

Flipping the World

Drugs Through a Blue Lens



Inspired by the hit documentary **Through a Blue Lens**, **Flipping the World** is an astonishingly honest look at the world of youth and drug addiction, told by those who have been there.

A culturally diverse group of seven high school students meets with members of the Odd Squad — Vancouver police officers who, since 1998, have been filming people addicted to drugs. But this is no ordinary school anti-drug presentation. The students talk to the cops, then meet young people who are in recovery, and others still struggling with drug addiction. In the process, their views on drugs and the people who use them undergo important shifts. The students become more understanding and empathetic — and they reveal their own drug experiences.

An important discussion-starter, **Flipping the World** provides a wealth of teachable moments for educators and others who work with young people.

Suggested Audiences:

- Students age 13 and up
- Adults working with youth in the areas of education, health, addiction or justice
- Guidance, Health, Personal/Life Planning Programs
- Religious and Moral Education, Science, Family Studies, Social Issues Classes
- Alternative education programs, community youth groups and peer helping programs

A user's guide is printed on the inside of this videojacket.

Director: Moira Simpson

Producers: Gillian Darling Kovanic, George Johnson



30 minutes Order number: C9199 302
Closed captioned. A decoder is required.

TO ORDER NFB VIDEOS, CALL TODAY!

1-800-267-7710 (Canada) 1-800-542-2164 (USA)

www.nfb.ca/flipping

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National Film Board of Canada
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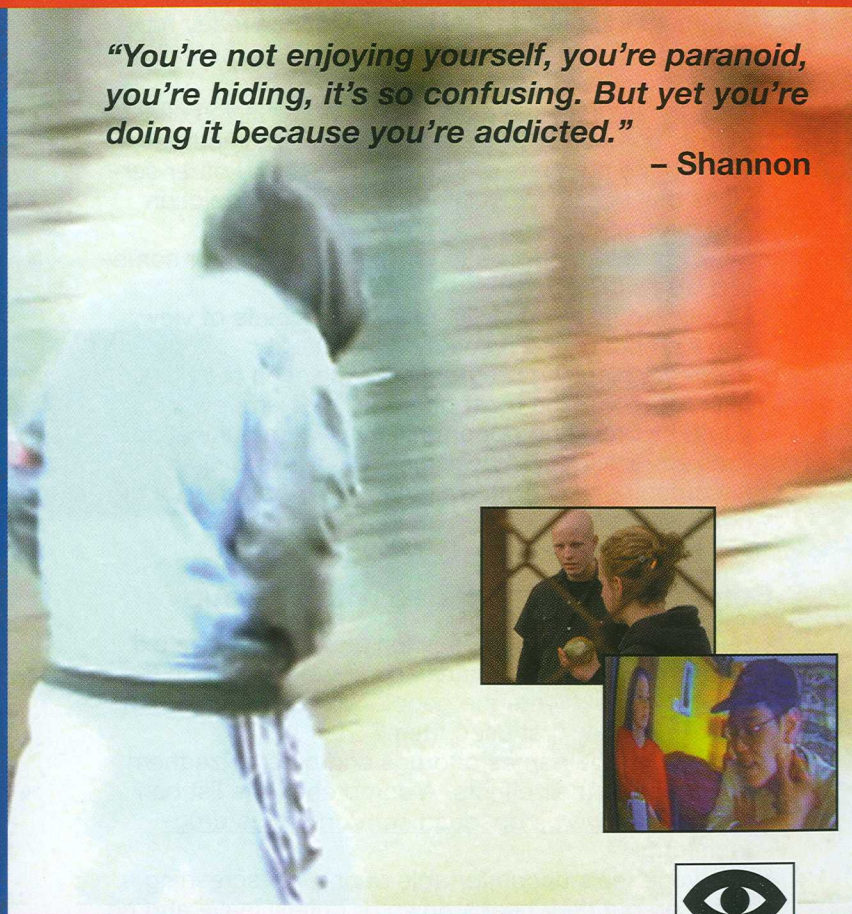
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"You're not enjoying yourself, you're paranoid, you're hiding, it's so confusing. But yet you're doing it because you're addicted."

— Shannon



VHS

C9199 302



A National Film Board of Canada Release

Flipping the World

- Previewing is essential. This video will have an emotional impact on the viewer and can be difficult for those close to someone with an addiction. Remember that at some point in their lives, most people will be affected by someone who has abused or is abusing a drug.
- It's important that the video be shown with a non-judgmental facilitator. The group should already have been introduced to the topic of drugs in a mutually respectful atmosphere.
- After the screening, young people may disclose their own or somebody else's drug usage. Be prepared with phone numbers of local help lines and other services that specialize in information about addiction and treatment.
- Never pressure anyone to disclose their own or somebody else's drug use.
- Use active listening skills, respect all points of view, show empathy and respect confidentiality.
- If you are planning drug-abuse prevention activities, remember that the most effective ones empower youth by providing opportunities for communication, problem-solving and decision-making, as well as encouraging assertiveness and positive strategies to cope with stress.

Before Viewing the Video with a Group

- Suggest the group notice when and in what context alcohol, tobacco and marijuana are mentioned in the video. How old were the people with drug dependencies when they first used them?
- Brainstorm the names of drugs and categorize them according to their effects. A comprehensive list can be found at www.oddsquad.com/drugfacts/drug-facts.htm
- If anyone feels uncomfortable during the screening, they can put their heads down or quietly leave and go to a designated place. Since the participants are not actors, watching the video can cause strong emotions.

Director:
Moira Simpson

Producers:
**Gillian Darling
Kovanic,
George Johnson**

Editor:
Debra Rurak

*Director of
Photography:*
Doug Sjoquist

*Additional
Cinematography:*
**Cst. Toby Hinton,
Moira Simpson**

*Downtown
Eastside Footage:*
**Daniel E. Mannix
The Odd Squad**

Group Facilitators:
**Cst. Al Arsenault,
Cst. Dave Kolb**

Music Composer:
Dennis Burke

Location Sound:
Lisa Kolisnyk

Inspired by:
**Through a Blue
Lens, directed by
Veronica Alice
Mannix**

Produced in
Association With:
**Odd Squad
Productions**

30 minutes

**Order number:
C9199 302**



After Viewing: De-Brief Feelings First

- Allow quiet time for viewers to write down their private responses.
- Before holding a group discussion, suggest that individuals share reactions with a partner.
- Ask the group to summarize feelings about the video, and make sure you acknowledge these feelings.
- Offer private support when necessary and provide helpful resources.

Commonly Asked Questions

Invite questions from the group: these are the openings for teachable moments. Be prepared with sources and allow time for group work and research.

- Why do people do drugs?
- How do drugs affect the body?
- How does recovery or drug detoxification work?
- Why didn't drug users' families stop or help them?
- If drug use is illegal, why didn't the police arrest the people in the video who have addictions?
- Can you get addicted the first time you try a drug?
- How can you tell when you have become addicted to a drug?
- Why do people have trouble stopping drug use?
- How can you help someone who is drug dependent?

Discussion Questions (written or oral responses)

- Which of the people in **Flipping the World** did you most relate to? Why?
- What consequences of short- and- long-term drug use are mentioned in the video?
- Talking about Jimmy, Justin says, "The fun kind of started stopping for him." How can people know when their drug use is out of control?
- Where can you go for help for yourself or for someone you are concerned about?
- Which drugs did Stephanie, Roger and Randy say they started with? How old were they and where were they when they first tried a drug? How did their addictions progress?
- If you could meet with one of the people in the video and talk to them, who would you choose?

- Mandy says she overdosed on Tylenol 3. Do you think there is a connection between the use of painkillers and illegal drugs? How about connections between tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs?

Further Activities

- Several people in the video who have drug addictions refer to various problems that led to their starting to use drugs. Brainstorm alternative ways to overcome problems like these.
- How do social influences, peer pressure and community standards affect whether or not young people use drugs?
- Create scenarios to role-play. Examples include at parties, in the park, and at fast-food outlets. Students can demonstrate and assess alternative ways to say no to drugs. Videotape these role-plays or perform them for peers.
- Study media messages aimed at youth and analyze how they may encourage or discourage drug use. Ask what key messages about drug abuse are being delivered by the media, the law, schools and parents about substance abuse. How are these messages similar or different?
- Have a discussion about what should and can be done to decrease drug addiction.
- Visit a location where people are helping those with addictions and interview staff or volunteers.
- Interview a police officer about the legal implications of drug use and trafficking.
- Create messages about drugs, or parody existing messages.
- Make a student video on the topic of addictions to show to younger students or peers.

Resources

NFB Videos

Confessions of a Rabid Dog (1997, 48 min, order #: C9197 073) A look at addiction through the stories of six people in recovery. (Ages 15 and up)

No Quick Fix (2000, 52 min, order #: C9199 217). A documentary about young drug users and their parents. (Ages 15 and up; some subtitles)

Through a Blue Lens (1999, 52 min, order #: C9199 117) Life among the drug-addicted on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. (Ages 15 and up)

Books

Saying No Is Not Enough: Helping Your Kids Make Wise Decisions about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs — A Guide for Parents of Children Ages 3 through 19 by Robert Schwebel. New York: Newmarket Press, 1998.

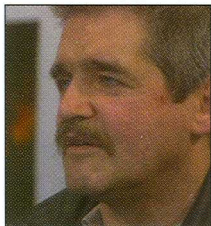
Step by Step: A Prevention Handbook on Alcohol & Other Drug Use. 1994, Kaiser Youth Foundation. A useful guide for parent groups, teachers and community groups, from a BC-based foundation.

Stop the Chaos: How to Get Control of Your Life by Beating Alcohol & Drugs, by Allen Tighe. Center City, MN: Hazelden Educational Press, 1999. (A workbook for youth.)

Substance Abuse Prevention Activities, by Patricia Rizzo Toner. Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1993. (For Grades 7 to 12.)

Web Sites

For a comprehensive listing of Web resources, please visit www.nfb.ca/flipping



Randy: "It carries on farther and farther, and you don't know you're there — but you're there."



Roger: "It cost me a real life because I started so young. I never learned how to deal with stress. I never learned how to deal with anger or depression."



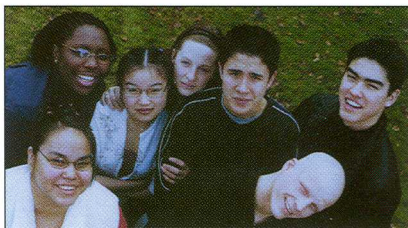
Stephanie: "I wasn't me anymore. I was a walking zombie. Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually... And I went to a payphone and I phoned my mom and I said, 'I need help.'"



Jimmy: "The drug is recruiting and everybody fits the bill... If you give it the chance it'll take you."



Shannon: "You're not enjoying yourself — you're paranoid, you're hiding, it's so confusing. But yet you're doing it because you're addicted."



Clockwise, from left: Dannella, Candice, Mandy, Erin, Justin, Rory, Leif.