 Schoolies week

Suggested duration: 40 minutes

This activity is designed to assist students who are planning to travel to locations which hold large end of school celebrations for Year 12 school leavers. There are a number of websites that provide useful information for students, parents and teachers about preparing for these celebrations and staying safe.

Through this activity, students will reflect on preparing for safe celebrations and safe partying information and plan for strategies to reduce harm in drug and alcohol related situations.

Course outcomes

1.1 Assess personal strengths and skills to achieve positive outcomes in a range of challenging and changing situations.

1.2 Critically evaluate services and resources to identify sources of reliable information and support.

1.3 Build positive thinking, self-belief and a sense of empowerment to take action to promote meaningful futures for self and others.

5.1 Critically analyse situations, attitudes and behaviours that influence independence, health, safety and wellbeing in different contexts.

5.2 Recognise and respond appropriately to situations which may be limiting or harmful to self and others.

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Recognise potential risks associated with travelling to and participating in end of school celebrations.
* Propose strategies to reduce harm in a range of situations that could occur during end of school celebrations.

Suggested content

| Learning context  | Content |
| --- | --- |
| Drugs and alcohol Focus: Making safe and responsible choices | Identifying solutions and responding to situations which involve the use of drugs and alcohol* avoidance and assertive behaviours
* recognising risk
* intoxication and its effects
* planning strategies to reduce harm in various situations
* assessing and applying personal strengths to respond to situations
* recognising influences on decision making and problem solving, e.g. personal, social and cultural values

Responsible behaviour* protective strategies in drug and alcohol related situations
* responsible behaviour in venues
* responsible behaviour in other environments, e.g. end of school celebrations, festivals and concerts, public places, parties, moving between venues
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Teaching notes

Teachers should not assume that all young people will engage in Schoolies Week celebrations, or assume that all students will engage in risk taking behaviours during the time of leaving school. Teachers should encourage students to use their strengths and skills to enjoy this time of their life in a manner that reflects their values, goals and interests, without feeling the need to conform to peer expectations or societal stereotypes.

Teachers may also choose to complete this activity in conjunction with showing [Be safe and watch your mates](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBKQVG-H6eWPhyFD-Y0uHhW7RT6EENITr), a video for students attending Schoolies Week celebrations developed by the Queensland Government.

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of Life Ready sessions that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of Life Ready can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

Be sensitive to cultural protocols that may be relevant to certain members of intended audiences when previewing materials. The department’s [Audiovisual materials in schools - procedures for use](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/controversial-issues-in-schools?refid=285776) provides advice for schools with regard to the use of audio-visual material including films, videos, DVDs and computer games classified by the Classification Board and Classification Review Board.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [Life Ready website.](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready)

Evaluating resources before use

Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context. Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care. Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audiovisual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.

Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Materials should be reviewed in full and endorsed by the school principal before use in NSW government schools.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of Life Ready may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the Life Ready program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the Life Ready program they are concerned about. A sample information letter is available on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Learning experiences

Activity one – Staying safe while celebrating the end of school (40 minutes)

1. Students design a presentation to inform Year 12 school leavers about Schoolies Week, using an online tool such as [Glogster](http://edu.glogster.com/) or [Animoto](https://animoto.com/). The focus of the presentation should be providing strategies for staying safe while celebrating the end of school.
2. The presentation could focus on general information for all school leavers, or have specific details for students visiting particular locations that provide venues and events for school leavers, e.g. the Gold Coast or popular locations, e.g. Bali.
3. A number of issues and topics are suggested below. Teachers and students should select issues and topics that are relevant to their interests, needs and contexts.
* Planning before you leave
* Identifying your values, expectations and limits before you go away
* Strategies for looking after your friends
* Preventing drink spiking
* Sexual health, access to condoms and condom use
* Protecting yourself from unwanted sexual experiences
* Protecting yourself and others from aggression and violence
* Managing relationships and maintaining respectful relationships
* Looking after your mental health and wellbeing
* Safe travel
* Seeking help if something goes wrong
* Identifying and accessing services
* Legal issues, including laws related to drugs and alcohol in locations where end of school celebrations occur, consent laws, sharing information online, sharing images
* Extra preparation and precautions for travel to overseas locations e.g. protecting yourself and others, protecting your possessions, who to inform about your travel, accessing services, seeking help.
1. Useful websites to assist in developing presentation include:
* [Queensland Government schoolies week information](http://www.schoolies.qld.gov.au)
* [Turning 18 – Celebrating Safely](http://www.turning18.com.au/celebrating-safely/)
* [Smart Traveller](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/youth/index.html)
1. Invite students to share their presentations online or as a group.