

'Say NO to Poisons!' Learning Plan

Welcome to the 'Say NO to Poisons!' Learning Plan. The objective of the Learning Plan is to suggest a method of introducing an awareness of poisons to pre-school children. The overriding aim of introducing the plan is to ensure the safety of children and to give them the tools to be self-safe. The Learning Plan will bring Early Years Professionals, carers and parents through a series of activities in a structured manner. This plan should be tailored to the interests and understanding of the young child. Each activity can be used alone as a single activity or linked together in any preferred order to suit the needs of the targeted group or child. Download the materials from www.poisons.ie



The Learning Plan contains the following:

1. Circle Time 1: What do you know about poisons?
2. Story 1: Ben asks "What's a Poison?"
3. Safety Signs: What is safe?
4. Slide Show: It's a REAL poison.
5. Story 2: Amy knows "It's a poison"
6. Worksheets: 'X' the poison and colour in Ben and Amy.
7. Circle Time 2: What did we learn about poisons?
8. Take home messages.

Learning messages:

- Children learn to always ask a grown-up minding them, if something is safe to eat, drink, or touch.
- Children learn never to take medicine unless it is given to them by a grown-up who is minding them.
- Children learn not to play with, touch, or try to open bottles, especially those that have the "Click, Click" lids.
- Children learn to shout for help from a grown-up minding them if poisoning occurs.
- Children learn the 'Say NO to Poisons' catchphrase.

Target group: Pre-school children in the age range 2½ to 4½ years.

Settings for learning: Childcare and education services and children's homes.

(1) Circle time 1: What do you know about poisons?

A group/individual discussion between carer or parent and child/children.

Action: The adult begins the discussion by asking the child/children “What do you know about poisons?” Further questions can be asked e.g. “What is a poison?” and “Where are there poisons?”



The child’s own information should be acknowledged.

Purpose: To establish:

- Child’s current knowledge of what is a poison.
- To find out where children think there are poisons.

This activity can be followed by Story 1 where Ben will find out about poisons.

(2) Story 1: Ben asks “What’s a Poison?”

A story to share and to use as material for further discussion on poisons.

Action: Read the story about Ben asking if he can he take another child’s medicine.



Purpose: To emphasise the learning messages:

- Children learn to always ask a grown-up minding them, if something is safe to eat, drink, or touch.
- Children learn never to take medicine unless it is given to them by a grown-up who is minding them.
- Children learn not play with, touch, or try to open bottles, especially those that have the “Click, Click” lids.
- “Say NO to Poisons” catchphrase.

The child/children can then be asked if they know if their environment is safe from poisons and they can join in the next activity or move to the Slide Show if there is any fear of a child being exposed to potential poisons.

(3) Safety Signs: What is safe?



Exploratory walk, a tour of child's environment, i.e. Home or pre-school, indoors and outdoors to place safety signs on areas where there are known potential poisons.

Action: Bring child/children under supervision to explore their environment to see if there are any potential poisons. Visit the kitchen, bathroom, utility room, play rooms, garden and play area. Particular safety and vigilance of the child/children needs to be adhered to. The child/children can be made aware of everyday substances that are potential poisons e.g. washing liquids, shampoo, soap, washing detergent, fabric softener, paint, plants and garden shed items. Any bottle with a "Click, Click" lid can be demonstrated but all of these substances, (potential poisons), should be kept in a locked cupboard. The child/children and supervising adult can place an 'X' symbol on dangerous areas and products to emphasise the 'Say NO to Poisons' safety message.

Cautionary note: Tell the child/children that for this particular exploring activity they are not permitted to handle, taste or eat any item without the grown-up saying that it is safe.

Purpose: To teach children:

- That poisons can be found in everyday surroundings.
- To learn not to touch anything with a "Click, Click" lid.
- To learn to "Say NO to Poisons".

The child/children can be shown the next activity in addition to or instead of the previous activity.

(4) Slide show: It's a REAL poison.



A series of photographs of potential poisons which can be found indoors and outdoors.

Action: This series of slides show photographs of potential poisons that the child might see every day. The tagline "Say NO to Poisons" is repeated after each slide and should be verbally repeated by the carer as each slide is shown. The number of slides can be limited to suit the child's interests. Download the "Say NO to Poisons!" slide show at www.poisons.ie

Purpose: To reinforce:

- Child's awareness of poisons.
- To learn to "Say No to Poisons"

The next story shows what happens if a child takes something that is poisonous.

(5) Story 2: "It's a Poison"

This story alerts the child to the consequences of taking something without asking if it is safe.

Action: Read the story about Amy taking some cleaning fluid.

Purpose: To emphasise the learning messages:

- Children learn to always ask a grown-up minding them, if something is safe to eat, drink, or touch.
- Children learn to shout for help from a grown-up minding them if poisoning occurs.
- Children learn the 'Say NO to Poisons' catchphrase.



Child/children can now use the worksheets which will reinforce their learning about potential poisons.

(6) Worksheets: (A) 'X' the poison (B) Colour in Ben and Amy.

An opportunity for group or individual work with support from the supervising adult.

Action: Worksheet A has a selection of photographs. Following a discussion with the supervising adult, the child can decide if the items are potential poisons. An 'X' can be drawn through any potential poisons. Worksheet B is a colouring-in page of Ben and Amy who "Say NO to Poisons". The carer can discuss the message of the worksheets with the children as they colour and learn. The actual colouring or completion of the worksheets is not the task rather it is the learning messages that are present.



Download the activity sheets from www.poisons.ie

Purpose: The worksheets will:

- Reinforce that children should ask if something is safe to eat, drink or touch.
- Children will develop an awareness that poisons are present in their environment.
- Children will know to "Say NO to Poisons".

To tie in all the learning messages, the child/children and adult can come together for a discourse.

(7) Circle Time 2. What did we learn about poisons?

A group/individual discussion between the carer or parent and the child/children.

Action: Children can once again be asked the original questions of Circle Time 1 i.e. "What is a poison?" and "Where are there poisons?" to see what do the children now know about poisons.

Purpose: This is an opportunity to establish if the children know more about poisons now than they did before the activities were introduced to them.

It is also an opportunity for the adult to reflect on his/her role and to evaluate the learning.



There is no time line associated with any of the activities above. The activities can be presented in a day or over a week and the material can be adapted to suit the understanding of the young child.

(8) Take home messages.

Action: Poisons Prevention Leaflets and fridge magnets are available to order free of charge from www.healthpromotion.ie

Purpose: Leaflets and magnets should be sent home with the children to give to their parent.





**If you think a child has been poisoned, call the
Public Poisons Information Line
(01) 809 2166
Daily 8am-10pm
Outside these hours contact your GP or hospital or call 999 / 112**