**God’s Work of Art, Your Brain:**

**Substance Abuse as a “Joy Inhibitor”**

***A study of how our God-designed brains give us the capacity for joy—and how drug abuse messes that up***

**Purpose**

*This section gives a two to three sentence explanation of the primary goals and aims of the session.*

The goals of this session are:

1. To introduce youth to the topic of substance abuse and addiction through the lens of their impact on the ability to experience true joy.
2. To provide a science-based understanding of addiction as a resource for theological reflection.

**Objectives**

*This section describes what participants wll discuss, explore, or engage during ths session.*

In this session, youth will: identify features of life associated with joy and flourishing; learn about differences between substance use, abuse, and addiction; explore how our brains are made by God to be “pre-wired for joy” and how substance abuse interrupts that by offering false joy.

**Session at a Glance**

***Gather (5 minutes)***

* Opening Prayer
* Greeting One Another
* Introduction of Session

***Engage (30 minutes)***

* Activity 1: What is Addiction?
* Activity 2: Joy, Drugs, and Our Brains

***Reflect (20 minutes)***

* Activity 3: Think-Write-Talk: Ephesians 2:10
* Activity 4:

***Send Forth (5 minutes)***

* Sum-It-Up
* Closing Prayer

**Further Study**

*This section should list scriptures or resources that the facilitator can use to better prepare for the session.*

Ephesians 2:10

Psalm 139: 14-15

**Video Resources:**

1. “Addiction: What is it?” from be smart be well.com, available on Vimeo at <https://vimeopro.com/video2goil/bsbw/video/63840329>
2. “The Reward Circuit: How the Brain Responds to Natural Rewards and to Drugs” (2 minutes), available on YouTube
3. Animated video “The Science of Addiction” by Life Noggin (2 minutes), available on YouTube

**Books and Websites for Background:**

1. Daniel J. Siegel, M.D., *Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain, An Inside-Out Guide to the Emerging Adolescent Mind, Ages 12-24.* New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2013.
2. Omar Manejwala, M.D., *Craving: Why We Can’t Seem to Get Enough.* Center City, MN: Hazelden. 2013.
3. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence website: NCADD.ORG
4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website: samhsa.gov
5. National Institute on Drug Abuse website: [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
6. Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation website: hazeldenbettyford.org

**Enhancer of Joy**

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**Time:**

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**Lesson developed by:**

Joyce Ann Mercer

**Tips to Prepare:***Indicate what the facilitator should do in preparation to teach this lesson.*

Read through the teaching plan and handouts. Preview the video, and if you have time, view the optional additional videos. Collect magazines and cut out images. (If you have time, you might put these into individual plastic sheet protectors, but that is optional.)Spend some time in prayer and reflection for the youth in your session, and for other young people facing problems with substance abuse. Read and reflect on the scripture texts for this session (below).

**Setting the Atmosphere:**

*Please describe how the room should be set up when the students enter. For example, should the chairs be in a circle? Do you want music playing? Will you need tables?*Students will enter and be invited to select an image from a collection of availalbe **Magazine photos which should be spread out across a large table enabling students to walk around the table to view the images. Chairs (or on-floor seating) are in a circle. Optional: music playing during image selection/gathering time. If a white board or newsprint is avialabe, or on a power point slide, display the NRSV text of Eph. 2:10 so that students may see it as they enger.**

**Materials Checklist:**

[ ] Small pieces of paper or index cards for writing

[ ] Pens or pencils

[ ] A wide variety of pictures cut out from magazines

[ ]One large poster board

[ ] Glue sticks

[ ]Equipment to play music (CD player, MP3 player, iPhone and speakers, etc.

[ ]Equipment to project an online video with sound--

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**Scripture Focus:**

*Please select one scripture that can help focus the entire session.*

**Ephesians 2:10**