

Combating the Opioid Crisis:

Discussion Guide for Educators

As you watch *7 Days* with your students, we encourage you to consider using this guide for discussion point inspiration. There are multiple breaking points in the audio when statistics are displayed on the screen. These moments would be a great place to pause the documentary for discussion. We have chosen a few of these moments and provided time stamps with coordinating topics.

The goal is to engage student minds and encourage critical thinking surrounding the information in the documentary, and to encourage students to investigate healthy and unhealthy behaviors related to drugs while understanding the physical, psychological, and legal consequences for themselves and others. Through discussion students should be able to:

- analyze the misuse of and dependency on drugs and identify support and resources for treatment.
- evaluate the family, societal, and legal impact of drugs.
- describe the effects of the use of drugs.
- analyze substance abuse and identify resources to combat addiction.

[3:38] Discuss with your students their thought process while hearing Kyle's story. Example questions could include:

- What comes to mind when you hear Kyle Brewer's story?
- How did he initially encounter opioids?
- Does it surprise you that his addiction stems from this encounter?
- How do you think his initial encounter could have gone differently; what resources encourage someone in Kyle's position to seek out?

[9:45] Discuss with your students the severity of opioid addiction and how easily a person can become addicted. Example questions could include:

- What are your thoughts on the dramatic increase in Arkansas patients who develop opioid use disorder, also known as addiction?
- How do you feel about the statistic on the screen? Thoughts on the correlation between this number and the number of patients who develop addiction?
"For every 100 Arkansas there are 80.9 opioid prescriptions in the state. This is the second highest rate in the country."
- What are the potential consequences of opioid use? Look for answers that include a range of topics from street cost, further drug usage and addictions, effects on family and friends, health and legal consequences, etc.

[45:17] Allow students an opportunity to guide the discussion and generate thought-provoking conversation among peers regarding their overall outlook on drugs. Some helpful questions to start and/or keep the conversation flowing may include:

- What was your outlook on drug use before the documentary? Did it change? If so, how?
- What did you know about addiction before the documentary? What do you know now that you did not know before?
- You have seen that addiction can be a struggle for anyone despite their class, race, gender, age, etc. Did your judgement of drug use or addiction change because of this? If so, how?
- A range of consequences were shown in the documentary, including incarceration and death, but you also saw a range of support opportunities and resources. What consequences of addiction were shown during the documentary? What are some ways that individuals can get help if they are struggling with addiction?

You may wish to take this opportunity to give students time for further research into the opioid crisis in Arkansas. Here is a resource to help with further research into the opioid crisis, opioid use disorder, and resources available for individuals struggling with addiction.

myarkansaspbs.org/opioid_awareness/resources