

Life Skills and Healthy Choices for Middle School Students

Curriculum Overview

Designed for:

- Middle school students (grades six through eight)

Length:

This 11- to 13-hour curriculum is comprised of 15 lessons. With supplemental materials, this curriculum can be adapted to a longer block of time. You can also select individual lessons or activities to use in your current curriculum.

Goal:

The goal of this program is twofold: To help students realize the importance of waiting to engage in sexual activity, and thereby delay becoming a parent until they are emotionally, financially, psychologically, and socially ready to take on the demands of parenting; and second, to introduce the skills needed to make healthy choices during adolescence.

Synopsis:

The purpose of the *Life Skills and Healthy Choices for Middle School Students Curriculum* is to provide a high-quality pregnancy prevention program at the middle school level, giving learners the skills they need to make healthy choices regarding sexual activity before they reach the typical age for dating. When used in conjunction with RealCare Baby® infant simulators, this program will teach students how to make healthy decisions regarding their current and future health and wellbeing.

Curriculum Components:

- Curriculum
- Student materials
- Slide presentations

Learning Objectives:

Lesson 1 – Changes, Puberty, and Adolescence

- Understand the difference between human and animal reproduction
- Understand that puberty is a time of life that results in physical changes in the body
- Understand that adolescence is a time of life that results in mental, emotional, and social changes in a person

Lesson 2 – The Human Reproductive System

- Understand the basic structure of the male and female reproductive systems

Lesson 3 – Does the Media Affect My Sexual Decision-Making?

- Identify the effects of media on sexual decision-making and predict the potential consequences of not taking responsibility
- Identify TV shows, movies, magazines, books, and songs that contain sexual messages
- Examine a magazine advertisement to determine possible underlying messages regarding sex

Lesson 4 – Healthy Relationships

- Identify the specific traits of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Understand why doing things in groups (group dating) is extremely important
- Think about and decide on sexual limits/boundaries

Lesson 5 – Where Could Relationships Go?

- Understand the teen sexual relationship continuum
- Understand the effect of hormones on the body and decision-making when it comes to sexual decisions
- Know and begin to use assertiveness and communication to prevent entering the “danger zone”
- Use critical thinking skills to look at healthy and unhealthy decisions they may make regarding sexual activity

Lesson 6 – Sexual Wellness and the Law

- Identify specific consequences of early sexual activity related to wellness
- Identify several practical responsibilities to take to prevent suffering from the unhealthy consequences
- Understand the specific legal parameters designed to protect teens regarding sexual activity
- Identify resources that are available to people with issues regarding sexual activity and the law

Lesson 7 – Sexual Harassment

- Understand what sexual harassment is and how to recognize it
- Recognize examples of the three types of harassment
- Know specific ways to take action against harassment
- Know and be able to use specific communication strategies to combat harassment
- Understand sexting and its social/legal consequences

Lesson 8 – Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Describe how Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are spread
- Identify common symptoms of STIs
- Explain how to prevent STIs
- Identify facts and myths about STIs

Lesson 9 – Birth Control

- Explain how the menstrual cycle works
- List six forms of birth control
- Explain why abstinence is the most effective way to avoid pregnancy
- Identify condoms as the only form of birth control that can also prevent STIs

Lesson 10 – An Abstinent Lifestyle

- Identify the many positive attributes of abstinence
- Consider a commitment to staying abstinent
- Develop a game plan to remain abstinent and prevent teen pregnancy

Lesson 11 – Pregnancy and Birth

- Describe how humans develop from conception
- Identify stages of fetal development in the cycle of nine-month pregnancy
- Understand the risks involved with having a child too young

Lesson 12 – RealCare Baby® Simulation Experience Part 1

- Understand and administer care events for the RealCare Baby® infant simulator (Baby)
- Understand the responsibilities of taking care of Baby outside of class

Lesson 13 – RealCare Baby Simulation Experience Part 2

- Understand and respond to the demands of a young infant
- Master the care of Baby during the simulation experience
- Understand that being a sexually active as a teen can have real and lasting consequences

Lesson 14 – Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome

- Define shaken baby syndrome
- Explain why infants and young children are vulnerable to injury by shaking
- Identify areas of the brain that are affected by shaking and the resulting physical consequences
- Identify methods of coping with stressful situations in caring for one or more infants
- Identify the characteristics or profile of a person most likely to shake an infant
- Formulate a plan for handling frustration, anger, and stress when an infant cries

Lesson 15 – Questions, Summary, and Assessment

- Understand how attitudes about self, sexual activity, and parenting have changed over the course of instruction
- Summarize main concepts presented in the course
- Assess understanding of information presented throughout the course