

Wisconsin Poison Center

Poison Prevention Program

Grades K - 2

I Introduction

- a. Read the objectives.
- b. Explain that more than 60 percent of the reported poisonings to the Wisconsin Poison Center occur in children younger than 6 years old. Children are curious, and learn to explore their world by eating, touching, and smelling things. Sometimes these things are poisons. Also, most children cannot read labels and they may eat, drink or spray something that is harmful.

II Poison Information

- a. Tell the children what a poison is:
 1. A poison is something that makes you sick or hurts you if you eat, drink, touch or smell it.
 2. Ways that poisons get in your body:
 - Mouth or swallowing a poison.
 - Nose or breathing a poison.
 - Eyes or getting a poison in the eyes.
 - Skin or getting a poison on the skin, or getting a bite or sting from an insect or animal.
 3. Explain that poisons are everywhere in their home and outside, too. For example, poisons are found in the bathroom (shampoo, medicines), the bedroom (makeup, perfume), in the kitchen (soap, cleaning products), in the backyard (plants, berries, mushrooms), in the garage (gas, weed killers), in purses (medicines, cigarettes) and in diaper bags (medicines, diaper rash cream).
 4. Explain that poisons *may* look and smell pretty, although most children think poisons look bad and taste bad.
 - Perfumes smell good and often look pretty, but they should not be tasted, or squirted in the eyes.
 - Some medicines may taste good, but taking too much medicine can make you *very* sick.
 - Some poisons may look like things that are safe to eat. (Show a bottle of a pine cleaner and apple juice, or see other examples of poison look-alikes on the enclosed sheet). Emphasize that children should ask a trusted adult before they eat, drink, taste, touch or smell anything! Explain the four forms of poisons.
 5. Explain the four forms of poisons.
 - Solids-like powder, granules, pills, plants.
 - Liquids-clear like water, colored like juice, some are “runny”(like mouthwash) and some are “thick” (like dish soap).
 - Sprays-aerosol, pump or trigger sprayers.
 - Invisibles-smoke, carbon monoxide, fumes (like car exhaust).

- b. Discuss medication safety
 - 1. Amount: When a doctor gives you medicine, the doctor wants you to get better. The doctor gives you the right amount of medicine. If you take that amount, you will get better. But if you take more medicine than the doctor tells you, it can make you very sick.
 - 2. Kind: The doctor gives the right kind of medicine to children. Taking someone else's medication or an adult medication can make you sick.
 - 3. ALWAYS have a trusted adult help you take medicine. Never take someone else's medication. Only take as much medicine as a trusted adult gives you.
- c. The Wisconsin Poison Center
 - 1. The place to call if someone has been poisoned or someone has a question about poisons.
 - 2. Calls are answered 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
 - 3. National number, toll free 1-800-222-1222. The number will reach the caller's nearest poison center.
 - 4. Here in Wisconsin the Wisconsin Poison Center is a program of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, but we help people of any age.
 - 5. Calls are confidential or "private."
 - 6. Calls are answered by registered nurses trained in the study of poisons/toxicology.
- d. Mr. Yuk
 - 1. Mean, green face on stickers (show Mr. Yuk stickers).
 - 2. Mr. Yuk means "No" or "Poison Stay Away."
 - 3. With an adult at home, put Mr. Yuk stickers on things around the house that could make a child sick. With an adult's permission, place a Mr. Yuk sticker on/near the phone, in case of any emergency.

III Learning Activity Ideas

- a. Duffle Bag Presentation
 - 1. Fill a duffle bag with empty poison containers, as well as containers from different foods, (e.g. empty dishwashing liquid, laundry soap, medicine bottles of all kinds, spray bottles, and an empty milk container, macaroni and cheese box, cereal box).
 - 2. Allow the children to come up to the front of class, one at a time and pick a container from the duffle bag to show to their classmates.
 - 3. Allow the students to decide if the container/product is poison not and place it in the Mr. Yuk basket or in the smiley/safe basket.
 - 4. Remember to include things that children and adults forget are potentially poisonous. These include toothpaste, mouthwash, plants, berries, mushrooms, bubble bath, blowing bubbles, and nail polish remover.
- b. Poison Bingo

Make bingo cards, using a Mr. Yuk face as the free space in the center of the card. Use pictures of cleaning products, plants, berries, medicines, etc. Bingo sheets can be downloaded from www.wisconsinpoison.org. Hand each "winner" a poison packet to take home. Remind them that the Mr. Yuk stickers should be placed on things and

near/on their phone with a trusted adult. Remember each child should be a “winner” and receive a poison packet to take home.

c. Play “What if?”

Ask the children what they would do if:

They went to their Grandma’s house and found a pill on her counter?

What would they do?

They found their little brother or sister playing with a spray bottle?

What would they do?

They found a soda bottle on their Dad’s tool bench. It looks like juice.

Would they drink it?

They are at the park and they see a bush with pretty red berries.

Would they eat the berries?

d. Poison Posters

Instruct the students to cut pictures of household products that might be poisonous out of old magazines and make a collage poster. Encourage the students to talk about their pictures and how the products may poison them.

e. Scavenger Hunt/ Poison Patrol

Instruct the students to make a list of things around their homes that they think are poisons. Give them a list of areas to think about: bathroom, bedroom, kitchen, laundry, basement, garage/shed and outside. Next the students are to take the list home and be a detective. Students should locate poisons on their list and add other poisons to their list. Encourage students to do this activity with an adult in their home and with younger siblings and have the students apply Mr. Yuk stickers to the products they discover. Continue the class discussion with the student’s updated lists.

Another idea: students put names of found poisons on index cards or sticky notes. In the classroom post a large diagram of a house and have students put their index card/sticky note in the room on the diagram where they located the poison.

REMIND students that poisons can hurt someone if they are swallowed, get on the skin, in the eyes, or breathed in!

f. Practice emergency telephone skills

Review when to call 911 (loss of consciousness, not breathing,

Review the importance of calling 1-800-222-1222; the poison help number if someone is poisoned or they think someone has been poisoned. Students role-play a poison emergency telephone call using a play phone.

Remind the students that the poison center will ask for the exact product name as it appears on the label, the name, age and sometimes the weight of the patient, the caller’s phone number and zip code, if the patient (person exposed) has any symptoms or medical problems.

Remind the students that the poison center is there to help them and they should remain calm.

Students can make a list of emergency numbers for their home. Include parent work phone numbers, a trusted neighbor, 9-1-1 and the center number (a sample is enclosed).

Poison Mobile

Materials needed:

- Old magazines
- Glue and scissors
- Cardboard
- Construction paper/scrap
- 3 soda straws
- String or yarn or thread

Instructions for constructing the mobile:

1. Students cut out six pictures of poisons from magazines. Glue pictures to construction paper. Trim.
2. Cut a triangular shape from a piece of cardboard. Cut a small slit in each corner of the triangle, and punch a hole in its center.
3. Attach short threads/string to the poison pictures. (Do this by punching holes in the pictures and tying the thread or by taping the threads to the pictures.)
4. Cut slits in the ends of the straws. Attach two pictures to each straw, one on each end.
5. Cut four pieces of threads/string, each two feet long. Grasp the threads at one end and tie a knot in them as a group, about six inches from the end.
6. Insert one thread in the center hole of the cardboard triangle. Insert each of the remaining three threads in each of the corner slits (one thread for each corner)
7. Attach corner threads to the middle/balancing point of the straws.
8. Attach a Mr. Yuk sticker to the thread that runs through the center hole.
9. Display the mobile.

Use the activity sheets provided in this kit to reinforce what was taught today!
Or download activity sheets at www.wisconsinpoison.org.

g. Poison Prevention and Safety:

1. Always lock up potential poisons and medicines up high and out of the reach of children.
2. Place the poison center number near/on the phone.
3. Place the poison center number near/on the phone.
4. Make sure to do this with a trusted adult and any children in the home. Emphasize that Mr. Yuk means “No” or “Poison Stay Away!”

IV. Evaluation

At the end of the activity, each student should be able to state:

1. What a poison is.
2. Three poison prevention/safety measures.
3. The four routes of poisoning.
4. Never taste, touch or smell something without asking an adult first.
5. Only take medicine with a trusted adult.
6. Where to call for a poison question or emergency.