

FISH & CANOES

A Critical Thinking Game

This game helps players practice their critical thinking skills about substance use. The point of the game is not necessarily to race to the centre, but instead to work together to bring all teams to the centre through cooperation. The game can be played as individuals, or groups of teams of 2 or 3 players.

1. Each player or team of players selects a token
2. Spread the cards face up

3. In turn, each player (or team of players) rolls the dice and moves their token accordingly.

a. If the player lands at the bottom of a canoe (brings them up), they choose a card that they think represents a “helpful” use of a substance or medicine. They can decide on a card as a team, but they should not take more than a minute to make their decision. Next, they read the card out loud and explain why they think that it is a helpful or positive use of a substance or medicine. A discussion follows, and if the other players agree that the chosen card is an example of helpful use of a substance or medicine, the player gets to go up the canoe. Otherwise they must stay where they are.

b. If the player lands at the head of a fish (brings them down), they must choose a card that represents a harmful use of a substance or medicine. They can decide on a card as a family, but they should not take more than a minute to make their decision. Next, they read the card out loud and explain why they think that it is a harmful or negative use of a substance or medicine. A discussion follows, and if the other players agree that the chosen card is an example of harmful use of a substance or medicine, the player avoids slipping down the fish, and instead stays where they are on the board.

3. Once a card has been used, it is placed face-down and is out of play. The group should ideally agree and come to consensus about whether the situations are helpful or harmful.

OPTIONAL: The group may decide to place cards on the spectrum of “harmful” to “beneficial” uses of substances or medicines, located on the top of the board:

