## Week 1: Key words

**Alcohol** - drinks that can make people drunk such as beer.
- **Recreational** - an activity done for enjoyment.
- **Drugs** - a drug is a chemical which is given to people in order to treat or prevent an illness or disease. Drugs are substances that some people take because of their effects, but which are sometimes illegal.
- **Nicotine** - a toxic liquid which is in tobacco.
- **Tobacco** - nicotine-rich leaves of a plant, for smoking.
- **Habit** - a regular practice, one that is hard to give up.
- **Addiction** - the fact or condition of being addicted (dependent on) to a particular substance or activity.
- **Social Norms** - behaviour that is typical, or standard in society.
- **Substances** - an intoxicating, stimulating, or narcotic chemical or drug, especially an illegal one.
- **Influence** - to have an effect on someone’s behaviour.

## 2: Introduction to Drugs

**Why are drugs dangerous?**
Illegal drugs aren’t good for anyone, but they are particularly bad for a kid or teen whose body is still growing. Illegal drugs can damage the brain, heart, and other important organs.

**Why Do People Use Illegal Drugs?**
Sometimes kids and teens try drugs to fit in with a group of friends. Or they might be curious or just bored. Someone may use illegal drugs for many reasons, but often because they help the person escape from reality for a while. A drug might — temporarily — make someone who is sad or upset feel better or forget about problems. But this escape lasts only until the drug wears off.

## 3: How do drugs affect people’s lives?

Drug use can lead to risky or out of character behaviour. When affected by drugs:
- You are more likely to have an accident (at home/car)
- You may be vulnerable to sexual assault
- You could commit a crime
- You could do harm to organs and systems in your body
- You could get an infectious disease, from sharing needles
- You could have mood swings and erratic behaviour
- You may develop an addiction
- You might have an accidental overdose
- You may have a higher risk of mental illness, depression, suicide and death

## 4: Drugs and the Law

You can get a fine or prison sentence if you take illegal drugs, make drugs, sell, deal or share drugs. The penalties depend on the type of drug or substance and the amount you have.

- **Class A drugs**: Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, crystal meth. Penalty: Up to life in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- **Class B**: Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, ketamine, synthetic cannabinoids. Penalty: Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- **Class C drugs**: Anabolic steroids. Penalty: Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both (except anabolic steroids - it’s not an offence to possess them for personal use).

## 5: Drugs and Addiction

There are four main groups of drugs:

- **Stimulants**: These make you feel energetic and alert. Repeated use can cause psychosis and paranoia. They are also addictive.
- **Depressants (sedatives)**: these make you feel relaxed. Possible paradoxical effects; anxiety, nightmares, aggression. They are addictive.
- **Opium-related painkillers**: these make you feel, a rush of pleasure and drowsy. They are very dangerous at high doses. They are addictive.
- **Hallucinogens**: The same drug may have different effects at different times. These may make you feel detached from your surroundings and experience hallucinations.

## 6: Tobacco and Alcohol

- **Cigarettes**: Smoking is harmful. It causes lung cancer, respiratory disease, heart disease and many cancers. Smoking reduces fertility.
- **E-cigarettes**: Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine which is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, they can contain other harmful substances besides nicotine. Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to smoke in the future.
- **Alcohol**: In the long term, it increases the risk of developing a long list of health conditions including cancers, heart disease, strokes and liver damage. A high alcohol intake can also damage our mental health, impair memory skills and reduce fertility.