

Words Can Work®

Discussion Guide

Steroids

True Stories

Hosted by Curt Schilling

BLAKEWORKS®

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Showing *Steroids: True Stories* Hosted by Curt Schilling

This program, hosted and narrated by professional baseball player Curt Schilling, shows how anabolic steroids can harm not only those who use the drugs but also the people around them. It also reinforces the value of honest achievement.

Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Schilling is appropriate for groups of young people and parents and other caregivers. It can be viewed in the classroom and in workplace and community workshops. It is also appropriate for family viewing and discussion at home.

You can view the program in its entirety or in segments. Separate discussion questions are offered for young people and for parents and other caregivers. Discussion questions appear at the end of the program and at the end of each segment.

Roberto Olivardia, Ph.D., Harvard Medical School, answers frequently asked questions about anabolic steroids.

Note: Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Shilling includes copyrighted materials. Broadcast, cablecast, Internet, duplication, or commercial use in trainings or presentations is prohibited. For further information contact Blake Works at 978.282.1663 or info@wordscanwork.com.

wordscanwork.com

You can read *Issues and Answers* columns at wordscanwork.com. In these true stories, young people, parents, and experts share their experiences with a range of issues, including drugs, alcohol, bullying, mental health, and more. You can also join online discussions about these topics.

In the booklet *Words Can Work: When Talking About Steroids*, available at wordscanwork.com, young people share their true stories. Experts give you strategies and the words to start and continue conversations about anabolic steroids.

Profiles

Craig

Craig began lifting weights and taking anabolic steroids as a high school student. He and his parents describe their five-year “nightmare.” They tell why Craig quit using the drugs, and how his life has turned around.

Katelyn

Katelyn, Craig’s sister, urges young people who suspect that someone they care about may be using steroids to seek help from an adult.

Nate

Nate’s determination to build a strong body without using anabolic steroids has paid off. He is All American in football and a shot put champion. He aims for the Olympics in shot put. Nate received a full college scholarship for his athletic accomplishments.

Using This Guide

This guide is designed to help you lead discussions with groups of young people, parents, and other caregivers. Parents can also use this guide for discussing the program with their children. Questions are marked for:



young people



parents/caregivers

- Follow these arrows to proceed easily through the discussion.

Impact on Participants

Young people may feel a variety of emotions as they watch the program due to their own abuse of anabolic steroids or their knowledge of someone else's abuse.

Before Viewing the Program

Prepare participants for viewing the program by asking the following questions:

➤ Ask participants

- What are anabolic steroids?

Answer: Anabolic steroids are synthetic substances similar to the male sex hormone testosterone.

Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America

- Why do some young people use anabolic steroids?

Answer: Some young people use steroids to gain a competitive edge in a sport. Others use them to quickly build or tone their muscles. Using anabolic steroids is dangerous. There are healthy ways to achieve these goals: working out and eating nutritious foods.

- Are anabolic steroids legal drugs?

Answer: Anabolic steroids are illegal except when prescribed by a doctor. Sometimes doctors prescribe them to treat certain types of anemia or to treat men who don't naturally produce enough testosterone. The drugs are also prescribed to treat body wasting in patients infected with HIV and other diseases that result in the loss of lean muscle mass. Doctors never prescribe anabolic steroids to young, healthy people to build muscles. Abuse of anabolic steroids can lead to serious health problems.

Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America

Craig



➤ Introduction

Many young people feel pressure to build muscular bodies or to be more competitive in sports. Some young people use illegal anabolic steroids to help them reach their goals. Let's see what happened to Craig and his family when he abused these drugs.

➤ Begin discussion for young people by saying

Let's talk about the effect that using steroids had on Craig and everyone around him.

➤ Ask young people

- Why did Craig use anabolic steroids?
- What do you think are the chances that something bad would happen to you if you used anabolic steroids? If you would be willing to take the risks associated with these drugs, explain why.
- The doctor warned Craig that using anabolic steroids could cause a heart attack and that he could die. What are other ways anabolic steroids can harm you?
- How did you feel as Craig's parents described life when Craig was abusing steroids?
- Craig says he used steroids to impress others. Name characteristics about your friends that impress you.
- Craig says using steroids is cheating. How would you feel if you knew you were competing against someone who was using steroids?
- Name someone who would be disappointed if you were abusing steroids. How do you feel when you imagine disappointing this person?
- What is muscle dysmorphia?
Answer: Muscle dysmorphia is a dangerous psychological condition. Those with the disorder obsess about their appearance and the build of their body.
- Craig says he wasted five years obsessing over his appearance. What goals might you fail to reach if you were addicted to anabolic steroids?

➤ Remind young people

Using anabolic steroids either for a few weeks or for years puts your health at risk. Craig is proof that, with professional help and hard work, you can quit using anabolic steroids and lead a happy, healthy, and productive life.



➤ Introduction

Some young people who feel pressure to build muscular bodies or to be more competitive in sports use illegal anabolic steroids to reach their goals. Let's see what happened to Craig and his family when he abused these drugs.

➤ Begin discussion for parents and other caregivers by saying

Adults often urge children to stay away from drugs. Some don't consider warning children about anabolic steroids. Many parents deny that their child may be using these drugs. Let's discuss how you can help your children avoid using steroids and remain alert to signs of abuse.

➤ Ask parents and other caregivers

■ What are some of the reasons young people use anabolic steroids?

■ What is muscle dysmorphia?

Answer: Muscle dysmorphia is a dangerous psychological condition. Those with the disorder obsess about their appearance and the build of their body.

■ How can you determine whether your child has a healthy body image?

■ Using steroids is cheating. How do you help your child value honest achievement?

■ Craig's parents didn't recognize the symptoms of steroid abuse. What are signs that a young person may be using these drugs?

Both Genders

Unusually rapid gains in weight and strength
Severe acne, especially on the face and back
Mood swings
Depression
Obsession with physical appearance
Jaundice (yellowing of the skin)
Pink or purple lines on the chest and abdomen caused by rapid growth
Stunted growth
High blood pressure and heart disease
Liver damage and cancers
Stroke and blood clots
Urinary and bowel problems such as diarrhea
Headaches, aching joints, and muscle cramps
Increased risk of ligament and tendon injuries
Thinning hair and baldness
Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things not really there)
Paranoia (extreme feelings of mistrust and fear)
Anxiety and panic attacks

Males

Breast development
Testicle shrinkage
Reduced sperm count
Impotence
Enlarged prostate
(gland that produces fluid for semen)

Females

Growth of facial and body hair
Deepening of voice
Breast reduction
Menstrual problems

Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America

- What would you tell your child about the physical and psychological effects of anabolic steroid abuse?
- How do you try to build your child's self-esteem so that he or she is less vulnerable to peer pressure?
- What would you do if you knew that a friend of your child's was abusing anabolic steroids?
- Sometimes parents deny their child may be abusing drugs. If you had reason to suspect that your child may be using anabolic steroids, what steps would you take?
- Coaches sometimes know about steroid abuse but look the other way. What can you ask your child's coach to learn about his or her position on the abuse of these drugs?

➤ **Remind parents and other caregivers**

When talking with children about anabolic steroids, it's important to acknowledge that steroids do build muscles, but they also can cause life-threatening side effects.

If you suspect that your child is using anabolic steroids, seek professional help immediately.

wordscanwork.com

For information about the booklet *Words Can Work: When Talking About Steroids*, go to wordscanwork.com. Young people and parents share their true stories. Experts give you the words and strategies you can use to start talking about anabolic steroids. This booklet is an ideal companion to the DVD *Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Schilling*.

At wordscanwork.com, you can also read *Issues and Answers* columns about other challenges kids face growing up and join online discussions.

Katelyn



➤ Introduction

For years, Craig's sister, Katelyn, and their parents lived in turmoil because of Craig's steroid abuse. Let's hear what she has to say.

➤ Begin discussion for young people by saying

Katelyn urges you to speak up if you know someone who is abusing anabolic steroids.

➤ Ask young people

- Katelyn described life with her brother when he was abusing steroids. How would you feel if you put your family through similar turmoil?
- Craig's steroid abuse affected all his relationships. How fair is it for siblings or friends to make decisions that have a negative effect on others?
- Why do you think Craig had so little concern for others while he was abusing steroids?
- Now Katelyn is proud of Craig. When Craig was abusing steroids, how did the drugs affect his ability to continue his education and reach his career goals?
- If you suspected that a sibling or friend was using anabolic steroids, how willing would you be to speak up or tell an adult, even if the person using the drugs might be angry that you did so?

➤ Remind young people

People who use anabolic steroids often have a hard time giving them up. Some people don't stop using them until they've damaged their health and their relationships. If you suspect someone is using these drugs, tell an adult immediately.



➤ Introduction

For years, Craig's sister, Katelyn, and their parents lived in turmoil because of Craig's steroid abuse. Let's hear what she has to say.

➤ Begin discussion for parents and other caregivers by saying

When someone in the family abuses drugs everyone is affected. Let's discuss what Katelyn has to say.

➤ Ask parents and other caregivers

- How did Craig's abuse of anabolic steroids affect Katelyn?
- Katelyn says that if Craig hadn't wasted years abusing steroids, he would have accomplished more in life by now. How do you help your child set and reach goals?
- If someone told you he or she suspected your child was using anabolic steroids, how would you respond?
- How can you teach children that if they suspect someone is abusing these drugs, telling an adult they trust may be scary but may save a life?

➤ Remind parents and other caregivers

Anabolic steroids are readily available to young people. That's why it's important to talk openly about the reasons to avoid using anabolic steroids. It's also important to describe the steps to take if a young person suspects someone they care about is abusing these drugs.

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Nate



➤ Introduction

Most young people avoid using anabolic steroids. Many excel through hard work. Let's watch Nate's story.

➤ Begin discussion for young people by saying

Nate was motivated to work hard to achieve his goals. Let's discuss what influenced his choices.

➤ Ask young people

- What are some of the reasons Nate doesn't use anabolic steroids?
- Nate says he has no respect for young people who use steroids. Why would he feel this way?
- Do you think using steroids is cheating? If so, why?
- How would you feel if you knew you were competing against someone who was using anabolic steroids?
- In five years, how do you think Nate will feel about his decision to achieve his goals naturally?
- Nate says he wants to go to the Olympics. How could the use of anabolic steroids affect his chances of competing in the Olympics?

➤ Remind young people

Nate shows how hard work can pay off. Whether you play a sport, participate in theater or science club, or pursue your favorite hobby, setting and reaching your goals through hard work makes you feel good.

➤ Introduction

Most young people avoid using anabolic steroids. Many excel through hard work. Let's watch Nate's story.

➤ Begin discussion for parents and other caregivers by saying

Nate learned early on that honest achievement feels good. Let's talk about how you can support young people in making positive choices.

➤ Ask parents and other caregivers

- Can you remember feeling discouraged but working hard to reach a goal? How did you feel when you achieved success? How can you share this experience with your child?
- How do you find ways to remind your children to avoid using anabolic steroids and other drugs?
- How do you show commitment to your goals as a positive example for your children?
- Nate's older brother motivated him to excel. How do you help your children understand that they can be positive role models for their siblings and friends?

➤ Remind parents and other caregivers

Children who respect and feel good about themselves are more likely to make good choices. You can build your child's self-esteem by reinforcing his or her positive qualities and achievements. Remind your child that using steroids is a form of cheating.

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Blake Works, Inc.

Blake Works, Inc. produces research-based media (DVDs, the *Words Can Work* series of booklets, discussion guides, training materials, and wordscanwork.com) to help families, young people, and their peers talk about the challenges kids face growing up.

Jeanne Blake is the producer of *Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Schilling* and the president of Blake Works. She is a television medical reporter and an affiliated faculty member at the Division on Addictions, Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School.

Blake speaks to parents at corporations and at health care and community organizations. She consults nationally on family communication. She is also the president of Family Health Productions and the creator of abouthealth.com.

A portion of the proceeds from *Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Schilling* will be donated to *Curt's Pitch for ALS*.

Curt's Pitch for ALS



After meeting ALS patient Dick Bergeron in 1993, Shonda and Curt Schilling founded *Curt's Pitch for ALS*. Dick was a brave man who was living with this progressive neurodegenerative disease commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Dick's courage inspired the Schillings to help raise awareness about ALS and to contribute funds for research and patient care. Since then, baseball fans around the world have helped Shonda and Curt raise millions of dollars toward improving the quality of life for those living with ALS. Here's how *Curt's Pitch for ALS* works: You can assign the dollar amount you want to contribute for every strikeout or win or both. To learn about how you can participate visit www.curtspitch.org.

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DVDs available at wordscanwork.com

Alcohol: True Stories Hosted by Matt Damon (DVD/VHS)

Young people tell how alcohol affected their lives and encourage peers to avoid underage drinking. Discussion guide included. 20 minutes.

Grades five & up, parents and other caregivers. 

Boys on Bullying (DVD/VHS)

Boys tell how bullying resulted in feelings of depression, anger, and shame. They tell how they handled these situations with support from a friend, parent, or another caring adult.

Discussion guide included. 20 minutes. *Grades five & up, parents and other caregivers.* 

Depression: True Stories (DVD/VHS)

Young people and their families talk about living with depression and the importance of early diagnosis and treatment. Discussion guide included. 20 minutes.

Grades six & up, parents and other caregivers.

Drugs: True Stories (DVD/VHS)

Joel's abuse of alcohol and marijuana led to addiction to prescription pills. He describes his descent into addiction. His parents and sister tell how Joel's abuse affected the entire family. Discussion guide included. 20 minutes. *Grades five & up, parents and other caregivers.*

Eating Disorders: True Stories (DVD/VHS)

Young women talk about recovering from anorexia and bulimia with professional intervention and family support. Discussion guide included. 20 minutes.

Grades five & up, parents and other caregivers.

In Our Own Words®: Teens and AIDS (DVD/VHS)

Teens infected with HIV through unprotected intercourse discuss denial, condoms, postponing sex, and how alcohol use affects decision making. Discussion guide included.

20 minutes. Available dubbed in Spanish. *Grades six & up, parents and other caregivers.* 

The Power of Girls: Inside and Out® (DVD/VHS)

Girls discuss bullying, eating disorders, early sexual activity, and loss. They tell how they handled challenges they faced with support from a friend, parent, or another caring adult.

Discussion guide included. 20 minutes. *Grades five & up, parents and other caregivers.* 

Raising Healthy Kids®: Families Talk About Sexual Health (Two DVDs/VHS)

Parents, young people, and experts offer parents information and skills to help families discuss sexual health. Discussion guides included. 20 minutes.

Parents and other caregivers. 

Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Schilling

Professional baseball player Curt Schilling tells how Craig lifted weights and abused anabolic steroids. Craig and his parents talk about their five-year "nightmare." His sister urges others to seek help if they suspect that someone they care about is using steroids. Nate, 18, an accomplished athlete, describes how he stays strong naturally. Discussion guide included. 20 minutes. *Grades five & up, parents and other caregivers.*

Booklets by Jeanne Blake available at wordscanwork.com

Words Can Work: When Talking About Alcohol

In their true stories, families tell how they discuss underage drinking. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about this topic.

Words Can Work: When Talking About Body Image

In their true stories, families describe how they nurture a positive body image and discuss topics including maintaining a healthy weight and eating disorders. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about these topics.

Words Can Work: When Talking About Bullying

In their true stories, families describe how they handled and discussed bullying. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about this topic.

Words Can Work: When Talking About Depression and other mental health disorders

In their true stories, families describe how they handle and discuss depression and other mental health disorders. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about these topics.

Words Can Work: When Talking About Drugs

In their true stories, families tell how they confronted drug abuse and addiction. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about these topics.

Words Can Work: When Talking With Kids About Sexual Health

In their true stories, families tell how they discuss puberty, values, relationships, postponing sex, and birth control. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about these topics.

Words Can Work: When Talking About Steroids

In their true stories, families tell how they discuss anabolic steroids and the value of honest achievement. Experts offer information, strategies, and the words young people and parents can use to talk about these topics.

Order at wordscanwork.com

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info@wordscanwork.com

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Author

Jeanne Blake
Blake Works, Inc.

Research

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Advisors

Roberto Olivardia, Ph.D.
Clinical Instructor of Psychology
Harvard Medical School
Co-author, *The Adonis Complex: The Secret
Crisis of Male Body Obsession*

Paula Rauch, M.D.
Chief, Child Psychiatry Consultation Service
Massachusetts General Hospital
Partners HealthCare
Co-author, *Raising An Emotionally Healthy
Child When A Parent Is Sick*

Howard J. Shaffer, Ph.D., C.A.S.
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Cambridge Health Alliance
Harvard Medical School

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