What Else?"

Okay, GO!

Situation

Way to Say No

Some kids have stepped outside a party at the school. One of them offers you a beer

A kid on the playground offers you a drink from a silver bottle (called a flask). You figure that it's alcohol.

A stranger in the park offers you a drink out of a wine bottle.

A friend knows where his or her parents keep alcohol and suggests that you drink some while

Some kids are offering you a drink and talking about how "a little bit won't hurt."



Say What Else?

To Parents / Guardians: Guess what? Individuals and families can be different in the ways they find best to refuse to do risky things. Not every child will have the same "right" answers to "Say What?" above. Likewise, "Say What Else" gives you and your child the chance to make up another situation and another way to refuse. Or you can use one of the ways to refuse above and have your child rewrite it into his own words to match up with the new situation you describe below.

Make Up Another Situation	Write How You Would Say No

