

HIGH

DISCUSSION / VIEWER GUIDE



A STORY ABOUT KIDS AND DRUGS

This Discussion Guide is made possible by:

**The New Mexico
Office of the Attorney General**



In association with
SafeTeen New Mexico
New Mexico Public Education Department
New Mexico Children Youth and Families Department
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Thank you for your interest in the **HIGH** Discussion/Viewing Guide. We are very excited to present this program to ignite a new discussion among our children, parents and teachers. We want to empower and support young people to discover their own solutions to life-threatening behavior and situations. In doing so, we hope that they may come to understand how valuable they are in our families and communities.

Enclosed are some ideas for discussions and activities for students and adults. Feel free to alter any of these suggestions for a better fit with your particular group. This is intended only as a guide and starting point.

You may find it helpful to visit our website www.SafeTeenNM.org, www.nmag.gov or www.ChristopherProductions.org for further information on this and other issues of concern for young people including mental health issues, internet dangers, and distracted driving.

RESPONSE REQUESTED: We supply these materials to you free of charge, in the hope that they can support your efforts in reaching students with enlivened discussions about difficult situations and adolescent curiosity, insecurity and empowerment.

The only thing we ask in return is that you let us know if you are using this so we can track the number of participants and the lives you've affected. A response page can be found at the end of this guide.

On behalf of the New Mexico Attorney Generals Office and SafeTeen New Mexico we want to thank you for working with young people and helping to brighten their future.

Sincerely,

Thom Turbett
President
SafeTeen New Mexico

Gary K. King
NM Attorney General

Chris Schueler
Executive Director
SafeTeen New Mexico

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S H O W O V E R V I E W

“HIGH” is a 30-minute television program designed to show people the truth about the dangers associated with drugs and young people including inappropriate use of over the counter drugs as well as street drugs like meth and marijuana. We hope this will rally community and educator support to find ways to help young people make healthy decisions.

A years worth of research went into the information in the program including “think tanks” with experts in all areas related to drug use. The audience will see statistics in the program, such as:

Over 30% of New Mexico students have been offered drugs at school.

2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM

This show is meant to be a catalyst for discussion, which means that there are no right or wrong answers. The purpose is to encourage as much discussion as possible. Young people should be encouraged to actively participate in exchanging ideas and researching related topics of interest.

Portions of the show may not be appropriate for some young people to watch. Please read the script and watch the program prior to sharing it with students. This will make discussion with your students easier and more effective.

THE SCRIPT IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT

www.ChristopherProductions.org and
www.SafeTeenNM.org

Please download, read and have available prior to viewing program.

This guide is designed to be a tool for group discussion. It includes discussion and activity ideas for involving students at various levels of development. Further information and a complete list of additional resources are included at the end of this guide . Our hope is that this is just the beginning, and that together we can make an important difference in our communities and in the lives of our children.

GENERAL INFO

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Over 30% of New Mexico students have been offered drugs at school.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM
- Over 60 % of teens say they attend high schools with drug problems.
National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University
- New Mexico student's rank 8th highest in **methamphetamine** use in 40 states surveyed.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey, UNM
- Over 7% of New Mexico youth have reported methamphetamine use within the past 12 months.
UNM 2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey
- Almost 1 in 5 U.S. teenagers (19% or 4.5 million youths) report having taken prescription painkillers such as Vicodin or OxyContin or stimulants such as Ritalin or Adderall to get high.
2005 Survey Partnership for a Drug-Free America
- More than 3 in 5 teens can easily get **prescription painkillers** from their parents' medicine cabinets.
2005 Survey Partnership for a Drug-Free America
- More than one in four New Mexico students have used **marijuana** in the past 30 days (26%), and almost 8% have used cocaine in the past 30 days.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM
- New Mexico has the highest rate of **drug related death** in the nation.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM
- Over 30% of students indicate that it is very easy or sort of easy to get hard drugs.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM

THE PROJECT

"HIGH" will be a comprehensive media campaign to help youth and parents throughout New Mexico understand the dangers associated with various prescription and non-prescription drugs that are being abused by youth. While we will focus on Meth, Oxycontin, Ecstasy, marijuana and other popular drugs in our state, this campaign will utilize a variety of media and video tools to reach educators, parents and, most importantly, teens to emphasize the message: **make good choices because if you don't, there are serious consequences.**

The project will involve teens extensively in the creative process and will center on the production of a 30 minute documentary along with a 30 minute live community conversation phone in program that will be broadcast in late August or early September 2008 just as school is beginning. It will also include a series of television informational promos, a shortened version of the documentary for public talks and a viewer guide about the issue.

HIGH

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this campaign will be **teenagers** statewide, secondarily **parents** and finally school officials and other community leaders and law enforcement.

The overall public will learn about the extent and effect of drugs on our kids as highlighted by the statistics and true stories. This will be an opportunity for youth and their parents to come together and discuss solutions to this statewide issue.

School officials, community leaders and law enforcement will have an opportunity to **explore various solutions** and discuss specific issues in the community conversation portion of the program.

APPROACH: UNDERSTANDING DANGERS AND CONSEQUENCES.

While the video will highlight the key information about these issues, it will stress the **overall reason** for statewide concern; **keeping our youth safe so they can live full lives.**

The campaign will also include basic information about the **various dangerous drugs that are being used** and the access to these drugs, prescription and non-prescription, as well as highlighting the various reasons that youth are taking them. Additionally we will have a **section for parents** to help them know how to deal with their kids and to determine if they're experimenting with drugs.

Finally, we will utilize the **latest wireless and internet technology** to gather participation and interest from teenagers statewide. This may include a text messaging and video messaging element linked to the live broadcast as well as a centralized website utilizing these elements and guiding viewers to resources in their local communities.

The purpose of this event is: To give **YOU** a tool...an event to rally around...to address dangerous drugs in **YOUR community**, in **YOUR family**, and in **YOUR schools**. Check out your tools below:

- DVD of the TV show "HIGH"
30 MIN. DOC / 20 MIN VERSION/ CHAPTERED ELEMENTS
- This discussion guide for classroom or group use

To get copies of the tools listed above, please visit:

www.SafeTeenNM.org or
www.ChristopherProductions.org

**NEW MEXICO
has one of the
HIGHEST DRUG RELATED
DEATH RATES
in the NATION**

2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey

With **YOUR** Involvement...

You can
save lives
change our communities
and bring us closer to our children

Use
this tool, this event, this time
to enhance the way
your community,
your school
and
your family
addresses
the danger of drug use.

V I E W I N G S U G G E S T I O N S

- **Consider providing additional information and instruction.**

The information and stories in “HIGH” are presented in a style that serves as a catalyst for thoughtful discussion. It is assumed by the creators of the program that more in-depth information and instruction will be provided by the group leader or teacher. Some of this information can be found in the resource section of this guide.

- **Consider discussing the content before watching the show.**

Many young people today are exposed regularly to situations in which there is drug use. Most likely, they’re struggling to balance personal beliefs and social pressures in order to make good decisions. Briefly discuss the content before watching the show in order to make the discussion after the show more effective.

- **Consider setting ground rules with the students prior to viewing.**

Teachers or group leaders need to be prepared to offset disruptions in order to guarantee respect for the rights of those students wanting to see the show. Talk to students ahead of time and agree on appropriate behavior during the viewing. This should include **no talking or asking questions** until the show is concluded. You should also supply or **have available paper and pens or pencils** so that students can jot down ideas and questions for later discussion.

- **Consider covering “Discussion and Activities” for your grade from the following pages.**

There are many ways to encourage open discussion. Since the need for facilitation and supervision will vary among ages, more age-specific suggestions are given on the following pages.

P R I O R T O V I E W I N G

Instructors: Please keep in mind that this guide contains discussion questions that may be sensitive in nature and may cause uncomfortable feelings and emotions to surface for some students due to personal experience or other reasons.

Please have resource information readily accessible to students and discuss only those questions that you feel comfortable handling.

PRIOR TO SHOWING THE DOCUMENTARY:

For Instructors/Leaders:

1. Be certain to preview the video and read through this guide.
2. Gather and have available print resources (reference resources list at the end of this guide).
3. Download and read the script of the video.
4. Determine how much time you will have and what the goal of your discussion will be.
5. If you can, ask a trained expert to assist with the discussion (perhaps your school counselor).
6. Use clear guidelines. Avoid general, unstructured discussion.
7. Allow enough time to discuss the topics after the viewing.
8. Discuss only those questions that you feel comfortable handling

Go over the following **with your group** prior to viewing:

1. Explain that this is about the dangers of drug use.
2. Be certain all cell phones and pagers are turned off.
3. Be sure everyone has pen and paper and encourage them to jot down notes, ideas, and questions. (perhaps review questions you'll be asking after the show – see "Discussion" Section.)
4. Explain the program is 30 minutes long and then a discussion about the program will follow.
5. Explain that the video was created with the help of teenagers and that all the **interviews and scenes are real**.
6. Tell your group that if they feel uncomfortable at any point they may choose not to watch (be sure to arrange for a place where they can go in advance).
7. Explain that the program can be an emotional experience and to respect everyone's personal feelings.

AFTER VIEWING

Because it is important to protect everyone during the discussion, ask the group **not to use any names**, and set ground rules that include using the phrase “a person I know” OR REFERRING TO THE PEOPLE IN THE VIDEO each time. This may allow a more open discussion for everyone.

- 1. Give everyone a few moments to jot down ideas and questions they may have about the information in the documentary.**
- 2. Explain that this is not a tattletale session and it's not about telling on others.**
- 3. Say that this will be a discussion about the facts and dangers that are associated with illegal drug use.**
- 4. Follow some of the ideas for discussion in this guide and from the aforementioned specialized tapes you may have already viewed as group leader.**
- 5. Be sure to leave enough time for adequate discussion. If time is short after the viewing (30 minutes or less), you may want to take just one of the discussion topics and leave the rest for later.**

DISCUSSION

Middle School Students

It is important that young people are provided with tools to make smart decisions on their own. All discussions should be conducted with this in mind. Young people will make better decisions if they understand that their actions will have consequences.

- Discuss what effects illegal drug use has on the students' community, family, and friends—and themselves. (physical dangers, etc.)
- Discuss the various drugs and dangers of them seen in the video.
- Ask the students the following:
 - How do illegal drugs affect people and why?
 - Why do they use illegal drugs when they know it's dangerous?
 - How could friends and family help discourage illegal drug use?
 - What could the people in the video have done differently to avoid the dangerous behavior?
 - How could you talk with your friends and parents about illegal drugs and the importance of not using them?

ACTIVITIES

Middle School Students

- Have the students write about their feelings after watching the documentary. They can:
 - Focus on drugs in the community?
 - Focus on drugs at parties?
 - Focus on what could have changed in the story to have a better outcome.
 - Who could have been responsible for that change?
 - Focus on whether this is really a problem. Why or why not?
- Discuss the facts in this guide to come up with ways to change policy, public perception or empower others to affect change.
- Have the student's research additional facts on the internet.
- Design a project around "don't use drugs" with rewards or incentives. Prizes could be donated by local businesses.

DISCUSSION

High School Students

It is important that young people are provided with tools to make smart decisions on their own. All discussions should be conducted with this in mind. Young people will make better decisions if they understand that their actions will have consequences.

Initiate a discussion and then let the students direct its course. This will allow them to reach their own conclusions. However, ground rules will need to be set regarding respecting each other's opinions. Also, have everyone use the phrase "someone I know" or some of the people in the video when referring to illegal drug use. Have everyone take turns to talk.

- Focus the discussion on coming to conclusion / consensus on:
 - 1) Is there a problem in our community?
 - 2) Who is responsible for solving that problem?
 - 3) How can I help in that solution and what role can I play?
- Ask the students the following:
 - What could the people in the video have done differently in order to avoid the consequences?
 - How can young people talk to their friends about illegal drug use? What are the barriers? How can they be overcome?
 - Is using illegal drugs as dangerous as the video portrayed?
 - Whose responsibility is it to take control of this issue? Do parents have some responsibility? How can parents talk effectively with their kids about this issue?
 - How can we get young people to not use illegal drugs? What are the barriers? How can they be overcome?

ACTIVITIES

High School Students

- Discuss the facts in this guide to come up with ways to change policy, change public perception or empower others to affect change.
- Design a campaign in the community or school to affect change and help eliminate illegal drug use of all kinds.

DISCUSSION

PARENTS

Initiate a discussion and then let the parents direct its course. As with all discussion, ground rules will need to be set regarding respecting each other's opinions. Also, have everyone use the phrase "someone I know" or "some of the people in the video" when referring to these issues. It is extremely important not to allow personal stories. Also be sure to allow everyone an opportunity to speak.

- Focus the discussion on coming to conclusion / consensus on:
 - 1) Is there a problem in our community or in our homes?
 - 2) Who is responsible for solving that problem?
 - 3) How can I help in that solution and what role can I play?
- Ask the parents the following:
 - What could the people in the video have done differently in order to avoid the consequences? Would that have been possible?
 - How can you talk to your children about illegal drug use?
 - How can parents support their kids in stopping the causes of illegal drug use?
 - What did the video say the signs of drug use are?
 - What did you learn from the video regarding illegal drug use?
 - Do you think that we are a "drug society" as mentioned in the video?

ACTIVITIES

PARENTS

- Discuss the facts in this guide to come up with ways to change policy, change public perception or empower others to affect change.
- Role play talking to your children about the dangers of illegal drugs.
- Create an event for youth that could replace dangerous parties and reinforce fun without illegal drugs.
- Create a time with your children to discuss the dangers of illegal drugs, what the various drugs are and why you are concerned.

F A C T S t o D I S C U S S

- Over 30% of New Mexico students have been offered drugs at school.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM
- Over 60 % of teens say they attend high schools with drug problems.
National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University
- New Mexico student's rank 8th highest in **methamphetamine** use in 40 states surveyed.
2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey, UNM
- Over 7% of New Mexico youth have reported methamphetamine use within the past 12 months.
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- More than 3 in 5 teens can easily get **prescription painkillers** from their parents' medicine cabinets.
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2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey UNM

Q U E S T I O N S t o A S K

START BY SAYING: “I need your help on this. Bear with me and see what you come up with.”

- Is this video a fair representation of what is really going on?
- Are the people who made this video or the people who are concerned about this issue making much ado about nothing?
- Is this issue as important as the video alludes to?
- Are illegal drugs really a problem in our (school, community, state)?
- Are prescription drugs a problem? Whose problem is it?
- Is it a teenage problem?
- Is it an adult problem?
- Is it a parent problem?
- Is it a legal problem?
- Why are prescription drugs so dangerous to use for other people than those that are prescribed the drug?
- Is this just another way for adults to control kids?
- What would need to be done to help everyone understand the dangers of illegal drugs?
- Does legality matter or is breaking the law part of the challenge?
- If a young person uses illegal drugs, what bad things can happen to them or their friends?
- Can a person stay away from drugs at a party where drug use is happening?
- Is it possible to talk to friends about not using drugs at parties and how would you do that?

CONTINUE TO ASK “why?” and “why not?” and “can you explain that?” after each answer from a student.

If a class can establish that illegal drugs are a problem, ask:

- Is it a problem that needs to be solved?
- Can it be solved?
- Who can solve it?
- How can it be solved?
- Does anything you do or decide to do make any difference?

HIGH

R E S O U R C E S

SafeTeen New Mexico
www.SafeTeen.net

New Mexico Attorney General's Office
www.nmag.gov

New Mexico Public Education Department
www.ped.state.nm.us

New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department
www.cyfd.org

Drug Abuse Prevention: What Works, National Institute on Drug Abuse
www.nida.nih.gov

Life Skills Training, Institute for Prevention Research
www.lifeskillstraining.com

Mothers Against Drunk Driving
www.madd.org

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
www.niaaa.nih.gov

Parenting Adolescents Wisely, Ohio University
www.familyworksinc.com

SMART Moves Program, Boys & Girls Clubs of America
www.bgca.org

Students Against Destructive Decisions, SADD
www.nat-sadd.org

National Organizations for Youth Safety www.noys.com

HIGH



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Television to Touch the Heart

HIGH

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Christopher Productions, LLC
12301 Oakland Ave. NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87122

**PLEASE NOTE: YOU CAN ORDER THIS VIDEO ON LINE AND
LESS EXPENSIVELY AT www.SafeTeen.net**

www.christopherproductions.org

HIGH

The following are the websites of the local organizations responsible for creating this project:

SafeTeen New Mexico	www.SafeTeen.net
New Mexico Attorney General's Office	www.nmag.gov
N.M. Public Education Department	www.ped.state.nm.us
N.M. Children, Youth and Families Department	www.cyfd.org
New Mexico Mutual	www.nmmcc.com
Cooperative Educational Services	www.nmedu.org
Independent Insurance Agents of New Mexico	www.iiannm.org
New Mexico Parent Teacher Association	www.nmpta.org
AAA New Mexico	www.aaa.com
Christopher Productions, LLC	www.ChristopherProductions.org

HIGH

HIGH: A Story about Kids and Drugs

RESPONSE FORM:

Please take a moment to fill out the information below and then EMAIL to us as a word doc: Chris@ChristopherProductions.org

Thanks for letting us know how you're using the materials.

Name:

Organization:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Which materials were used (documentary, curriculum):

Date(s) materials used:

Group(s) using materials (i.e. Class, Club, Group – what kind?)

Number of people using the materials:

Youth:

Adults:

Other comments about the materials and your discussion: