

HEALTHY CHOICES LESSON PLAN

OBJECTIVE:

In this lesson students will learn the various ways drug use/abuse can be prevented by making healthy choices. They will identify the biggest concerns they have about drug use/abuse, develop ideas for how to solve the drug use/abuse problem, and learn some positive ways to refuse drugs if they are offered to them.

LESSON STEPS:

Healthy choices make happy people, bettering kids' self-esteem and resiliency.

Lead a discussion about why some kids choose to use drugs. Some possible reasons could be:

- They think using drugs makes them seem cool.
- They have low self-esteem and are afraid to say no to their peers.

Is there a difference between drug use and drug abuse? Is it okay to use drugs if you don't abuse them? Have a discussion about how *using* drugs can eventually lead to *abusing* drugs.

Discuss with students the difference between "street" drugs and "prescription" drugs.

Give them the opportunity to define these two terms in their own words.

Is it illegal to use "street" drugs? When is it illegal or dangerous to use "prescription" drugs? (when they're someone else's prescription or when someone is selling them illegally). Can using drugs lead to lying? stealing? damaged health? depression? accidents? What are the students' biggest concerns about drug use/abuse?

Honest education, rather than scare tactics, is the key to solving the drug use/abuse problem. Help students identify ways healthy choices can be learned through education.

Lead student discussion about whether it is stronger to say "no," "maybe," or "later" if someone offers them drugs. Why is "no" a stronger statement than "maybe" or "later?" Help them come up with reasons to refuse, based on what their biggest concerns about drug use/abuse are. For example:

"No thank you, underage drinking is illegal;" "No, cigarettes cause cancer."

Have students discuss ways they can refuse drugs by changing the situation rather than by saying “no.” They can:

- Change the subject: “Did you see the new movie that came out?”
- Change the person they’re talking to: “I see John over there. I need to ask him something.”
- Change their location: “I’ve got to go and meet John.”

And by using the “I” word, they can let the person offering drugs know it’s not about them but rather a personal choice: “I don’t want to be a smoker.”

Have students come up with an Exit Plan they can use if they find themselves in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation.

For example, they can call a parent and use a pre-arranged code phrase, such as “Did I leave my iPod at home?” which means, “Come and get me!” Let students use their imagination and have fun coming up with ideas for getting out of a bad situation.

VOCABULARY

The following terms should be pre-taught and discussed to ensure students understand these concepts

Drug Use

Abuse

Self-esteem

Street drugs

Prescription drugs