

Choice vs. “Choice” Activity

Time: 10 minutes

Rationale: When it comes to drug abuse and abstinence, it’s very convenient and somewhat naive to just scream “Don’t do it! Stop doing drugs! Don’t have sex in high school!” and hope for the best. However, the reality is not the case. Increasingly, we’re seeing abstinence-only sex education programs and the social demonization of drug users to be failing the general population and producing counter-productive results.

Objective: Students will learn about what it means to actually make voluntary choices, and how media, social pressures, and other factors may affect how a person makes “choices”.

Setup:

Skill Power

- tell students to close their eyes
- tell students to raise their left hand, and then put their hand down
- tell students to smile, and then stop smiling
- tell students to open their eyes
- Question: “Were you able to control your skills of hand raising and smiling?”

Will Power

- tell student to close their eyes
- Say: “Do Not think of a monkey!” (take note of how many students laugh or react in any other way)
- tell students to open their eyes, and repeat “Do Not think of a monkey!” (again, take note of student reactions)
- project funny monkey video clips and images on class projector and repeat “Do Not think of a monkey!” (again, take note of student reactions)
- take note of any students smiling or laughing and tell them to stop smiling or laughing (they won’t!)
- Question: “Were you able to control your will power of thinking of monkeys? How did this affect your skill power of smiling?”

Closing Thought: Do you really have a choice when it comes to will power? Guess it’s not as easy as just saying “well they should just stop!”