**Lesson 3: Say No to Unhealthy Choices**

**Overview:** Students will practice what to say and how to say it with our body and words to say NO to unhealthy choices. The lesson will model and practice communicating in role-play scenarios to enhance skillfulness and confidence to communicate healthy choices.

National Health Education Standards

**Standard 1:** Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

**Standard 4:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Healthy Behavior Outcomes (HBOs):

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| **Alcohol and other drugs** | HBO 2. Avoid misuse and abuse of over-the-counter and prescription drugs. |
| HBO 3. Avoid the use of alcohol. |
| HBO 4. Avoid the use of illegal drugs. |
| **Tobacco** | HBO 1. Avoid using or experimenting with any form of tobacco. |

Lesson Objectives – Students will be able to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Assessments** |
| 1. Apply medication safety and substance use prevention principles to make healthy decisions to prevent substance use. | Attachment 3.1 – Know to NO! Review |
| 1. Describe the elements of effective nonverbal and verbal communication that are a part of a refusal message to prevent substance use. | Attachment 3.2 – Refusal Skill Review |
| 1. Identify trusted adults who can help make healthy choices and prevent substance use. | Attachment 3.4 – Refusal Skill Practice |
| 1. Describe and apply the critical elements of a refusal skill message to prevent substance use. | Attachment 3.4 – Refusal Skill Practice |
| 1. Describe and apply the elements of asking for help from a trusted adult to support healthy choices about substances. | Attachment 3.4 – Refusal Skill Practice |

Introduction:

* No is just a two-letter word: N-O. It seems simple enough to say, but saying the word is not all there is to refusing an unhealthy situation. Today we’ll learn how to say NO! to unhealthy and unsafe decisions.
  + What can we communicate? (A decision; a request for help; saying thank you)
  + How do we communicate? (With our words and with nonverbal cues. Verbal is using our words, but we can also communicate using our body.)
  + Communicating a choice or decision is sometimes challenging. For example, what if you are a little afraid to say NO, especially to a friend?
    - Saying NO is more than just sounding out a two-letter word; it will take some practice to communicate clearly with our words and body language to share our healthy choice.
  + Being assertive about making healthy choices will protect your health and well-being. Your real friends will accept your refusing to do something that is unhealthy or unsafe. The big lesson today is how to say YES to healthy choices and NO to unhealthy, unsafe situations.

Teaching Steps:

Activity 1: Healthy Choices Practice

* Let’s review what we’ve learned so far. (Use Attachment 3.1 to review and practice.)
* Can you remember our Know to NO! principles to help us make healthy choices?
  + Rule 1: Substance use — including alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs — is harmful to my health.
  + Rule 2: If you do not know what something is *(use motions with arms to show “X”):*
    - Don’t touch it! *(Touch pointer finger to palm for “touch.”)*
    - Don’t take it! *(Make a grabbing motion for “take.”)*
    - Don’t taste it! *(Point to lips for “taste.”)*
    - Reach out to a trusted adult for help to make healthy choices!
  + Rule 3: ONLY take medicine with the help of a trusted adult.
  + Rule 4: NEVER take or share someone else’s medicine.
* When we have to make a decision, what are the three steps we can use?
  + Stop, Think, Choose
    - Stop
      * Recognize the situation.
      * Do I need help with this situation?
    - Think
      * What are my options?
      * Is this choice healthy? Safe? Respectful?
    - Choose
      * Make a healthy, safe, and respectful choice.
      * Ask a trusted adult for help.

Activity 2: Know to NO! Assertive Communication

* EXPLAIN: Communication is what we say and how we say it. We’re going to learn to say no to unhealthy choices and learn to ask for help when we need support to make healthy choices.
  + Saying NO is a skill, and it takes practice. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. It also makes it easier to say NO even when it is difficult.
  + Saying NO will help us make healthy choices that have positive consequences.
  + ASK: What do we need to do to be sure our message is heard when we say NO to unhealthy or unsafe choices?
* What are refusal skills?
  + Refusal skills are ways to say NO to pressure.
* Why is it important to learn how to resist pressure and to learn refusal skills?
  + To tell others we don’t want to make that unhealthy choice OR to make a healthy choice.
* ALL REFUSAL SKILLS use assertiveness. Assertive simply means standing up for yourself and for your health and safety. Assertiveness is different from being aggressive or passive.
  + **Assertive:** Stands up for themselves by calmly using respectful words and body language.
  + **Aggressive:** Uses nasty or mean actions/words to get their way; frequently bullies or threatens to get their way
  + **Passive:** Gives in to others’ ideas; does things they don’t want to do because they feel threatened or pressured
* Use Attachment 3.2 to practice differentiating between passive, aggressive, and assertive.
* What assertiveness looks like and sounds like
  + Stand up straight.
  + Look the other person in the eyes.
  + Calmly and politely state your position.
  + Be confident in voice and body. Your voice volume and tone should help the person hear you loud and clear.
* EXPLAIN: You say NO with your words and your body — with what you say, how you say it, and how your body looks as you say it.
* SHOW the video: *Refusal Skills Strategies PreK 5* (<https://youtu.be/r18uHIZ_c-o>)
  + Ask: What does the phrase “*No to you, yes to me”* mean? (*Saying NO to an unhealthy or unsafe situation is a way to take care of yourself — a way to say YES to your health, safety, and happiness.*)
  + Let’s put motion to this idea so we better understand it:
    - Demonstrate/model for students:
      * Say and do: Say, “No, thanks.” Put your hand up in a “stop” gesture.
      * Continue: “That’s not healthy for me.” Pull both hands, one over the other, to your chest on the words “for me.”
    - Have students practice the words and motions.
      * Reinforce that NO to someone else can be a YES to yourself. When you say NO to something unhealthy and unsafe, you are also saying YES to your own health and safety.
* Let’s explore the entire process of saying NO.
* EXPLAIN the steps of saying NO (Attachment 3.3):
  + What will you say?
    - No, I am not interested because I want to stay healthy.
    - No, that’s not for me. I would rather go do something active.
    - No, I’ve made the choice to be healthy.
  + How will you say it?
    - Look directly at the person.
    - Stand tall and assertive with your shoulders back.
    - Be clear, calm, and confident.
    - No arguing.
* Model:
  + Use this example to model the skill: You are at a soccer game. An older kid asks you to duck behind a dumpster and smoke with him.
  + As you model, ask students to complete the checklist for how to say NO (see Attachment 3.2).
* PRACTICE with a partner:
  + ASK students and their table partner to practice saying NO by using the same prompt you modeled (use Attachment 3.2):
  + You are at a soccer game. An older kid asks you to duck behind a dumpster and smoke with him.
  + First round: Partner A is the refuser, and Partner B is the checker who uses the checklist. Partner B uses Attachment 3.2 to check Partner A’s communication.
  + Second round: Roles are reversed
  + After each round, the checker provides feedback.
* Processing questions: *Be sure both partners have opportunities to share answers.*
  + What is one part of the skill your partner did well?
  + What is one part of the skill with which your partner might need more practice?
  + What do you think about the importance of using this skill?

Activity 3: Know to NO! Asking for Help

* Saying NO is a helpful tool, but sometimes we need help to make a healthy choice. Who can you ask if you need help making a healthy choice, taking medicine, or finding more information?
  + Ask a trusted adult. A trusted adult is an adult who is ready to help and will answer your questions and keep you healthy and safe.
* Asking for help uses assertive communication.
  + What to say to reach out for help (Attachment 3.4):
    - Ask: Can you help me?
    - Tell what is happening.
    - Listen to what you are told to do.
    - Thank you!
  + How to say it:
    - Look directly at the person.
    - Your body conveys, “I am confident.” Stand straight up, shoulders back.
    - Speak clearly, calmly, and confidently (the three C’s).
* Time to practice with a partner. Play rock, paper, scissors to decide who goes first. One person will ask for help while the other checks for Ask, Tell, Listen, and Thank you.

Closure:

* Today, we learned the process of how to say NO, which is easy to remember. Sometimes the hardest part is deciding how your NO statement will begin. I have a list of possibilities (Attachment 3.3).
* Select your three favorite refusal statements to share with your table. Select a partner to begin sharing, then go clockwise around the table so everyone has a chance to share. While sharing, practice eye contact and a clear, confident delivery.
  + ASK: Who would like to share their favorite refusal statements from the list?
  + You can also use Attachment 3.3 to practice writing a refusal statement.

Attachment 3.1a: Know to NO! Review. Choose one option.

***Option A: Tobacco***

**Scenario:** An older sibling’s friend wants you to try a vape pen.

* 1. What are the three steps you can use to make a healthy choice?
* **STOP**
  1. Recognize the situation. What is happening?
  2. Do I need to use Stop, Think, Choose? **YES** or **NO**
  3. Do I need help from a trusted adult? **YES or NO**
* **THINK**
  1. What are two possible choices you could make?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Choice 1: Try it** | **Choice 2: Say NO** |
| **Is this choice HEALTHY?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Is this choice SAFE?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Is this choice HELPFUL?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Do I need the help of a trusted adult?** | YES NO | YES NO |

* 1. Who is a trusted adult who could help in this situation?
* **CHOOSE**
  1. What is the **BEST CHOICE** (healthiest, safest, most helpful)?

**Choice 1 Choice 2**

* 1. Why is this the healthiest safest, most helpful choice?

Attachment 3.1b: Know to NO! Review. Choose one option.

***Option B: Alcohol***

**Scenario**: Your friend finds an open can that looks like juice, but you don’t know what it is. Your friend wants you to try it.

* **STOP**
  1. Recognize the situation. What is happening?
  2. Do I need to use Stop, Think, Choose? **YES** or **NO**
  3. Do I need help from a trusted adult? **YES or NO**
* **THINK**
  1. What are two possible choices you could make?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Choice 1: Try it** | **Choice 2: Say NO** |
| **Is this choice HEALTHY?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Is this choice SAFE?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Is this choice HELPFUL?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Do I need the help of a trusted adult?** | YES NO | YES NO |

* 1. Who is a trusted adult who could help in this situation?
* **CHOOSE**
  1. What is the **BEST CHOICE** (healthiest, safest, most helpful)?

**Choice 1 Choice 2**

* 1. Why is this the healthiest safest, most helpful choice?

Attachment 3.1c: Know to NO! Review. Choose one option.

***Option C – Medication Safety***

**Scenario:** It’s time to take your prescription medicine, but your parent is busy helping your siblings. Should you take it without their help?

* **STOP**
  1. Recognize the situation. What is happening?
  2. Do I need to use Stop, Think, Choose? **YES** or **NO**
  3. Do I need help from a trusted adult? **YES or NO**
* **THINK**
  1. What are two possible choices you could make?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Choice 1: Take the medicine without a parent’s help** | **Choice 2: Wait for a parent’s help to take the medicine** |
| **Is this choice HEALTHY?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Is this choice SAFE?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Is this choice HELPFUL?** | YES NO | YES NO |
| **Do I need the help of a trusted adult?** | YES NO | YES NO |

* 1. Who is a trusted adult who could help in this situation?
* **CHOOSE**
  1. What is the **BEST CHOICE** (healthiest, safest, most helpful)?

**Choice 1 Choice 2**

* 1. Why is this the healthiest safest, most helpful choice?

Attachment 3.2 – Refusal Skill Review

**HOW TO SAY NO CHECKLIST**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WORDS** | **Check if YES** |
| * Stated a NO response |  |
| * Stated a reason for saying NO or shared a healthy option |  |
| **ACTIONS** |  |
| * Looked directly at the person |  |
| * Stood tall and assertive with  shoulders back. |  |
| * Clear, calm and confident |  |
| * No arguing |  |

Recognize if the communication is aggressive, assertive or passive.

1. Makay asksPaloo ifshe can copy his homework. Paloo looks down at the ground and softly says, “I guess so.”
   1. Aggressive
   2. Assertive
   3. Passive
2. Palo is first in line at the swing set. Jamie shoves Paloo and calls him names.
   1. Aggressive
   2. Assertive
   3. Passive
3. Eldon asks Betty to go on a bike ride with him. Betty has not started her homework yet, so she calmly says, “Sorry, Eldon, I need to finish my homework before I can do that.”
   1. Aggressive
   2. Assertive
   3. Passive

**Saying NO! Practice**

**I will say \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!**

**How will I say it?**

* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ directly at the person.
* Stand \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with shoulders back
* Be clear, calm, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Attachment 3.3: How to Say NO!

1. **I will say NO!**

* No, I am not interested because I want to stay healthy.
* No, that’s not for me. I would rather go do something active.
* No, I’ve made the choice to be healthy.

1. **How will you say it?**

* Look directly at the person.
* Stand tall and assertive with your shoulders back.
* Be clear, calm, and confident.
* No arguing.

1. **How will your body look?**

* Stand straight up, shoulders back.
* Body conveys, “I am confident.”

**Write a message you might say if someone told you to be unhealthy or unsafe.**

Attachment 3.4: Refusal Skill and Asking for Help

**Scenario:** You’re at a carnival and see a group of teenagers you recognize. They are using a vape pen. They see you looking at them and ask if you want to try.

1. **Stop, Think, Choose: What is the healthy choice in this situation?** 
   1. Use the vape pen.
   2. Do not use the vape pen.
2. **What will you say?**
3. **How will you say it? (Check all that apply)**
   * Be assertive.
   * Look directly at the person.
   * Speak clearly, calmly, and confidently
   * No arguing

*This situation requires the help of a trusted adult. Write a message to ask for help.*

*Practice sharing it with your partner. Your partner will role-play acting as a trusted adult. Your partner will use the checklist to be sure you included each element.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WORDS** | **Check if YES** |
| * Ask, “Can you help me?” |  |
| * Tell what happened. |  |
| * Listen and follow directions. |  |
| * Thank you! |  |
| * Your body “says” I am confident.” Stand straight up, shoulders back. |  |
| * Speak clearly, calmly, and confidently. |  |