psychological dependence — A craving or compulsion for repeated use of a drug despite any adverse effects which may occur.
sedatives — Drugs used to induce calmness.
tolerance — A process involving the body’s lessening response to a drug, making it necessary for users to take higher doses of the drug to achieve the same effects once reached with lower doses.
withdrawal — Symptoms of illness that occur when an addict discontinues use of a drug. Withdrawal from tranquilizers and other depressants can produce anxiety, illusions, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, seizures and death.

Discussion Topics
• Describe the physical effects of tranquilizer use. What are the dangers of mixing tranquilizers with other drugs?
• Discuss the psychological and social consequences of tranquilizer addiction. List the places where a person can find support if he or she is experiencing problems.
• Blackouts and amnesia from drug and alcohol use make sexual assaults a very real possibility, with the victim either unaware of what happened, or too ashamed to admit it. Brainstorm ways that students can protect themselves and their friends when they are out at a club.

Follow-up Activities
• The execution of criminals who receive the death penalty is accomplished by lethal injection in many states. Have students research the drugs used in such injections.
• Have students create a poster showing the cycle of addiction. Use a large circle to represent the ongoing cycle of any addiction and illustrate the stages of tranquilizer addiction around the circle.
• In peer discussion groups, have students share strategies for keeping themselves drug-free.

Suggested Internet Resources
Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

www.acde.org
The American Council for Drug Education site offers an extensive library of substance abuse education and prevention information for kids and adults.

www.clubdrugs.org
A NIDA companion web site designed to educate the public on the dangers of club drugs, including Rohypnol.

For help with a drug problem, call 1-800-662-HELP or go to: www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

TEACHER’S GUIDE
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COMPLETE LIST OF TITLES

• ALCOHOL & ALCOHOLISM
• ALCOHOL: TEENAGE DRINKING
• CLUB DRUGS
• COCAINE & CRACK
• HALLUCINOGENS
• HEROIN & OTHER OPIATES
• INHALANTS

• MARIJUANA
• METHAMPHETAMINE & OTHER STIMULANTS
• STEROIDS
• TEENAGE DEPRESSION & SUICIDE
• TRANQUILIZERS & OTHER DEPRESSANTS

Teacher’s Guides Included and Available Online at: libraryvideo.com

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Before Viewing the Program
Engage the group with the following discussion points before viewing the program. Brainstorm a list of responses and record them on the chalkboard or flipchart. After viewing the video, refer to the list and add or revise if necessary.

- Why do people use drugs?
- What is addiction?
- Do you know of someone who is addicted to drugs? What is his or her life like?
- Is there a type of person more likely to become addicted to drugs?
- What is your image of a drug addict?
- Where can a person find support if they are experiencing problems?

Background
Depressants are drugs that slow down the normal activity of the brain and spinal cord. (In other words, they ‘depress’ the central nervous system.) They have been used throughout history to induce sleep, relieve stress and reduce anxiety. While alcohol is one of the oldest and most universal depressants used for these purposes, hundreds of substances have been developed that produce central nervous system (CNS) depression. Most depressants are prescription drugs given by doctors to treat pain or other health problems like anxiety disorders or to provide short-term relief of anxiety symptoms. They are legal when taken by the person for whom the prescription was written. Other depressants can be purchased without a prescription (over the counter) in drugstores. Because of the availability of these drugs, they are often abused. The word ‘downer’ is slang for this large group of drugs that come in pill and capsule form and are illegally obtained by theft, illegal prescriptions and the illicit market. Two groups of depressants most commonly abused are barbiturates and benzodiazepines.

Barbiturates were first developed for medical use in the early 1900s. Until the 1960s, they were widely prescribed for anxiety and insomnia. Accidental death by overdose, depression, suicide and other serious side effects when barbiturates were used with other drugs or alcohol led scientists to pursue another type of drug that was not so dangerous.

Benzodiazepines were first marketed in the 1960s as a class of drug that was safer and less addicting than barbiturates. Valium is a trade name for diazepam, a commonly prescribed benzodiazepine used for short-term relief of symptoms of anxiety disorders, agitation, tremors, delirium, seizures and hallucinations as a result of alcohol withdrawal. It was once the most prescribed drug in the United States. Xanax is the trade name of another commonly prescribed benzodiazepine.

(Continued)