

One Thing Always Leads to Another

**ALCOHOL, DRUG EDUCATION AND
REFUSAL SKILLS**

**FOR
TEEN'S AND PRETEENS**

DISCUSSION GUIDE
INCLUDES STUDENT HANDOUT

TEEN DRINKING ON THE RISE – Parade Magazine, December 19, 1999

The most dramatic change: girls are drinking at earlier ages – which puts them at greater risk for alcohol problems later in life.

In 1965 just 7% of girls said they had their first drink between ages 10 and 14; in 1995, the figure was up to 31%.

One Thing Always Leads to Another

A 13-year-old girl reluctantly drinks beer at her friend's home.

She gets sick and experiences a series of seemingly unrelated consequences, from being late for school to losing the soccer championship.

In the end, she realizes how these disasters all resulted from drinking alcohol the night before, learning how One Thing Always Leads To Another.

Refusal skills scenarios are shown during a discussion with her mother.

WHO WE ARE

We create award winning educational videos that weave interesting stories, dramatic images and exciting songs together to help viewers *experience* — and *feel*, difficult and challenging social situations *emotionally*.

Why *emotionally*?

We believe you learn *best* through your feelings. When you FEEL it, you GET it.

We've been creating our award-winning educational videos since 1986.

One Thing Always Leads to Another

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More Youth-At-Risk video kits available.

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What's it about?

One Thing Always Leads To Another is an alcohol and drug education video dealing with the unexpected effects a decision to drink can have on your life.

Lexi, a 13-year-old girl, decides to drink some beer at her friend's house one night even though she really doesn't want to. She just doesn't know how to deal with the pressure from her friends.

After drinking too much, and getting sick on her bed, she spends the night sleeping on the floor with her window open. Now, a series of events take place like a group of dominos falling one after another.

Lexi gets the chance to replay the scene at her friend's house while talking to her mom about what happened, and learns some new refusal skills to help her the next time she's faced with the decision to drink.

Who should view this video?

One Thing Always Leads To Another is appropriate for teens and preteens ranging from upper elementary through senior high.

It's easy to get started

This guide offers suggested methods for presenting the video and questions to help you lead a discussion. We recommend you watch the video and review this guide before presenting it to your students.

Included in the center of this guide is a **handout** which can easily be removed for duplicating. One side has questions for your students to answer on their own. The other side has questions for group discussion. These questions are listed in this guide; discussion questions are left open-ended so that students may explore their own ideas and feelings.

The video is about sixteen minutes long. Together with the handout, one class period may be all you need to cover the material.

Important points

- *One Thing Always Leads To Another* refers to how decisions and choices have natural consequences; you must think about those consequences before you act in order to be in control of your own life.
- Lexi accepts beer from her friend's boyfriend because he pressures her. You will be pressured by friends; be prepared with more than one way to refuse.
- There are many ways to refuse alcohol. Lexi thinks of three: grab a soda instead, say you don't drink, or leave the situation.
- Dominos are a great metaphor for how one action starts another; it only takes one domino to knock the whole string down. It only takes one poor choice or decision to cause a lot of bad things to happen.

Before You Show The Video . . .

Write the questions below on the board, or use an overhead projector. Ask the students to think about these questions as they watch the video:

- What is “One Thing Always Leads To Another” referring to?
- Why does Lexi accept a beer from her friend’s boyfriend?
- What are the three things Lexi learns to do to refuse alcohol?
- What do the falling dominos have to do with the message?

Pass out the handout. Tell the students they will be completing the questions after they watch the video.

- ✓ Give students about a minute to quickly look over the questions.

After the Video . . .

Have the students take about ten minutes to answer the questions on side one of the handout. Then, have them break into groups. Assign each group one or two questions to discuss from side two. Give them about ten minutes, then have each group share their written answers with the class.

- ✓ To save time, have the students pick their group members and group spokesperson the day before you show the video.

Helpful Tips

You might find that some teens may not be comfortable talking about these issues. These **Do’s** and **Don’ts** can help set their fears at ease, and promote an open discussion.

Do

- ✓ **Help everyone feel comfortable.** “This is an open discussion. No one is right or wrong. No one has to talk if they don’t want to.”
- ✓ **Create a safe environment.** “This discussion should stay in this room. These means you can’t discuss what someone says here outside of this class. You can talk about the video and the subject but keep what’s said right here in this room.” This fosters trust and mutual respect.
- ✓ **Be an observer.** You are there as a guide; try to give advice only when asked.

Helpful Tips (con't)

Don't

- ✗ **Lecture.** If you lecture, teens close up. They may be more receptive if they don't feel as though they're in a classroom.
- ✗ **Force anyone to participate.** Forcing participation will make everyone uncomfortable. Encourage rather than press.
- ✗ **Belittle or criticize anyone's views.** Everyone has a right to disagree; everyone's opinion is valid. Be respectful of each others' feelings. This helps maintain a safe atmosphere.
Tip: Remind teens disagreements are really with the *opinion* not the *person*.
- ✗ **Overreact to what you hear.** You might hear some shocking things — who may be drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Try not to show your own personal feelings; this might dispel the open discussion you're trying to foster.

Discussion Questions

The discussion questions that follow are also printed on the handout. The questions are grouped by the themes presented in the video.

Throughout this guide you'll find open-ended questions in boxes like this one. These questions are also on side two of the handout.

"I Slept Okay... I Guess"

Why is Lexi sleeping on the floor?

Lexi drank too much alcohol the night before and threw up on her bed. She had to sleep on the floor because she was too sick and drunk to clean up her bed.

Why does Lexi have to change her clothes — and her shoes, before she can go to school?

She accidentally sat in the vomit, getting her pants wet and messy. And her shoes — her new shoes, also had vomit in them so she had to take time to put on another pair of shoes. She hadn't cleaned up her bed yet because she didn't have time before school.

What happens because she has to take time to change her clothes?

She misses the bus.

How did Lexi feel about drinking? How did Angela feel about drinking? Do you think these are realistic portrayals of how teens feel? Why or why not?

Lexi knocks some dominos over when she answers the phone. Then later we see more dominos falling. What do they have to do with the story?

“No Excuses!”

Why does Lexi get detention?

It’s the second time she’s been late to class so the teacher gives her detention for being tardy.

Why was Lexi late to school?

Because she missed her bus.

What happened to Lexi’s homework?

It got stained with vomit. The teacher threw it away and told her she would have to do it over.

Everytime something happened to Lexi, Angela was ready to remind her about an important lesson in life — what is it?

That: *One Thing Always Leads to Another* — Angela wanted Lexi to remember that drinking isn’t just about getting high. All kinds of things can happen as the result of the choice you make — including being late, your best friend being mad at you, getting detention, having to do your homework over — even losing a championship soccer game.

“Maybe I Need to Hear What Happened – From the Beginning”

Why does Lexi’s sister say “oh, are you gonna get it!” when she sees her coming down the hall to her room?

She knows her mother is home earlier than expected and that her mother has discovered a mess in Lexi’s room.

How does Lexi’s mother react to Lexi’s explanation about the mess on her bed?

She stays very calm when Lexi tells her she drank beer the night before at her friend’s house. Instead of overreacting and getting angry, she listens to Lexi and reflects back to her what she hears Lexi saying underneath the words.

Lexi said “no” the first time she was offered beer. Why did she end up taking the beer when she clearly didn’t want to and had already said “no” once?

What reason did Lexi give her mother for drinking the beer?

She said that her friends' boyfriend just kept teasing her and calling her names. She didn't know what to do so she just took the beer and drank it.

When Lexi is talking to her mom, she starts to figure out how she could have refused the beer and not given in to pressure. What were the three things she said she could do?

She could have said, "No, thanks, I already have a drink" and go get a soda. She could say, "No thanks, I don't drink beer". She could have just left the room.

Do you think the ways Lexi would say no if she could do it over again would work for you? If not, what would work?

What might be some reasons why one person would pressure another to do something (like drink alcohol) when they have already said no?

"I Didn't Do It On Purpose!"

Why is Lexi late for the soccer game?

She had to clean up the mess in her bedroom before she could leave for the game. Being late is another consequence of drinking the night before.

What happens during the last seconds of the soccer game?

Lexi sneezes at the wrong moment and the ball gets by her. She causes her team to lose the championship.

What are some of the things that Lexi says happened to her because she accepted a beer, drank too much and ended up getting sick after she gets home?

She gets a cold, ruins her clothes, misses her bus, arrives late at school, gets detention, has to redo her homework, her best friend is mad at her, gets caught by her mother, is late for the soccer game and then loses the game by sneezing and missing the ball.

At what point did Lexi finally "get it" about why she lost the game?

What helped Lexi figure out why she lost the soccer game?

She finally got it when she sat down after the game and thought about why she missed the ball. It took the extreme event to really get her attention and make her think. Up to that point, she was so involved in trying to catch up with the things she needed to do that she couldn't stop and think.

Angela yells: "What Do Dominos Have to Do With Losing the Soccer Game?"

Dominos have nothing to do with losing the soccer game but everything to do with what happened to Lexi. The dominos are a metaphor for what was happening to her. What does this mean?

If you knock over one domino, the others soon follow. This is like life and the choices you make. Once you start events in motion, it may be hard, if not impossible, to stop or alter the events. Sometimes, you may not even be aware that one action has set in motion a whole other set of actions — until it's too late and everything comes tumbling down around you.

How can you become more aware of what consequences your choices might cause to happen and prevent undesirable events from happening later?

Angela wanted to help Lexi but her tone of voice showed she was angry. Do you think Angela's way of trying to help Lexi worked? Why or Why not? How did Lexi react to Angela's repeated reminders?

What is the joke that the DJ tells at the end of the video and what did it refer to?

"Please remember to cover your mouth when you sneeze." It refers to the fact that Lexi sneezed at the critical moment of the game.

Dealing With Peer Pressure: the “Three Steps to Say No”

All kids sometimes feel pressure from others to do things they know are wrong. “Three Steps to Say No” is a simple recipe kids can follow when they feel they’re being pressured by their peers. Discuss these steps with the children, or let them read this themselves.

STEP 1: Figure out if what your friends want to do is OK.

Sometimes you know right away, but sometimes you have to think it through by asking your friends questions. Ask them things like, “Are we allowed to be there?” Or ask yourself questions such as, “Would my parents let me to go there?”

STEP 2: If it’s wrong, say “No.”

As soon as your friend gives you an answer that lets you know that the suggestion is wrong, stop asking questions and say, “No thanks.”

Then explain your reason for saying “No.” Be nice about it — don’t be mean or put anybody down — but let your friend know you’re serious. Sometimes kids don’t want to take “No” for an answer.

If your friend tries to argue with you, say, “I know you want me to go along with you, but it’s not what I want to do.”

STEP 3: Suggest other things to do instead.

After you make it clear that you won’t do what your friend wants you to do, come up with some other activities you know are OK. You could say, “Let’s ride our bikes instead,” or “Why don’t we go to a movie or the mall?” Or “Let’s play a video game”.

If your friend says “No” to your ideas and keeps trying to convince you to do something you know you shouldn’t, walk away. It’s not always easy to say “No.” Other kids might call you names or say they’re not going to be your friend anymore, and may hurt your feelings. But it’s very important not to let people pressure you into doing something you know is wrong. No one can make you change your mind.

Name of Video: "One Thing Always Leads to Another"

After watching the video answer the questions below.

Your Name: _____ **Period:** _____

1. Why is Lexi sleeping on the floor?
2. Why does Lexi have to change her clothes — and her shoes — before she can go to school?
3. What happens because she has to take time to change her clothes?
4. Why does Lexi get detention?
5. Why was Lexi late to school?
6. What happened to Lexi's homework?
7. Everytime something happened to Lexi, Angela was ready to remind her about an important lesson in life — what is it?
8. Why does Lexi's sister say "oh, are you gonna get it!" when she sees her coming down the hall to her room?
9. How does Lexi's mother react to Lexi's explanation about the mess on her bed?
10. What reason did Lexi give her mother for drinking the beer?
11. When Lexi is talking to her mom, she starts to figure out how she could have refused the beer and not given in to pressure. What were the three things she said she could do?
12. Why is Lexi late for the soccer game?
13. What happens during the last seconds of the soccer game?
14. What are some of the things that Lexi says happened to her because she accepted a beer, drank too much and ended up getting sick after she gets home?
15. At what point did Lexi finally "get it" about why she lost the game?
16. Dominos have nothing to do with losing the soccer game but everything to do with what happened to Lexi. The dominos are a metaphor for what was happening to her. What does this mean?
17. What is the joke that the DJ tells at the end of the video and what did it refer to?

Group Discussion Questions

Discuss the questions below with your group. Have a spokesperson write down your answers and comments on a separate sheet of paper and then share them with the rest of the class.

1. How did Lexi feel about drinking? How did Angela feel about drinking? Do you think these are realistic portrayals of how teens feel? Why or Why not?
2. Lexi knocks some dominos over when she answers the phone. Then later we see more dominos falling. What do they have to do with the story?
3. Lexi said “no” the first time she was offer some beer. Why did she end up taking the beer when she clearly didn’t want to and had already said “no” once?
4. Do you think the ways Lexi would say no if she could do it over again would work for you? If not, what would work?
5. What might be some reasons for why one person would pressure another to do something (like drink alcohol) when they have already said no?
6. What helped Lexi figure out why she lost the soccer game?
7. How can you become more aware of what consequences your choices might cause to happen and prevent undesirable events from happening later?
8. Angela wanted to help Lexi but her tone of voice showed she was angry. Do you think Angela’s way of trying to help Lexi worked? Why or Why not? How did Lexi react to Angela’s repeated reminders?