

Website sample

Alcohol, drugs & substance use

A preview of the updated Nexsteps resources

Selected pages from the current document follow.

This preview is not the complete workbook, plan or guide.

Original page numbers and references have been retained.

To discuss full access, organisation licensing or an agreed pilot,
use the enquiry form on the Nexsteps website.

Work at the young person's pace with appropriate support.

Follow your organisation's safeguarding and privacy arrangements.

Use current professional plans and local procedures where relevant.

Alcohol, drugs & substance use

UNDERSTAND. THINK. MAKE SAFER CHOICES. GET SUPPORT.

A practical, non-judgemental workbook for young people aged 16-18 in England. Work independently or with a trusted adult, personal adviser (PA), key worker, teacher or adviser.

How to use this workbook

Read a page, talk through an example, try an activity and agree one next step. You can write, type, draw or ask someone to record your words. You do not need to use substances to complete it.

Your choice and your safety

Use fictional examples if you prefer. You may skip a question or take a break. This is education and support planning, not a diagnosis, treatment programme or substitute for emergency help.



NEXSTEPS PILOT EDITION 1.1 | 9 OCTOBER 2026 | Review before use if guidance or circumstances change

1. What are alcohol, drugs & substances?

What the words mean

Alcohol is a drug that affects the brain and body, including judgement, coordination and mood. Other substances include illegal drugs, medicines used outside their instructions, and volatile or other psychoactive substances.

Check what you hear

Legal does not mean risk-free. Appearance, price or a familiar name cannot prove what an illicit substance contains. Check information with a reliable source, pharmacist or specialist service rather than a rumour.

Three claims I have heard: fact, opinion or not sure?

One claim I will check, the source I will use and what I find



2. Why do people use?

Understand the reason

Reasons may include curiosity, wanting to fit in, boredom, loneliness, difficult feelings, habit or dependence. People who do not use substances also have different reasons. Avoid assumptions or labels.

Scenario

Alex feels lonely after moving into new accommodation. Friends offer something to help Alex relax. What does Alex need in that moment, and who could help without pressure?

Two supportive responses to Alex

A difficult situation, feeling or trigger - personal or fictional

A safer way to meet that need and someone who can help

