

Poisons in the Home



Grade Level: Preschool- 1st

Time Needed: 30 minutes

Supplies: symbols, hazardous look-alikes

Location: Classroom

Objective: Students will learn about symbols on hazardous products that help to protect non-readers from harm. They will learn ways that people can be harmed by chemicals in the home. And lastly they will participate in a hazardous look-alike contest and learn tips for keeping themselves safe.

Each year in the United States, 2 million poisoning accidents take place. Seventy-five percent of the cases happen in the home.

Activity I: Since many of the students in this age range are non-readers, start by showing them how important symbols and signs are in their everyday lives. The students are shown symbols such as a stop sign, handicapped accessible, no smoking, boys restroom, and recycling symbol. Then they are shown the Mr. Yuck or Skull and Crossbones symbol. What do these mean? Should we sniff items with this symbol? Drink from them? Open them? Introduce the word poison, if they haven't already mentioned the word. Poisons can be solids, liquids, sprays or even invisible (gases).

Activity II: Safety Questions

- Ask the students if they think there are poisonous chemicals or cleaners at their house or in their garage. Although they may know better than to drink chemicals from under the sink, ask how many of them have younger siblings or cousins & friends who visit.

(Most experts who deal with poisonings state the most vulnerable age for exposure to poisons is age 2)

- How could a younger brother get sick from the poisons? (eating, drinking, breathing, skin contact)
- What precautions can we take to protect little ones from danger? (See what they come up with and show them a childproof cabinet lock & childproof medicine cap. Mention putting chemicals in the kitchen and garage (antifreeze) up high in a lockable area. All hazardous products should be kept in their original containers.

Activity III: Look-Alike Guessing Game

The game has two openings, one is a poisonous product and the other is a look-alike food or drink. Explain to the students that many unattended toddlers get in trouble because they cannot read that the bottle is full of chemicals, when it looks like apple juice to them.

Side by side, show them the following:	(which one would you eat or drink?)	
Pseudoephedrine Cold Medicine	looks like...	Red Skittles
Glass Cleaner	looks like...	Blue Sports Drinks
Orange-Scented Multi-Purpose Cleaner	looks & smells like...	Orange Fruit Drink
Purple-Colored Toilet Bowl Cleaner	looks like...	Grape Juice
Wood cleaners/Pine-scented cleaners	looks like...	Apple Juice

Wrap-Up: review- Give handouts with the Poison Control Hotline Number.

1-800-222-1222

If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call 911.