

Substance Use and Sexual Activity: Making Informed Choices

Understanding the Connection

- Substance use and sexual activity are often linked
- Both can have significant impacts on health and well-being
- Important to understand the relationship to make safe decisions

What Are Substances?

○ Definition: Any chemical that alters the body's function
Common examples for teens:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco/nicotine (including vaping)
- Marijuana
- These substances can affect judgment and decision-making

How Substances Affect the Brain

Substances can:

- Impair judgment
- Reduce inhibitions
- Affect decision-making skills
- Alter perception of risks

These effects can
influence sexual
behavior and choices

Risks of Combining Substances and Sexual Activity

Increased likelihood of:

- Unprotected sex
- Sexual activity with unfamiliar partners
- Consent issues
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Unintended pregnancy

Alcohol and Sexual Activity

Alcohol is often involved in sexual experiences

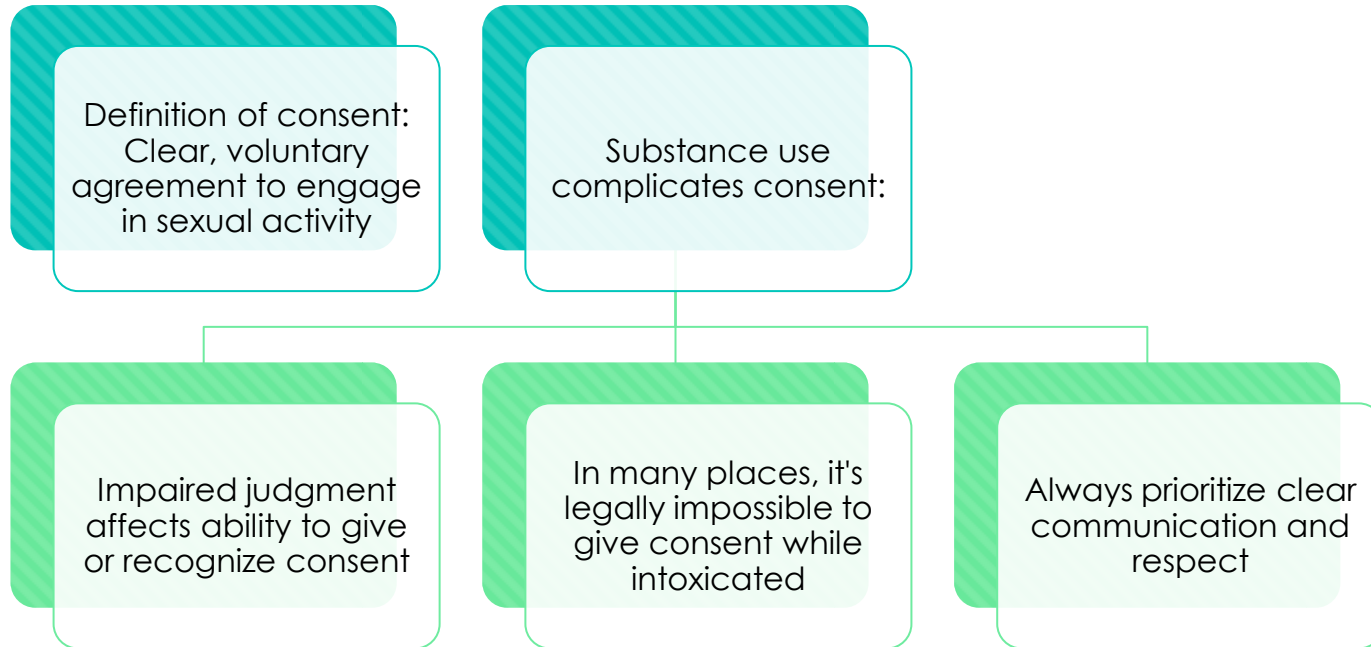
Effects of alcohol:

- Impairs judgment
- Can lead to blackouts or memory loss
- Increased risk of sexual assault or unwanted sexual activity

Other Substances and Sexual Behavior

- Marijuana:
 - Impairs judgement and decision making
 - Can increase sexual desire and risk-taking
 - May lead to unsafe sexual practices

Consent and Substance Use



Staying Safe: Making Informed Choices

Tips for reducing risks:

- Avoid mixing substances and sexual activity
- Use protection
- Know your limits and stick to them
- Look out for friends and use the buddy system
- Have a safety plan when going out

Resources and Support

- Trusted adults: Parents, teachers, school counselors
- School nurse or health educator
- Local health clinics
- National helplines:
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): 1-800-662-4357
 - National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673
 - Remember: It's okay to ask for help or information

Empowering Yourself

- Understanding the link between substance use and sexual activity is crucial
- Knowledge helps you make informed, safer choices
- Prioritize your health, safety, and well-being
- Remember: You have the power to make positive decisions for yourself