



Poison Prevention Education Teaching Plan for Early Elementary (1st-3rd grade)

Teaching Objectives

1. Enable the student to identify potentially hazardous substances, their different forms, and how they should be safely stored.
2. Help students acquire safe habits that will provide self protection including an understanding of the need to “Always Ask First.”
3. Help students understand that they still require help from adults for some activities, but can be independent on other activities.
4. Reach parents with information about poison prevention and what to do in an emergency through take-home materials.
5. Increase awareness of the West Virginia Poison Center and the services it provides.

Key Concepts

1. Anything can be a poison if not used correctly. One can be poisoned by eating, drinking, touching, or inhaling a potential poison.
2. It is unwise and often dangerous to eat or drink anything that one is not sure is safe. Something that looks good or harmless may be poisonous. Always ask first!
3. Medicine is not candy. Medicine can make you sick if taken at the wrong time or in the wrong amount. Only adults give medicine.
4. There are many dangerous items throughout the home, including the yard and garage.
5. Call the West Virginia Poison Center in case of a poisoning.

Note: Teaching instructions are italicized.

Introductions

If the students are unfamiliar with you, tell them a little about yourself.

Hi, I am _____. I am a volunteer for the West Virginia Poison Center and I currently work for _____. *You may add anything else you would like them to know about you.*

Have you ever been poisoned? *If they answer no, ask: Have you ever been stung by a bee? If they answer yes, then say: Then you have been poisoned.*

Do you know that there is a West Virginia Poison Center? The West Virginia Poison Center helps you if you ever get poisoned or have questions about poisons.

Today we are going to learn about poisons and how to keep you safe from these poisons. Learning about poisons and how to protect yourself and your family can prevent poisonings from happening.

What would you do?

You see a jar in the bathroom that looks like it has candy in it. Do you eat the candy or do you ask a grown-up before touching the jar?

You are cleaning your room and want to help by washing the windows. You find a spray bottle under the kitchen sink. Would you use the spray bottle and hope it cleans the window or would you leave the bottle alone and ask an adult to help you wash the windows?

You and some friends are playing outside and find some bright red berries on a bush. They look like they would be okay to eat. Would you pick the berries and eat them or would you remember that you should never eat berries you find outside?

Your older sister offers you some of her medicine when you aren't feeling well. Would you take the medicine or would you tell an adult you aren't feeling well and ask for medicine from them?

These are hard questions, aren't they? Let's talk a little about poisons so we can find out the right answers to these questions.

What is a Poison?

What is a poison?

Many things can be poisonous if not used correctly. Even items that you've used before can hurt you if they are not used right. Poisons can make you sick by touching, tasting, drinking, or smelling them. Poisons come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. They may even look like things you like, such as juice or candy. So, anything can be a potential poison.

Flashcards of potentially poisonous items can be used. Ask the children if the item is safe. You can even have containers or baskets to separate the poisons and non-poisons. Containers of potential poisons can also be used, but make sure they do not have poisonous items left in them.

Where are poisons found?

Where can you find poisons?

Poisons can be found almost anywhere. Each room of your house may have poisons in it, including the garage and yard. This is why it is important to always ask an adult before you touch or put anything in your mouth.

Pictures of different areas of the house, including the garage and yard can be used by asking children to name potentially poisonous items that may be found in each area.

Types of Poisons

Poisons can come in many forms: solids, liquids, sprays, or gases.

Here is an example of solid poisons—plants. Plants are sometimes poisonous and can be found in your house and in your yard. Some plants are even poisonous just by touching them, such as poison ivy. Even berries you may think are edible are not. Even if you see animals eating these plants and berries, do not touch them and do not put them in your mouth.

Many poisonous items are kept in the garage. Many of these items are liquids. Never touch, eat or drink anything that is found in the garage, even if it looks like it is a food or drink. Some people put poisonous items in food containers, like cups and pop bottles. You should ask your parents not to do this, but just in case, you should always ask first before touching, eating or drinking something.

Some poisons are even invisible, like carbon monoxide gas. This poison can not be seen or smelled and can come from running cars inside the garage or items not working properly, like gas stoves and ovens. It is important to have a carbon monoxide detector in your home to keep everyone safe.

You may want to have some examples of the above mentioned poisons. You can also have other examples of solid, liquid, and spray poisons, but be sure these examples are not actually harmful.

Safe Medicine

Show candy that looks like medicine in a medicine bottle or a plastic bag full.

Would you eat candy that looks like this? Can you tell if this is medicine or candy? You should always ask an adult before eating something. This medicine looks a lot like candy, doesn't it?

Sometimes medicine is needed to keep you healthy and safe, but you should only take medicine or vitamins from grown-ups you trust. Never take medicine by yourself.

Some medicine may look like candy, so always ask an adult before you eat anything, even if you think it is candy.

If you take too much medicine or vitamins, it can make you sick.

Reading Labels

Most products come with labels on their containers. The labels give directions on how to use the product correctly. These instructions help us stay safe. It is important to always read the label before using a product or have your parents read the label. Therefore, it is important to keep all items in their original containers with their original labels.

Where should poisons be kept?

Poisons should be kept locked up and out of reach of children. This is especially important if any of you have younger brothers or sisters. Little kids are curious and could easily get into a poison they are not supposed to touch if it is easy for them to reach. It is important to help teach your younger siblings to "always ask first" before touching, eating or drinking anything.

What if someone may have been poisoned?

What would you do if you found someone touching, eating or drinking a poison?

You should immediately tell an adult and call the West Virginia Poison Center. The phone number is 1-800-222-1222. All of our stickers and brochures have the number on them. Be sure that your family has the number. It helps you remember about the poison center if you put our sticker on or near the phone.

What would you do now?

Now that you have learned about poisons, let's go back over our "What would you do" questions.

You see a jar in the bathroom that looks like it has candy in it. Do you eat the candy or do you ask a grown-up before touching the jar?

Good, you should always ask an adult before touching, eating or drinking anything. The "candy" could really be medicine that looks like candy.

You are cleaning your room and want to help by washing the windows. You find a spray bottle under the kitchen sink. Would you use the spray bottle and hope it cleans the window or would you leave the bottle alone and ask an adult to help you wash the windows?

Good, you should always ask an adult before touching, eating, or drinking anything. An adult can help you read the label on the cleaner and help you use it correctly.

You and some friends are playing outside and find some bright red berries on a bush. They look like they would be okay to eat. Would you pick the berries and eat them or would you remember that you should never eat berries you find outside?

Good, you should never eat berries you find outside unless given to you by an adult you know and trust. Even if you see birds or animals eating them, they can still be a poison to you.

Your older sister offers you some of her medicine when you aren't feeling well. Would you take the medicine or would you tell an adult you aren't feeling well and ask for medicine from them?

Good, you should only take medicine from an adult you trust. Your sister may be trying to help you, but adults know how much you are supposed to take and whether the medicine is safe for you.