

Grade: Five	Lesson: 4	Topic: Drug Awareness
Virginia Standards of Learning	Health 5.1i, 5.1j, 5.2i, 5.2j	
Virginia School Counseling Standards	DeM1: 5-6a, 5-6b	
Materials Needed	• Whiteboard or chart paper and markers • Scenario handout	
Learning Objectives	• Examine different types of substances used as drugs. • Discover how drugs affect the brain and body. • Explore the categories and the effects of legal and illegal drugs. • Discuss the medicinal and non-medicinal uses of drugs.	
I DO Learning-Ready Reminders Content	Introduce yourself. Build a positive relationship with the students by sharing a fun fact about yourself. (For example: Your favorite ice cream flavor, your favorite food, or your favorite color.) Next, use the Learning-Ready Visuals and define the classroom expectations for when you visit. Say, “We will learn a lot about safety, responsibility, and respect within our school and community! When we are learning, we must be learning-ready! When we are learning-ready, we will: • Respect personal space - Be aware of your surroundings, respect others’ space, and stay in your own area. • Use volume control - Use indoor voices and be mindful of noise levels. • Show active listening - Eyes and ears open! Ready to participate! • Have sharp minds - Be prepared to problem solve, ask questions, and contribute to the lesson.” Introduce legal and illegal drugs. Say, “What is a drug?” (Allow students to call out.) “A drug is any substance that affects how the mind or body works. Where do drugs come from? • Legal drugs come from pharmaceutical companies and are regulated. • Illegal drugs are manufactured in illegal ways that fail to ensure quality or safety.	

Does anyone know why people use drugs? Legally? Illegally?" Guide students with these answers:

"Legally:

- **As medicine:** Some drugs are used legally as medicine. Doctors prescribe them to help people feel better when they're sick. For example, if you have a headache, you might take medicine to make it go away.
- **For pain relief:** People use legal drugs like painkillers after surgeries or injuries to reduce pain. These drugs help them heal faster.
- **To treat health conditions:** Some drugs help manage health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or allergies. They keep our bodies working well."

"Can legal drugs be used in an illegal way? Yes. Never take medication that belongs to someone else. Use medication as only as directed."

"Illegally:

- **Because of curiosity:** Sometimes, people try illegal drugs out of curiosity. They wonder what it feels like or why others use them.
- **Due to peer pressure:** Friends or classmates might encourage someone to try drugs. It's essential to say no if it doesn't feel right.
- **As an escape:** Some people use drugs to escape from tough feelings or problems. They are looking for a temporary way to forget about their troubles.
- **Because they have an addiction:** Unfortunately, some folks get addicted to drugs. Addiction means they can't stop using them, even if it hurts them. It's essential to avoid anything that can lead to addiction."

Draw a Venn diagram on the board or use a PowerPoint slide 10 to list drugs that are legal, illegal, or both. "When are drugs legal?" List examples (Acetaminophen/Tylenol, Ibuprofen/Motrin/Advil, Pepto Bismol, allergy medicine (Benadryl), vitamins, etc.) "When are drugs illegal?" List examples (heroin, kratom, cocaine, etc.) "Sometimes drugs can be both legal and illegal." List examples (marijuana, vapes, tobacco, alcohol, prescription medications, etc.)

"What forms do drugs come in? How are they administered? You can see drugs that are:

- Pills which are ingested.
- Liquids which can be ingested, injected, or inhaled.
- Other solids like plants which can be ingested or inhaled.
- Creams or patches which are applied to the skin.
- Gases which are inhaled."

"Medicines available over the counter (OTC) or by prescription (Rx) are meant to help us feel better and keep us healthy. If taken incorrectly, they can make us very sick. Medicine can be harmful if:

- The wrong dose is taken.
- You take someone else's medicine.
- The medicine is used at improper intervals.
- The medicine is expired.
- The medicine is mixed with other medications.

Medicines should only be used as directed, and under no circumstances should they be shared with others."

"Prescription abuse is just as dangerous as illegal drug abuse. Overdosing on these drugs can result in death, coma, and addiction. Other side effects can be impaired memory, nausea, and vomiting. Using prescription medications without a valid prescription is illegal. Opioids are a common prescription medication. They are used to treat pain or severe cough. Even though doctors use these medications to treat pain, they can have serious risks and side effects. When the user does not follow the instructions on the label, they can become addicted. "

"Addiction is considered a disease because substances like drugs and alcohol change the structure of the brain and how it works. It is an uncontrollable urge to do something despite the harmful consequences. This interferes with ordinary responsibilities such as school, family, or health. The user may not even be aware that their behavior is causing problems for themselves and others. When a user who is addicted to drugs, alcohol, or nicotine tries to stop, there are notable withdrawal symptoms which can include flu-like symptoms, anxiety, and depression."

"It's important to know how to read OTC medicine and Rx labels."

Show a sample of each from slide 15. Point out the important information below:

"Important information:

- Patient name
- Name of medicine and strength
- Instructions on how and when to take the medication
- Physical description of the medication
- Expiration date
- Number of pills in the bottle

Taking prescription drugs in a way that has not been recommended by a doctor is more dangerous than some might think. It's drug abuse. It's illegal just like taking street drugs."

Ask "How can drugs negatively impact an individual?

- Driving under the influence (DUI): If someone is caught driving with drugs or alcohol in their system, they can face serious consequences. These include license suspension, fines, and even jail time. DUI laws are strict because alcohol impairs driving skills.
- Possession and purchase: Minors caught with illegal drugs can be fined or required to do community service. Offense convictions can be reflected on their criminal histories for years.
- School consequences: Schools take drug misuse seriously. Students caught with drugs may face disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion."

"There are also health hazards to alcohol and drug use/abuse like:

- Damage to organs: Illegal drugs and legal drugs being misused can harm our vital organs, especially the heart and liver. The heart pumps blood throughout our body, but drugs can strain it. They may cause irregular heartbeats, high blood pressure, or even heart attacks. The liver filters toxins from our blood, but drugs can overload it. This can lead to liver damage or failure.
- Increased heart rate: Many illegal drugs speed up our heart rate. Imagine your heart racing like a super-fast car! This puts extra stress on the heart, making it work harder. Over time, it can weaken the heart muscles.

	• Asphyxia: Asphyxia means not getting enough oxygen. Some drugs can cause this in people. For example, if someone takes too much opioid (a type of drug), it can slow down breathing. Lack of oxygen can be dangerous and lead to suffocation. • First-time fatality: Shockingly, some illegal drugs can be fatal even the very first time someone tries them. Heroin, for instance, can depress breathing so much that it becomes deadly. • Allergic reactions: Just like some people are allergic to certain foods or pollen, they can also be allergic to drugs. Allergic reactions can cause rashes, swelling, or even difficulty breathing.” Say, "Who can safely give you drugs? • Doctor/nurse • Parents/guardians • Pharmacist • Dentist” “How does the government try to stop illegal drugs? • Drug checkpoints at borders and on roads • Use of drug-sniffing dogs in airports • Special investigative law enforcement units • Harsh legal consequences for distributors” "What should you do if you suspect or know someone is guilty of using illegal drugs? Stay clear, you can get in trouble if you are where drugs are being used even if you’re not using them. You could also get hurt. If a friend is using drugs, help them get help. Contact a trusted adult, parent, counselor, teacher, or pastor. If it is not a friend, still stay clear; contact a trusted adult or the police if a person is breaking the law."
WE DO Practice	Sort legal and illegal drugs. Explain to the students that they will be sorting different drugs into two categories: legal and illegal. Write “Legal” and “Illegal” on the board or chart paper. Provide a list of drugs (you can use examples below or add more): Legal Drugs: Aspirin, cough syrup, vapes, prescribed medicines. Illegal Drugs: Fentanyl, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy. Ask students to place each drug in the correct category (legal or illegal). Then have students discuss with a shoulder buddy why they made their choices.

Check for Understanding	Then have a class discussion. Ask students the following questions: “Why are some drugs legal while others are not?” “How do legal drugs help us (like aspirin for headaches)?” “Why is it essential to follow rules about drugs?” Ask students to reflect on what they’ve learned. “Why is it crucial to know which drugs are legal and which are not? How can we make safe choices when it comes to medicines and substances?”
YOU DO Practice	Activity- scenarios handout Provide students with the scenarios handout where they are to apply their knowledge about responding in different drug-related scenarios. Students can capture their answers on the handout and then provide additional context in a whole class recap after everyone has completed their handout. Alex’s prescription medication Background: Alex is a 10-year-old student who has been prescribed medication for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The medication helps him focus and manage his behavior. Scenario: One day, Alex decides to take more than the prescribed dose because he thinks it will make him feel even better. He experiences side effects like dizziness and nausea. Questions: Why did Alex take more medication than prescribed? What are the potential consequences of misusing prescription drugs? How can we prevent such situations? Sarah and peer pressure Background: Sarah is a 5th grader who attends a sleepover at her friend’s house. Her friend’s older sibling offers her a small, colorful pill, claiming it’s just candy. Scenario: Sarah hesitates to take the pill but wants to fit in with the older kids. Questions: Why did Sarah feel pressured to take the pill? What could she have done? How can we resist peer pressure related to drugs? Jake and the vape pen Background: Jake is curious about vaping because he sees older kids doing it. He finds a vape pen in his older brother’s room. Scenario: Jake tries vaping and likes the fruity flavor. He doesn’t realize that it is actually marijuana. Questions: What risks are associated with vaping?

Conclusion	Why is marijuana harmful? What should Jake have done when he found his brother’s vape pen? Lily and the medicine cabinet: Lily’s parents keep various medications in the bathroom cabinet. Scenario: One day, Lily takes a few pills from different bottles out of curiosity. She experiences stomach pain and drowsiness. Discussion Questions: Why did Lily take the medication? Why is it essential to follow proper medication guidelines? What could Lily have done differently? Wrap up the lesson by allowing students the opportunity to expand on the answers from their handouts. If time permits, you may also include a round of pair sharing within small groups prior to the full group recap.
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Name _____

Date _____

Drug Awareness Scenarios

Scenario 1: Alex's Prescription Medication: Alex is a 10-year-old student who has been prescribed medication for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The medication helps him focus and manage his behavior. **Scenario:** One day, Alex decides to take more than the prescribed dose because he thinks it will make him feel even better. He experiences side effects like dizziness and nausea.

Questions:

1. Why did Alex take more medication than prescribed?
2. What are the potential consequences of misusing prescription drugs?
3. How can we prevent such situations?

Scenario 2: Sarah and Peer Pressure: Sarah is a 5th grader who attends a sleepover at her friend's house. Her friend's older sibling offers her a small, colorful pill, claiming it's just candy.

Scenario: Sarah hesitates to take the pill but wants to fit in with the older kids.

Questions:

1. Why did Sarah feel pressured to take the pill?
2. What could she have done?
3. How can we resist peer pressure related to drugs?

Scenario 3: Jake and the Vape Pen: Jake is curious about vaping because he sees older kids doing it. He finds a vape pen in his older brother's room. **Scenario:** Jake tries vaping and likes the fruity flavor. He doesn't realize that it is actually marijuana.

Questions:

1. What risks are associated with vaping?
2. Why is marijuana harmful?
3. What should Jake have done when he found his brother's vape pen?

Scenario 4: Lily and the Medicine Cabinet: Lily's parents keep various medications in the bathroom cabinet. **Scenario:** One day, Lily takes a few pills from different bottles out of curiosity. She experiences stomach pain and drowsiness.

Questions:

1. Why did Lily take the pills?
2. Why is it essential to follow proper medication guidelines?
3. What could Lily have done differently?