

# Addiction & Truancy

English for Teachers B, Autumn 2023

## Warm-up

What is the difference between a habit and an addiction?

Are the following addictions really possible? Are they dangerous in any way?

My son's addicted to football. It's like a drug to him!

I'm a shopaholic! I can't resist buying clothes.

I'm a chocaholic! I can't live a day without it.

I'm a webaholic! I spend all days on the net.

(adapted from *Taboos and Issues*, LTP, 2001, p. 40)

With your group list as many other addictions as you can.

## Vocabulary practice

Look at the words in the box and put them in the correct sentence. You might need to change the form of these words (e.g. present to past).

<i>be addicted to</i>	<i>addict</i>	<i>overcome an addiction</i>
<i>seek professional help</i>	<i>addictive</i>	<i>get withdrawal symptoms</i>
<i>kick the habit</i>	<i>take an overdose</i>	<i>be hooked on</i>

1. She was rushed to hospital after accidentally \_\_\_\_\_ of sleeping pills.
2. When he realised he was \_\_\_\_\_ alcohol, he decided to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. When he wasn't able to get hold of any drugs for a few days, he started to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Gambling can become \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A lot of people want to give up smoking, but it's very difficult to \_\_\_\_\_.
6. She's a shopaholic. She tried to \_\_\_\_\_, but it's hard to break the habit.
7. A lot of people \_\_\_\_\_ their smartphones these days.
8. He's a real television \_\_\_\_\_.

## Addiction at school

Watch [this student](#) talking about his addiction and decide if the following are true (T) or false (F).

1. The speaker started drinking and smoking weed because he had a hard time at school.
2. When using oxycodone, the speaker argued with his family and friends a lot.
3. When the speaker used heroin, he was expelled from school.
4. The speaker has never tried rehab.
5. He went to the treatment centre in February, 2005.
6. He didn't get enough attention in the centre.
7. These days, he has a very good relationship with his family.
8. He has been sober for 4 years.

## Addiction in Czech children

With a partner, discuss the following questions:

1. How common is addiction in Czech children and young people?
2. Which addictions do you think are the most common among the Czech youth?
3. What do you think are the factors that contribute to addiction in young people?

Now walk around the classroom, search for the information and write it into the table below:

Question no.	Answer
1.	
2.	
3.	

## What can I do as a teacher? (group discussion)

Work in groups of 3-4 students and discuss the following questions and be ready to share your ideas with the class:

1. What could teachers do to prevent addiction from starting?
2. What could parents do to help?
3. In your future classroom (as a teacher), if your student is drunk in class, what will you do?

Write a list of possible recommendations for other groups. Use phrases such as:

I think you could...

It's possible/important/ to...

If I found out that... I would...

I would advise you to...

As a teacher, you could/might...

## New vocabulary

## Truancy

### Warm-up

Work with a partner and answer the following questions:

What do pupils/students do when they play truant?

What do you think are the causes of truancy?

What do you think are the consequences (= results) of truancy?

### Unexcused absences - video

**Before you watch the video, look at the following words and match them with their definitions:**

1. compassionate
2. sentence
3. court
4. dismiss
5. conviction

- a) in court - the act of finding somebody guilty of a crime
- b) feeling or showing sympathy for people or animals who are suffering
- c) the place where legal trials take place and where crimes, among others, are judged
- d) the punishment given by a court
- e) to say that a trial or legal case should not continue, usually because there is not enough evidence

Notes:

Compulsory Education Act = a legal document (in the USA) requiring all children of a certain age to attend school

misdemeanor = a crime that is considered not very serious (such as shoplifting, drunk driving or vandalism)

deferred sentence = a sentence that has a probation period (the person doesn't go to prison if they behave well for a certain period of time)

**Watch [the video](#) and answer the questions:**

Questions:

1. Who is responsible for making sure that children attend school?
  - A. The children themselves
  - B. The school administrators
  - C. The parents
  - D. The state government
  
2. What happens if a child has 10 or more unexcused absences per semester?
  - A. The child is expelled from school.
  - B. The child's parents are fined.
  - C. The child is required to repeat a class.
  - D. The child's parents may find themselves in truancy court.
  
3. Why did Mary skip school last year?
  - A. She didn't like Physical Education classes.
  - B. Her classmates skipped school as well.
  - C. She was bored in school and found it useless.
  - D. Her classmates bullied her.
  
4. What is the punishment for violating the compulsory education act?
  - A. A fine of a few hundred dollars.
  - B. A criminal charge on the parent's record.
  - C. Up to 5 days in jail for the first conviction.
  - D. All of the above.
  
5. What percentage of cases in Tulsa County's truancy court end with a charge dismissed or a deferred sentence?
  - A. 20%
  - B. 50%
  - C. 80%
  - D. 100%
  
6. What is the purpose of filing truancy charges?
  - A. To punish parents for their children's behaviour.
  - B. To get children educated.
  - C. To make money for the state government.
  - D. To get parents to switch schools.
  
7. What is the preferred approach of school administrators to dealing with truancy?
  - A. Filing truancy charges.
  - B. Working with parents and students directly.
  - C. Expelling students who skip class.
  - D. None of the above.

Do you agree that taking parents to truancy court is a good solution to the problem? Discuss with a partner.

## Vocabulary building

### What are the consequences of truancy?

Truancy brings consequences for the students, his or her peers, and his or her family. Consequences of truancy in the UK include the following. Children who skip school don't do as well in tests, assessments and exams. The truant gains a reputation for 1) \_\_\_\_\_ and disinterest. Being out of school during school hours gives your child time to 2) \_\_\_\_\_ - and research has shown that this can lead to criminal or 3) \_\_\_\_\_ behaviour. A parent who is responsible for their child could get a penalty notice (must pay a 4) \_\_\_\_\_) or even face prosecution.

1. A) disbehaviour      B) misbehaviour      C) unbehaviour
2. A) kill                      B) save                      C) have
3. A) social                      B) socialized              C) antisocial
4. A) fee                      B) fine                      C) bill

### How to prevent truancy?

Watch [the video](#) (1:50-3:30) and answer the questions with a partner.

Apart from low credits, what else happened to Beto because of the truancy?

How many unexcused absences does it take before the school will file a petition in court?

What are the possible consequences for the student and the parent if it goes to court?

### How can students prevent truancy?

Truancy is a problem that teachers, parents and the government are working hard to 1) \_\_\_\_\_. Students can play a part in preventing truancy by: never playing truant; advising their friends against truancy; offering to help truants who are returning to the classroom; stepping in to stop bullying; encouraging others to join clubs and sports and become involved at school; talking to school staff. Truancy is a problem that results in thousands of British students 2) \_\_\_\_\_ school every day. These absences disrupt not just the truant's education, but the education of every pupil in every class affected by truancy. Don't let truancy take hold in your school.

1. A) fight              B) struggle      C) hit
2. A) attending      B) leaving      C) missing

### How can schools, social educators and teachers help?

Now watch [the video](#) (3:30-4:25) and answer the questions with a partner.

How are the truancy workshops trying to solve the issue of truancy?

What are some of the reasons they mention for children playing truant?

How could the student and their parents have the court petition dismissed?

## New vocabulary

