



## Poison Prevention Education Teaching Plan for Early Childhood

### Teaching Objectives

1. Enable the student to identify potentially hazardous substances in the home.
2. Help students acquire safe habits that will provide self protection including an understanding of the need to “Always Ask First.”
3. Reach parents with information about poison prevention and what to do in an emergency through take-home materials.
4. 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.

### Always Ask First Skit

*Introduce two characters, Jake and Katie. These characters can be puppets or stuffed animals if you have these available. Real props lead to greater effectiveness. Try using a juice bottle and household cleaner container with colored water for effect. However, pictures work as well.*

Jake and Katie are hungry and thirsty. Mom is busy cleaning the bathroom, so Jake and Katie go into the kitchen where Jake finds the groceries Mom bought earlier still on the counter. Jake pulls down two containers that both look like juice. Jake is having trouble telling if there is a difference between the two bottles other than the picture. Jake goes to open one of the bottles, but Katie stops him.

Should Jake and Katie open the bottle they think is the juice and drink part of the bottle?

Do you think both bottles are juice?

What else could the bottle be?

What should Jake and Katie do?

What would you do?

Katie remembers Mom saying never touch, eat or drink something if they aren't sure what it is. Katie decides they should find Mom and ask her for a glass of juice.

Jake and Katie did the right thing. One of the bottles was actually a cleaning product that could have poisoned them if they drank part of it. You should always ask an adult before touching, eating or drinking anything. Sometimes good and bad things look alike, like juice and something an adult may use to clean. *Show juice and cleaning product, if possible.*

### 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. 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?

- Medicine cabinet
- garage
- kitchen and bathroom cabinets
- cleaning cabinet
- plants around the house (inside and out)

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.

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

*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.*

## Safe Medicine

Certain things can make you feel better, but if you take too much of it, it can be poisonous. Like medicine.

Sometimes medicine is needed to keep you healthy and safe, but you should only take medicine or vitamins from a grown-up you trust. If you take too much medicine or vitamins, it can make you sick.

Some medicine may look like candy, so always ask an adult before you eat anything. Never take medicine by yourself.

*Show candy that looks like medicine in a medicine bottle or travel plastic bag of candy that looks like medicine.*

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?

## Mr. Yuk

*Hold up Mr. Yuk. Who is this? What does it mean?*

Mr. Yuk is a sticker that can be placed on poisons to remind you not to touch, eat or drink the item. It would be a good idea for Jake and Katie's mom to use Mr. Yuk stickers. Today you will get some Mr. Yuk stickers to take home and help your parents put on poisonous things around the house. This will help you to remember what poisons are in your house.

## 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 they can 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 for your parents to learn.

## Games

### Like "Duck, Duck, Goose"

*Have children sit in a circle. While patting the children's heads name non-poisonous items, then say a potential poison as you tap one child's head. That child should get up and tag you before you get back to his/her open spot. If you are not tagged, he/she should go to the middle of the circle for the rest of the game.*

### Fishing Game

*Use poisonous and non-poisonous item pictures on index cards. Draw a fish on the other side of the card. Use a large paper clip, such as a butterfly paper clip on the card. Make a fishing pole out of a stick and string with a magnet on the end of the string. Have the children fish a card and then decide if it is safe or poisonous.*

### Poison Hunt

*Place empty potential poisons and non-poisons throughout the classroom, or use pictures of items. The children should point out poisons, without touching them. The items should then be placed in two piles by the teacher: "Poison" and "Not Poison."*