

Using A Mixed Methods Approach to Inform a Harm Reduction Substance Use Health Education Lesson Map for Intermediate Level Students

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Introduction

- In 2022, youth in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) reported that they lacked practical decision-making skills related to substance use¹
- There is a lack of accessible harm reduction education in NL schools²
- DECYDE** is a harm-reduction substance use education strategy that is informed by stakeholders such as youth, educators, and people with lived and living experience
- The purpose of this project was to create a lesson plan map for grade 7-9.

Objective

- Gather information and insights to inform grade 7-9 harm reduction substance use education in NL schools.
- Design a harm reduction substance use lesson plan map for grades 7-9 for the DECYDE strategy

Methods

Document Analysis

- Review curriculum outcomes, policy, and other public documents published by the NL Department of Education.
- Review guidance on the implementation of skills based health education (SBHE)³

Public Engagement

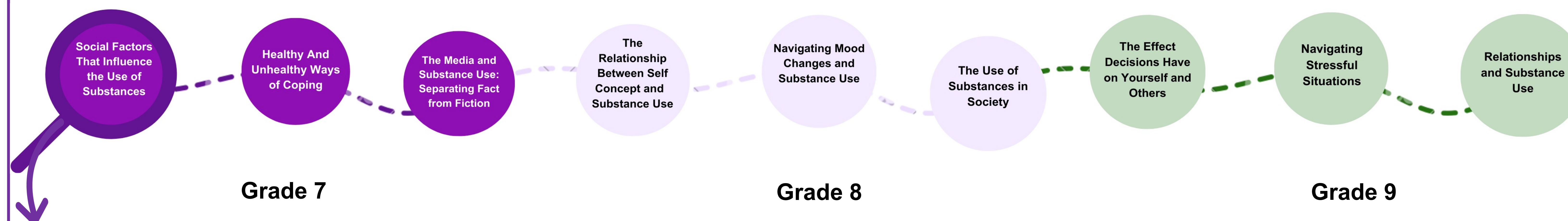
- Youth, educators, addictions consultants and stakeholders were consulted to provide insights and suggestions.

Map Development

- This data was integrated into a lesson plan map that prioritizes skills based learning, harm reduction, and aligns with curriculum outcomes.

Outcome

Lesson Map



Grade 7 Lesson 1: Social Factors That Influence The Use of Substances

Curriculum Outcomes

Alcohol and Other Drugs

- Use a decision making model with regard to tobacco use
- Identify and practice refusal skills with regard to smoking
- Promote and encourage appropriate health-based practices

Relationships

- Recognize the influence of peer groups

Safety and Environmental Health

- Be aware of unsafe practises that endanger the lives of young people and understand why these practices occur
- Develop knowledge and skills necessary to participate safely in activities with potential risks

Emotional and Social Well Being

- Understand the meaning of self-concept and the factors that influence its formation
- Explain how one event can illicit multiple perspectives

Learning Activities

What Influences Decision Making Around Substance Use?

- Goal: Understand the way influences can shape decisions on substance use
- Peers, media, personal values, family, and culture

How Would You FACE The Situation?

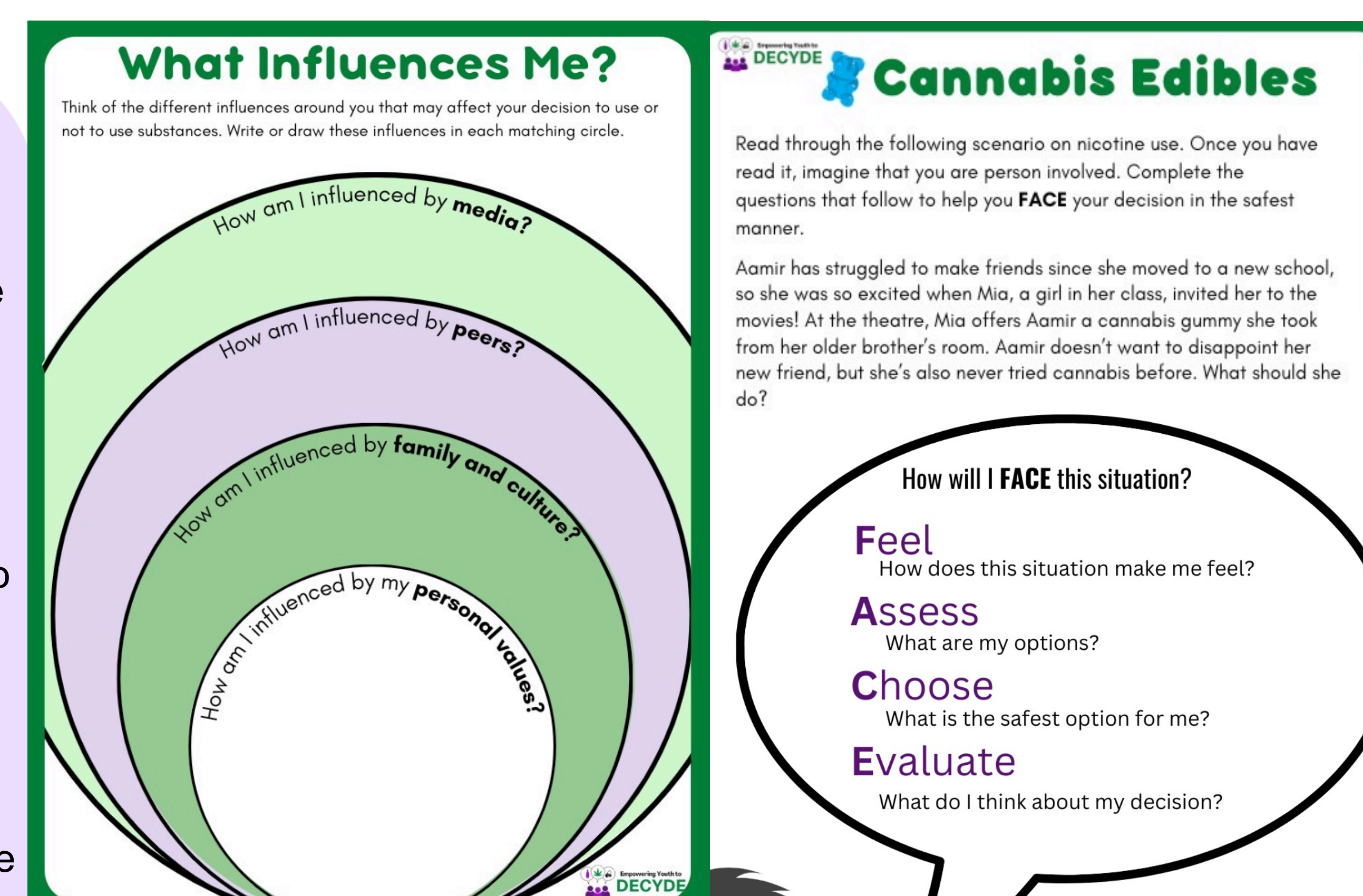
- Goal: Apply the FACE Decision Making Model to make the safest decision regarding substance use

What If You Took Too Much?

- Goal: Understand the importance of reducing harms during substance consumption, recognize an overdose, and seek help when needed.

Harm Reduction Hustle

- Goal: Reflect on the effects of different substances and ways to reduce harm when consuming substances.



What Influences Me?
Think of the different influences around you that may affect your decision to use or not to use substances. Write or draw these influences in each matching circle.

Cannabis Edibles
Read through the following scenario on nicotine use. Once you have read it, imagine that you are person involved. Complete the questions that follow to help you **FACE** your decision in the safest manner.

Amir has struggled to make friends since she moved to a new school, so she was so excited when Mia, a girl in her class, invited her to the movies! At the theatre, Mia offers Amir a cannabis gummy she took from her older brother's room. Amir doesn't want to disappoint her new friend, but she's also never tried cannabis before. What should she do?

How will I **FACE** this situation?

Feel
How does this situation make me feel?

Assess
What are my options?

Choose
What is the safest option for me?

Evaluate
What do I think about my decision?

Limitations and Conclusion

- Lesson maps were limited to NL Dept of Education health curriculum outcomes and time allotment for health instruction. This limits the scope of substance use education in grades 7-9
- Educators may be hesitant to adopt harm reduction in substance use education.
- This lesson plan integrates best practices, current curriculum outcomes, and addresses the needs of youth and educators, ensuring relevance and realism in the modern classroom.

Next Steps

- Develop full lesson plans that align with curriculum outcomes and follow a skills based health education approach
- Pilot test lesson plans among educators to collect data to inform future modification and development
- New curriculum outcomes will be integrated once they are publicly available.

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