**Lesson 5: Know to No! It Might Be Legal, But Is it Safe?**

**Overview**: Students will analyze influences on substance use: rules, laws, and policy; family, peers, and culture; and media/technology. Scenarios will offer practice analyzing positive and negative influences; applying substance use prevention principles; and using health resources to choose health-enhancing behaviors.

National Health Education Standards:

**Standard 1:** Students comprehend functional health knowledge to enhance health.

**Standard 2:** Students analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, social media, technology, and other determinants on health behaviors.

Healthy Behavior Outcome (HBO):

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| Students will recognize the dangers associated with legalized substances. |

Lesson Objective – Students will be able to:

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| **Objective** | **Assessments** |
| 1. Identify legal and illegal substances; explore rules, laws, and restrictions on substance use; and discover the consequences of violating these rules. | Attachment 5.1: Q & A |
| 1. Recognize that legal substances have the potential for harm if not used properly. | Attachment 5.1: Q & A Attachment 5.2 – Know to NO! Situations |
| 1. Analyze how laws, rules, policies, and influences impact decision making. | Attachment 5.2 – Know to NO! Situations |
| 1. Describe how restrictions can support healthy and safe decisions. | Attachment 5.2 – Know to NO! Situations |
| 1. Describe reasons to make healthy and safe choices to prevent substance use. | Attachment 5.2 – Know to NO! Situations |

Introduction:

* In Lesson 4, we examined how risk and protective factors influence substance use. Today we’ll analyze additional influences including laws, policies, and regulations. Why do we have rules?

Teaching Steps:

Activity 1: Q & A – Attachment 5.1

* Set the stage – Reminder from Lesson 4: It’s important to identify influences on decision making, but also to realize that these factors only influence your decisions. Ultimately, you are empowered to make the decision. By recognizing influences, we can identify negative influences and seek positive influences that support healthy decisions.
* Lesson 5 will look closer at how laws and rules influence substance use.
* Class discussion:
* What substances are legal? What substances are illegal?
  + *Possible student answers:* Legal for over 21: tobacco products, including vape; alcohol; marijuana; over-the-counter and prescription medications. Illegal – cocaine, methamphetamine, LSD, etc. There are also rules that govern the use of medications.
  + There are also rules about substance use; share that your school is a tobacco-free environment, and that smoking is not permitted in restaurants, bars, or other indoor spaces.
* Do both legal and illegal substances have the potential for harm?
  + Legal substances can cause harm. Add information about medication safety principles (dose, storage, and disposal). There is no safe level of use for tobacco or marijuana.
* What are the dangers and consequences associated with substances that are legal for ages 21 and over?
  + *Possible student answers:* Lung cancer; alcohol poisoning; memory problems; increased violence; trouble with the law; unintentional overdose. See the [HOPE Curriculum](https://health-education-human-services.wright.edu/kinesiology-and-health/hope-curriculum) for additional information about prescription medications and opioids.
* Why are alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana legal for some but illegal for others?
  + *Possible answers:* Adolescents are still growing and developing; substance use can impair brain development; increased risk of substance use disorder; other health consequences.
  + Teens’ brains are still developing. Teens are more likely to act on impulse; misread or misinterpret social cues and emotions; get into accidents of all kinds; get involved in fights; engage in unhealthy, dangerous, or risky behavior.
  + Adolescents are less likely to think before they act, pause to consider the consequences of their actions, change their dangerous or inappropriate behaviors
  + These brain differences don't mean that young people can't make good decisions or tell the difference between right and wrong. It also doesn't mean that they shouldn't be held responsible for their actions. Teens need additional support or guidance to make healthy decisions. Rules, laws and guidance are key to supporting healthy decisions.
* Why are rules and laws important to preventing substance use?
  + Laws are designed to reduce the prevalence of substances. This limits supply and demand for substances. It reduces the number of times teens or adults must make decisions to prevent substance use.
  + Laws can limit access to substances.
  + The greater number of smoke/vape shops, the greater the rates of tobacco/vape use.
  + Laws are designed to prevent harmful consequences of substance use.
  + Laws can deter people from driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, thereby preventing injuries and fatalities.
  + Laws against flavored tobacco can reduce the number of people who use tobacco.
* Tobacco-free schools, restaurants, bars, and other indoor spaces limit the consequences of secondhand smoke.
* Laws, rules, and regulations guide decision making. They tell us clearly what is healthy and safe. There are also consequences for breaking laws, rules, and regulations.
* We can also use laws and rules to support or justify decisions.
* “I can’t drink; it’s against the law,” or “My parents would kill me.”
* “I’m not going to vape. It’s against the law, and I wouldn’t be able to play if I was busted.”
* Even with laws and rules, it is important to remember the key principles to make healthy decisions:
* 1a. Know to NO! Substance Use Prevention Principles
  + Substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs have harmful consequences on our health and well-being.
  + Don’t touch, take, or taste; ask trusted adult for help.
* 1b. Know to NO! Medication Safety Principles
  + Only take medicine as directed from a trusted adult.
  + Never take someone else’s medicine.
  + Properly store and dispose of medications.
  + We make healthy choices using Stop, Think, Choose.
  + Recognize and reach out to resources to support healthy and safe choices.
* *Additional information if these topics may come up with class discussion):*
* *Rather than discussing whether substances should be legal or illegal, focus the discussion on how laws and rules guide decision making. The goal is to make healthy and safe decisions.*
* Tobacco, marijuana and alcohol use is unhealthy. Substance use can have short and long-term impacts. The impact of substance use is even greater on teens because of the ongoing growth and development of teen’s brains and bodies. Provide students with additional resources that highlight the consequences of specific substances.
* Links to resources at the end of the lesson can provide additional information about rules, regulations, and laws. See lesson resources at the end of the lesson for specific substances and can supplement the concepts and skills introduced in this lesson.
* Distribute RESOURCE PAGE with credible information for students to refer to - Attachment #2
* After class discussion from the questions in Attachment #1, the teacher will provide an overview of the information provided for alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana to highlight additional dangers from use of these legal substances for those 21 and over and accurate statistics for each of these substances.
* Students will refer to this information for the next class activity.
* Complete Attachment 1 and debrief the answers.
* Be sure to wrap up the discussion that rules, regulations and laws drive decision-making.
* Students can share their reasons or keep them private.

Activity 2: Legal Does Not Mean Safe

* Practice making healthy and safe choices in each of the scenarios. Begin the activity sharing examples of health behaviors that are legal, but it does not mean they are safe. For example:
  + It is legal to swim during a thunderstorm, but it does not mean it is safe.
  + It is legal to smoke poison ivy, but it is not safe.
  + It is legal to be out in the sun without sunblock, but it does not mean it is safe.
  + It is legal in Ohio for a person over 18 and who has had their motorcycle license for over a year to not wear a helmet, but it does not mean it is safe to ride a motorcycle without a helmet.
  + It is legal to wear earbuds in Ohio while riding a bicycle, but it does not mean it is safe.
* Distribute Attachment #3 – Students will read the scenarios and provide information to guide the character to avoid taking, touching, or tasting the substance and always tell a trusted adult.
* Students will be prepared to share their answers with the class.

Closure:

* At the bottom of Attachment #3, students will answer the following lesson summary questions:
* Why are there laws, rules, policies, and regulations for substances?
* What influences you to make healthy choices regarding substance use?
* Provide an example of how you will use this lesson to make healthy choices.

Lesson Resources:

* [Tobacco 21 (Ohio Department of Health)](https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/tobacco-use-prevention-and-cessation/tobacco-21)
* [Alcohol – Ohio Law for Parents and Underage](https://oiu.ohio.gov/schools-and-businesses/resources/ohio-alcohol-law-for-parents-and-students)
* [Additional Ohio Liquor Laws](https://www.servsafe.com/downloads/pdfs/ssa-key-laws/ohio)
* [Marijuana – Ohio Law](https://ohiostatecannabis.org/laws)
* [Drug Fact Sheet: Marijuana/Cannabis (Department of Justice and Drug Enforcement Administration)](https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Marijuana-Cannabis-2020_0.pdf)
* [Excessive Drinking in Ohio (United Health Foundation)](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/ExcessDrink/OH)
* [Underage Drinking (CDC)](https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/underage-drinking)
* [The Toll of Tobacco in Ohio (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids)](https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/ohio)
* [About Cannabis (CDC)](https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/)
* [Cannabis and Teens (CDC)](https://www.cdc.gov/cannabis/health-effects/cannabis-and-teens.html)
* [The Federal Status of Marijuana and the Policy Gap with States (Congressional Research Service)](https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12270)
* [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt35964/NSDUHHsaeSpecificStates2020F/NSDUHsaeOhio2020.pdf)
* [Harm Reduction (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA)](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction)
* [Alcohol Use – Youth in Ohio](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/youth_alcohol/OH)

Attachment 5.1: Legal Does Not Mean Safe: Questions and Answers

1. Do both legal and illegal substances have the potential for harm?
2. Yes
3. No
4. Unsure

* Explain your answer using a specific example.

1. Describe three reasons there are laws, rules, and restrictions for substances.
2. Laws can be one strategy to reduce \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for substances.
3. Laws, rules, and restrictions can guide and support healthy \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Laws provide interventions and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to prevent or reduce substance use.
5. Why are there laws, rules, and restrictions for substances for ages 21 and over?
6. Provide two reasons you will make healthy choices about substance use.

Attachment 5.2a – Know to NO! Is It a Healthy Choice? Tobacco Scenario

**Scenario 1:** Your brother, who is 21, just bought a vape pen. You are surprised he wasted his money on something that can hurt him. You ask, “Why did you buy that stuff?” He replies, “I was curious what all the hype was about, so I thought I would get one.” You care about your brother and have concerns for his health.

1. List the influences in this scenario. Label them as positive (+) or negative (-)
2. Was it legal for your brother to buy a vape pen?
3. Is it a healthy choice to vape?
4. Yes
5. No
6. Unsure
7. What are the possible consequences of your brother using a vape pen?
8. What resources would you share with your brother to help him recognize that being old enough to buy a vape doesn’t make it safe:
9. What are your reasons to make a healthy choice about vaping?

Attachment 5.2b – Know to NO! Is It a Healthy Choice? Alcohol Scenario

**Scenario 2:** You just started your first year of college. You are meeting some really nice people and getting comfortable with your new surroundings. The first weekend of the semester, they invite you to come with them to a house party of some college seniors (over 21 years old). Even though those throwing the party are 21, you recognize the possible consequences of this environment.

1. List one positive influence and one negative influence.
2. Is it legal for the seniors who are hosting the party to buy alcohol?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Unsure
3. Is it legal for someone over 21 to buy alcohol for a minor (someone under 21)?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Unsure
4. Is it legal for someone under 21 to consume alcohol?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Unsure
5. Is it legal for someone under 21 to drive after consuming alcohol?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Unsure
6. List two possible consequences of attending the party.
7. What resources will help you to make a health-enhancing decision about attending the party?
8. Provide two reasons to make a healthy and safe choice.

Attachment 5.2c – Know to NO! Is It a Healthy Choice? Marijuana Scenario

**Scenario 3:** You just graduated from college and are excited to start your new career. You have a week before you start working, so you decide to meet up with some friends out of town for a few days. You are all having a great time cooking around a campfire, and after dinner, one of the friends brings out marijuana and a bong. Recreational marijuana is not legal where you live, and technically, marijuana is still an illegal substance under federal law. Your friend hands you the bong and says, “Take a hit!”

1. List one positive and one negative influence.

Positive

Negative

1. Is it legal for your friend to purchase and use marijuana?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Unsure
2. Is it legal to drive under the influence of marijuana?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Unsure
3. What are the possible consequences of using marijuana?
4. What resources will help you to make a health-enhancing decision?
5. Provide two reasons to make a healthy and safe choice.