Stop, Make A Change.

Toolbox Talk: Drug Driving – Don't Put Drugs in the Driving Seat

Duration: 10 minutes

Audience: All Site Operatives & Staff

Purpose: Raise awareness of drug driving and the potential implications to the individual, their future career, friends and family etc

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1. Introduction (1 minute)

Opening message:

Good morning and thank you for taking the time to stop for this important talk.

Everyday, thousands of people drive to and from work believing they're safe to drive. But feeling ok isn't the same as being safe to drive, today we're taking about how drug driving could cost someone their licence, their livelihood, and in the worst cases, someone's life.

This isn't just about being caught by site management or stopped by the police – it's about protecting your job, your family, your colleagues, other site workers and other road users.

THINK! Don't put drugs in the driving seat.

Key point:

- Many construction workers drive cars, vans, pickups or company vehicles as part of their role.
- A drug-driving conviction can have serious consequences both at work and at home.

Video: Don't put drugs in the driving seat (Cocaine)

Don't put drugs in the driving seat (Weed)

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2. Why Are We Talking About This? (1 minute)

Share the facts:

- Drug-driving convictions are at record levels

- Between 2014 and 2023, there was a 70% increase in driver fatalities where drugs were present
- Police are carrying out more roadside drug tests than ever before.

If you are caught and convicted of drug driving, you could face at least a 12-month driving ban.

Ask the group:

"Who here relies on their driving licence to get to work or do their job?"

(Use responses to reinforce the importance of the topic.)

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3. Common Myths About Drug Driving (2 minutes)

Myth 1: "I feel fine, so I'm OK to drive."

Reality:

- Drugs can affect reaction times, concentration and judgement, even if you don't feel impaired.
- Feeling 'fine' does not mean you're safe to drive.
- There are also limits for driving on legal drugs such as prescription medicines. It is an offence to drive if these impair your driving in any way, so always talk to your doctor about whether it is safe to drive and take any medication as directed.

Myth 2: "The effects have worn off by the next day."

Reality:

- Some drugs remain detectable in the body long after the immediate highs have disappeared.
- You may still fail a roadside/evidential (police station) drug test later, even if you feel fit to drive.

Myth 3: "Cannabis isn't as serious as drink-driving."

Reality:

- There is a zero-tolerance approach to drug driving in England, Scotland and Wales
- Cannabis significantly affects driving ability and can result in the same serious legal consequences as other drugs.

Myth 4: "The chances of getting caught are low."

Reality:

- Police roadside testing is increasing.
- Enforcement activity means the likelihood of detection is higher than many drivers think.

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4. The Consequences of Drug Driving (3 minutes)

Legal Consequences

A drug-driving conviction can result in:

- Minimum 12-month driving ban
- Criminal record
- Fine and court costs
- Up to 6 months in prison
- Increased insurance costs
- Possible travel restrictions abroad

Work-Related Consequences

For construction workers this could mean:

- Inability to drive company vehicles
- Loss of site access where a licence is required
- Disciplinary action
- Risk of losing your job
- Reduced future employment opportunities

Personal Consequences

- Loss of income
- Difficulties getting family members to school, appointments or activities
- Increased dependence on others for transport
- Financial pressure on households

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5. Why This Matters on Our Site (2 minutes)

Discuss site-specific risks:

- Many workers travel significant distances to site each day.
- Some employees drive vans, pickups or plant transport vehicles.
- Drug-impaired driving puts colleagues, other road users and the public at risk.

Safety message:

"The decisions we make before getting in a vehicle can affect not only our own lives but also the lives of our workmates and members of the public."

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6. Key Takeaways and Close (1 minute)

Remember:

- Feeling OK does not mean you are safe to drive.
- Some drugs can remain detectable long after the immediate effects wear off.
- Police enforcement is increasing.
- Losing your licence could mean losing your livelihood.
- The risk is not worth it.

Closing Message

THINK! Don't Put Drugs in the Driving Seat.

"If you're unsure whether a substance could affect your ability to drive, don't take the risk. Protect yourself, your licence, your job and everyone around you."

Supervisor Discussion Question

"What impact would losing your driving licence for 12 months have on your work and home life?"

Allow a few responses to reinforce the personal consequences of drug driving.

Further information

Further information from THINK! can be found via this link, including posters (Welsh Language versions available):

Conversation Starters

1. “Could you afford to lose your licence for at least one year?”

Why it works: Construction workers often rely on a vehicle to get to multiple sites, transport tools, or drive company vehicles.

Discussion prompt:

"If you lost your licence tomorrow for (at least) 12 months, what would that mean for your job, your income and your family?"

Key message:

Drug driving doesn’t just risk a criminal conviction – it can cost you your licence, your job, your income and being able to support the people who rely on you.

2. “How long do you think drugs stay in your system?”

Why it works: Challenges the common misconception that feeling fine means being safe to drive.

Discussion prompt:

"If someone used drugs at the weekend and felt completely normal on Monday morning, do you think they could still fail a roadside drug test?"

Key message: Many drugs remain detectable long after the immediate effects have worn off. Feeling fine doesn't guarantee you're safe to drive.

3. “What would happen if the police stopped you on your way to site tomorrow?”

Why it works: Makes enforcement feel real and relevant.

Discussion prompt:

"Police are carrying out more roadside drug tests than ever. If you were stopped on the way to work tomorrow and tested positive, what could that mean for your job and future opportunities?"

Key message If you need your licence for work, losing it could mean losing your ability to get on site, drive company vehicles and continue in your role.

4. **"How would you feel if you or someone you cared about was injured by a drug driver?"**

Why it works: Makes it personal

Discussion prompt:

"The decisions we make before getting in a vehicle can affect not only our own lives but also the lives of our workmates and members of the public."

Key message:

Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Closing Line

" What might seem like one small decision could cost you your licence, your livelihood and your future. Is it really worth the risk?"

THINK! Don't put drugs in the driving seat.