

Healthy hints help: Safety rules

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

1. Expand practices that provide safety for self and others.
2. Describe and demonstrate ways to assist with the safety of others.
3. Demonstrate effective decision-making, focusing on careful information gathering by
 - identifying safe ways of handling and taking medicines
 - educating others about important safety procedures concerning medicines

CONTENT AND TIME (45-MINUTE LESSON)

- 4.1 Opening activity: Describing drug decisions (10 minutes)
- 4.2 Samples of safety (10 minutes)
- 4.3 Medicine mobiles (20 minutes)
- 4.4 Review: What have we learned (5 minutes)

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Handout 4.2: Samples of safety

Handout 4.3: Medicine mobiles

Chart paper

Coat hangers

String

Crayons/pencil crayons/felts

Coloured construction paper (optional)

4.1 Opening activity: Describing drug decisions (10 minutes)

Have the class refer to HANDOUT 3.3. Read through the questions(s) given during the previous lesson and provide an opportunity for the students to discuss the ideas they recorded. Encourage everyone to listen carefully to responses and to record any new ideas. Try to elicit the following suggested answers:

1. Many drugs are medicines and are meant to heal specific conditions or illnesses. Does that mean that it is always safe to take medicine? Why or why not?

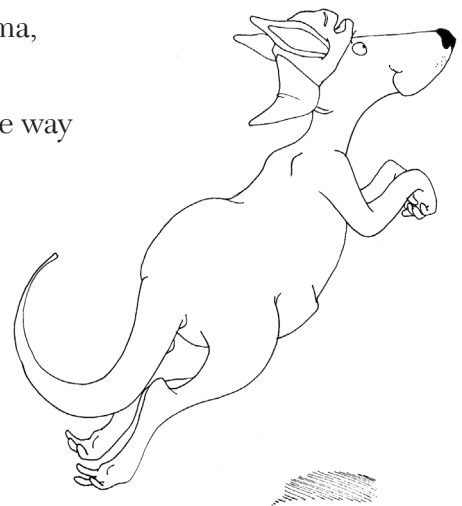
Suggested answers:

- No, the medicine was recommended by the doctor for your friend, not for you.
- Your body makeup is different from your friend's.
- Using medicine your body does not require could be very dangerous.
- You should have your parent's permission before taking any kind of drug.

2. Many drugs are legal for adults to buy, such as cigarettes, alcohol and cannabis. Does that mean that these drugs will not harm a person? Why or why not?

Suggested answers:

- There are many products sold that do not promote healthy living.
- Tobacco products are directly related to health problems such as lung cancer, emphysema, chronic bronchitis and strokes.
- Alcohol is also a drug and will change the way a person's body and mind functions.
- People under the influence of alcohol may make poor choices and/or behave poorly.
- Just because a drug is legal does not make it safe.



4.2 Samples of safety

(10 minutes)

Have a brainstorming session about safety procedures concerning prescription and non-prescription drugs. Ask the class to create a list of rules for safely storing, handling, taking and disposing of medicines. Record responses on chart paper for reference in the next activity. The following are some examples the students may offer: keep drugs away from small children, only take medicines that are prescribed for you by a doctor or given to you by a parent, always read the labels of medicines you take and do not take more than the recommended amount. Next, distribute a copy of HANDOUT 4.2 to all students. Have the students compare their suggestions with this list and discuss important points missed.

4.3 Medicine mobiles

(20 minutes)

As an extension to the brainstorming activity (and one that may require more time than is allotted for this lesson), have the students create medicine safety mobiles to display at school and/or home. This will enable them to share important information with others. Distribute copies of HANDOUT 4.3. Ask the students to record important safety rules on the shapes provided or on shapes they design themselves. For example:

- A safety rule concerning a doctor or parent could be written on one of the people shapes.
- A safety rule about dosage could be written on a bottle or pill shape.
- The rectangular shape could be used to record a rule about prescriptions or labels.
- A safety rule about disposal could be written on the garbage can shape.
- The stop sign shape could be used to record a safety rule about not accepting medicine from anyone other than a doctor, a pharmacist or a parent.

Once the students have written their safety rules, ask them to cut out and decorate their work. You may also ask that the students mount their mobile shapes on coloured construction paper for durability. To complete this activity, have the students attach their shapes to a coat hanger using string.

If there is not enough time to complete this activity, the students could finish their mobile during another class or as a homework assignment. You might also consider extending this activity. To help the students understand their role in educating others about safe practices for storing, handling, taking and disposing of medicines, provide time for them to display their safety mobiles to another class before displaying them at school and/or at home.

4.4 Review: **What we have learned** (5 minutes)

Have volunteers show the work they have completed on their mobiles by reading aloud one or two safety rules and explaining the reasons for their choice(s). You may also want to emphasize the importance of discussing this information about drug safety with others.

Review the expectations of this activity if it is assigned for homework.



Samples of safety

1. Use drugs only when necessary.
2. Only take medicines that are prescribed for you by a doctor or given to you by a parent.
3. Only take your medicine in the presence of a parent. If this is not possible, make sure you practice with a parent how to take your medicine safely and responsibly.
4. Never take drugs from a stranger or a friend.
5. Never share your medicines with anyone.
6. Always read the labels of medicines you take and follow the directions carefully.
7. Do not take more than the recommended amount.
8. Never take different drugs at the same time, unless recommended by your doctor.
9. If you forget to take your medicine, do not double your next dose; ask your doctor what you should do.
10. Always keep medicine in its original container with the original label for directions.
11. Never take medicine from an unlabeled container – throw it out if you do not know what it is.
12. All medicines have an expiry date – do not take medicine that has gone past the expiry date.
13. When throwing medicine away, take it to your pharmacist for proper disposal.
14. Always keep drugs out of reach of a young child.
15. Do not take medicine in front of young children, as they may think it is candy.
16. Never take medicine in the dark.

Medicine mobiles

