
Cannabis Memory Game

Learning Outcomes:

- To think about how cannabis use might affect the memory

(One of the effects of cannabis use can be impairment of memory. This is a silly activity just to demonstrate what impairment of memory might feel like – but clearly, this is not actually what happens – as you will see...!)

Equipment:

- About 40 small items from around the house – e.g. spoon, paperclip, card, pen
- Two towels or similar
- A timer (phone, cooker)

Instructions:

- Put the items into two piles – so that the items are close together, but you can see everything. The piles should not be too close to each other. (Could be in a different part of the room, for example). There should be the same number of items in each pile, but both piles should contain different things. (It's ok if they are similar – a pen in one pile and a pencil in the other, perhaps.)

- Cover each pile with a towel so that you cannot see the items.

- Explain that your child(ren) will have a chance to look at, but NOT TOUCH, the items under the first towel for ONE MINUTE. They cannot take a picture, write anything down or in any way record what they see – they just have to memorise the items. Remove the first towel.

- After one minute, cover the pile and ask them to write down as many things as they can remember – they have ONE MINUTE to do this.

- See how many they have got - compare to the pile.

- Repeat this with the second pile, but this time they only have 30 SECONDS to memorise what they see – and while they are doing this chat to them, interrupt them, make a lot of noise (if that won't annoy your neighbours!).

- Then cover the pile and give them 30 seconds to write down what they remember – while you continue to talk/distract etc.

- Usually (there are always exceptions!) people remember less the second time than the first – some even give up. You can use this silly activity to discuss how regular use of cannabis might affect their short-term memory and could even possibly lead to slightly lower grades at school because of this.

National Curriculum: Secondary - Pupils should know the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.