**Lesson 5: Positive Influences Promoting Healthy Choices**

**Overview:** This lesson will help students affirm and strengthen personal values, positive influences, and protective factors that promote healthy choices to prevent substance use. Students will affirm their commitment to making healthy decisions and applying the substance use prevention principles.

National Health Education Standards

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

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

Healthy Behavior Outcomes (HBOs):

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| --- | --- |
| **Alcohol and other drugs** | HBO 8. Support others to be alcohol- and other drug-free. |
| **Tobacco** | HBO 4: Support others to be tobacco-free. |

Lesson Objectives – Students will be able to:

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| **Objective** | **Assessments** |
| 1. Compare and contrast risk factors and protective factors.
 | Attachment 5.2 – Risk and Protective Factors |
| 1. Describe positive influences and protective factors that promote healthy choices to prevent substance use.
 | Attachment 5.1 – Protective FactorsAttachment 5.3 – My Protective Factors |
| 1. Describe three reasons they make healthy choices that prevent substance use.
 | Attachment 5.3 – My Protective Factors |

Additional Resources for Families:

* Sign up for [Know! Tips](https://preventionactionalliance.org/prevention-programs/know-tips/) for additional resources to support your kids making healthy choices.
* [Start Talking!](https://starttalking.ohio.gov/) helps families to build healthy behaviors and prevent substance use.
* [Passiton.com](https://www.passiton.com/) provides a list of values and positive messages.

Introduction:

* We learned that influences can impact, sway, or have an effect on our decisions. In Lesson 4, we learned there are positive and negative influences on substance use. In this lesson, we’re going to identify positive influences in our lives that protect us from using substances. These protective factors keep us safe from risk, making it easier to prevent substance use and reduce the chances of situations where you must face a choice to refuse to use substances.

Teaching Steps:

Activity 1: Risks

* Each of us is vulnerable to risks or unhealthy choices. We can prevent or reduce those risks. Can you think of an example of ways that we can reduce our risks?
	+ Examples – Swimming only when a lifeguard is on duty; wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle; eating healthy; exercising.
	+ What about examples that would reduce our risk to use substances like alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs? What might put someone at a greater risk for using substances? In this lesson, we’ll identify factors that protect
* Terminology
	+ A risk is exposure to danger.
	+ Protective factors reduce the risk or shield an individual from danger.
	+ Risk factors increase risk. Risk factors don’t necessarily mean someone will use substances; they present a greater likelihood of an unhealthy outcome. To overcome a risk factor and make a healthy choice, a person will need protective factors and skills.
* Researchers have studied risk and protective factors and have grouped these factors into categories including individuals, family, friends, school, and community. We’re going to identify protective factors that will support you to make healthy and safe choices.
	+ Examples of risk factors:
		- Early substance use, family substance use, peer and family attitudes towards substance use, chronic absenteeism, low commitment to school or future goals, media and advertising,
	+ Examples of protective factors:
		- Positive physical, emotional, mental, and social development; self-regulation, coping, and problem-solving skills; engagement in school or community activities; social connections; trusted adults at home, at school, and in the community; friendships and connectedness; engagement in school and community activities.
	+ Together we’re going to brainstorm a list of protective factors.
	+ Pass the paper: Place students in groups of three or four. Each person will have a piece of paper with a label (individual, family, school, community). Give students one minute to brainstorm a list of possible factors on the paper that can protect or prevent substance use. After one minute, have students pass the paper to the next group. Students should read the items already on the list and see if they can add more to the list. Repeat until each student has had one minute to add to the list.
	+ Once the rotations have been completed, allow the groups to edit each paper for repeats or to clarify any factors.
	+ Present Attachment 5.2 to examples of protective factors and risk factors. Repeat that protective factors add a layer of protection from negative influences and pressure to use substances.

Activity 2

* Students will use Attachment 5.3 to share positive influences and protective factors in their lives that promote healthy choices that prevent substance use.
* For this activity, we suggest that students create a digital poster to showcase their protective factors against substance use. These protective factors should be personal and based around their real life. Students will need to include at least one protective factor for each category: individual, family, friends, school, and community. Each protective factor should also include an image. For example, if the reason listed was that their friends would not want to hang out with them, they could incorporate a picture of their friends in the poster (with permission).
* Students can present their posters to the class if they would like. Encourage being a positive peer influence to create a social norm in middle school that we make healthy choices about substance use.

Closing

* We can be a positive influence and surround ourselves with positive influences and protective factors to prevent substance use. We can also be aware of what may put us at risk for using substances. Together, we can make safe and healthy choices.

Attachment 5.1:

Attachment 5.1a – Individual Protective Factors



Attachment 5.1b – Social Protective Factors (Family and Friends)



Attachment 5.1c – School Protective Factors



Attachment 5.1d – Community Protective Factors



Attachment 5.2: Risk and Protective Factors for Adolescents

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Risk factors** | **Protective factors** |
| **Individual** | * Rebelliousness, poor conduct, or antisocial behavior.
* Early substance use
* Antisocial or negative emotionality
* Low commitment to school, schoolwork, and goals
* Lack of engagement in school or community activities
 | * Positive physical, emotional, mental, and social development
* Self-regulation, coping, and problem-solving skills
* Engagement in school or community activities
* Social connections
* Trusted adults at home, at school, and in the community
 |
| **Family** | * Family history of substance use
* Lack of adult supervision
* Family conflict
* Family attitudes toward substance use
 | * Supportive family relationships
* Clear expectations for values, behaviors, and rules
* Family monitors behaviors
* Values and attitudes promote healthy behaviors to discourage substance use
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| **Peers** | * Rebelliousness
* Peer/friend substance use
* Peers’ attitudes supporting substance use
 | * Friendships and engaged with friends
* Friends who have attitudes that promote health and discourage substance use
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| **School, community, environment** | * Laws, norms, or policies that increase the availability and use of substances
* Poverty
* Physical, psychological, and environmentally unsafe spaces
* Community violence
* Community substance use
 | * Presence of mentors and community engagement
* Laws, norms, or policies that reduce the availability, promotion, and use of substances
* Physical, psychological, and environmentally safe spaces
 |
| **Societal factors** | * High levels of substance use in community
* Media and advertising promoting use of substances
* Lack of respect for rules, guidelines, and enforcement of policies
* Norms and attitudes that indicate approval for substance use
 | * Drug-free environments
* Health promotion resources available
* Positive relationships with law enforcement
* Respect for the law
* Presence of law enforcement
* Respect for rules, guidelines, and enforcement of policies
* Norms and attitudes that discourage substance use
 |

Source: <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/risk-and-protective-factors#adolescents>

Attachment 5.3: My Protective Factors

List three reasons you will make healthy choices to prevent substance use.

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| --- | --- |
|  | **Medieval Armor outline** |
|  |
|  |

Draw your shield, share positive influences and protective factors.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Individual |  |
| Family |  |
| Friends |  |
| School |  |
| Community |  |