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SMOKESCREEN

by David S. Craig



Image courtesy of Roseneath Theatre

Teacher Study Guide

Adapted by Tracy Carroll and Ilene Hermann from the original
Smokescreen Study Guide prepared by Roseneath Theatre



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Alberta Health Services – Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) has developed materials with Alberta Learning to support teachers in delivering Health and Life Skills Curriculum. Please reference the **Own Your Zone** (junior high) and **Be Your Own Hero** (senior high) materials for additional information and activities. Contact AADAC at 780-644-3642 for copies of these materials or for more information on AADAC services and support.

Preparing Students

Theatre Etiquette

Before the Performance

Some students have never attended a theatrical performance before, and may need some guidance as to what standards of behaviour apply. Others may need a refresher.

The important point to emphasize is that when they are watching the play they are in a partnership. They contribute as much as to the enjoyment and interest of the performance as the performers do. The performers appreciate audience response. Laughter, sighs, thoughtful silence, and applause all let us know we are reaching you. The unspoken back-and-forth communication of thought and feeling is what theatre is all about.

Before the play, brainstorm with your class regarding what they themselves would appreciate if they were performing in front of a large audience. Make a list of do's and don'ts in class and agree to try to be the highest quality audience possible during the performance.

In-class preparation is very important! Ask any actor – if the students are thinking about the issues when they walk into the auditorium, they are the most intelligent, responsive, engaged audiences for which a performer can wish. You can help prepare your students truly benefit from what the play has to offer.

In the Performance Space Please review the following before attending the play.

Sound carries: speaking aloud, gum chewing, moving about is not only disturbing for the other audience members, it also distracts the performers. They can see and hear you from the stage. They rely on your focus, attention and respect for what they do best.

1. **No photography or recording permitted**
2. **Please turn off and put away all electronics, including; cell phones, pagers, music players (iPods, MP3) and headphones. Please remember to turn off watch alarms also.**
3. **Remain in your seat until the play is over.**
4. **In the case of an emergency, please leave as quietly as possible. If you plan to return, please wait for a teacher to re-seat you.**

Should any students be continuously disruptive, the Stage Manager may ask that they be removed from the audience. They may be refused the privilege of attending other Concrete Theatre performances.

Post Performance Wrap-up

Like a good meal, theatre should be digested. Create both a time and a comfortable environment in which to review the production with your class. Follow up on the issues raised in the pre-show preparation. Take advantage of the activities and discussion points suggested in the study guide, or create your own follow-up.

Teachers- we'd Love to Hear From You!

Invite your students to describe, written or graphically, what the play made them think about, and how it made them feel. Have them interview each other for ideas with which to write and send us letters, e-mail, and drawings of your in-class activities.

At the back of this Study Guide there is a Feedback Form for teachers. Please take a few minutes to comment on the performance and let us know how the experience was for your students.

We trust you will find *Smokescreen* a moving and thought-provoking theatrical experience.

Caroline Howarth
Mieko Ouchi
Artistic Co-Directors

Irene Kunda
Booking Coordinator

Debbie Giesbrecht
General Manager

Concrete Theatre
6-17 Stanley A. Milner Library Building
7 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2V5

Phone: 780-439-3905
Fax: 780-433-4782
Email: info@concretetheatre.ca
Website: www.concretetheatre.ca

The Play- SMOKESCREEN

Characters

Trent Dolin (16) – a young offender; a high school student who has been arrested for possession and trafficking of marijuana.

Rayzee de Gruijter (27) – a youth care worker at the Danforth Youth Clinic in Toronto who is assigned to conduct Trent's court-ordered drug assessment.

Jeff Dolin (46) – Trent's father; works in the construction business; a concerned parent who is both troubled and angered by his son's use of marijuana.

Synopsis

Prologue: Saturday night - Trent Dolan is having a "get together" at his house while his parents are out of town. The party gets out of control and the police arrive. Trent runs to the basement to flush his stash of marijuana down the toilet, but he is caught red-handed. On his way out to the police car, he sees his Mom and Dad standing on the sidewalk. Trent's father was the one who called the police...

In the first scene, Trent's father (Jeff) appears unannounced at the Danforth Youth Clinic where Trent has an appointment for his drug rehab assessment. He meets Rayzee de Gruijter, the youth worker who has been assigned to Trent's case. When he learns that his son has arrived for the assessment, Jeff leaves so his son will not see him. In the ensuing interview, Rayzee quickly discovers that Trent is very bright, very verbal, and that when subjected to her line of questioning, he has every argument under the sun to justify his marijuana habit. Rayzee concludes that drug rehab would be useless:

RAYZEE: *Trent, you smoke dope 24/7, you can't stop and you don't think there's anything wrong with it despite the fact that you've been arrested, you can't talk to your parents, you're living in a shelter, you're falling behind at school and you find everything boring. You talk about legalizing drugs but actually you're a dealer supporting the criminals you condemn. On the up side you have a group of friends, but I have to tell you something. Those aren't your friends, Trent. Those are Mary Jane's friends.*

Trent is angry when he leaves the office, only to discover that his father has been listening outside the door. An argument takes place until Rayzee is able to separate father and son by putting them in separate rooms. When Trent and his Dad finally talk, Trent reveals that he owes his dealer four hundred dollars and that he is in danger of getting hurt if he doesn't return it. He tries to borrow it from his father.

Jeff is now faced with a terrible decision. Give his son the money thus saving him from harm but which will also enable his drug habit, or refusing the money and trusting that his son will find his own solution and learn his own tough lesson.

JEFF: *You're going to have to work this out on your own.*

TRENT: *Please.*

JEFF: *And I know you will. I have faith that you will.*

TRENT: *Just give me the money. Please, please, just give me the money.*

JEFF: *I love you.*

The play ends with Trent deciding whether he is willing to change or if he will go back to dealing and using drugs.

The Players

About The Playwright

David S. Craig
Artistic Director, Roseneath Theatre

David S. Craig has written more than twenty professionally produced plays. For Roseneath Theatre he has written the internationally acclaimed, award winning *Danny, King of the Basement* as well as *Smokescreen and Rocket and the Queen of Dreams* which premiered at the Luminato Festival in June, 2008. With Robert Morgan, he has written *Morgan's Journey* (Chalmers Award), *Head à Tête* (DMM Award), *The Book of Miracles*, *Health Class* and *Dib and Dob and the Journey Home* (DMM Award). His adaptation of *The Neverending Story* recently opened to rave reviews at the Seattle Children's Theatre. His successful adult comedy, *Having Hope at Home* has had ten professional productions across Canada. His one-man show *Napalm the Magnificent* was performed extensively in Canada and at the John Houseman Theater Center on Theater Row in Manhattan.

For CBC Radio, David created for Morningside a fifty-one part series based on his stage play *Booster Crane, P.M.* and for Metro Morning, a 50 episode series titled *The Diamond Lane*. He has written episodes of *The New Babar* for Nelvana and is currently working on a screenplay of *Danny King of the Basement* for Instinct Films.

NOW magazine has called David S. Craig, "one of the top twenty playwrights in Canada." He lives in Toronto with actress Robin Craig and their two children.

About the Director

Caroline Howarth
Artistic Co-Director, Concrete Theatre

Caroline Howarth is a founding artistic co-director of Concrete Theatre where she has directed many projects including the Sterling Award winning *The Shape Of A Girl*, *The Sprouts New Play Festival for Kids*, *A Promise to the Sun and Carnival Magic* and *Are We There Yet?*. Caroline directed *Lord of the Flies* and a reading of *The Geography Club* for the Citadel Theatre's Teens @ the Turn. She is also a theatre instructor at Concordia University College of Alberta where she teaches acting, directing and children's theatre and directs student productions including *Our Town*, *Seussical* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Caroline works in opera as a singer and director. She directed *Suor Angelica* for Opera Nuova and *The Y2K Blackdeath Oratorio* for Edmonton Opera. Caroline has an MA in Popular Theatre from the University of Alberta.

About Concrete Theatre

Concrete Theatre is an award-winning professional theatre company committed to creating, developing and producing artistically excellent and culturally diverse Theatre for Young Audiences that explores issues relevant to the lives of young people and their families. Concrete Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

Concrete Theatre is a non-profit organization and a registered charity.

The Production Team

Director	Caroline Howarth
Stage Manager	Jamie Betts
Production Designer	David Fraser
Sound Designer	Dave Clarke
Sound Technician	Josiah Hiemstra
Poster Design	Isabelle Gagnon

The Actors

Mieko Ouchi (Rayzee)

Actor, writer, director and filmmaker, Mieko Ouchi received her professional training through the University of Alberta BFA Acting Program. Theatre work includes roles in plays at the Citadel Theatre, Workshop West Theatre, Northern Light Theatre, Concrete Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects, Lunchbox, Persephone Theatre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, The Globe, The Tarragon and the National Arts Centre. Film/television work includes the series regular role of Nori Sato in Global TV's new series *The Guard* and roles in the series pilot *The Orange Seed Myth and Other Lies Mothers Tell* (1998 AMPA nomination for Lead Performance Female), *Fear Itself, A People's History of Canada, Trousers Accidents, For The Love of A Child, Two, Silent Cradle* and the lead in Anne Wheeler's *The War Between Us* (Atlantis/CBC). She has written and directed the award-winning documentary *Minor Keys* (NFB/CBC's *The Nature of Things*), *Shepherd's Pie and Sushi* (NFB), as well as the multi award-winning shorts *Assembly, Paper Cut, By This Parting* and *Samurai Swing*. Mieko's first full-length play as a playwright *The Red Priest (Eight Ways To Say Goodbye)* was a finalist for both the Governor General's Award for Drama and won the Canadian Authors Association Carol Bolt Prize for Drama in 2005. Her second play *The Blue Light*, has enjoyed productions across the country and has been translated into French, Japanese and Russian. A Co-Founder and current Artistic Co-Director of Concrete Theatre, Mieko has directed award winning productions of *Nami Namersson, The Viking Who Liked To Name Things, The Incredible Adventures of Mary Jane Mosquito, Are We There Yet?, The Plum Tree* and *Naomi's Road* for Concrete. In 2003, Mieko received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her contribution to the arts community in the City of Edmonton.

Garett Spelliscy (Trent)

Garett Spelliscy is happy to be appearing in his first Concrete Theatre show. He is a graduate of the University of Alberta's BFA in Acting program. Credits there include: *What the Butler Saw, While We're Young, and Twelfth Night*. He is also a member of the Serial Collective, an Edmonton based group of avant gardists. This summer he directed and performed in the Serial Collective's *Happy Kitchen*.

George Szilagyi (Jeff)

George Szilagyi is an Edmonton-based actor and playwright. Recent stage credits include Dr. Treves in *The Elephant Man* (Studio Theatre) and as The Creature in *Frankenstein* (Catalyst Theatre). He also appeared in *Dinner With Friends* (Theatre Buffet Co-op), *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl* (Theatre Network), and *Black Rider* (November Theatre). In 2004, George was honoured with a Sterling Award for Outstanding Fringe Performance by an Actor for *The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine* (Fringe 2003). His play *Hockey Stories For Boys*, written for Azimuth Theatre, received a nomination for a Sterling Award for Outstanding New Play in 2006.

Creators of this Study Guide adapted from the original prepared by Roseneath Theatre

Tracy Carroll

Tracy was Artistic Associate at the Citadel Theatre for 6 years and while there co-created and directed KidsPlay @ the Citadel, a series of plays for children and their families. Other Theatre for Young Audiences experience includes directing *The Shape of a Girl* and the award winning *Lig & Bittle* for Concrete Theatre; *Penelope vs. The Aliens!!*, *The Man Whose Mother was a Pirate, New Canadian Kid, The Sword in the Stone* and the Sterling Award winning *A Giraffe in Paris* for KidsPlay @ the Citadel; and *The Adventures of Emily Brontesaurus. Liars and Beethoven Lives Upstairs* for Magnus Theatre in Thunder Bay. This past summer Tracy coordinated Kids Fringe at the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival. She also stays busy each February/ March instructing drama workshops at Alberta Teachers' Conventions. Tracy is creating a beautiful new play for children with writer/filmmaker Eva Colmers called *Beneath the Ice* which will be presented at Fringe Theatre Adventures in March 2009.

Ilene Hermann

Having taught health, character education, and drama to students from grades three through twelve, Ilene Hermann is an experienced educator. As such, she believes passionately that a variety and depth of positive learning experiences are to be found by students who explore life issues and behaviour choices via dramatic productions. Ilene is happy to support Concrete Theatre with her contribution to the *Smokescreen* Teacher Guide.

Notes from the Playwright, David S. Craig

In February of 2005, Roseneath Theatre premiered *Smokescreen*. - the second play in its ANNUAL TEEN THEATRE SERIES. The play toured to schools and was presented at the Lorriane Kimsa Theatre for Young People the following year. It has since toured to theatres across Canada and the United States.

Smokescreen is a play for adolescents that seeks to explore the relationship between a hard line father and his troubled, rebellious son with a young, youth-care worker in the middle. The drama's conflict centres on the boy's use of marijuana. As we look ahead to future productions of the play, it is worth clarifying our intentions as theatre artists and producers:

First of all, as playwright, the impetus to write *Smokescreen* came from watching my nephew, son and daughter go through the 'marijuana years'. What I experienced as a parent is that my children viewed marijuana use as next to harmless. They were not alarmed at daily use, day time use, using alone or using during school hours. I was. I'm not a prude, but I felt my kids were using marijuana too young and too much. I felt the drug was subtly affecting their mood and behaviour in ways to which they were unaware. I wanted them to stop! Completely! Now! The conflict that arose between their attitudes and my own was one that I felt many families were experiencing. It forms the emotional core of the play.

When I began interviewing teenagers in Toronto area high schools I wanted to compare the use of alcohol and marijuana. I asked the kids if they could buy marijuana in one hour without leaving school property. They said they could. I asked them if they could buy a bottle of vodka in the same way and they said this was not possible. I asked them if it was common to drink alcohol at school during lunch. They said it occurred much less frequently than students smoking marijuana. I began to see that we, as a society, have values around alcohol use which includes where and when it's acceptable to drink. For example, most parents would disapprove of alcohol consumption in school. The same parents might consider a few beers on the weekend with friends normal and acceptable as long as no one was driving. These values influence our children. Around marijuana use, however, adult opinion is conflicted. The Federal Senate approves legalization. The House of Commons favours decriminalization. But the drug is still illegal. The result is that many young people are developing their own values that rationalize marijuana use any time, any where, any place.

In writing a play that explored marijuana use I knew that my audience was going to be deeply suspicious. Teenagers have come to expect exaggerated doom and gloom, 'reefer madness' style warnings that they discover experientially aren't true. Once that happens, all drug messages from 'adult land' become bogus. Their own thinking about marijuana use specifically and drug use in general is that the subject is full of contradictions, ironies, exaggerations and hypocrisy. Any play on the subject would have to reflect these views if it was to have any integrity.

As a dramatist, I had to accept that my audience was going to attend expecting to smell a rat and my job was to take them by surprise and keep them guessing until the last second. That is why the central character of Trent is so verbal and smart. I wanted him to be the most savvy weed smoker around. When the audience sees that Trent can be brought low by marijuana use, they realize anyone can.

One of the questions asked of the play is why it only deals with marijuana and not alcohol or other drugs. First of all, in fifty minutes, I do not have enough time to deal with all three (We have subsequently produced a Dora Award winning play by Chris Craddock called *Wrecked* which deals with alcohol use.) Secondly, I find that most adolescents understand that there are risks connected with the use of drugs like ecstasy, meth, acid, etc. They may choose to ignore those risks, but they know the risks exist. However with marijuana, as my own children argued, there are no risks or at least, they might concede, there are very, very few. Having watched the substantial damage the drug has caused in my family, I beg to disagree. And in that, there is a play!

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

“Smokescreen” - Function: *noun*

1. : a screen of smoke to hinder enemy observation of a military force, area, or activity
2. : something designed to obscure, confuse, or mislead

A smokescreen is a tactic used in war to conceal an assault. In the play, it represents the way characters conceal their true intentions.

For example, Rayzee is a woman with a man’s name. She tries to remain impartial, although she is not.

Jeff is trying to control Trent, although Jeff has very little actual control over the situation.

Trent appears initially to have no problems, but he does.

Marijuana, as a drug, also projects a smokescreen. In some circles, it is touted as being harmless. In others, it is still the ‘demon weed’. Neither is true. The play itself is a smokescreen. It is devised to conceal the true intentions of the playwright. **Can you guess what those intentions are?**

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY 1: Learning the Lingo

Familiarize your students with the language and vocabulary associated with marijuana & substance use:

ADDICTION- an older term referring to the situation of chronic users of various drugs, replaced by ‘drug dependence’ with specific descriptive modifiers indicating the type of drug involved and the type of criteria met.
CANNABIS- the name that covers marijuana, hashish, hash oil- all of them come from Cannabis Sativa, a plant that grows in many parts of the world. All three forms contain THC. THC is a chemical that changes the way the user/person thinks, acts and feels. Cannabis is a hallucinogen smoked in "joints" or eaten in cooked or baked foods, and is the most commonly used illegal drug in Canada.
DEALER- a person who “deals” or sells drugs.
DEALING/ TRAFFICKING- to sell, administer, give, transfer, transport, send or deliver a drug.
DRUG- any substance, other than food, that is taken to change the way the body or the mind works. This includes: illicit drugs, alcohol, prescription medications, over-the-counter drugs, laxatives, vitamins, sleeping pills, and everyday beverages, such as colas, teas and coffee.
DRUG MISUSE/ABUSE- any use of a drug that results in a physical, mental, emotional, legal or social problem. Occurs when the use of a drug results in a problem in one or more of the following areas; at school, at work, with family/friends with drinking and driving, health, etc
DRUG USE- use of any drug in order to change the way you think, act or feel, without interfering with your daily activities. Drugs can be taken by many routes: ingesting, inhaling, absorbing, smoking or injecting.
HARM REDUCTION- a public health approach that aims to minimize harm caused by certain conditions that pose serious risks to individuals, groups and society. Harm reduction is not about stopping people from doing something risky. It is about showing people how to more safely do whatever they choose to do
MARIJUANA (see Cannabis) In the play, you will hear the following terms which are typically used on the street when referring to marijuana: herb, weed, pot, dope, Mary Jane Some terms used by Trent when talking about the hand-rolled marijuana cigarette: a joint, a blunt, a pin-er (skinny joint), a cannon (a fat joint), spliff
PSYCHOACTIVE DRUG- any substance that affects perceptions, thoughts, emotions or behaviour.
PUNKED OFF- street talk: being robbed, mugged, or thugged for your drugs.
SIDE EFFECT- drug-induced effect that accompanies the intended effects of a drug. Side effects are often undesirable, but may occasionally be beneficial.
SMOKE UP, TOKE UP, TO HAVE A TOKE, GET STONED or HIGH - the act of smoking marijuana to reach a desired drug induced state.
SUBSTANCE ABUSE- any use of a substance that causes a physical, mental, emotional, legal or social problem.
TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL (THC)- a synthetic preparation, which is the major psychoactive ingredient in the various forms of cannabis.
TOLERANCE- reduced sensitivity to a drug resulting from the body adapting to repeated exposure to that drug, thus requiring higher doses to maintain the body's original response to the drug.
USER - a person who takes or indulges in drugs
USING- the act of taking or using drugs

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY 2: Identifying what we mean by the “marijuana years”

As David Craig discusses in his introduction to the play, the impetus to write Smokescreen came from personal experience watching his own nephew, son and daughter go through the ‘marijuana years’.

1. Discuss what you think are “the marijuana years”.
2. Why is drug use so closely associated with teenagers?
3. What are five reasons you think young people try marijuana in the first place?
4. Do you think most young people “grow out of” a pot habit by a certain age?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. If so, what age might that be? Support your answer.
 - c. Now research and find statistics that will support or refute your speculation.

Look for Canadian stats at both a provincial and national level.

HINT: try the Centre For Addiction and Mental Health, Health Canada and Statistics Canada

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY 3: What are student attitudes & values re: marijuana use?

In the NOTES FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT, David Craig expresses his concerns over the fact that while we as a society have clearly defined values around alcohol use, which includes where and when it’s acceptable to drink, compared to marijuana use, adult opinion is conflicted and young people are developing their own values, which rationalize marijuana use any time, any where, any place.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the attitudes of students in your school towards marijuana use?
2. How do students’ values and attitudes around marijuana use compare to those related to alcohol use?

GROUP ACTIVITY

Create and conduct a survey of students at different grade levels to determine the extent of marijuana use in your school:

1. Put together a survey questionnaire to gather opinions and attitudes on a range of different topics related to teens and marijuana use.
2. Establish qualifiers to define different levels or degrees of usage.
Consider using the Drug Use Continuum Chart below as a frame of reference.
3. Discuss strategies for information gathering and for protecting the privacy of individuals offering opinions.
4. Decide on a forum for sharing your findings.

Playwright David Craig’s experience as a parent is that his children viewed marijuana use as next to harmless. They were not alarmed at daily use, daytime use, using alone, or using during school hours.

DRUG USE CONTINUUM:

Adapted from Youth and Drugs: An Educational Package for Professionals, Health and Welfare Canada and Addiction Research Foundation, 1991.

1. **NON-USE:** Has never used a particular drug.
2. **EXPERIMENTAL USE:**
Has tried a substance once or several times. Use is motivated by curiosity about the drug effect, and peer influence.
3. **OCCASIONAL USE:**
Use is infrequent and irregular, usually confined to special occasions (holidays, birthdays, etc.) or when opportunities present themselves directly. Availability, accessibility and affordability influence use.
4. **REGULAR USE:**
Use has a predictable pattern, which may entail frequent or infrequent use. The user actively seeks to experience the drug effect, or to participate in the drug-taking activities of the peer group. Usually he or she feels in control of the drug use. (i.e. he or she can take it or leave it.)
5. **DEPENDENCE USE:**
Use is regular, predictable, and usually frequent. The user experiences a physiological and/or psychological need for the drug. He or she feels out of control vis-à-vis its use, and will continue to use despite adverse consequences. Drugs are often used alone and daily activities may be planned around drug use.

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY 4

Investigating parents' perspectives on marijuana & identifying sources of parent-teen conflict.

David Craig expresses his concerns about the fact his kids were using too much marijuana at too young an age and that the drug was subtly affecting their mood and behaviour in ways of which they were unaware. He wanted them to stop!

Conflict between David Craig's attitudes as a parent and those of his teenaged son and daughter are typical of those that many families experience. As this conflict forms the emotional core of the play, it is a good idea to begin the discussion of parent-child relationships and differing attitudes towards marijuana use before seeing the play:

DISCUSSION

1. How do your parents view marijuana use?
2. What do they think about marijuana use among...
 - a. Teens in your school or community?
 - b. Teens in general?
3. How do your friends' / other students' parents view marijuana use?

TALKING ABOUT PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

It is often said that nothing can be done to help a person with a drug problem unless that person wants to change. Parents are often at a loss as to what to do when they find out that their son or daughter is using marijuana, especially when their kids do not think marijuana use is any big deal. Teens often do not recognize the damage marijuana is causing not just to them, but also to the whole family.

1. What can concerned, caring adults say and/or do when they perceive a problem related to marijuana use?
2. What would you characterize as effective, supportive communication?
3. Where can youth turn for help when communication with their parents starts to break down?

Activity A- "EVERY" TEEN

Like Trent in the play, teenagers often feel misunderstood by their parents. A breakdown in the communication between adults and their teenage children often leaves young people feeling angry, isolated and resentful. Parents also become angry and frustrated as they see their children growing away from them, and when drugs enter the picture, the conflicts escalate. "If only they would listen" is often the cry from both sides.

1. If you could encapsulate the most essential needs and desires that direct teenagers' lives, what would they be?
Imagine that you are the voice for all youth, sending a message to parents / to the adult world. This is your chance to be heard.
2. Create a mural using drawings, quotations, song lyrics, images from magazines that represent these needs and desires.

Attach to the mural a list:

We need:

We want:

We wish:

Activity B- "EVERY" PARENT/GUARDIAN

If you could project the most essential needs and desires that direct the lives of parents/guardians, what do you think they would be? Imagine that you are the voice for all parents/guardians, sending a message to teen-aged daughters and sons. What would you say to the youth in your care?

We need:

We want:

We wish:

1. Divide the class into two groups. Have them chorally read the lists to one another.
The first time through, have each group read the entire list.
2. The second time, have the groups read one statement at a time, in the tradition of CALL AND ANSWER.
Edit and re-order your sequence for dramatic impact as a performance piece.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY 1: Tableaux

Here is Trent’s monologue, from the play *Smokescreen*, delivered as the play opens:

“It happened last Saturday night. I was having a little party at my house while the ‘rents were out of town. My friends called their friends and their friends called their friends and pretty soon the place was packed and superbly out of control. Then suddenly everyone starts running – out the doors, out the windows – I’m standing in the kitchen, laughing when the first cop comes in the back door. Suddenly I’m not laughing. Suddenly I’m running down to the basement, grabbing my stash, trying to flush it down the toilet. Only it’s in plastic bags, and they keep floating up. So I grab this toilet brush, and I’m poking at these floating plastic bags when all of sudden my left arm gets cranked up behind me. Like very painfully. And naturally I struggle, which I discovered later was ‘resisting arrest’, and out of self-defence I start beating the cop with the toilet brush, which I find out later is ‘assaulting a police officer with a weapon’, and then they fish out the herb and I get charged with that too. But that’s not the best part. On my way out to the police car, in handcuffs, who do I see but good old Mum and Dad standing on the sidewalk? Turns out they’d come home early. Turns out Dad was the one who called the police.”

Organize the students into groups of 5 or 6. Ask each group to create a tableau depicting the final moments before Trent is being placed in the police car when he is being arrested.

1. Determine whom you will include in the scene.
2. Clearly show the relationships between the people in the scene (eye contact, physical proximity or distance).
3. Capture the emotional life of the moment for each person in the scene (facial and body expression).
4. Be prepared to speak one line aloud that expresses what you are thinking, feeling, or wanting to say at this moment in time.

NARRATION FOR THE SCENE

1. Students compose a short narration describing the event. 2. Choose one person per group to be the narrator.	Group 1:	Describe what happened in role as a friend of Trent
	Group 2:	Describe what happened in role as Trent’s mother
	Group 3:	Describe what happened in role as Jeff, Trent’s father
	Group 4:	Describe what happened in role as a neighbour
	Group 5:	Describe what happened in role as Trent

SHARING THE TABLEAUX:

1. **Have two groups at a time share their tableaux.**
Tap students on the shoulder inviting them to speak aloud an inner thought or feeling.
2. **Have each group share their tableau with the narration.**
Discuss the different points of view that emerge in each scene.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY 2: Revisiting the play

Distribute file cards to each student. Ask each person to record a short description of one scene that stood out for him or her in the play. Encourage students to record any words or lines from the scene that they recall.

Have the students circulate around the room with their file card, sharing their recollections with one another.

After the students have shared with the class, with one word or one sentence, ask them to complete the phrase:

“The play *Smokescreen* is about _____” using... one word OR one sentence

Allow time for the students to share and discuss their statements with a partner. Assemble the group into a circle and invite each pair to share their thoughts on the essential theme and message of the play. Record ideas on the board or on chart paper.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY 3: Discussion

1. How has Jeff reacted to Trent's arrest?
Describe his emotions and feelings as this boy's father?
2. Considering the dramatic structure of the play, why did the playwright include the scene between Rayzee and Jeff in which she spills out the story of her credit card debt?
3. What clues do we get in the play about Trent's relationship with his mother?
How does his relationship with his dad compare?
4. Why did Trent run away from home after he got out of jail?
5. Why does Jeff find it necessary to spy on his son during the drug assessment even when Rayzee has made it clear that it is against the law for him to take part in the assessment without Trent's consent?
6. How does Rayzee manage to pick up the pieces and move forward?
7. Brainstorm as a group all the rationalizations Trent uses to justify his marijuana habit during the drug assessment.
8. What experiences have shaped Rayzee's life?
 - a. How has her background prepared her for her current job as a youth worker?
 - b. Do you think she is good at her job?
9. Why did Trent's Dad refuse him money in the final scene of the play despite the obvious danger his son is in?
Is this an example of what parents call "tough love"?
10. What do you think about this response from the Dad?
 - a. Should he have given Trent the \$400?
 - b. Why or why not?
11. Do you think Trent will be back for drug rehab?
Will he want to see Rayzee again?
12. What happens to Trent after the end of the play?
13. Take a poll of how many students liked the ending and see how your ideas compare to the class consensus.
14. Create a new ending for the play and share it with your classmates.
15. What did you think of the Trent character in this play?
Did you think this character is real? Truthful?
16. What message(s) does this play deliver?
17. Discuss: Did this play make you think differently about marijuana use?
If so, in what ways?
18. What elements of the play or the production are most memorable / powerful / resonating for you?

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY 4: Writing in Role

Ask the students to assume the role of Trent, Jeff (Trent's father) or Trent's mother and to imagine that they are reflecting on the day's events and writing in their personal journals.

1. Ask the students to select a few lines from their writing that they would like to share with the group.
2. Ask those who wrote in role as Trent to sit on the floor in a circle or in a straight line.
Ask those who wrote in role as the mother to bring a chair and sit behind one of the Trent characters.
Ask those who wrote in role as Jeff to stand behind the mother characters.
3. Tap each student on the shoulder, inviting them to share a few lines of their writing.
4. Explain to the students that you may tap them more than once, inviting them to either read their lines again or to choose another section to read.
5. The teacher then orchestrates the reading, with attention to the emotional impact of the writing.
6. Invite the students to share their responses to this exercise.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY 5: Advice to Others

It is ten years after the events in the play. Trent has a younger cousin or family friend who is in trouble because of marijuana abuse.

1. Create a scene between Trent and his cousin that demonstrates Trent's perspectives on marijuana now that he is an adult. Have his views changed?
2. What advice will Trent give to his cousin?
3. What has Trent learned?
4. What advice or insights does he have to offer?
5. Where does he suggest his cousin should go for help?

Areas of Curriculum – Junior High

Based on Alberta Education Curriculum summaries

English Language Arts:

Comprehend various kinds of texts

Grade 7 Choose strategies for generating ideas and focusing topics
Interpret texts around key ideas

Grade 8 Create texts related to current life issues

Grade 9 Create texts interrelating plot, setting and character
Consider historical context

Communicate clearly

Grade 7 Present ideas and opinions confidently

Grade 9 Share sample treatments of a topic with peers
Present with a variety of media and display techniques

Manage ideas and information

Grade 7 Consider audience, purpose, point of view and form in presentation
Distinguish between fact and opinion

Grade 8 Make notes in point form, summarizing major ideas
Experiment with several ways to focus a topic

Grade 9 Select types and sources of information for balance
Obtain information reflecting multiple perspectives
Communicate ideas in a variety of texts

Respect and support others

Grade 7 Discuss ideas, people, experiences and cultural traditions in various texts

Grade 8 Examine the ideas of others to broaden perspective
Use inclusive language and actions that demonstrate respect

Grade 9 Analyze how texts reflect different cultures, communities

Explore thoughts and ideas

Grade 7 Listen and respond constructively to alternative ideas
Talk with others to elaborate ideas

Grade 8 Seek out and consider diverse ideas, opinions and experiences
Identify and use visual and textual cues in reference materials

Grade 9 Examine ideas, experiences, to find patterns

Grade 9 Analyze addictions; e.g., stages, kinds, and resources available to treat addictions
Develop strategies that address factors to prevent or reduce sexual risk; e.g.,
abstain from drugs and alcohol, date in groups, use assertive behaviour

Health and Life Skills:

Relationship Choices

Grade 7 Refine personal strategies for managing stress/crises

Grade 8 Analyze skills needed to maintain individuality within a group

Wellness

Grade 7 Analyze social factors that may influence avoidance and/or use of particular substances

Grade 8 Examine the relationship between choices and resulting consequences; e.g., how choosing to smoke affects how one looks, feels and performs

Areas of Curriculum – Senior High

Based on Alberta Education Curriculum summaries

English Language Arts:

Identify and examine ways in which cultural and societal influences are reflected in a variety of Canadian and international texts

Respond to texts at a variety of different levels of sophistication

Speak clearly and confidently

Engage in active listening

Social Studies:

Understand the roles, rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society and global community

Develop complex critical and creative thinking skills, and inquiry skills

Career and Life Management:

Assess the effects of substance use and abuse—tobacco, alcohol, drugs—on health

Evaluate the impact of situations of risk and risks in combination

Describe how peer pressure and the expectations of others influence choices

Develop strategies for managing stress; investigate benefits and limitations of stress and negative, stressful and harmful responses to stress

RESOURCE MATERIALS ON CANNABIS & SUBSTANCE USE / ABUSE

CANADIAN HEALTH NETWORK: Public Health Agency of Canada

<http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/>

CHN is a national, non-profit, bilingual web-based health information service. Its goal is to help Canadians find the information they're looking for on how to stay healthy and prevent disease.

CANNABIS: OVERVIEW

The following information was selected from the Canadian Health Network web site

Cannabis is the most commonly used illegal drug in Canada and worldwide. Cannabis refers to the preparations of the plant *Cannabis sativa* (Latin for “cultivated hemp”), which includes marijuana, hashish, and hash oil. It also includes THC, a synthetic preparation, which is the major psychoactive ingredient in the various preparations or forms of cannabis. Indications are that cannabis use in the general Canadian population rose during the 1990s; it is estimated that between 10% and 15% of the adult population has used cannabis in the past year, up from 7% in 1994.

Use of cannabis varies among residents across Canada. Nova Scotia and Alberta reported the lowest rates of past year use (14% each), while Saskatchewan reported rates as high as 35%.

Rates are considerably higher in younger age groups (e.g., 23%-40% of Canadian high school students (ages 13-18) report use in the past year). Among Canadian university students, 28.7% reported past year cannabis use.

Approximately one in four clients in selected Canadian treatment systems report that cannabis is a “problem” substance.

Typical effects from recreational use of cannabis include relaxation, impaired concentration and short-term memory, and increase in appetite. Some people experience hallucinations, anxiety, and depression; a few experience panic, paranoia, or an increase in pre-existing psychiatric symptoms. Usual doses impair motor skills; especially when used in combination with alcohol. Cannabis use before driving (or undertaking any other activity requiring motor coordination, such as using heavy machinery or playing sports) is dangerous. Cannabis smoking damages the respiratory system.

Studies suggest that developmental delays may occur in children whose mothers used cannabis regularly during pregnancy. Effects from chronic, heavy use may include decreased motivation and difficulties with memory and concentration. It appears that cannabis use may bring about the onset of schizophrenia, at least among some with a predisposition. Tolerance may develop with regular, high-dose use as can psychological and physical dependence among people who use heavily or regularly.

Although scientific evidence is currently lacking, anecdotal reports suggest that cannabis can help relieve nausea and vomiting related to AIDS and cancer therapies, and is effective in treating other diseases or conditions, including anorexia, chronic pain, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, glaucoma, arthritis, and migraines.

SOURCES

Canada's alcohol and other drugs survey 1994: a discussion of the findings

MacNeil, Patricia; Webster, Ikuko Ottawa, ON: Health Canada, 1997.

Canadian campus survey 1998

Gliksman, Louis; Demers, Andrée; Adlaf, Edward M.; et al. Toronto, ON: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2000.

Straight facts about drugs and drug abuse

Ottawa, ON: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000.

Student Drug & Alcohol Use Statistics

<http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/Statistics/Canada/Pages/StudentStatistics.aspx> **read entire overview**

AADAC Services for Youth

The content of *Smokescreen* can be tied directly into lessons on risk, process of addictions and levels of use.

Own Your Zone (Junior High) – Lesson 4

Be Your Own Hero (High School) – Lesson 1

WEB SITES USEFUL IN EXPLORING MARIJUANA & SUBSTANCE ABUSE ISSUES

Source for this list:

Parent Action on Drugs Web Site:<http://www.parentactionondrugs.org/links.php>
Substance Use and Abuse Prevention, Education and Health Promotion

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
www.aadac.com

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
<http://www.camh.net>

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse
<http://www.ccsa.ca>

Council On Drug Abuse
www.drugabuse.ca

FOCUS Resource Centre de Resource de FOCUS
www.frcentre.net

Resources for Information easily made into Worksheets

Addiction in the Family
http://www.aadac.com/87_151.asp

The Science Behind Drug Abuse
http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts_mj1.asp

Cannabis (Marijuana, Hash)
http://www.aadac.com/87_439.asp

Facts for Teens = Questions and Answers
<http://www.nida.nih.gov/MarijBroch/Marijteens.html>

Information and Quiz: Fact or Myth?
Canadian Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
http://www.camh.net/education/Resources_teachers_schools/Drug_Curriculum/Secondary/curriculum_gr9expect1t/s4.html

Life Skills Training
http://www.cprd.uiuc.edu/Pep/docs%5CDataCollectionFiles%5CProgramImplementation%5CBotvin's_Implementation_Log_2.RTF

Marijuana: Facts for Teens
<http://staff.howard.k12.md.us/~gwynethj/marijuanapage/marijuana.html>

Includes both on-line and printable material for the following topics:

In Your Own Words

Long Term Effects of Marijuana Use

Marijuana Fact 1 - Questions & Answers

Contact & Credits

Meet a Pot-Head:

The lows of getting High: Alby's Story

Is Marijuana Used as a Medicine?

How Can You Tell if Someone is Using Marijuana?

Marijuana Photo Gallery

What Does Marijuana Do to the Brain?

Is Marijuana Addictive?

Other

Aadac for Kids www.aadac4kids.com

Letters to a Street Child www.letterstoastreetchild.ca

From Grief to Action (FGTA) www.fgta.ca

Youth Voices www.youthvoices.ca

Virtual Party www.virtual-party.org

SMOKESCREEN TEACHER FEEDBACK FORM / PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

We would like to hear from you, your colleagues and your students!

Concrete Theatre depends on teacher feedback for assessing our shows and planning future programming.

Please copy this form for each of your teachers and mail or fax to Concrete Theatre (address below)

School: _____ Performance Date: _____ Attending Grades: _____

Teacher's name, grades & subjects taught: _____

Please add me to Concrete's Electronic mailing list:

My Email address is _____

1. If you were responsible for booking, how did you find out about this performance? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Company brochure/handbill | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete's booth at the Teacher's Convention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ATA News ad | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete's website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a teaching colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

2. Who paid for this performance?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents / School Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Both School and Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

3. Did you and your students find the performance and its content...

Enjoyable? ___ Yes ___ No Engaging? ___ Yes ___ No Age-appropriate? ___ Yes ___ No
Informative as a support for curriculum / student learning? ___ Yes ___ No

Comments on the show and how it was received by your students:

4. Did you find the Teacher's Study Guide useful for:

personal/student prep follow-up discussion/activities building links to school programming

Comments/Suggestions:

5. Did you find the Post-show Question and Answer session with the actors valuable? informative?

Yes ___ No **Comments/Suggestions:**

6. What themes, topics, issues, plays or stories would you like to see explored in future works created for students in the grade level(s) you teach?

7. When is the best time to contact you with information about booking next season's productions?

8. Please include any general comments / issues related to the performance and Concrete's work.

Feel free to continue your comments on the back of this form if you need more room.

Please mail, fax or email this Evaluation Form to: Concrete Theatre
6-17 Stanley A. Milner Library Building, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, AB T5J 2V5
Phone: 780.439.3905 Fax: 780.433.4782 bookings@concretetheatre.ca