

## Purpose of the Lesson

The purpose of the lesson is to reinforce making healthy choices and the consequences of unhealthy choices. We will use a “Game of Chance or Roll of the Dice” activity to show the risks and consequences of making healthy or unhealthy decisions. The lesson wraps up with reinforcing who can help you make healthy decisions about medicines.

## Background Knowledge (Talking Points)

- Risks can be positive (safe and healthy), but they can also be negative (unsafe or unhealthy).
- Consequences could impact physical, mental, or social aspects of health.
  - Physical health – *The body and the way it functions*
  - Social health - *Relationships with others, especially their parents/ guardians*
  - Emotional health - *Feelings and expressing those feelings*
- We can reduce our risks by making healthy choices:
  - Only take medicines with the help of a trusted adult.
  - Make sure medicines are put away and out of the reach of children.
  - If you don’t know or feel unsafe – Don’t Touch! Don’t Taste! Don’t Take! Tell a Trusted Adult.
- **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** are the steps to making healthy decisions.

## Lesson Objectives

*Students will be able to:*

Objective	Activity & Assessments
1. Describe possible risks and consequences of making unhealthy decisions about medicines and drugs.	• “Taking Risks” Activity
2. Summarize the potential effects of a decision on a person’s physical, social, and emotional health.	
3. Explain the guidelines or rules for taking medicines at home or school and how they can help us make healthy decisions.	• “Taking Risks” Debrief

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

## Materials

Example Risk Card ([Attachment 1](#)), “Taking Risks” Activity Cards ([Attachment 2](#)) – one per group, Scrambled Message Word Cards ([Attachment 3](#)), small scraps of paper for each student to record Risk Numbers, dice (one per group).

## Introduction

- Show students a pair of dice. **ASK:** What are these? How do we use them?

- o **ASK:** When you roll a pair of dice, do you always know what numbers you will get?
- o **ASK:** What is a risk? (*When we do something, but we do not know what will happen? Or if the consequences may be positive or negative? What might be synonyms for risk – taking a chance, gambling, taking a risk.*)
  - Risks can be positive (safe and healthy), but they can also be negative (unsafe or unhealthy).
- o **ASK:** Who can give me an example of a positive risk? (*i.e., singing a solo in choir; giving a speech in front of a lot of people; not sure about an answer, but volunteering in class anyway, sitting with someone new at lunch, etc.*) Positive risks are safe and can help us be a better person and feel happy.
- o **ASK:** Who can give me an example of a negative risk? (*i.e., riding your bike without a helmet, taking an unknown substance, giving into to a friend's pressure to do something unsafe, doing something that breaks a school or home rule, etc.*) Negative risks can be harmful and unhealthy for you and others. Negative risks can get you in trouble.
- Even though we know the **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** way to make decisions (Grade 3), today we will be looking at risk-taking and the possible effects of taking risks with medicines or drugs. And, yes, we are going to use these dice!

## Teaching Steps

### Activity 1: Taking a Risk

- Divide students into groups of four, moving their desks together to form a table. Give each group a pair of dice and a set of **Taking Risks Activity Cards** and small scraps of paper. **Taking Risks Activity Cards** go face down in the center of the table.
- Show **Taking Risks Activity Card #1** – Example on the front board or display for all to see. Go over the directions.
  - o The student whose birthday is closest to today's date will start the game by taking the top **Taking Risks Activity Card** and reading to the group the situation at the top.
  - o Then the student rolls the dice.
  - o The number rolled will match a number in the left column of their card. Student reads the consequence written on the card. (*Some consequences will not be negative because sometimes when we make a bad choice, we get lucky. When we make positive or healthy choices, we stay in control and don't leave it up to chance/luck.*)
  - o In the right-hand column, there are also numbers, but these numbers are the Risk Points. The higher the risk number, the more dangerous the risk is. The student will keep track of their Risk Numbers on a small piece of paper or card.
  - o **Pass the dice to the student on your right.** Each student in the group will take a turn to roll, read the possible consequence and record their risk number. Try a practice roll to be certain students understand the process of the game.
- Walk through the **Taking Risks Activity Card (Attachment 1)**:
- Play **Situation 1, 2, and 3 Cards** (or as many as time permits).

## Activity 2: Taking Risks Debrief

- When students have finished the game (all cards have been read), ask each student to add all of their risk numbers and discuss the following:
  - Why do you think we played this game?
    - **Possible answer:** Taking negative risks might be unsafe and unhealthy.
  - What was the highest total number someone in your group had?
  - What did the risk numbers represent? (How *harmful and unsafe the consequence was*. The higher the number, the worse the consequence.)
- Some consequences were negative and could have been harmful or unhealthy, but some of the consequences were not negative. Why? (*Emphasize: When you take a chance, you do not get to choose the type of consequence. Sometimes you are lucky to avoid the negative consequences.*)
  - **ASK:** Even though we sometimes avoid negative consequences, is it worth the risk? Examine situations like not wearing a bicycle helmet and how **not** everyone gets hurt. But those who do get hurt often have to go to the hospital. Sometimes not wearing a bicycle helmet can cause harm that lasts a long, long time.
  - **ASK:** If you take medicine the wrong way, what could happen? (could become sick, could need to go to the doctor, could need to spend time in a hospital or even worse.) **Emphasize:** When we choose to take negative risks, we cannot control the possible consequences ... just like we could not control which numbers we rolled with the dice.
  - **ASK:** How would you feel if every choice in your life was made by rolling dice?
    - ASK: What could happen? (You would not have any control over your choices. Some choices would have OK consequences, but many would have negative, harmful, unhealthy consequences.)
  - **Explore** several of the consequences on the the **Situation Cards** by asking students how these consequences could affect their:
    - Physical health (*their body*)
    - Social health (*their relationships with others, especially their parents/ guardians*)
    - Emotional health (*their feelings about themselves*)
  - We can reduce our risks if we make healthy choices about medicines:
    - Only take medicines with the help of a trusted adult.
    - Make sure medicines are put away and out of the reach of children.
    - If you don't know or feel unsafe – **Don't Touch! Don't Taste! Don't Take! Tell a Trusted Adult.**

# HOPE

Health and Opioid  
Prevention Education

4th GRADE  
LESSON 1

Your Health is Not a  
Game of Chance

## Closure

Give each group of four students an envelope with the **Scrambled Message** (Attachment 3). Tell them to open the envelope and lay all of the words on their table face up. The group arranges the words into a complete sentence with an important message. They should use the conventions of standard English grammar. Each student in the group may NOT touch another word until someone else in the group has added words to the sentence. The students take turns adding words to make a sentence. Once groups have revealed the hidden message, write it on the board and have students, as a group, say the message aloud.

**SCRAMBLED MESSAGE:** I will make healthy choices by avoiding unsafe risks.

## Recommendation and Reminders

- If groups finish the hidden message early, have them write an additional sentence to add detail to the message.

## National Health Education Standards

**Standard 1:** *Comprehending Concepts*

**Standard 2:** *Analyzing Influences*

## Healthy Behavior Outcome (HBO)

Alcohol and Other Drugs HBOs:

**HBO 1:** *Avoid misuse and abuse of over-the-counter and prescription drugs.*

**HBO 4:** *Avoid the use of illegal drugs.*

## English Language Arts Standards

**SL 4.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## TAKING RISKS ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

PRACTICE		
You heard that some of your friends tried cigarettes. You decided to smoke several cigarettes.		
Number on Dice	Possible Consequences	Risk Number
3 or 4	You get sick and throw up after smoking them. You feel sad and you have not followed the rule for how to stay healthy.	5
2	Your parents find out and ground you from your phone, your friends, and your computer for two weeks.	4
1	It was just a rumor about your friends trying cigarettes. They think what you did was wrong and are not talking to you any more.	4
5 or 6	You were lucky. You did not get into trouble this time.	2

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## TAKING RISKS SITUATION CARDS

### PRACTICE

You heard that some of your friends tried cigarettes. You decided to smoke several cigarettes.

Number on Dice	Possible Consequences	Risk Number
3 or 4	You get sick and throw up after smoking them.	5
2	Your parents find out you took medicine without asking them for help. They are very disappointed you did this and no longer trust you to follow the family rules.	4
1	It was just a rumor about your friends trying cigarettes. They think what you did was wrong and are not talking to you any more.	4
5 or 6	You were lucky. You did not get into trouble this time.	2

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### SITUATION 1

You have a bad headache. You go into the bathroom and find a bottle with an aspirin label on it. You take two aspirin to relieve your headache.

Number on Dice	Possible Consequences	Risk Number
2 or 5	This was <b>NOT</b> aspirin. A person in your family had put her medicine from the doctor in an old aspirin bottle to store it. You became very sick and spent eight days in the hospital.	10
1	Your parents finds out you took medicine without asking them for help. They are very disappointed you did this. They no longer trust you to follow the family rules.	7
3 or 4	Your little sister or brother sees you do this, decides to do the same thing, and becomes very, very sick.	9
6	You were very, very lucky. Nothing really bad happened this time.	2

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**TAKING RISKS SITUATION CARDS (CONTINUED)**

**SITUATION 2**  
You took “candy” from a stranger you met at the park.

Number on Dice	Possible Consequences	Risk Number
1 or 4	The candy is <b>NOT</b> candy. The stranger is not nice and tries to take you away with them.	10
3	You become very ill. What the stranger gave you was <b>NOT</b> candy.	9
5 or 6	Your parent arrives at the park just as the stranger is offering you candy. They grab your hand and take you home, but you are not allowed to go to the park any more by yourself and you are no longer trusted to walk to your friends’ houses either.	7
2	You were lucky. You did not get sick or hurt this time.	2



**SITUATION 3**  
You find pills that were left on the counter. They look like candy, but you really don’t know. You decide to try one or two of them.

Number on Dice	Possible Consequences	Risk Number
2 or 4	The pills were NOT candy. You become sick and are unable to go to the big campout at your friend’s house that night.	7
1 or 6	Your sister or brother tells your parents what you did. They are very upset and very disappointed in you. You feel so sad that you disappointed your parents.	6
3	When you tell your parents what you did, they take you to the emergency room. The doctor says you could have become very, very sick if you had taken one more of these pills. You feel sick to your stomach, but also very afraid about what could have happened.	7
5	You were lucky. You did not get sick or hurt this time.	2



### SCRAMBLED MESSAGE WORD CARDS

*Cut into ten individual word cards. Place each set of word cards in an envelope. Need a set for each group of four students. Students will use the word cards to construct a sentence about risks and choices.*

