

GAMES - HOW WE ARE INFLUENCED BY ALCOHOL

Crossing the circle

Crossing the circle or a show of hands are carried out as follows: All participants stand in a circle. The supervisor reads out clear and simple statements and the participants assess them. Those who agree with the statement or have experienced the question cross the circle. Those who do not agree or are uncertain of their response remain in the same spot. Sometimes students can show a lack of interest and remain still. If you notice this happening, you can change the statement to its opposite - Those who do not agree or are uncertain change seats. The most important thing is that the supervisor provides clear instructions.

One of the advantages of 'crossing the circle' or 'show of hands' exercises is that participants must physically display their stance and position. It is not always possible to justify or explain their answers, but they can at least show what they think. Taking a stance in front of others is an important element in all democratic learning.

The questions should be asked so quickly that the hierarchy of opinions does not have time to break down personal standpoints. With this in mind, it could be a good idea to practice hot seat exercises now and then with 'harmless' questions. Eventually, you can slow things down a bit and take time to discuss the various standpoints. Developing rules is also important in this exercise so that everyone dares to take a stance. Students should not be permitted to comment on one another's standpoints with boos or laughter. All participants must therefore ask permission from the supervisor to explain his or her standpoint.

Statements must be prepared before the lesson. Write down statements for the students to take stances on and rearrange the room to give a clear space.

Example of the hot seat/ show of hands methodology:

Crossing the circle ice breaker activity - 'How we are influenced by alcohol' game

This activity can be done through a rapid fire 'hot seat format'. You can adjust the statements according to the age group.

Get students to stand in a large circle around the room

1. Read out the statements listed below one at a time.
2. If students feel that the statement applies to them, they should cross the circle to the other side.
3. By the end of the statements most students are likely to have moved at least once – most more than that.
4. Ask them what they think this game demonstrates.

Almost all of us, even if we don't drink are affected by alcohol at some point, what matters is how we use it.

Statements

For younger students:

You've seen adverts for alcohol on TV
You can name 5 different kinds of alcohol
You can name 5 different brands of alcohol
You can describe what a pub looks like inside
You know someone who has tried alcohol
You've read seen articles or features on binge drinking or drink drive?
You know what a hangover is
You've seen health adverts on the dangers of drinking too much
You know someone who has been drunk in the last month
You feel confident in resisting peer pressure around drinking

For older students you may wish to add in some of the following statements to assess experience and understanding:

You've been to a house party with alcohol there
You have been to, or are planning to go to a festival
Regular heavy drinking can effect long term health
Drinking too much can affect school work and chances of getting good grades
There is the same amount of alcohol in a pint of beer, a double shot of vodka and a medium glass of wine
You feel confident in resisting peer pressure around drinking
You know of someone your age who's been drunk in the last month
It's against the law for an adult to a buy alcohol on your behalf of someone who is under 18 years old
You know someone who's needed help to get home safely when they have had too much to drink